

28 April 2025

**CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE  
INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL  
CHANGE RESEARCH**

**Thirty-third meeting**

**Asunción, Paraguay. Hybrid.**

**29–30 May 2025**

**Agenda item 10**

**Summary report of activities from 1 June 2024 to date by the Directorate**

1. This document has been prepared by the Directorate.

Introduction

2. The summary below describes the main achievements of the Directorate from 1 June 2024 to date, highlighting the effective initiation of the implementation of decisions adopted at the 32nd meeting of the Conference of the Parties and the continuation of ongoing projects and activities.

**Decisions by CoP-32 directed to the Directorate**

XXXII/5. *The IAI Directorate is instructed to foster communication between focal points, SAC/SPAC members, and investigators of funded projects, and the larger scientific community, to strengthen the strategic exchange of information and knowledge relevant to global change science, to increase the use of science in decision making and policy processes, and to improve the implementation of IAI's Strategic Plan.*

Actions by the Directorate and results

- The Directorate is engaging with the principal investigators and teams in the Collaborative Research Action (CRA) on Integrated Approaches to Human Migration/Mobility in an Era of Rapid Global Change to develop policy-relevant

syntheses with key findings for Parties. These projects are reporting their activities for their second year, in April 2025. Results will first be shared with the SAC and SPAC members for feedback and subsequently with Focal Points, thus providing an integrated summary of critical results for decision-making and policy processes.

- The Directorate is engaging with Climate, Environment, and Health (CEH) Seed Grants Principal Investigators and teams to develop similar syntheses. The twelve funded CEH Seed Grant projects had mid-term one-on-one advisory meetings in June and July 2024, and seven teams have completed their projects. The last CEH project from this cohort will conclude in October 2025. As part of their final reports, project teams must write a summary for non-technical audiences, highlighting solution pathways and policy implications. A webinar series organized around three umbrella research topics (dengue, extreme heat, and local knowledge and data) is planned for the next intersession period, when project teams will share and discuss their findings. The key findings will first be shared with the SAC and SPAC members for feedback on how to improve their communication, and later with IAI's National Representatives.
- A one-hour communications training was organized for all funded teams to improve the communication of their results at the science-policy interface.
- In May 2025 Directorate plans to request that National Representatives recommend science and science-policy experts to the IAI, aiming to provide the IAI community with specialists in various aspects of sustainability in the Americas. These experts will be added to the IAI Expert List, which includes experts in the region who are available for consultation by actors such as decision-makers, journalists, students, scientists, and civil society.
- The Directorate, in collaboration with Dr. Inés Camilloni, a member of the SAC, and other lead scientists from the IPCC AR7, hosted a webinar focused on the structure, functioning, and thematic aspects of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The webinar also addressed how researchers from the region could contribute to the reports as contributor authors.
- As an observer to the IPCC, the Directorate submitted 12 scientists from IAI member states as potential authors or editors for the 7<sup>th</sup> Assessment Report and 1 scientist was nominated for the Data Working Group.

The Directorate, in collaboration with the Alliance for Just Deliberation on Solar Geoengineering (DSG) and The Degrees Initiative, is holding a series of regional workshops in 2025 entitled *From Science to Policy: Navigating the Complexities of Emerging Climate Techniques in the Americas*. The primary goal of these workshops is to foster well-informed engagement in the growing debate around solar radiation modification (SRM) in the Americas. The first virtual workshop was held in April 2025, with 12 Parties participating; a subsequent virtual workshop is planned for June 2025, and an in-person workshop for September 2025.

- The Directorate hired an expert marketing team to assess the perceptions of IAI National Representatives, to better understand the Parties' needs and to guide the Directorate's outreach and engagement strategy. The assessment was conducted in October 2024. The key messages, recommendations to Parties and recommendations to the Directorate are presented in the Annex.

XXXII/9. *The IAI Directorate is instructed to monitor and evaluate the activities of the Directorate as dictated in the IAI's Strategic Plan, to periodically solicit feedback from the Parties to include in the evaluations, and to report on these outcomes during the annual Conference of the Parties.*

#### Actions by the Directorate and results

- The IAI Directorate developed a digital system for monitoring and reporting the progress of objectives and key results related to the IAI Strategic Plan. This system allows for continuous evaluation of the IAI Strategic Plan's achievement levels, with periodic reporting of the outcomes to the Executive Council and the Conference of the Parties.
- The marketing assessment yielded important recommendations from 16 IAI National Representatives on improving their engagement with the Directorate, strengthening their role as National Representatives, and promoting the IAI's agenda to support the implementation of the IAI Strategic Plan (see Annex).

XXXII/11. *The IAI Directorate is tasked with sending an invitation to the Center for Climate and Resilience Research (CR2) of the University of Chile to become an Associate of the Institute and preparing an Agreement of Association which shall specify the areas of the Scientific Agenda and/or programmatic activities that will be supported by the Associate, and the modalities of such support.*

#### Actions by the Directorate and results

- The Directorate sent an invitation to CR2 on 29 May 2024. The Directorate and CR2 met on 25 July 2024 in person and on 19 August and 23 October 2024 virtually. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed on 10 December 2024.<sup>1</sup>
- The Directorate co-hosted a virtual workshop with CR2 regarding the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative (LACI) project focused on the La Plata Basin on 17 June 2024. This project aims to codesign an open data platform and observatory regarding the links between climate, environment, and health with stakeholders from the five countries in the basin (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay).
- An in-person workshop at CR2 in Santiago, Chile, was held in December 2024 to co-design the observatory for the links between climate, environment and health in the La Plata Basin. The outcomes of the workshop were: i) consolidating a network of collaborating institutions and researchers from six countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay, ii) codesigning a prototype for the observatory to be implemented in Foz de Iguazu, Brazil, and iii) developing a workplan towards UNFCCC CoP 30 in Belem, Brazil in November 2025.

XXXII/13. *The IAI Directorate is tasked with sending an invitation to Santa Catarina Research and Innovation Foundation (FAPESC) to become an Associate of the Institute and preparing*

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<sup>1</sup> See the signed MoU available at:

[https://www.iai.int/administrador/assets/images/ckfinder/files/CR2%20MoU-CR2-IAI-draft\\_SB\\_05\\_12-firmado.pdf](https://www.iai.int/administrador/assets/images/ckfinder/files/CR2%20MoU-CR2-IAI-draft_SB_05_12-firmado.pdf).

