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08 December 2021

**EXECUTIVE COUNCIL TO THE
INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL
CHANGE RESEARCH
Fifty-second meeting
Videoconference, 18 November 2021
11:00 to 14:00 UYT**

Report of the 52nd meeting of the IAI Executive Council

1. This document has been prepared by the IAI Directorate.

Introduction

2. Article VI, paragraph 3 of the *Agreement establishing the Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research* (IAI) states:

The Executive Council shall meet at least twice a year and shall strive to hold its meetings in different locations among the Parties.

3. In accordance with Article VI, paragraph 3, of the *Agreement*, the 52nd meeting of the Executive Council was held via videoconference on 18 November 2021 and represented the second and final meeting in the year 2021.

Introduction

4. The meeting was chaired by the Chair of the EC, Dr. Maria Uhle, United States. Ing. Milagro Mainieri, Panama, was the Vice-Chair.
5. The following Parties to the Agreement with membership in the Executive Council attended the meeting: Canada, Chile, Jamaica, Panama and the United States of America.

6. The following observer Parties attended the meeting: Argentina, Colombia and Peru.
7. A member of the Science Policy Advisory Committee attended the meeting.
8. The following Associates attended the meeting: American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) and the Center for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN) of Columbia University
9. The following observers attended the meeting: United States Global Change Research Program (USGCRP).
10. The following individual attended the meeting: The former Chair of the Executive Council.
11. The list of observer Parties and other observers attending the meeting is provided in the List of participants available on the EC-52 web page¹.

Opening of the meeting

Welcome by the Chair Executive Council

12. The Chair expressed her gratitude to EC members for their attendance and for their support of the IAI. She praised the work of the IAI during the intersessional period, and referred to the successful conclusion of the 29th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP-29, Videoconference, 2021). She thanked the IAI Directorate for official documentation and concluded by wishing everyone a successful meeting.
13. The Chair offered the floor to the IAI Executive Director for comments.
14. The IAI Executive Director thanked members of the Executive Council for their support of the IAI. He stated that EC-52 was the first time in many years that it was not held back-to-back with a meeting of the Conference of the Parties. He concluded his comments with a hope that participants would be able to meet face-to-face in the near future.
15. The Chair cordially welcomed the participants to the meeting and invited a round of introductions.

Agenda item 1: Approval of the agenda

16. The Chair invited members of the Executive Council to approve the agenda (document no. IAI/EC/52/1).
17. The agenda was approved by consensus.

¹See: <https://www.iai.int/administrador/assets/images/ckfinder/files/EC-52%20Final%20List%20of%20Participants.pdf>

Agenda item 2: Review of CoP-29 items for action by the EC and implementation strategies for Decisions from EC-51 and CoP-29

18. In her introduction to this agenda item, the Chair invited the IAI Executive Director to provide a review of Decisions adopted at CoP-29 and possible strategies for their implementation.
19. The Executive Director noted that the Conference of the Parties at CoP-29 (Videoconference, 2021) did not assign the Executive Council a direct role in the Decisions. However, the Executive Director stated that some of the Decisions should be of importance to the Executive Council and would benefit from their participation and input.
20. Among the Decisions highlighted by the Executive Director are: Decision XXIX/8 on the *Gender Policy on IAI scientific projects and activities*; Decision XXIX/9 on the *Initiative for Enhancing Capacity for Climate Risk Assessment and Catalyzing Partnerships to Inform Decisions in Latin America and the Caribbean*; Decision XXIX/15 on efforts to ... *increase the inclusion of underrepresented groups in the IAI's science and capacity building activities*; and, Decision XXIX/16 to ... *map the domestic and international global change policy and decision-making landscape through a regional assessment*.
21. He continued by referring to efforts by Parties on gender policies and inclusion of under-represented groups in national activities and projects. Sharing national experience on these topics would assist the implementation of Decisions XXIX/8 and XXIX/15 respectively. He continued by noting that the Science Director would speak on Decision XXIX/16 during her presentation on science.
22. With regard to Decision XXIX/9 on the *Initiative for Enhancing Capacity for Climate Risk Assessment and Catalyzing Partnerships to Inform Decisions in Latin America and the Caribbean*, the Executive Director invited the Chair to speak on the initiative.
23. The Chair noted that the Initiative is supported by United States agencies coordinated by the United States Global Change Research Program (USGCRP) and several Latin American and Caribbean countries involved in AmeriGEO, in partnership with the IAI.
24. She continued by informing members that the goal of the Initiative is to provide opportunities for partnerships to strengthen climate risk assessments that support local and regional decision making. This process is aimed at helping communities to mitigate and adapt to climate change impacts.
25. The Initiative will bring together researchers (e.g., IPCC assessment authors), decision makers and experts with experience in the design and implementation of such assessments. It will also include users of the risk assessments.

26. She concluded by saying that, following the conclusion of EC-52, she would instruct the IAI Directorate to issue a notification² on the Initiative and invite Parties, the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) and the Science Policy Advisory Committee (SPAC) to establish a working group with a view to further develop the Initiative and assist with implementation.
27. Members of the Executive Council expressed interest in the Initiative and welcomed more information on participation and implementation.

