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15 October 2021

**EXECUTIVE COUNCIL TO THE  
INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL  
CHANGE RESEARCH  
Fifty-second meeting  
Videoconference  
18 November 2021  
Agenda item 4**

**Summary report of activities by the IAI Directorate  
mid-term of the 2021-2022 intersessional period**

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

Introduction

2. At its 29th meeting (CoP-29, 2021, Videoconference), the Conference of the Parties agreed to schedule the first intersessional meeting of the Executive Council during the month of November 2021, as opposed to immediately following the conclusion of the meeting of the CoP.
3. During discussion on this topic, Parties agreed that scheduling the meeting near the mid-point of the 2021-2022 intersessional period would afford the Executive Council with greater opportunities to exercise its role as the executive organ of the Institute, per Article VI of the *Agreement establishing the Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research*.
4. In light of the information provided in this document, the Executive Council is invited to review the core budget and country contributions, assess and offer feedback on the work

of the IAI Directorate, become aware of outstanding issues and offer feedback on science and capacity building proposals.

5. Accordingly, this document provides a summary on the work of the IAI Directorate and describes current activities and projects starting in June 2021.

Report on science

Decision	Strategic Plan	Actions to the IAI Directorate	Results
<p>XXVII/16. The IAI Directorate is instructed to continue exploring 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.</p>	<p>Theme I, Goal 1, Objective i, Action a.: By the end of 2019, the Directorate, with support of the SAC/SPAC and in collaboration with the Belmont Forum, will execute the Collaborative Research Network 4 (CRN4) to fund inter and transdisciplinary research to assist the Parties in advancing the understanding of global change issues.</p>	<p>The Directorate has received the grant funding from NSF and will be issuing a call for Fellows and consultants to work with the IAI to implement the goals of the proposal.</p>	<p>The Directorate anticipates contracting Fellows and consulting teams before the end of 2021 to support the creation of virtual curriculum on transdisciplinary science and science diplomacy, tailored for issues of global environmental change in the Americas.</p>

	<p>Theme I, Goal 1, Objective iv, Action a.: The Directorate, with the support of the SAC/SPAC, will continue with research activities and current capacity building program of the IAI.</p> <p>Theme III, Goal 4, Objective ii: The IAI is successful in increasing funding through writing new proposals and targeting strategic partnerships</p>	<p>(1) The IAI Directorate is executing two transdisciplinary projects in the Caribbean entitled, “Conduct of a vector-borne disease and gender dynamics study,” and “Integrating Climate Variability into the Surveillance, Prevention and Control of Vector- Borne Diseases” with funding from the Inter-American Development Bank via the University of West Indies (2020-2021) as part of the Pilot Programme for Climate Resilience (PPCR)</p> <p>(2) The Directorate has been awarded a new EU-funded consultancy with the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) to continue to develop climate tools for the health sector.</p> <p>(3) The Directorate is leading a consultancy with the Wellcome Trust to landscape the modeling tools available for climate sensitive infectious diseases.</p>	<p>Projects described in #1 have been severely delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic limiting the ability of Ministries of Health to engage in the research.</p> <p>However, under the new project (#2) with CARPHA, the Directorate will have the opportunity to continue to support this line of research to develop climate tools for the health sector.</p> <p>The consultancy with Wellcome Trust has revealed a number of priority areas for future funding around software tools for climate-sensitive infectious diseases. This project also allowed the IAI to engage with a new global partner (WT).</p>
	<p>Theme II, Goal 6: Human health and wellbeing: Through interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research, the IAI informed policy and decision making resulting in fewer health crises and chronic diseases.</p>	<p>The IAI contributed to the IPCC 6h Assessment Report, WGII Chapter 12 on Central and South America</p>	<p>The IAI contributed expertise on the effects of climate on health in the region.</p>
		<p>The IAI contributed to the WCRP’s report, CH8. Science Underpinning Sustainable Development in the Andes</p>	<p>The IAI contributed expertise on the effects of climate on health in the region.</p>