*an Agreement of Association which shall specify the areas of the Scientific Agenda and/or programmatic activities that will be supported by the Associate, and the modalities of such support.*

#### Actions by the Directorate and results

- The Directorate invited FAPESC to become an Associate of the Institute. Following the MoU signed with FAPESC on 7 December 2023, a technical cooperation agreement was signed on 20 August 2024. Other agreements were also signed to fund other joint actions.
- The Directorate and FAPESC met in person in July in Brasilia, Brazil, to plan and launch the announcement of the new cohort of STeP fellows placed in five Brazilian national and state agencies for 2025–2027. FAPESC is funding this cohort of STeP fellows to advance science-policy work on bioeconomy in Brazil. Moreover, FAPESC will cohost the IAI regional annual STeP conference in 2026.
- The IAI Directorate and FAPESC met in person on 13 August 2024 in Florianopolis, Brazil [visited](#) the University of Blumenau (FURB) where exchanged experiences with research teams participating in the TD training program. Additionally, they met during the COLACMAR meeting to discuss the partnership and scope of the Belmont Forum CRA Ocean 2.
- FAPESC and the IAI Directorate are collaborating on the Tropical Forest Transdisciplinary Training Program and co-funding seed grant teams, which began in June 2024. FAPESC is funding the Brazilian counterpart of a regional project which resulted from the SDC workshop on Science Diplomacy for Estuaries and Mangroves in the Americas: Building Bridges between Science and Sustainable Public Policies that took place in Panama in June 2024. FAPESC is funding three research teams led by Santa Catarina Brazil, out of a total of 9 teams funded by the seed grant program.
- FAPESC and the IAI will cohost and organize activities related to science diplomacy and the STeP bioeconomy cohort (see the report under item 8: [IAI/COP/33/8](#)).

XXXII/15. *The IAI Directorate is tasked with sending an invitation to the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI) to become an Associate of the Institute and preparing an Agreement of Association which shall specify the areas of the Scientific Agenda and/or programmatic activities that will be supported by the Associate, and the modalities of such support.*

#### Actions by the Directorate and results

- The IAI Directorate invited STRI to become an Associate of the Institute on 29 May 2024. The IAI Directorate and STRI met on 8 July 2024 in person to discuss the draft MoU, which was signed on 16 December 2024.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The signed MoU is available at:

<https://www.iai.int/administrador/assets/images/ckfinder/files/MoU%20STRI%20and%20IAIDecember%2013%202024-signed.pdf>.

- Josh Tewksbury (Executive Director, STRI) and Anna Stewart Ibarra (Executive Director, IAI) met on 11 February 2025, in Panama, to celebrate the signing of the MoU and develop joint actions for 2025.
- The IAI and STRI are partnering to place a STeP fellow with the Ministry of Environment in Panama to work with the technical secretariat of the Eastern Tropical Pacific Marine Corridor (CMAR).
- STRI staff and research associates are actively engaged in transdisciplinary research through the Belmont Forum Collaborative Research Action “Tropical Forests: Global Implications and Urgent Actions” (FORESTS 2024), a funding initiative led by IAI and FAPESP, and supported by the G20. The Directorate and STRI collaborated with Humboldt Institute, also an IAI Associate, to hold an in-person side event on gender and biodiversity during the CBD COP-16 in Cali, Colombia.

XXXII/17. *The Conference of the Parties approves the recommendation of the Science Diplomacy Center Advisory Board to establish a working group on emerging issues and technologies.*

Actions by the Directorate and results

- The Directorate, in collaboration with the Science Diplomacy Center Advisory Board, developed the terms of reference (ToR) of this working group, identified profiles for members and defined a calendar for implementing the working group (see report [IAI/COP/33/8](#)).

XXXII/18. *The Conference of the Parties instructs the IAI Directorate to train its staff and fellows in Gender and EDI, and internally promote strategies and guidelines to carry out the Implementation Plan of its Policy.*

Actions by the Directorate and results

- The Directorate held an information session about the IAI’s Gender, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and its Implementation Plan to staff and fellows in October 2024.
- The staff and fellows took part in two virtual workshops organized by Inclusive Innovation, where they collaborated to create a “Safe Space” statement for the workplace.

XXXI/14. *The Conference of the Parties instructs the Gender, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee to update, monitor and guide the implementation of the Gender, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy for IAI Scientific Projects and Capacity Building Activities during each intersessional period and report on progress during each meeting of the Conference of the Parties.*

And:

XXXII/19. *The Conference of the Parties instructs the IAI Directorate to continue working on the design of two advisory committees, one with representatives of Indigenous Peoples and the other with representatives of Local Communities, based on the facilitation of consultations with representatives and leaders of these communities, and to report the results of these consultations at the next meeting of the Executive Council.*

### Actions by the Directorate and results

- The Directorate continued to implement the Gender, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion policy. A summary of key actions can be found at the [information document](#) under item 10e.
- The EDI committee met on 19 August 2024, 2 September 2024, and 16 September 2024 to discuss the next steps in establishing a new Indigenous People Advisory Committee (IPAC).
- A workshop was held on 21 October 2024 with representatives from Indigenous groups to discuss the profiles of candidatures, their format, and the governance of the IPAC. Subsequent one-on-one meetings were held with additional representatives.
- During December 2024 and January 2025, the EDI Committee worked on two key documents for the call for nominations:
  1. A notification inviting Parties, Associates, SAC and SPAC members, and Indigenous Peoples organizations, to propose candidates. This document provided background, the origin, and rationale behind the creation of IPAC. It also included the committee's objectives, its initial governance and composition, its role within the IAI, and the expected profiles of candidates.
  2. A CV template for applicants to be evaluated was designed to systematically reflect their professional and personal knowledge, experience, and career path.
- On 5 February 2025, Notification IAIDIR/2025/1 was issued inviting Parties, Associates, SAC and SPAC members, and Indigenous Peoples organizations to propose candidates, attaching a CV and a letter of recommendation, to compose the IPAC. By the submission deadline, 19 March 2025, 14 nominations were received by the Directorate.
- In parallel to the nominations call, the SAC and SPAC members, and the Parties were formally invited to compose the Ad-hoc Selection Committee to evaluate the candidates.
- The selection process was completed by mid-April 2025.
- Report [IAI/COP/33/10/e](#) with details the work of the EDI committee and the composition of the IPAC is provided under agenda item 10e.

XXXII/21. *The Conference of the Parties instructs the IAI Directorate to publish the Formal Procedures for granting Observer Status at the Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research on the IAI website.*

### Actions by the Directorate and results

- The Directorate published the Formal Procedures for granting Observer Status at the Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research on the IAI website, at <https://www.iai.int/en/post/detail/Observers>.

- The Directorate further revised the approved the procedures to simplify the process. More details on the proposed revisions and the new version of the procedures for approval by CoP-33 is provided under item 12 of the agenda<sup>3</sup>.

### ***Other actions related to Past CoP decisions***

XXVI/45. *The IAI Directorate is directed to use the IAI Open data policy and principles to provide open access, as appropriate, to data and information generated by IAI-funded research.*

#### **Actions by the Directorate and results**

- The Directorate continued implementing two open data platforms (the IAI Harvard Dataverse and the Database of Scientific Articles and Reports) to store and share data and information produced through IAI-funded research.
- The Directorate developed an updated policy to advance open access to data and publications produced through IAI-funded research. This policy received input and feedback from the Open Data Working Group, the SAC, the SPAC, the IAI staff, representatives from Parties and Associates and the Open Research Community Accelerator (ORCA). The process of updating the policy was implemented cooperatively with the Belmont Forum to align the Open Science policies of both institutions.

