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19 June 2026

**EXECUTIVE COUNCIL TO THE
INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE
FOR GLOBAL CHANGE RESEARCH
Sixty-first meeting
Videoconference
3 June 2026**

Report of the 61st meeting of the IAI Executive Council

1. This document was prepared by the IAI Directorate.
2. The Executive Council of the Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research (IAI) held its sixty-first meeting (EC-61) on 3 June 2026 via videoconference.
3. The account of the proceedings and discussions of the meeting are provided in Section I of this report.
4. The meeting made four recommendations, which are provided in Section II of the report.
5. The full list of participants, including observer Parties and other observers attending the meeting is provided as Annex I to this report.

Section I: Proceedings of the meeting

Introduction

6. In accordance with *the Agreement establishing the Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research*, Article VI, *The Executive Council*, paragraph 3, the 61st meeting of the Executive Council to the Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research was held on 3 June 2026 via videoconference.
7. The EC-61 was held back-to-back with the 34th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP-34, videoconference, 3–4 June 2026) in accordance with Article VI, paragraph 3 of the *Agreement establishing the Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research*.

8. The meeting was presided by the Chair of the Executive Council, Milagro Mainieri of Panama. Fernando Mendez of Paraguay was the First Vice-Chair.
9. The following Parties to the Agreement, which are members of the Executive Council, attended the meeting: Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Jamaica, Panama, Paraguay, and Venezuela.
10. The following observer Parties attended the meeting: Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico and Perú.
11. The following members of the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) attended the meeting: Alexandra Mallet and Laura Ramajo.
12. The Chair of the Indigenous People Advisory Committee (IPAC) attended the meeting: Cristina Fures.
13. The full list of participants, including observer Parties and other observers attending the meeting is provided as Annex I to this report.

Opening of the meeting

Welcome by the Chair of the Executive Council

14. The 61st Executive Council Meeting of the IAI was opened by Milagro Mainieri, EC Chair and representative of Panama, who welcomed participants and thanked them for their attendance and continued engagement in the work of the Executive Council. She congratulated the IAI Directorate on the successful side event of CoP-34 held on the previous day, noting the relevance of the discussions on regional cooperation, research funding opportunities, and long-term perspectives for scientific collaboration in the Americas. She emphasized the value of these exchanges for both funding agencies and researchers seeking to advance collaborative initiatives and highlighted the importance of maintaining medium- and long-term approaches to strengthen regional integration.
15. The Chair expressed appreciation for the active participation of Executive Council members in the *ad hoc* committees convened over recent months. She noted that these committees have played an important role in supporting the Institute's decision-making processes during a critical period for its sustainability.
16. She concluded by expressing confidence that the discussions would contribute to advancing the work of the Institute.

Agenda item 1: Approval of the agenda

17. The Chair proposed a modification to the order of the agenda items, moving the report of the Executive Council ahead of the financial report in order to provide context for the subsequent financial presentation.
18. The Chair invited members of the Executive Council to approve the agenda as amended.

19. The agenda was approved by consensus, as amended.

Agenda item 2: Approval of the Reports of the 59th and 60th meetings of the Executive Council

20. The Chair invited members of the Executive Council to approve the reports of the 59th and 60th meetings of the Executive Council.
21. The reports were approved by consensus.

Agenda item 3: Election of the Second Vice-Chair of the Executive Council

22. The Chair recalled that the position of Second Vice-Chair of the Executive Council was currently vacant.
23. The Directorate informed the meeting that, after the departure of the United States of America (EE.UU.), the Executive Council currently comprised eight members and the Rules of Procedure provide for up to nine members elected by the Conference of the Parties (CoP). It was noted that consideration should therefore be given to restoring the Executive Council to its full composition prior to the election of a Second Vice-Chair.
24. The Directorate further explained that, historically, the IAI had not previously experienced a situation in which a member country departed from the Executive Council before the completion of its term. It was recalled that the CoP elects the members of the Executive Council, while the Executive Council elects its Bureau, composed of a Chair, a First Vice-Chair and a Second Vice-Chair.
25. Members considered the process for filling the vacant position of Second Vice-Chair of the Executive Council and discussed the desirability of restoring the Executive Council to its full composition.
26. The Executive Council agreed to recommend the Conference of the Parties to elect a ninth member to the Executive Council and subsequently convene to elect a Second Vice-Chair from among its members.

