



Request for applicants for an IAI Science, Technology and Policy (STeP) Fellow to be hosted by the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI), Panama, to support the Eastern Tropical Pacific Marine Corridor (CMAR)

CONTEXT

The [Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research](http://www.iai.int/en/step) (IAI), an intergovernmental organization with 19 Parties in the Americas, promotes transdisciplinary research and the enhancement of capacities to improve public awareness and provide information to governments for the development of public policy relevant to global environmental change (GEC), based on scientific excellence, international and intersectoral cooperation, and the open exchange of knowledge. The IAI Science, Technology, and Policy (STeP) Fellowship Program is an innovative and strategic international program placing scientists in public or private host institutions to inform and advise decision-making on global environmental change and sustainable development issues of national priority. Through the STeP program, the IAI provides professional development training and international networking opportunities for early-career policymakers and scientists to value and incorporate science in the decision-making process and become leaders and active agents of systemic change in their countries. More information on the STeP Fellowship Program can be found here: <http://www.iai.int/en/step>

The IAI, with science support from the [Adrianne Arsht Initiative for Community-Based Resilience Solutions \(the Initiative\) based at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute \(STRI\)](#), and Bloomberg Philanthropies invites eligible individuals to apply for this fellowship opportunity in marine science, conservation, and policy. The fellow will focus on supporting the [Eastern Tropical Pacific Marine Corridor \(CMAR in Spanish\)](#) – an intergovernmental agreement signed by Panama, Costa Rica, Ecuador, and Colombia to ensure connectivity and to promote the transnational protection of marine resources. The fellow will support the CMAR Secretariat, currently held by Panama, which was deliberately designed to engage science with policy to support evidence-informed decision-making across the four CMAR countries.

Through science, education, dialogue facilitation, and effective communications, the Initiative seeks to understand how communities (human and ecological) can become more resilient to global changes. This inter-institutional collaboration aims to support capacity building for the integration of science with public policy, with the goal of promoting Latin American leadership on ocean issues. For more information on the Resilience Initiative please visit: <https://striresearch.si.edu/resilience/>

Through the IAI, the STRI fellow will be jointly supported by training and mentorship on an international scale. The IAI STeP Program serves as the training and networking platform for the fellow, particularly in science-policy communication, transdisciplinary leadership, and science diplomacy.

PROPOSED ACTIVITIES (Supervised by CMAR Technical Secretariat and STRI).

- Work with the newly appointed government officials in Panama and the CMAR Secretariat to support the CMAR 2025-2035 work plan across all four CMAR countries. It is crucial to address issues related to climate change, the Sustainable Blue Economy, marine spatial planning, administrative roles and to create favorable scenarios to accelerate the achievement of the proposed objectives.
- Co-design with CMAR member states a short-term research project proposal **on socio-ecological aspects related to one or more of the challenges of the UN Decade of Ocean Sciences for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) to be implemented in the region relevant to CMAR**. The proposal will be submitted to STRI for review and approval. The Fellow will then lead the implementation of the research project under the scientific mentorship of STRI.
- The selected fellow will help support the IAI Ocean Committee Chair and participate in 2025 bioeconomy cohort of STeP Fellows supporting science diplomacy and regional collaboration across the Americas.

GENERAL SKILLS & ELIGIBILITY

- Collaborative team member.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills in English and Spanish.
- Education and experience related to global environmental change (GEC). Education and experience related to marine science, conservation, and policy is highly preferred.
- Interest/ability to coordinate and work with transdisciplinary groups of stakeholders and researchers from diverse disciplines related to GEC and marine conservation and policy practitioners.
- Knowledge of and experience with the science-policy interface, processes, and the uptake of scientific knowledge related to the ocean to support evidence-informed decision-making in the Americas. Experience and knowledge of environmental policies in Panama is highly preferred.
- Early career researcher (within 10 years of completing a PhD degree or equivalent such as DrPh, EdD, DVM, MD, JD). Early career individuals with graduate degrees (master's degree equivalent) and ~5 years of relevant professional experience will also be considered.
- Experience working with/in other research and government institutions in Latin America.

APPOINTMENT AND DURATION

The successful candidate will be appointed as a fellow of and supervised by the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI). The successful candidate will receive a stipend between \$45,000 and \$60,000

for the year (depending on qualifications), plus \$10,000 for research/travel.

The intended start date is June 2025, and the fellowship duration is twelve (12) months.

The fellow must be based in Panama. There are no citizenship requirements.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must complete the application form in English or Spanish.
<https://forms.gle/vviKJ41VBg1AJeK47>

Applicants must upload the following in one single PDF file:

- A cover letter (up to 2 pages) indicating why the candidate is qualified to perform the tasks listed under the proposed activities (description of professional experience, personal skills, and expertise to address the stated objectives).
 - The cover letter must explain why the individual is interested in working with the CMAR Secretariat, their interest/experience in transdisciplinary science, and the science-policy interface in the Americas. Finally, it should describe how the individual will engage with CMAR stakeholders.
- Curriculum Vitae (CV) (up to 2 pages)
- Two letters of reference (should not be from main advisor or proposed co-advisors)

DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING APPLICATIONS

The application form must be submitted in English or Spanish by **19 May 2025, 23:59 Panama time**.
<https://forms.gle/vviKJ41VBg1AJeK47>

Any questions may be sent to step@dir.iai.int