***Initial Concept (DRAFT)***

**IAI SCIENCE DIPLOMACY CENTER (SDC)**

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6. **BACKGROUND**

The IAI sits at the intersection of science and policy. As a regional intergovernmental organization, with 19 member countries of the Americas (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, United States of America, Uruguay and Venezuela), the IAI aims to provide nations with the information, tools, and professional and institutional capacities to better respond to the challenges posed by global change (GC). Global change is defined by the IAI as the interactions of biological, chemical, physical and social processes that regulate changes in the functioning of the Earth system, including the ways in which these changes are influenced by and impact on human activities. This collaborative, multinational effort is guided by the understanding that global change is urgent, complex, dynamic, and with considerable uncertainties, and consequences for the Nations of the Americas

Innovative science and training approaches and initiatives are needed to strengthen human and institutional capacities in research, in policy, and in science-policy-diplomacy across the Americas based on multinational efforts. These efforts are grounded in the IAI’s foundational principles, identified in the Strategic Plan: transdisciplinary (TD) science, participatory and inclusive design, innovative and solution based science, multi-scalar analysis and integration, open data/science, scientific outreach and knowledge mobilization, alignment with environmental governance frameworks, and strengthening capacities across the science-policy-diplomacy interface in the following strategic areas: reduction of poverty and inequality; improving food, water, and energy security; climate change adaptation and mitigation; improved human health and wellbeing; conservation and restoration of biodiversity and ecosystems; clean air, water and soil ([Link to IAI Scientific Agenda](https://www.iai.int/en/research/agenda)) and to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Americas have a long-standing culture and history of scientific collaboration and of science diplomacy. The IAI is the result of such cooperation. As an intergovernmental organization, the IAI works with its member countries and with the scientific community to promote regional cooperation around transdisciplinary research and training on GC. In many ways, a broad definition of science diplomacy reflects the objectives of the IAI given that the organization focuses on a transboundary approach to provide sound scientific information to support policy formulation. The IAI TD approach, which includes different knowledges, perspectives and responsibilities of stakeholders in the science-policy nexus, provides the IAI with the ability to play a key role in national, regional and international relationships and negotiations. In the context of the IAI, science-diplomacy is grounded in the pursuit of scientific excellence, international cooperation, and the full and open exchange of scientific information relevant to global change to support policy and decision-making for the benefit of society.

To celebrate its 30th anniversary and against this backdrop of three decades of functioning as a multilateral science-policy instrument for addressing GC in the Americas, the IAI works towards elevating its importance and leadership in the region and increase its visibility in science diplomacy through the establishment of the IAI Science Diplomacy Center for the Americas.

At the 30th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research the following decisions were adopted:

*XXX/8. The Parties are encouraged to participate in the training and education activities of the IAI Center for Science Diplomacy as lecturers or instructors with a view to providing participants with experience in and knowledge about the science-to-policy interface.*

*XXX/9. The Directorate is instructed to establish a steering committee, with the participation of Parties, the SAC and the SPAC, Associates, and experts on science diplomacy, to assist in and advise on the design and development of the IAI Center for Science Diplomacy and its programs and activities.*

As an Inter-Governmental Organization (IGO), the IAI and its SDC bring together the interest of the IAI Parties, the IAI science, capacity building, science-policy programs, and outreach initiatives under a unified umbrella with a visible branding and identity with the ambition to expand the IAI’s leading role to become a reference and a regional platform in science diplomacy for GC in the Americas, particularly for Latin America and the Caribbean.

**The Science Diplomacy Center Advisory Board (Steering Committee)**

The Board will be composed of 11 members for a 3-year period. Members will be representatives from IAI Parties, the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) and Science-Policy Advisory Committee (SPAC), Associates, and Partners, as well as science diplomacy experts from the Americas and abroad.

The Advisory Board will recommend an Implementation Plan for the Science Diplomacy Center to be approved by the IAI Conference of the Parties at its 31st meeting in 2023, considering:

1. Vision, Mission, Goals, Objectives
2. Science Diplomacy Focus Areas (priority themes and target audiences)
3. Capacity Building & Training (priority programs)
4. Approaches to a sustainable funding strategy
5. Strategic Initiatives (key programs, partners, outreach & visibility etc.)

The IAI Directorate is making available to the Advisory Board members additional IAI background material, such as the Agreement establishing the IAI; the IAI Strategic Plan; and IAI Regional Assessment report (summary prepared for the IAI Executive Council).