XXVII/16. *The IAI Directorate is instructed to continue exploring the alignment of CRN4 with the Belmont Forum Collaborative Research Action (CRA), especially in light of efforts to develop a flexible funding mechanism for the Americas.*

#### **Actions by the IAI Directorate and results**

- Ongoing work with the Collaborative Research Action (CRA) on Integrated Approaches to Human Migration/Mobility in an Era of Rapid Global Change projects
  - The three projects successfully completed their second year and submitted annual technical and financial reports in April 2025. Projects are being implemented in Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Chile. The projects have one year remaining and can request a one year no-cost extension.
- Ongoing work with Climate, Environment and Health (CEH) seed grant projects
  - Twelve CEH seed grant teams were awarded in 2023, involving researchers from 15 countries of the Americas; 7 successfully completed their projects. Five teams continue to implement transdisciplinary projects .
  - Individual mentorship sessions for seed grant teams were held in June 2024, with project leads and external mentors to review project progress and provide support.

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<sup>3</sup> See report [IAI/COP/33/12](#)

- Status of the Collaborative Research Action on Tropical Forests: Global Implications and Pressing Actions (FOREST CRA)
  - FORESTS 2024 aims to coordinate multilateral actions and projects with a transdisciplinary approach, promoting innovative local solutions to the challenges facing tropical forest regions.
  - The Directorate has co-led this CRA with FAPESP since 2022, when the concept note was first presented to the Global Research Council and subsequently to the Belmont Forum Plenary.
  - The FOREST CRA currently involves 22 funding agencies from around the world.
  - The CRA is testing, for the first time, a multilingual grant submission platform through the Belmont Forum's grant platform, allowing submissions in English, Spanish, French and Portuguese.
  - Following almost two years of scoping and call development, the FOREST CRA opened for pre-proposal submissions in June 2024; the deadline to submit pre-proposals was 12 November 2024, and full proposals are due 27 August 2025.
  - During the pre-proposal state, the IAI and Belmont Forum held six virtual "Office hour" meetings to allow interested individuals to ask general questions regarding the Call and application process. These sessions broaden the Call's reach and help establish direct contact with potential applicant teams.
  - A hybrid Forest CRA information session (Belmont Forum) for students, researchers, faculty, and staff members was held on 3 October 2024 at the University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona Campus in Kingston, Jamaica.
  - 80 pre-proposals were received, of which 49 were deemed eligible to submit full proposals.
- Tropical Forest Transdisciplinary (TD) Training Program
  - The Directorate developed and launched a Tropical Forest Transdisciplinary (TD) Training Program in partnership with the Foundation for Research and Innovation of the State of Santa Catarina (FAPESC). The call for applications opened in April 2024, and 79 expressions of interest from TD teams were received. Expressions of interest underwent a double-masked peer review process. Teams comprised an average of five people, including at least one social scientist, one natural scientist and one non-academic actor.
  - A pilot version of the new TD curriculum developed for the IAI was tested with this training program and served as the baseline training material.
  - Twenty teams were accepted in the training program, encompassing 12 of the 19 IAI member states.
  - From June to August 2024, 112 people completed 20 hours of self-paced training plus 12 hours of live virtual training in sessions hosted by the IAI TD Academy.
  - At the end of the course, the teams submitted 14 project proposals to compete for seed grant funding. The proposals underwent a double-masked peer review process with reviewers including SAC and SPAC members.
  - The IAI, in partnership with FAPESC and SENACYT Panama is co-funding seed grant projects in amounts of up to USD 50,000 per project, with a duration of one year.



- The Directorate is involved in the CEH2 CRA funding call, as described under Decision XXXI/5 below in this report.
- The Directorate is supporting the development of the new Oceans CRA., as described under Decision XXXI/6 below in this report.
- The Executive Director continues to serve as the co-chair of the Belmont Forum and participated in the Belmont Forum Plenary and SRI2024 Congress in June 2024 in Helsinki, Finland, and the virtual Belmont Forum Plenary in December 2024.
- The Directorate hosted a three-day workshop on transdisciplinary coordination and global environmental change research in June 2024 in Finland with the Belmont Forum and other global partners. The workshop organized by the Transdisciplinary Academy of the IAI aimed to define and understand best practices in transdisciplinary coordination. A draft report of the workshop is under development.

*XXXI/5: The Conference of the Parties instructs the IAI Directorate to establish a research and training program on the nexus of climate, environment and health to support decision making by Parties, considering human health and the health of all life systems, in partnership with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and other regional and global partners, to seek extramural research funding to support these activities, and to identify other relevant partners that may assist in addressing this issue at local, sub-national, national and regional scales and in global and multilateral fora.*

#### Actions by the IAI Directorate and results

- As described above, under Decision XXVII/16, 12 research teams with participants from 15 countries received seed grants in 2023 to develop transdisciplinary projects at the nexus of climate, environment, and health.
- Belmont Forum Funding Collaborative Research Action on Climate Environment and Health (CEH2) projects have been reviewed by the panel of experts, and the selection of projects was completed at the end of 2024. Six projects were recommended for funding from the IAI. At this point, the Directorate is awaiting funding from NSF or other donors to be able to proceed with the awards.
- The IAI's CEH steering committee met in August 2024, September 2024, January 2025, and twice in April 2025 to discuss the strategic actions of the Directorate.
- The IAI Directorate served in an advisory capacity for several global climate and health initiatives including:
  - Planning Committee for a Workshop on Pandemic Risk Assessment and its Intersection with Climate Change: Needs, Opportunities, and Design Considerations. Virtual planning and in person meeting held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 28 and 29 October 2024.
  - Steering Committee of Forecasting Healthy Futures. Global Summit. Held in Rio de Janeiro, April 2025.
  - Co-chair of the Keystone Symposium global conference on Climate and Health, to be held in June 2025 in Germany.
  - Expert Panel on Climate and Health for the Canada Grand Challenges.
  - Expert Advisors on Climate and Health for the Rockefeller Foundation.

- As a member of the Global Forum on Humanitarian Health Research 2025 Steering Committee, the IAI is helping co-develop the international research agenda, prioritizing participation from low- and middle-income countries in alliance with the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC), and ERLHA.
- For the CBD COP-16, the IAI organized a side event focused on Climate, Environment, and Health in the Peru pavilion in the Blue Zone. Further details are included under Decision XXXI/7 below in this report.
- The Directorate co-led, with NOAA and NASA, the One Health session at AmeriGEO in August 2024 in Ecuador, where it showcased research tools and results from the projects the Institute supports in the region.
- The Directorate participated in the submission on expressions of interest to the funding call, Nature4Health, led by Panama and Colombia.
- The IAI, in collaboration with CR2, USGCRP and RedClara, co-designed a pilot project for an open data observatory of water security and its links with climate and health. This is a case of transboundary cooperation among five countries sharing the La Plata Basin to coordinate scientific and communication actions for mutual benefits on water security issues.