Agenda item 4: Report of the Executive Council

27. The Chair provided an overview of the activities undertaken since the Extraordinary Meeting of the Conference of the Parties held on 9 March 2026.
28. She recalled that Parties had approved the continuation of an interim Executive Director, a minimum institutional structure, and an operational budget subject to review at CoP-34. She further noted that the mandate of the *ad hoc* Financial Restructuring Committee had been extended for an additional six months.
29. The Chair reported that the *ad hoc* Financial Restructuring Committee, composed of Brazil, Colombia, Panama and Paraguay, had met on three occasions between March and May 2026 to evaluate the Institute's financial situation and consider possible operational scenarios for the coming fiscal period.

30. Three scenarios were developed and reviewed by the Committee: a conservative scenario based on an interim Executive Director and a minimum institutional structure; an intermediate scenario including additional technical support; and an enhanced scenario involving a permanent Executive Director and a strengthened institutional structure.
31. Following its review, the Committee concluded that the conservative scenario was the only option currently supported by available resources and projected contributions and therefore recommended its consideration by the Executive Council and the Conference of the Parties.
32. The Chair explained that the conservative scenario would ensure continuity of the Institute's core operations and programmes, maintain support for ongoing projects and fundraising efforts, and preserve the capacity to pursue new funding opportunities while operating within existing financial constraints.
33. The Committee also reviewed institutional financial balances, available resources, expected revenues, the status of country contributions, contractual commitments, and budget projections for the 2026–2028 period.
34. The Chair provided an update on the establishment of the Institute's headquarters operations in Panama, particularly regarding the transfer of institutional accounts from Uruguay to Panama. She reported that the necessary administrative and legal procedures had been completed with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Panama, enabling the authorization of financial management and account administration arrangements under the interim institutional structure.
35. She further reported that the first transfers of funds from Uruguay to Panama were expected to commence in June 2026, facilitating the restoration of the diplomatic status of the Institute's accounts and supporting the continued implementation of headquarters arrangements.
36. The Chair emphasized the importance of strengthening the Institute's long-term financial sustainability through continued engagement with member countries, increased voluntary contributions, and efforts to attract new Parties. She stressed that the Institute's ability to transition from the conservative scenario to a strengthened operational structure would depend largely on the financial support provided by its member Parties.
37. The Chair further recommended maintaining the *ad hoc* Financial Restructuring Committee to continue supporting the Institute's sustainability and institutional strengthening efforts.
38. The Chair informed the Executive Council that the GEF-8 project on integrated sargassum management in the Caribbean had been formally approved on 18 May 2026. She noted that the project represented an important milestone for both the region and the Institute and would strengthen the IAI's role in supporting environmental management and decision-making processes.
39. She reported that the Institute would lead Component 2 of the project and highlighted

the significance of the approval as recognition of the Directorate's efforts in developing complex regional initiatives and securing external funding opportunities.

40. The Chair also informed the Executive Council of a communication received from the Belmont Forum concerning the ongoing restructuring process of the Institute.
41. She reported that the Belmont Forum had requested participation in discussions relating to the restructuring of the IAI due to the potential implications for the Belmont Forum Secretariat.
42. In response, the Bureau of the Executive Council reaffirmed that governance decisions within the IAI are reserved exclusively for its Parties and that participation in institutional decision-making processes must remain consistent with the Institute's legal framework and intergovernmental nature.
43. The Bureau nevertheless indicated that recommendations or observations from external partners could be submitted through the appropriate institutional channels for consideration by the governing bodies of the Institute.
44. The Executive Council took note of the report.
45. The representative of Canada expressed appreciation for the efforts undertaken by the Executive Council during the restructuring process and requested an update on the outcome of the investigation process previously considered by the Institute.
46. The Chair noted that the matter had been addressed through a dedicated review process involving participating Parties and that the recommended actions had already been implemented. She indicated that the process had been concluded and offered to provide additional information to interested representatives, if required.

Agenda item 5: Financial reports

47. The Chair invited the Administration, Finance and Operations Officer to introduce the financial report and the proposed operational budget for FY 2026–2027.
48. The Administration, Finance and Operations Officer presented an overview of the Institute's current financial situation, including the status of country contributions, the projected budget for the next fiscal year, and the work undertaken to ensure the Institute's financial sustainability.
49. She reported that operational expenditures had decreased by approximately 17 percent during the current fiscal year as a result of cost-saving measures adopted by the Directorate, including reductions in travel, training, and other operational expenses aimed at preserving available resources.
50. She noted that the withdrawal of funding from the United States of America had significantly affected the Institute's revenue projections and resulted in a substantial reduction in expected contributions for the current fiscal period.
51. To address this situation, the Directorate had intensified its engagement with

national representatives and focal points, including direct outreach regarding outstanding contributions and coordination with diplomatic missions in Panama. She reported that several Parties had indicated their intention to make additional payments toward outstanding contributions.