		The IAI submitted a symposium proposal to the America Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene	In November 2021, IAI will chair a symposium on "Earth observations for infectious disease early warnings: What can we learn from climate and disaster communities?"
	Theme III, Goal 4, Objective ii, Action c.: Increase collaboration with the Belmont Forum, including through setting up a similar co-funding mechanism for the Americas, for the design and development of Collaborative Research Action	The IAI conducted a series of virtual scoping workshops to identify regional priorities on climate, environment and health (CEH2) in the Americas to guide the upcoming CRA by the Belmont Forum. Through in-kind contributions, the IAI is supporting a team called Fish2Sustainability, funded by the Pathways to Sustainability BF CRA	The outcomes of the scoping workshop are being systematized and will be used to inform the focus of the CEH2 CRA and IAI's work in the coming year.  The IAI is exploring with BF how to continue to support future CRAs through in-kind contributions such as trainings and networking.
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.		The IAI began to design the Regional Assessment to understand decisions that Parties are making that are impacted by - or impact on - global environmental change	A listening session was held in August 2021 with 4 Parties (Argentina, Mexico, Panama, and Colombia) to begin to design the regional assessment tool.
	Theme III, Goal 1, Objective I, Action e.: The Directorate works with project Principal Investigators to provide timely project and other relevant information to the Parties, including through the organization of side-events, science-policy fora, and workshops	The IAI and SGP PIs participated in AmeriGEO week in Aug 2021. The Directorate presented 3 high level talks during the health and disasters session. The IAI also presented in the Conference on Climate Change and Health in Small Island Developing States	These open regional meetings provide an opportunity for the Directorate to communicate science efforts to a broad audience of researchers and policy practitioners.

	Theme I, Goal 3, Objective ii: The IAI promotes regional cooperation for interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research on global change	The IAI will be hosting several virtual events around scientific publishing and science communications in partnership with PLOS Climate and Latinoamérica 21	These events aim to increase the ability of early career scientists and policy practitioners to publish in scientific journals and media outlets.
	Theme II, Goal 3, Objective iii, Action c: outstanding early-career individuals from multiple backgrounds and disciplines will contribute to a pool of experts suited for contributing to future IAI research and to promote and disseminate the IAI's work in their home countries and organizations.	STeP Fellows and SGP project members are progressively being mentored to produce science communication texts for wide dissemination, including in the IAI Newsletter and IAI Updates.  IAI staff and SAC/SPAC members are progressively participating in drafting publications for the broader public.	The Directorate published an article in the PLOS journal blog with results of IAI's CoP-29 <sup>1</sup> .  The IAI mentored an SGP investigator from Uruguay to write a science-policy news article, which was published in several regional news outlets in October 2021.
	Theme III, Goal 2, Objective I, Action d: The Directorate increases media presence, including through social media and strategic partnerships.	The IAI has partnered with Latinoamérica 21 to publish columns by SGP research project members, SAC/SPAC members and STeP Fellows.	
	Theme III, Goal 2, Objective I, Action a: The Directorate coordinates the development of project briefs based on ongoing IAI project results.	The IAI has produced six bilingual briefs on the Small Grant Program projects which will be launched at EC52 and disseminated widely.	We anticipate that these actions will improve public awareness and provide scientific information for the development of public

<sup>1</sup> See: <https://latitude.plos.org/2021/08/swapping-headlines-on-global-change-science-in-the-americas/>

	<p>Theme III, Goal 1, Objective I, Action b: The Directorate continually develops and/or joins activities established by partners to link policy makers and scientists and invites focal points to these science and science-policy workshops.</p>	<p>The IAI will hold a pre-EC52 science-policy briefing for Focal Points, SAC/SPAC members, STeP Fellows and researchers from the SGP teams.</p>	<p>policy relevant to global change.</p> <p>The pre-EC meeting is an opportunity for knowledge exchange and, especially, feedback from the Parties on the resources that are used to make decisions and to keep up to date about GEC, and how scientists can engage with them and share their science</p>
	<p>Theme III, Goal 1, Objective ii, Action a: The IAI activities are communicated through official notifications, web postings and social media. Parties, SAC, SPAC, investigators and partner organizations are encouraged to disseminate those messages to relevant governmental agencies and focal points.</p>	<p>The IAI re-launched the newsletter in July 2021 and has added an Updates email to the external communication portfolio</p>	<p>The newsletter aims to bring timely information on IAI events, current science, and training/funding opportunities to IAI's network.</p>
	<p>Theme III, Goal 1, Objective ii, Action b: By the end of 2019, the Directorate formulates a presentation template for use by members of the IAI community to cohesively promote the mission and vision of the IAI.</p>	<p>The IAI has created a presentation template for use across the organization, including STeP Fellows, and by partners. A description of the IAI has also been created for standardized sharing across communication channels.</p>	<p>We anticipate that these actions will increase the capacity of the IAI and IAI network to communicate relevant scientific information to Parties and other partners.</p>