*XXXI/6: The Conference of the Parties instructs the IAI Directorate to establish a research and training program on the nexus of oceans, islands, coastal systems aligned with the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science, to support decision making by Parties, to seek extramural research funding to support these activities, and to identify partners.*

#### Actions by the IAI Directorate and results

- The IAI's steering committee on ocean, islands, and coastal systems met regularly during the intercessional period to support the scoping of the transdisciplinary research program on ocean-related topics. Additionally, the SAC and SPAC are involved in the Belmont Forum CRA Oceans 2 scoping process.
- The Directorate co-developed a regional project identification form (PIF) for the GEF8 entitled, "Promoting the Integrated Management of Sargassum: Building Resilient Tourism and Fisheries Sectors through the Conservation of Marine Ecosystems (SargMarine)," in partnership with the Organization of American States (OAS) and the the Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean (CAF). Participating countries include Colombia, Grenada, Jamaica, Panamá, RD, Saint Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago. In December 2024, the project was approved to advance to the next stage to develop a PRODOC full proposal in 2025.
- The Directorate participated in the *Immersed in Change* High-Level Event, organized by the Government of Costa Rica on 7–8 June 2024, in San José, Costa Rica. The event gathered over 1,500 delegates from over 40 countries, including Heads of State, ministers, ocean experts, and leaders from international organizations and civil society, to exchange best practices in ocean health and governance.
- The Directorate co-organized the hybrid CRA Oceans 2 Americas scoping meeting

during the COLACMAR conference in August 2024 in Brazil. The event had approximately 50 online participants and 46 attendees on-site, resulting in valuable contributions from both groups.

- During COLACMAR, the Directorate participated in the Blue One Health session, an initiative coordinated by Fiocruz. This session was a follow-up to the April meeting in Brasília, which included the participation of the Directorate, including a STeP Fellow.
- The Directorate participated in the Ocean Decade Fourth Foundations Dialogue Meeting organized by IOC-UNESCO and the Boticário Foundation, held on 3–5 September 2024, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. This event aimed to unite global philanthropic funders to foster actionable solutions for a sustainable ocean, aligning with international agendas.
- The Directorate participated in the third edition of the Blue Economy Round Table, Meeting organized by and the Philanthropy Cortés Solari, Meri Foundation and the Center Scientifique de Monaco, held on 24–25 March 2025, in Monaco.
- The Directorate is preparing a comprehensive report that details all ocean-related projects funded by the IAI. The report will offer an overview of the scope and research funding over recent years, the period preceding the Ocean Decade agenda. It will also highlight trends in international collaboration and explore future opportunities through IAI's transdisciplinary programs.
- The Directorate will participate in the One Ocean Science Congress, organized by CNRS and IFREMER, to be held in Nice, France, from 3 to 6 June 2025. This UN Special Event will serve as the scientific foundation for the Third United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC3). The Directorate will present during the session “Inclusive Science-Policy-Society Interfaces” on 6 June 2025.
- The Directorate is planning to participate in the UN Ocean Conference (UNOC), which will be held in Nice, France, from 9 to 13 June 2025. The IAI's steering committee on ocean, islands, and coastal systems is working collaboratively with the SAC and SPAC to contribute to the UNOC3 zero draft.
- The Directorate is preparing to participate as a resource and training partner in the upcoming Belmont Forum CRA Oceans 2, to be launched at UNOC, pending the availability of funding.

*XXXI/7: The Conference of the Parties instructs the IAI Directorate to engage with IAI Parties during international multilateral science-policy convenings, such as the meetings of the Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity, and Science Summit of the United Nations General Assembly, among others, and to seek external financial resources to sponsor an IAI delegation comprised of senior and early career scientists to disseminate relevant research with a global community, to strengthen engagement with decision makers, to increase the visibility and participation of scientists from the region, and to increase the capacity of the region to participate in international negotiations.*

### Actions by the IAI Directorate and results

- In preparation for the Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD) COP-16, the Directorate held two information sessions virtually. The first session, held on 17 July 2024, focused on climate-biodiversity issues and was organized for Parties and staff. The second session, held on 7 August 2024, was a dedicated preparation meeting for the IAI delegation attending CBD COP-16, specifically for the Directorate staff.
- The Directorate participated in the subregional training workshop on Target 3 of the CBD's Global Biodiversity Framework for Latin American countries, held from 9 to 13 June in Punta Leona, Costa Rica. The workshop aimed to train representatives from governments, NGOs, and intergovernmental organizations in using tools for countries to progress towards meeting Target 3 of the Kunming-Montreal Framework. As a result of this participation, the IAI:
  - Promoted the incorporation of LAC countries into the High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People (HAC) to request technical and financial assistance.
  - Explained the use of the matchmaking platform for regional research centers to offer technical assistance to countries.
  - Established research priorities aligned with the goals of the Global Biodiversity Framework.
- During CBD COP-16, the IAI organized and participated in side events hosted at the national pavilions of Colombia, Peru and Brazil. The Directorate also attended high-level and strategic sessions throughout the CBD COP-16, including the High-Level Ministerial Dialogue on "Synergies between Biodiversity and Climate Change: From Science to Action" and the Training and Development Forum (Organized by the CBD Secretariat). Additionally, the IAI participated in 5 thematic sessions in the Green Zone.
- The IAI Directorate was accepted as a member of the NBSAP Accelerator Partnership, an international platform led by the Governments of Colombia and Germany to accelerate the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF). This membership reinforces the IAI's commitment to its Parties to strengthen national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs), promoting integrated approaches based on transdisciplinary science and science diplomacy.
- The Directorate served on the UNFCCC CoP-29 Science Advisory Body to the Presidency, which hosted a pre-CoP science summit in October 2024 in Baku, Azerbaijan.
- A representative of the IAI Science Diplomacy Center attended the G20 meeting in Brazil as part of the IAI and Belmont Forum delegation.
- A representative of the IAI Science Diplomacy Center attended the Foro CILAC Meeting, participating in a session coordinated by Global Young Academy, where the new Science Diplomacy curriculum was presented.
- The Directorate was invited to serve on the Regional Coordination Mechanism for the Americas and the Caribbean for the *Early Warning for All* initiative, organized by the WMO and UNDRR. This initiative aims to provide regional technical and strategic forecasting, monitoring, and guidance to support its implementation in the region.