52. Turning to the proposed operational budget for FY 2026–2027, she recalled that the Extraordinary Conference of the Parties held in March 2026 had approved an interim Executive Director, a reduced institutional structure, and a six-month review process.
53. She further reported that the *ad hoc* Financial Restructuring Committee had reviewed several institutional and financial scenarios and concluded that a conservative scenario represented the most viable option under current financial conditions.
54. The proposed budget is based on realistic revenue projections and historical contribution patterns and prioritizes critical institutional functions, operational continuity, and the implementation of existing commitments.
55. It was reported that the resources currently available, together with projected revenues, would allow the Institute to maintain operations through June 2027 and potentially extend operations into the following fiscal year under the proposed conservative scenario.
56. The Administration, Finance and Operations Officer emphasized that the proposed budget seeks to balance financial responsibility, institutional continuity, and operational capacity while supporting ongoing programmes and the development of new funding opportunities.
57. Members discussed the implementation of the proposed budget and the possibility of revisiting institutional arrangements should additional financial resources become available during the intersessional period.
58. The Directorate clarified that the proposed budget would serve as the operational framework for FY 2026–2027 and that the Executive Council would continue monitoring the Institute's financial situation through its regular intersessional meetings.
59. The Executive Council took note of the financial report and agreed to recommend that the Conference of the Parties approve the proposed Operational Budget for FY 2026–2027 based on the conservative scenario recommended by the *ad hoc* Financial Restructuring Committee.
60. The representative of Colombia welcomed the efforts undertaken by the Directorate and the *ad hoc* Financial Restructuring Committee to ensure the Institute's sustainability and requested clarification regarding the implementation and future review of the proposed budget. She inquired whether the institutional arrangements reflected in the proposed budget, including the continuation of the interim Executive Director, could be revisited should the financial situation improve during the intersessional period.

61. The Directorate clarified that the proposed operational budget for FY 2026–2027 would provide the baseline framework for the Institute’s operations during the coming fiscal year and would be submitted to the Conference of the Parties for approval. It was noted, however, that the Executive Council would continue to monitor the implementation of the budget and review the Institute’s financial situation through its regular intersessional meetings.
62. The Administration, Finance and Operations Officer explained that the operational budget is approved annually by the Conference of the Parties and serves as the basis for institutional operations during the subsequent fiscal year. She further noted that any significant modifications would require consideration through the appropriate governance processes.
63. The Directorate emphasized that continued efforts to secure country contributions and external project funding could improve the Institute’s financial outlook and support additional technical capacity through project-based personnel and consultancy arrangements. These developments would be reported to the Executive Council during future intersessional reviews.

Agenda item 6: Closing remarks

64. The Chair thanked members of the Executive Council for their continued engagement and support during a period that required extraordinary meetings and additional efforts to ensure the sustainability of the Institute.
65. She welcomed the progress achieved during the intersessional period and the positive developments reported in recent weeks, noting that these developments reflected the implementation of actions previously discussed by the Executive Council. She expressed optimism that continued efforts by Parties and the Directorate would further strengthen the scenarios and initiatives under consideration.
66. The Chair emphasized the important role of the Executive Council in supporting the Institute and reiterated that the long-term sustainability of the IAI depends on the commitment and active participation of its member Parties. She thanked members of the Executive Council and the Directorate for their contributions and continued support.
67. The meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m. on 3 June 2026.

Section II: Recommendations adopted by the Executive Council at its 61st meeting

Recommendations

Approval of the Reports of the 59th and 60th meetings of the EC

LI/1. The Executive Council approves the reports of its 59th and 60th meetings.

Core Budget and Country Contributions

LI/2. The Conference of the Parties is invited to approve the Core Budget and voluntary Country Contributions for FY 2026–2027 and to consider the Preliminary request for 2027–2028.

Executive Council Composition

LI/3. The Conference of the Parties is invited to elect a new member of the Executive Council to reach 9 members.

Financial Restructuring Committee

LI/4. The *ad hoc* Financial Restructuring Committee is tasked with i) recommending a timeframe for the implementation of the conservative scenario and ii) supporting the development and implementation of a sustainability and institutional strengthening plan. This plan includes engagement with IAI member countries to encourage the payment of voluntary contributions, follow up on outstanding commitments, and explore opportunities to attract new member countries.

The objective of these efforts is to support the implementation of the conservative scenario while periodically assessing the conditions required to transition to a strengthened institutional structure. Such a transition would enable the appointment of an Executive Director, the expansion of support staff, and the full restoration of the IAI Directorate's operations.

Annex I

61st Meeting to the Executive Council to the Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research

**Virtual.
3 June 2026**

List of participants

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