Agenda item 3: Overview of the Core Budget and Country Contributions for FY 2021-2022

28. The Chair invited the IAI Directorate to present a summary of the Core Budget and country contributions received to date.
29. The IAI Administration, Finance and Operations Officer began her presentation by summarizing expenses and receipts related to the Core Budget since its approval by CoP-29 (2021, Videoconference). She noted that the contributions received to date were sufficient to maintain the functioning of the Directorate. However, the non-submission of Party contributions was affecting negatively the capacity of the Directorate.
30. She continued by explaining that the advent of Covid-19 impacted on many activities by IAI staff, primarily travel and physical meetings. As a result, expenses were lower during the 2020-2021 intersessional period than originally estimated.
31. With regard to Party contributions, she noted that a communication was sent to Parties late in submitting their contributions stressing the need for the Directorate to receive contributions in a timely manner.
32. The Executive Director continued by noting that the success of the Directorate in raising extra-ordinary funds during the 2020-2021 intersessional allowed for the establishment of an endowment fund per paragraph 3 of the *Agreement*. A portion of the overhead charged against financial resources received is deposited in the endowment fund. The target is an amount of USD 1 million prior to the conclusion of the Executive Director's second three-year term. At the time of writing, approximately USD300,00 has been allocated to the endowment fund.
33. The Chair thanked the Directorate for its summary and concluded this agenda item.

Agenda item 4: Summary report of activities to date by the IAI Directorate

² Notification no. IAIUYDIR/2021/027, *Invitation to Parties to participate in Co-design of an Initiative for Enhancing Capacity for Climate Risk Assessment and Catalyzing Partnerships to Inform Decisions in Latin America and the Caribbean*, was issued on 23 November 2021.

(see: <https://www.iai.int/admin/site/sites/default/files/notificaciones/nt-2021-027-en.pdf>)

34. On the conclusion of agenda item 3, the Chair invited the IAI Executive Director to present the Summary report of activities to date by the IAI Directorate.
35. The Executive Director began the summary by acknowledging the work of the Directorate, particularly with regard to the implementation of scientific projects and capacity building activities.
36. He noted the interest of many Parties to participate in these activities and stated that the Directorate would continue its efforts to secure extra-ordinary financial support for new projects and activities that are Party-driven and meets many of their priorities and needs.
37. He continued by stating that in its summary, the Directorate would not repeat the content found in document no. IAI/EC/52/4 but would highlight important elements found in the report.
38. He concluded by inviting the Science Director to first present her section of the report.

- a. Science

39. The Science Director offered an overview on progress related to the implementation of ongoing science projects since CoP-29. She referred to the Directorate's participation with the US Global Change Research Program in the Belmont Forum's second Collaborative Action Network (CRA) on Climate, Environment and Health (CEH2). She stated that the IAI has established an expert steering committee on CEH with participants from the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Wellcome Trust, IAI Parties (Uruguay) and SAC/SPAC members from Ecuador, United States, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. She described the results of scoping efforts to identify regional funding and training priorities to address CEH and the opportunities presented by this CRA to Parties, which is anticipated to be issued in early 2023.
40. She informed meeting participants that the Directorate recently issued a call for consultants to work with the Directorate to develop training materials on transdisciplinary science that are tailored for the region of the Americas, and a similar call will be issued focused on science diplomacy. The Directorate has also issued a call for early career scientists to apply for the IAI's Science, Technology, Policy (STeP) Fellowship Program to work with the Directorate. She noted that this work is possible thanks to the generous financial support of the United States National Science Foundation (NSF), which issued a grant to the IAI in September 2021 to support work on transdisciplinary science and science diplomacy over the next 4 years.
41. She continued by describing the many science-related outreach efforts through webinars, publications and a science briefing for IAI focal points the day prior to EC-52, and stated

that these efforts would continue if not increase throughout the 2021-2022 intersessional period.

42. She shared that the Directorate has been working with the SAC, SPAC and IAI Parties to develop a regional assessment of decisions that Parties are making that are affected by GEC. By focusing on decisions rather than asking about science priorities, the Directorate hopes to gain a more realistic view of the decision-making landscape and where and how scientific information can bring value. She stated that in the very near future, Parties would be contacted for participation and input into the survey and assessment, and the Directorate would also explore how to gather information in support of Decision XXIX/9. Work under this assessment is in fulfillment of Decision XXIX/16³.
43. She concluded by describing the outreach efforts to non-Party states in the Caribbean through their involvement in IAI science projects. She also referred to new communication tools such as the IAI Newsletter and other news services. She thanked the Parties for their support and invited them to review document no. IAI/EC/52/4.