- The Directorate is a member of the new Collaboratory on Risk and Resilience in the Caribbean, hosted by the Organization of American States (OAS), which aims to bring together diverse stakeholders to address critical issues related to disaster risk reduction, climate resilience, and sustainable development in the Caribbean region. A meeting launching the Collaboratory was held in Belize in February 2025.
- The IAI was selected to be the implementing agency on a new proposal submitted by Duke University and NASA to support the use of earth observations for monitoring and evaluating indicators of the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.
- The Directorate was invited by ABEMA to participate in the Climate and Biodiversity House, an intersectoral space for side events on biodiversity and climate during the UNFCCC's COP-30 in Belem, Brazil. In collaboration with ABEMA, the IAI will promote a series of webinars focused on biodiversity and global environmental change, as part of the preparations for COP30. These webinars aim to foster dialogue among scientists, policymakers, and other stakeholders, and to strengthen the integration of scientific knowledge into national and regional contributions to global environmental governance processes.
- The Directorate is preparing to participate in the UN Oceans Conference in June 2025 (see Decision XXXI/6).
- The Directorate is engaging with the *Sistema Universitario Centroamericano (SUCA)*, which is part of the *Central American Integration System (SICA)* through the program *Strengthening inclusive science and innovation systems in Latin America through a collaborative research network*. This initiative, funded by Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC) aims at fostering scientific exchange and collaboration across Central America and provide viable solutions to the region's most pressing challenges, including those faced by vulnerable populations. The IAI Science Team presented the Institute to participating research groups in Costa Rica, in November 2024, and is currently working on a MoU with SUCA to strengthen collaboration in transdisciplinarity across the Americas.
- The Directorate was invited by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) to participate in the XIX Meeting of the Ibero-American Conference of Meteorological and Hydrological Services (CIMHET) held in Puntarenas, Costa Rica, on 7–8 November 2024. The meeting focused on increasing the visibility and impact of CIMHET within the region. As a result of the discussions, a Declaration outlining several actions was issued. Notably, the IAI, through its collaboration with the WMO, will support connections to academic institutions in the region.
- The Directorate participated in the Global Science Ministerial Dialogue on Science Diplomacy at UNESCO Headquarters during 25 and 26 March, 2025, Paris, France, and served a panelist at the subsequent Workshop on Science Diplomacy Training: Objectives, Practices, and Recommendations. Organized by the EU Science Diplomacy Alliance and UNESCO, with support from the European Union the event provided a platform to share insights on science diplomacy in the Americas.

XXXI/9. *The Conference of the Parties instructs the IAI Directorate to participate in the HydroClimate Research Program of the Andes (ANDEX), under the umbrella of the Global Energy and Water Exchanges Project (GEWEX) of the World Climate Research Programme, to link it with other regional and global platforms, to communicate the advances of ANDEX to the Parties, and to seek extramural research funding to support these activities.*

#### Actions by the IAI Directorate and results

- The Directorate serves on the scientific steering committee of ANDEX and attended the ANDEX annual planning meeting on 24 May 2024 in Lima, Peru.
- The Directorate is involved in a newly funded project entitled *Andean Climate Change Observations Research and Discovery*, which focuses on mountain ecosystems and is supported by AccelNet through the US National Science Foundation, and participated in the in-person meeting in December 2024 in Washington, D.C.

XXXI/18. *The Conference of the Parties approves the creation of the IAI Science Diplomacy Center and its work plan for the first three years based on the recommendations of the Science Diplomacy Center Advisory Board.*

#### Actions by the Directorate and results

- An advisory board (AB) was established to support the development of the IAI Science Diplomacy Center (SDC). The board held virtual meetings during this intersessional period. Some members of the board also met in-person for a one-day meeting at AAAS, on 11 November 2024, back-to-back with the STeP and SDC workshop held from 9 to 10 November 2024. The AB is working on implementing a working group on emerging issues.
- A Science Diplomacy workshop entitled “Estuaries and Mangroves in the Americas: Building Bridges between Science and Sustainable Public Policies” was held in June 2024 in Panama. The workshop was funded by SENACYT Panama and focused on the Coiba National Park and its buffer zones, a priority biodiversity hotspot for the Government of Panama. This model of Science Diplomacy training was effective to share scientific information about mangroves, estuaries, oceans, and discuss science-policy-diplomacy challenges and opportunities for collaboration in supporting conservation policies. At the workshop, the SDC team encouraged participants to develop a TD seed project proposal. As a result, a regional (Brazil, Panama, Uruguay) seed grant research project was developed, and it will be funded by FAPESC and the IAI. This effort was linked to the Belmont Forum CRA opportunity on Tropical Forests.
- An additional outcome of the SDC workshop in Panama was a policy brief with recommendations for the Conservation of Estuaries and Restoration of Mangroves in Central and South America available at <https://www.iai.int/en/post/detail/Recommendations-for-the-Conservation-of-Estuaries-and-Restoration-of-Mangroves-in-Central-and-South-America>.
- A high-level government webinar was organized on 5 December 2024 to present the recommendations of the policy brief. The webinar had the participation of the Minister of the Environment of Panama, Juan Carlos Navarro, and the Head of International Cooperation of SENACYT Panama, Franklin Morales.

- In October 2024, AAAS and the UK Royal Society published a *Science & Diplomacy's* special issue entitled “Science Diplomacy – 15 Years On” after the AAAS and Royal Society publication that laid the foundation for science diplomacy in 2010. IAI/SDC staff member co-authored one of the few articles with a perspective from Latin America and the Caribbean. This collaborative article, co-authored by Franklin Carrero-Martinez (NASEM, US), Marcella Ohira (IAI/SDC) and Carlos E. H. Matsumoto (MCTI, Brazil) was entitled “Science Diplomacy in Latin America and the Caribbean: The Convergence of Science, Policy and Diplomacy to Solve Global Challenges” <https://www.sciencediplomacy.org/perspective/2024/science-diplomacy-in-latin-america-and-caribbean-convergence-science-policy-and>
- The SDC staff also attended the Fulbright Amazonia Scholars meeting on 11 December 2024, in Washington, D.C. Organized by Fulbright, and the Brazilian and US Foreign Ministries. The US focal point to the IAI, Maria Uhle, and BF executive director, Nicole Arbour, also participated in the meeting. For the 2nd Fulbright Amazonia Scholars program in 2025, IAI scientists, Dr. William Pan, Duke University, USA and Dr. Alisson Barbieri, Federal University of Minas Gerais, Brazil, have submitted a proposal to be the Co-Leads. This program recruits approximately 20 scholars who work in the Amazon on various projects (<https://fulbrightscholars.org/amazonia>). If approved, the Science Diplomacy Center will be a collaborator of this initiative and provide linkages and collaborations between the STeP and the Fulbright Amazonia Scholars programs.
- In December 2024, the IAI Directorate signed a MoU with The Organization of Iberoamerican States (OEI) for Education, Science and Culture, Argentina office. Both organizations have been discussing collaboration in science diplomacy. OEI invited the SDC staff to attend its previous two Science Diplomacy events within the MERCOSUR agreement in Argentina in 2023, and Paraguay in 2024.
- In collaboration with AAAS, the IAI Science Diplomacy Center is developing a Ministers’ Conversation Series. This initiative builds on the AAAS Center for Science Diplomacy series of interviews with Ambassadors in Washington, D.C. The first Conversation, published in February 2025, was with Brazil’s Minister for Science, Technology and Innovation, Luciana Santos, who highlighted Brazil’s National Strategy for Science, Technology, and Innovation (2025–2035) and its collaboration with the IAI as a key partner to foster international scientific cooperation and strengthen the connection between science and public policies. According to Minister Santos, “this collaboration will be developed through the STeP Fellowship program to train scientific advisors specialized in scientific diplomacy throughout the Americas, and the first MCTI-IAI Workshop on Scientific Diplomacy, scheduled for August 2025 in Brasilia, which will be a key space to consolidate scientific collaboration networks in the region. This event will bring together experts, researchers, and decision-makers to explore how science can strengthen public policies and address shared environmental challenges. AAAS and IAI will work on future Conversations and invite several STI Ministers and Secretaries to participate in the Conversation Series (<https://www.iai.int/en/news/detail/IAI-and-MCTI-of-Brazil-strengthen-cooperation-in-science-and-scientific-diplomacy>)
- In February 2025, the SDC coordinated the submission of the regional project proposal entitled “Amazon Research Consortium (ARC): Developing targeted Climate Change