1. **SWOT ANALYSIS OF THE IAI AS AN ACTIVE ORGANIZATION IN SCIENCE DIPLOMACY**

* **Strengths:**
  + Treaty organization.
  + Direct access to governments.
  + Reputation, legitimacy, history and tradition in science diplomacy for 30 years.
  + Only science-focused multilateral organization of Western Hemisphere scope.
  + Multinational and multidisciplinary.
  + Jointly funded by Parties and able to receive funds from other funding agencies.
  + Well positioned to lead and coordinate regional efforts among many national and international institutions.
  + Active and engaged Scientific Advisory Committee and Science Policy Advisory Committee with leading senior scientists from across the Americas.
  + Well established research networks on global environmental change with representation from across the Americas.
  + Transdisciplinary approach creates extensive multi-stakeholder networks for research, training, and policy impact.
  + Science Technology & Policy (STeP) Fellowship Program that trains early career researchers and policy makers from the region in science diplomacy creating an upcoming generation of Science Diplomacy Center ambassadors/practitioners/trainers.
  + Knowledgeable and competent international staff with experience and connections to the scientific and diplomatic ecosystem of the LAC region.
* **Weaknesses:**
  + Limited visibility: The IAI is not well known in academic nor government circles outside of the researchers and government entities that directly engage with it. This often leads to a wider unawareness of the IAI’s role and unfamiliarity with its work/impact. Even within governments, turnover of authorities and focal points, and political changes result in the lack of institutional memory.
  + Funding too centralized in a few funders.
  + Not all Parties comply with the treaty funding commitments.
  + As the focus area is global change, it does not encompass all fields of science diplomacy (but could be a strength), as opposed to other institutions.
  + Perceived disconnection from global GC frameworks and processes e.g. UNFCCC.
* **Opportunities:**
  + Providing services to Parties to support their Science Diplomacy strategies and actions.
  + The IAI has great potential to become a reference organization/platform for Science Diplomacy in GC in the Americas, especially in Latin America and the Caribbean.
  + Unique position, capabilities, networks, and potential to connect the transdisciplinary science of GC with the training and capacity building for decision makers at a hemispheric scale.
  + Thematic focus on GC encompasses almost all global challenges and sectors (e.g. agriculture, water, health, energy, biodiversity, disasters…) framed by the Sustainable Development Goals.
  + Integrating TD approaches for innovation in science, policy, and diplomacy intellectual frameworks.
  + Synergies with IAI Science, Technology and Policy (STeP) Fellowship Program and engagement with STeP fellows, their host institutions and countries.

1. **POTENTIAL PILLARS OF THE IAI Science Diplomacy Center**

* Science Diplomacy Training and Capacity Building Program:   
  + STeP fellowship expansion to new countries and becoming the hub/platform for the Inter-American Network of Science-Policy Fellows.
  + Science Diplomacy workshops and courses offered to the scientific, policy and diplomatic community in the Americas.
  + Curriculum development: an IAI consultancy team is developing training materials on science diplomacy related to GC in the Americas following the ‘train the trainer’ model on:
    - Key priority themes identified in the IAI regional assessment that are important for IAI Parties and the scientific community.
    - Science diplomacy and science advice interfaces, institutional structures, mechanisms and instruments.
  + Transdisciplinary Academy: Connecting the science on GC with the training and policy impact.
  + Seed Grant program that supports the curriculum development knowledge imparted from the training to real work science diplomacy applications.

Alumni and community management, long-term impact monitoring and career support (particularly for STeP fellows). Consolidation of the Inter-American network of STeP Fellows should be included as a resource for the IAI SDC which could serve as a platform for early career researchers, policy makers, and other professionals to support and participate in the programs and activities outlined for the Center.

* Establish a platform for SD initiatives and institutions in the Americas: convening, awareness raising and exchange of best practices to elevate the IAI profile, outreach to new members, renew relationship with inactive Parties, compile case studies in SD, build networks, and promote SD activities in the Americas, particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean.
* Provide Science-Policy support and enhancement of institutional capacities in Science Diplomacy:
  + Support Parties in their science diplomacy needs: ecosystems, strategies, structures, programs, training, actions.
  + Support governments in the region to develop science diplomacy governance mechanisms to address GC.
* Develop a presence, visibility and outreach in key multilateral dialogues for global environmental change, climate, biodiversity, water, etc. (UNFCCC, IPBES, CBD…).

1. Expand of IAI Membership and sustainability: new member states, observers, associate members, partners, funders. Long-term funding strategy.  
     