b. Capacity building

44. The Executive Director invited the Director of Capacity Building to highlight her section of the report.
45. The Director of Capacity Building began her presentation by summarizing the many initiatives found in document no. IAI/EC/52/4. Parties are invited to refer to this document for more detailed information on the initiatives and projects described.
46. She spoke on the success of the first year of the Science, Technology, Policy (STeP) Fellowship Program and the strong interest voiced by Parties regarding participation in year 2 of the project. She informed EC members that the number of participants would more than double in size during the 2021-2022 intersessional year with the participation of new countries including, but not limited to, Brazil, countries in the Caribbean, and Panama. She referred to the support and participation of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) and Mitacs in the implementation of the project. She also thanked Party focal points from Brazil and Panama, who have played a key role in implementing STeP in their countries, and NOAA for its generous financial support to STeP fellows from the Caribbean.
47. She also described the work of the fellows noting in particular their presentations on science diplomacy at national and international conferences. She welcomed the new cohort of fellows, participating organizations and countries to the Program. She thanked the Canadian representative to the IAI for Canada's strong support to the STeP and for

³ Decisión XXIX/16. *Instructs the IAI Directorate, in collaboration with the Parties, the SAC and the SPAC, to map the domestic and international global change policy and decision-making landscape through a regional assessment, subject to the availability of external resources.*

his participation, with that of the President of Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) and two STeP fellows from Canada and the IAI Directorate, at the IAI STeP panel which was held on 22 November 2021 during the Canadian Science-Policy Conference 2021⁴.

48. She continued by describing the *Project on the Design and Implementation of an information system on droughts (monitoring, prediction, adaptation and mitigation of impacts) for southern South America* (SISSA) targeting Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay. The project will be administered by the IAI Directorate.
49. The National Meteorological Service of Argentina on behalf of the Regional Climate Center for Southern South America (RCC-SSA) will be responsible for the technical administration of the project. She acknowledged and expressed gratitude for the generous financial contribution by the European Union through its EUROCLIMA+⁵ cooperation program and the Spanish Development Cooperation Agency (AECID) of approximately 1,5 million Euros which made this project possible. The project was officially initiated on 6 November 2021.
50. She concluded by providing an overview on the implementation of the IAI Transdisciplinary Academy, the Science-Diplomacy Center and the collaborative work with the IAI-PAGES mobility fellowship program. She welcomed Party participation in the above initiatives and acknowledged their strong support.

c. Data, information and public awareness (IAI 30th year anniversary)

51. The Chair offered the floor to the Executive Director to speak on this section of the report.
52. The Director began by describing some of the information and communication tools available through the IAI website. He thanked the IAI Science and Capacity Building Directors for their efforts to increase outreach and disseminate information on the IAI particularly through the newsletter and news services.
53. He continued that the IAI will reach its 30th anniversary on May 2022 and stated that discussions were underway on the organization of public awareness and celebratory activities.
54. He concluded by thanking Parties for their support.
55. On conclusion of his report, the Chair closed this agenda item.

⁴ See <https://www.iai.int/en/post/detail/IAI-session-at-the-13th-Canadian-Science-Policy-Conference-CSPC-2021->

⁵ EUROCLIMA+ is the European Union flagship cooperation programme on environmental sustainability and climate change with the Latin American region. Its objective is to reduce the impact of climate change and its effects in Latin America by fostering climate mitigation, adaptation, resilience and investment (from: <https://euroclimaplus.org/en/home-en/about-the-programme>).

Agenda item 5: Feedback received from Parties responding to the survey on the organization of CoP-29

56. The Chair requested the Executive Director to summarize the findings of the survey on the organization of CoP-29.
57. The Director explained that the purpose of the survey is to maximize the services provided by the IAI Directorate in its organization of IAI meetings. He expressed his gratitude to Parties for completion of the survey noting the exceptionally high number of responses.
58. He summarized the findings and stated that similar surveys would be developed for future meetings of the Conference of the Parties. He concluded by describing the efforts by the Directorate to implement recommendations found in the survey in organization of meetings.
59. In closing this agenda item, the Chair noted that one of the findings in the survey was the request for the IAI Directorate to organize additional meetings with the Parties to increase communication and the dissemination of information.
60. The Executive Director stated that internal discussions are currently underway on how to best implement this recommendation. He also noted that Parties are invited to participate in joint meetings of the SAC and the SPAC and in thematic meetings organized by the Directorate.

Agenda item 6: Other decisions arising

61. There were no other decisions arising.

Agenda item 7: Future meetings and venues

62. The Chair gave the floor to the Executive Director who stated that for the foreseeable future official meetings of the Executive Council and the Conference of the Parties will be organized using videoconferencing systems.
63. He expressed his hopes that the travel restrictions resulting from Covid-19 would be lifted in the near future. However, owing to the logistics required by a host Party for the organization of meetings of the Executive Council and the Conference of the Parties, it is unlikely that EC-53 and CoP-30 could be organized as physical meetings.

Agenda item 11: Closing remarks and closure of the meeting

64. The Chair invited members to make closing remarks.
65. EC members thank the Chair for her support of the meeting and the IAI Directorate for its preparation of documents and organization of the meeting.
66. The IAI Directorate expressed gratitude for the support of the EC to the Parties and its work and thank Secretariat staff for their achievements during the intersessional period.
67. The Chair closed the meeting by noting the progress of the IAI and the strong participation of Parties.
68. The meeting was closed at 12:30 on 18 November 2021.