Mitigation to Integrate Community Climate Resilience Strategies into Health Surveillance and Responses”. This proposal was submitted to the Wellcome Trust. If funded, the project will integrate climate change mitigation actions into disease monitoring and control by (a) creating a multi-scale approach of climate-health analysis to produce more robust and actionable information on climate-induced vector-borne and water-borne diseases and (b) to find land-based climate change mitigation solutions that also have strong health outcomes in the community. This regional effort is a transdisciplinary and science diplomacy project working with scientists, policy makers, and civil society representatives from Ecuador, Peru, Brazil and the USA.

- The SDC will hold a Science Diplomacy workshop on Drought Management for agriculture and cattle ranching, energy and river transportation on 26–27 May, 2025 in Asunción, Paraguay. This workshop is co-organized and sponsored by Paraguay focal points at the National University of Asuncion (UNA), the Centro de Investigación y Capacitación en Agrometeorología y Cambio Climático (CICAG), and the Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología (CONACYT), Paraguay’s National Council of Science and Technology. Another key partner and sponsor is the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) Regional Office for the Americas. The workshop will be held back-to-back with the meetings of the IAI Executive Council, Conference of the Parties, and Side Event co-organized with Paraguay and WMO entitled “Regional Priorities in Early Warning Systems, Droughts, and Sustainable Development.” The Science Diplomacy Workshop and the Side Event aim at producing two tangible outcomes: a project on climate services to align with national and international funding opportunities, and a Declaration on Early Warning Systems.
- The SDC is also collaborating with Brazil’s focal point at the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MCTI) to develop a workshop on introducing Science Diplomacy, 5–7 August 2025 in Brasilia, Brazil. The event will train government officials from Brazil and directors of international collaboration from many countries in LAC in science and innovation diplomacy. The workshop is funded by the MCTI and will serve as a venue to discuss STI collaboration among countries in the Americas in preparation for the upcoming UNFCCC CoP30 to be held in Belem, Brazil. The workshop will be held back-to-back with the São Paulo School of Advanced Science on Science Diplomacy and Innovation Diplomacy (InnSciD SP) to be held 6–9 August in Sao Paulo. The two events are coordinated in close collaboration, developing synergies and providing participants coming from several IAI Parties the opportunity to participate in both activities.
- The Science Diplomacy Center and FAPESC will co-host and organize joint activities in science diplomacy, such as a regional training workshop to foster capacity building in bioeconomy, entrepreneurship, sustainable development goals, and science diplomacy (dates to be determined, tentatively scheduled for late 2025 or early 2026). The workshop will invite representatives from the public, private sector as well as the academia. FAPESC is currently consulting the public and private sector in the state about the priorities in bioeconomy to be addressed at the workshop. The organizing committee includes experts from NASEM, IEEE Entrepreneurship, and UNESCO.
- SDC was invited to share their experience in science diplomacy in the Americas at the “Workshop on Science Diplomacy Training: Objectives, Practices, and Recommendations,” hosted by UNESCO and the EU Science Diplomacy Alliance on 27 March 2025 at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris. Additionally, the Directorate was



also invited to the “Global Science Ministerial Dialogue on Science Diplomacy,” held at the same venue on 25–26 March 2025. These events convened high-level government authorities, science diplomacy experts, and UNESCO officials to foster commitment to science diplomacy as a tool for dialogue and peace, explore innovative initiatives, and strengthen international cooperation. A key outcome of the ministerial dialogue was reaffirming capacity building as essential for advancing global science diplomacy—an area the IAI Science Diplomacy Center identified as a priority in 2023. The Global Ministerial Dialogue on Science Diplomacy Co-Chairs’ Statement, summarizing key conclusions and commitments, is available [here](#).

- **STeP Program:** The SDC held a Science Diplomacy and Innovation Training Workshop in November 2024 in Washington, D.C., United States. The event, convened 23 participants, including STeP Fellows and alumni, AAAS Science & Technology Policy Fellows, former Canada’s Mitacs fellows, U.S. Government employees, and science diplomacy experts from the Americas. Participants audited portions of the SD course, both the online and in-person components. The input has helped the Directorate develop tailored, engaging in-person events for stakeholders with the launch of the official curriculum in May 2025 at IAI CoP33. The event also connected current and former STeP fellows to strengthen a science diplomacy community and foster valuable networking opportunities. Filmed testimonies from participants can be found at <https://iai.int/en/post/detail/Discover-the-Voices-of-the-IAls-Inter-American-Network-of-STeP-Fellows>.
- The third and fourth cohorts of 27 STeP Fellows completed the professional development program on 29 April 2025 with the science diplomacy project forum. Multinational and multidisciplinary teams presented work on the following topics: Energy Transition, Biodiversity & Health, Language Inclusion in Science, Integrated Sargassum Management, Ocean, Climate, Biodiversity Nexus, and the IAI Regional Assessment. The STeP Program to date has 81 Fellows from 15 countries that have completed the program and are currently serving as alumni.
- The fifth cohort, 2025–2026 cohort of STeP fellows will commence in August 2025. Having completed a 4-year pilot phase, the STeP Fellowship Program will now focus on areas of thematic interest identified by IAI Member Countries and Program Partners and funders. The 2025–2026 thematic focus areas include 1) bioeconomy, and potentially other topics, such as 2) climate, environment and health, and 3) climate services for drought management and plans.

### ***Other actions related to the Strategic Plan***

#### **Scholarships**

- Nine scholarships were awarded to postgraduate students to attend the Caribbean Sociological Association (CASA) Conference on 26–27 September 2024 at the University of the West Indies (UWI) in Kingston, Jamaica. The scholarship recipients addressed topics related to the priorities of IAI’s strategic plan.
- The Directorate funded four students from Latin America and the Caribbean to attend the ENSO Winter School 2025, a Winter Course on the Fundamental Dynamics of the El Niño-Southern Oscillation, hosted on 15–23 March 2025, in Honolulu, Hawaii, USA.

- The Directorate hosted the virtual ENDCast Showcase in Spanish, English and Portuguese organized by the Barcelona SuperComputing Center on 31 July 2024 with a focus on early warning tools to mitigate or prevent outbreaks of climate-sensitive infectious diseases in the region.

#### **Other relevant events/workshops:**

- The Directorate co-hosted a hybrid half-day hurricane symposium, addressing lessons learned, best practices, and resilient development for Caribbean nations on 3 October 2024 in collaboration with the University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona Campus, and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). The event was broadcast virtually in English and Spanish.
- The Directorate participated in the Global Research Council's Regional Meeting in Brasilia, Brazil, on 21 and 22 November 2024. The Directorate presented its TD program within the session on "Co-Creation to address Global Challenges."
- The Directorate participated in the USGCRP International Partners meeting in Washington, D.C. on 18–19 September 2024.