   **PROPOSAL FOR THE IAI SCIENCE DIPLOMACY CENTER STEERING COMMITTEE**

At the 30th meeting of the Conference to the Parties to the Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research the following decision was adopted:

*XXX/9. The Directorate is instructed to establish a steering committee, with the participation of Parties, the SAC and the SPAC, Associates, and experts on science diplomacy, to assist in and advise on the design and development of the IAI Center for Science Diplomacy and its programs and activities.*

The Steering Committee will help generate ideas, support the design and development of programs and activities, and recommendations about collaborations, partnerships and funding sources the IAI Directorate can forge to foster science diplomacy in the region and establish the Center to become a go-to resource for governments, academia, other multilateral organizations and civil society.

**Membership (2022-2025)**

**IAI Parties**

* + - 1. Carlos Matsumoto, International Cooperation, Ministry of Science and Technology, Brazil (focal point)
      2. Marcelo Mena, former Minister of the Environment of Chile, Chile (nominated by Chile’s focal point)
      3. Maria Uhle, Program Director for International Activities Directorate for Geosciences National Science Foundation, IAI Executive Council Chair and Co-chair of the Belmont Forum, USA (focal point and chair of the Executive Council)

**SAC and SPAC representatives**

* + - 1. Carol Franco, climate advisor to the Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources of the Dominican Republic, Dominican Republic, and professor at Virginia Tech University, USA
      2. Javier Gracia-Garza, former Agriculture and Food Canada, Canada

**IAI Associate representative**

* + - 1. Kimberly Montgomery, Director of International Affairs and Science Diplomacy at AAAS, USA

**Science Diplomacy experts**

* + - 1. Frances Cólon, member of President Biden's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology and Senior Director of the International Climate Center for American Progress, USA
      2. Carmen Claramunt, ambassador and deputy director of the Diplomatic School at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Costa Rica
      3. Janina Onuki, professor at the Institute of International Relations of the University of São Paulo (leader of the IAI consultancy team developing initial training materials for the SDC), Brazil
      4. Nathan Hotaling, Senior Data Scientist at National Institutes of Health & SVP Data Science Axle Informatics, USA
      5. Member TBC, Geneva Science and Diplomacy Anticipator (GESDA) Switzerland

1. **WORK PLAN AND REVISED TIMELINE (June 2022 – June 2023)**

**June 2022:** CoP 30 decision for the Directorate to establish a steering committee, with the participation of Parties, the SAC and the SPAC, Associates, and experts on science diplomacy, to assist in and advise on the design and development of the IAI Center for Science Diplomacy and its programs and activities.

**July 2022:** Selection of the Americas Science Diplomacy Initiative (ASDI) Consortium (University of São Paulo and SciTech DiploHub) for the consultancy to develop initial training materials on science diplomacy related to GC in the Americas.

**August/September 2022:** communication sent to Parties that volunteered to participate in the steering committee, to the IAI SAC/SPAC, and to associate and leading experts in science diplomacy. All members appointed by the Parties, SAC/SPAC, and invited experts accepted the IAI invitation.

**September 2022**: invitations to advisory board members to participate in the first in-person meeting to be held from 11-13 November in Punta del Este, Uruguay.

**October 2022:** Database of existing open access Science Diplomacy resources relevant for GC in the Americas (publications, case studies, projects, simulation games, science diplomacy strategies, and other materials). Gap analysis and needs assessment to discuss with the consultancy team.

**November 2022:** Firstin-person meeting of the SDC Advisory Board. The meeting also overlaps with the STeP Science Diplomacy Leadership Workshop. The SDC Advisory Board will also serve as a key resource to engage with STeP Fellows and learn about their work and provide mentorship to their science diplomacy projects.

**December 2022**: First draft of SDC Implementation Plan and work plan with initial ideas for the SDC, including timeline of activities for Y1-Y3.

**January/March 2022:** Advanced draft SDC Implementation Plan and work plan incorporating comments and feedback from the Advisory Board. IAI SAC/SPAC and Directorate.

**April/May 2023**:

* Develop at least two draft proposals (including a theory of change) to grant sources for funding to assist the establishment of the IAI SDC and its initial programs and activities.
* Prepare short article, publications, and/or policy brief about the importance of SD for the Americas, the role of the IAI SDC as an IGO in fostering SD collaborations in global change.
* Prepare a Report and SDC Implementation Plan and work plan for the IAI Executive Council and Conference of the Parties.

**June 2023**: Presentation of the SDC Implementation Plan/work plan to the IAI Conference of the Parties for its review and approval.

Schedule the second in-person meeting of the SDC Advisory Board in 2023 to advance on the Implementation Plan and work plan after the IAI CoP 31’s approval.