#### **Other partners:**

- The Directorate advanced a collaboration with La Referencia, the Latin American network for Open Science, to provide more regional visibility and accessibility to IAI-funded data and publications through the aggregation of the IAI's open data platforms into the regional repository maintained by La Referencia.
- The IAI continues to serve on the EPIC Network LAC steering Committee. The IAI and EPIC-N are implementing the Global EbA Fund and IUCN grant "Catalyzing Unconventional Partnerships in the Global South for Urban Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA)." The project held pre-proposal training courses and received over 40 proposals from the region. Five seed grants have been awarded to support community-university TD team EbA projects in Mexico, Panama, Argentina, and Colombia. On-site workshops will be held throughout the next intersessional period in collaboration with the IAI TD Academy.
- The Directorate has signed an MoU with the Network of Earth Observation Laboratories in LAC (RED LABOT) focused on using territorial intelligence to address disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, and other community driven sustainable development priorities.
- The Directorate has partnered with ESRI Panama in the initiative Strategic Territory Management (GET). A national survey was launched in February 2024 to map indigenous technical talent in partnership with the Association of Indigenous Municipalities of Panama (AMPIP). On 23 April 2025, the IAI participated in the workshop "Building a cosmovision for Panama from the Cities," and signed an MOU with ESRI Panama.

- The Directorate participated in “Climate Governance in LATAM” on 29 April 2025. This joint initiative with IAI focal point, MinCiencias Chile, and the International Climate Change Council Network focuses on strengthening scientific advisory councils on climate change in Latin America and the Caribbean.

### **Communications, Website and Virtual Campus**

- The Directorate translated the Summaries of Working Group II of the Sixth Assessment Cycle of the IPCC (AR6) from English into Spanish.
- The Directorate published the document [“CBD COP16 Brief: Advances in Governance of the Climate, Environment, Health Nexus”](#) in English and Spanish.
- The Directorate produced a compendium of articles in partnership with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and Latinoamerica 21 entitled “Biodiversity in Latin America”. The compendium includes sixteen articles written by researchers, policymakers and local experts with renowned knowledge and experience in biodiversity research, policy and action. Each of these articles was published in several newspapers and other media outlets from the region before entering the compendium.
- The IAI website has implemented a search feature in the STeP fellows and scientific experts’ sections to improve access to relevant profiles.
- The new self-managed, free and certificate-based course “Climate change, migration and health in Latin America and the Caribbean,” developed by the IAI in partnership with the Global Consortium on Climate and Health Education (GCCHE) and Universidad del Desarrollo (Chile) has been launched in the IAI’s Virtual Campus.
- The Directorate will launch two new self-managed, free and certificate-based courses, accompanied by case study books, in May 2025:
  - Science Diplomacy and Global Environmental Change in the Americas.
  - Advances in TD Research on Global Environmental Change in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- The IAI developed a virtual course on Remote Sensing and Geographic Information Systems in partnership with NASA and Stanford University. The content course has been produced and uploaded to the IAI virtual campus. The four-week course will be implemented in April 2025.
- The Directorate is planning a new virtual course on El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) modeling and forecasting in partnership with the WMO Regional Office for the Americas and the University of Colorado at Boulder.

### **Outreach to new potential member states:**

The IAI has actively reached out to potential new Parties including:

- El Salvador: The Directorate staff visited El Salvador to support the country’s initial steps toward joining the IAI Agreement. Meetings with key stakeholders, including CONACYT and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, reinforced the strategic role of science

diplomacy in addressing global environmental challenges. The IAI remains committed to assisting El Salvador throughout the accession process, strengthening scientific capacities, and advancing shared sustainability goals.

- Belize: The Directorate attended an OAS meeting in Belize in February 2025, and held follow up meetings with key partners to explore interest in becoming an IAI Party.
- Barbados: The Directorate met with partners in Barbados in December 2024 and shared information about becoming a Party and ongoing IAI activities that involve Barbados.

### **Staff retreat and professional development training**

- The Directorate participated in a series of activities facilitated by Inclusive Innovation, an organization that fosters innovation by promoting diverse perspectives, inclusive dialog and problem solving. Inclusive Innovation conducted a comprehensive assessment of the current organizational culture and challenges by holding interviews with staff and administering a survey. Based on these findings and in close collaboration with senior leadership, Inclusive Innovation co-designed a training program tailored for the IAI.
- The retreats, held between May and September 2024, aimed at fostering teamwork and a cohesive working environment, clarifying roles, designing the annual work plan aligned with the IAI's Strategic Plan, and ultimately setting a clear direction for IAI's Directorate team and prepare it to meet the institution's goals for the coming year:
  - 10 May 2024: virtual retreat meetup focused on introducing team members, fostering connections, and establishing agreements for a safe and collaborative working environment. It also explored team problem-solving preferences using FourSight, which identifies individuals' natural thinking styles in the creative process. The tool highlights four key stages: *Clarifier*, *Ideator*, *Developer*, and *Implementer*, helping teams understand how each member approaches challenges and how they can best collaborate to solve problems effectively.
  - 3 June 2024: virtual retreat meetup, exclusively for the leadership team. This session reviewed leadership strategies, reflecting on the organization's vision, and defining roles and responsibilities within the leadership group.
  - 21–23 July 2024: in-person retreat in Montevideo, Uruguay, focused on individual and team development plans. The first day centered on leadership, including revisiting personal leadership profiles and finalizing the leadership vision for the IAI. The second day emphasized effective teamwork through tools for trust-building and conflict management. The final day focused on reviewing the IAI's strategic goals for 2025 and defining organizational culture and roles to enhance accountability and effectiveness.
  - 26 September 2024: virtual retreat meetup. This final virtual staff retreat aimed to review and discuss outcomes from the previous workshops, reinforce communication strategies, and define the following steps to sustain ongoing collaboration across the Directorate.
  - December 2024–April 2025: Directors received one-on-one coaching in leadership and effective team management.

### Conclusions

3. This report does not purport to present a complete summary of the activities organized by the IAI Directorate. Updates on activities omitted from this report will be provided to Parties on an ongoing basis during the 2024–2025 inter-sessional period and the 33rd meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

### Recommendation

4. The Conference of the Parties is invited to assess and provide feedback on the work of the Directorate, take note of outstanding issues, and provide input on science and science diplomacy proposals.

## **Annex**

### **Main recommendations from the report on interviews with IAI Focal Points**

#### Introduction

1. The interviews were conducted between September 13 and November 29, 2024.
2. Two expert consultants designed the research, conducted and analyzed the interviews, and prepared the final report and synthesis.

#### Background

3. The Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research (IAI) aims to strengthen its relationship with national Focal Points (FPs), leveraging the recent relocation of its headquarters to Panama to enhance visibility and regional connectivity.

#### Objectives

4. The objectives of the research were to:
  - a. Identify priority areas for the institutions associated with Focal Points.
  - b. Assess Focal Points' knowledge about the IAI and their roles.
  - c. Determine the availability of time to interact with the IAI within institutional agendas.
  - d. Identify strengths and areas for improvement in relationships with the IAI.
  - e. Collect suggestions for other potential collaborating institutions.

#### Method

5. A focal point per country was invited to participate. Information was collected through 45-minute individual interviews via Zoom with the 16 focal points who were available (Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, United States and Uruguay).

### **Key message #1**

**There is a high rate of turnover of IAI focal points, requiring more robust onboarding and Focal Point engagement.**

*Almost half (43%) of the focal points have taken on the role in the last two years; 28.5% between 2020 and 2022, and 28.5% before 2020.*

Recommendation for Focal Points:

- Ensure regular, structured communication with the Directorate.

Recommendations for the Directorate:

- Share and engage Focal Points in the implementation of the recently adopted Strategic Plan (<https://www.iai.int/administrador/assets/images/ckfinder/files/CoP-32-9d-en.pdf>).
- Offer training for Focal Points to better understand their roles and IAI procedures.

Actions being taken by the Directorate:

- Information documents have been compiled and made accessible to Focal Points in the Directorate OneDrive for easy access and consultation ([Resources for IAI National Representatives](#)).
- The Executive Director met individually with Focal Points to discuss their participation prior to COP33.

### **Key message #2**

**Institutional priorities need more alignment with the IAI's priorities.**

*50% of Focal Points' institutional priorities are moderately aligned with the IAI's priorities; 36% are fully aligned; and 14% are marginally aligned.*

*50% of FP institutions specifically implement global environmental change programs; 29% have general programs related to global environmental change.*

Recommendation for Focal Points:

- Actively engage local and regional institutions in collaborative projects with the IAI.

Recommendations for the Directorate:

- Work with Parties to ensure that the appointment, role, and support of Focal Points are strategically aligned with the IAI's objectives and priorities.
- Identify and promote collaborative, goal-oriented initiatives with clear timelines.

Action being taken by the Directorate:

- Expand the topics of closed sessions for Focal Points that are open to additional institutional representatives.

### **Key message #3**

**Focal Points value multilingual communication and practical outputs that add value to their institutional missions.**

*Focal Points highlighted the importance of the IAI publishing documents in Spanish, English and Portuguese, which is viewed as inclusive, facilitating exchange and a differentiating factor.*

Recommendation for Focal Points:

- Actively use and disseminate IAI materials to support national and local projects and inform policy discussions.

Recommendations for the Directorate:

- Continue to provide translated materials and language interpretation at meetings and webinars.

Actions being taken by the Directorate:

- Directorate publications and courses are produced in English and Spanish and, when possible, also in Portuguese and French.
- Audiovisual content on the IAI and research projects' outputs has been produced to share with Focal Points.

#### **Key message #4**

**Focal Points have thorough knowledge of the IAI, which can be leveraged to reinforce the relevance of the organization in providing evidence for decision-making.**

*79% of FPs show a thorough knowledge of the IAI; recently assigned Focal Points were less familiar with the organization.*

*Over a third (36%) of Focal Points have an active role in the IAI; 21% help to disseminate information and support activities; and 43% limit their engagement to attending meetings and completing requests.*

Recommendation for Focal Points:

- Identify shared issues across countries where IAI projects are delivering research results.

Recommendation for the Directorate:

- Share the Strategic Plan with Focal Points so that they can get involved and contribute.

Action being taken by the Directorate:

- A summary of the IAI's Strategic Plan has been prepared for easy access and consultation ([IAI Strategic Plan 2024-2030](#)).
- A summary of the IAI's Regional Assessment has been prepared for easy access and consultation ([IAI Regional Assessment](#)).

#### **Key message #5**

**Engagement levels vary and many Focal Points have limited time to dedicate to IAI-related work; however, most have a team supporting their IAI-related work.**

*79% of Focal Points have limited time availability. Only 36% are actively engaged with the IAI, 21% are moderately engaged, and 43% are minimally engaged.*

*65% of Focal Points have significant support and 21% have some support to work in IAI tasks; 14% work individually.*

Recommendation for Focal Points:

- Identify opportunities for collaboration on shared regional challenges.



Recommendations for the Directorate:

- Find potential synergies between Focal Points' institutions and the IAI that allow for greater participation.
- Encourage and support the two-way exchange of information between countries.

Action being taken by the Directorate:

- The Directorate is working to facilitate connections through regional networks where countries are already participating to leverage current institutional commitments of Focal Points.

### **Key message #6**

**Strengthening the role of Focal Points remains essential.**

Recommendation for Focal Points:

- Share achievements with the Directorate that can be disseminated through the IAI channels.

Recommendations for the Directorate:

- Create a reporting model to make achievements visible by country.
- Visit countries to introduce the IAI to high-level authorities and ensure that Focal Points are recognized as national representatives of the IAI.
- Create a communication channel to resolve quick inquiries.

Action being taken by the Directorate:

- The Directorate is working on an action plan to implement these recommendations, which includes seeking resources to do so.

### **Key message #7**

**Greater support to develop proposals can result in a wider network of contributors and advocates from different IAI Parties.**

Recommendation for Focal Points:

- When the IAI launches or shares a call, encourage the submission of research projects and applications to fellowships and scholarships to expand the IAI network of advocates.

Recommendations for the Directorate:

- Provide technical support to potential applicants in developing research proposals.

Action being taken by the Directorate:

- Synchronous and asynchronous training and materials for potential applicants to calls for proposals have been expanded in transdisciplinary science and science diplomacy.

### **Key message #8**

**There is a need for greater integration of local scientific knowledge into national and regional policies.**

Recommendations for Focal Points:

- Act as a link between scientists and local institutions.
- Contribute to regional networks disseminating national research.

Recommendations for the Directorate:

- Strengthen transdisciplinary projects so that the evidence produced informs policies.
- Map scientific advisory bodies that can support the drafting of evidence-based policies.

Actions being taken by the Directorate:

- Strengthened the roster of experts who can be consulted by Parties and external users.
- Organized briefing sessions to connect Focal Points with leading experts on priority and emerging issues.

### **Key message #9**

**Partnerships and programs of the IAI should become more visible to increase knowledge on the work of the organization**

Recommendations for Focal Points:

- Invite funded research teams, STeP fellows, and scholarship recipients to share the knowledge they have gained with wider audiences.
- Promote interaction with IAI activities among its own networks.

Recommendations for the Directorate:

- Foster the exchange of experiences to strengthen networks and disseminate new research.

Actions being taken by the Directorate:

- The Directorate is expanding partnerships with national Associates and regional organizations to strengthen the IAI's reach.
- Actively engaged in regional and international fora.
- Strengthened outreach and communications capacity by engaging communication experts.
- Enhanced communication efforts by increasing the number of publications synthesizing and discussing scientific knowledge and policy implementation relevant to the region.
- Significantly increased the reach of the IAI on social media.