<p>XXIX/15. Instructs the IAI Directorate, in collaboration with the Parties, the SAC and the SPAC, to increase the inclusion of underrepresented groups in the IAI's science and capacity building activities, as appropriate and subject to the availability of external financial resources</p>	<p>Theme III, Goal 4, Objective I, Action b: IAI Directorate continually targets donors, private-sector foundations and Parties to raise funds for the Endowment Fund.</p>	<p>The IAI is joining efforts with UNICEF LACRO ( Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Office) to work on including the needs and perspectives of children and youth in GEC research.</p>	
	<p>Theme III, Goal 4, Objective I, Action d: Annually promote collaboration with various stakeholders, including partners, donor agencies and development banks, academia, private sector and constituent groups at various governmental levels. This includes partnering with countries outside the Americas.</p>	<p>The IAI has met with the executive directors of EU-LAC Foundation (European Union – Latin America and Caribbean Foundation) and CC35 (Capital Cities Facing Climate Change of the Americas) to expand the IAI's network. An event was organized with AASPA (Alliance of Public Health Associations of the Americas).</p>	<p>These actions increase serve to increase IAI's network of potential regional partners and funders</p>

Report on capacity building

Strategic Plan	Actions by the IAI Directorate	Results
<p>Theme I, Goal 3, Objective iii: The IAI supports capacity building efforts in interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research, collaboration and innovation.</p>	<p>STeP (Science, Technology and Policy): Directorate works with IAI Associates and partners in the development of transdisciplinary training and science diplomacy capacity building projects, and in the organization of science to policy workshops.</p>	<p>First year Fellows (17) from 4 countries: Argentina (CREA/CONICET), Mexico (SECTEI/CDMX), Canada (Mitacs CSPF) and USA (AAAS STPF) have opted to continue for 2nd year of STeP Professional Development Training.</p> <p>STeP is expanding by more than 50% with 24 new fellows and 3 new countries to the program in 2021-2022. The Second Generation will include</p>

	<p>STeP is welcoming new fellows and new countries to the Second iteration of the program in 2021-2022.</p> <p>MSTeP will also welcome new fellows from Canada's Mitacs and the AAAS to the Second Generation of fellows.</p> <p>The Directorate has negotiated agreements with STeP Parties and partners, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Letter of Agreement with Brazilian Platform for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (signed).</li> <li>-Letter of Agreement with University of West Indies Center for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (pending signature).</li> <li>-Memorandum of Understanding with the <i>Biblioteca del Congreso Nacional</i> of Chile to collaborate on Science Communication training (draft).</li> <li>-Memorandum of Understanding with SciTech DiploHub Barcelona to collaborate on Science Diplomacy training (draft).</li> <li>- Negotiations with Future Earth's Leadership Program (former Leopold's Leadership Program) to collaborate on Leadership and Communication training (ongoing).</li> <li>- Negotiations with IPBES to implement a STeP cohort on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services in LAC The Directorate has submitted a proposal to</li> </ul>	<p>fellows (8) from Brazil (Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation and the Brazilian Platform for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services; 3 fellows from the Caribbean region. (University of West Indies Center for Resource Management and Environmental Studies) in partnership with NOAA; 2 fellows from Panama (Secretary for Science, Technology and Innovation); 7 fellows have been selected from USA (AAAS STPF), and Mitacs Canada has launched a call for 4 new Fellows.</p> <p>STeP is becoming well known among IAI Parties as a program that supports more effective provision of scientific information for the development of public/private policy, gaining interest from potential new member states, as well as supporting leadership among early career scientists and the next generation of science advisors in the region. STeP is strengthening the collaboration of the Directorate with several IAI Parties, science and policy organizations, and Focal Points.</p> <p>STeP is fostering the development of new partnerships to strengthen the IAI capacity building programs in several areas: science diplomacy, transdisciplinary training, communication and leadership.</p> <p>STeP is an effective mechanism of external national and regional support to the IAI programs, and linking STeP with other initiatives and activities and funding sources.</p> <p>STeP fosters the development of an Inter-American Network of Science-Policy fellows, host organizations, and alumni to share knowledge, experiences, lessons learned and best</p>
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	<p>IPBES outlining the first activities to be carried out under the MoU signed between IAI and IPBES in 2018 proposing funding and support for STeP Fellows to work on IPBES Assessments and strategy to improve assessment uptake to end-users.</p> <p>Informal networking events hosted with STeP Fellows and the US National Science Policy Network (NSPN).</p>	<p>practices across the Americas on regional science diplomacy issues of common interest.</p> <p>STeP enhances human and institutional capacity, and regional networking, and international professional exposure among fellows and their host organizations across the Americas.</p> <p>Fellows are now participating in Belmont Forum Scoping Session on Climate Environment and Health providing Fellows with real world experience in an international funding call with future possibilities to continue.</p>
<p>Theme I Goal 1, Objective vii: Promote cooperation among the different institutions of the region.</p>	<p>Discussions with international partners to provide IAI Parties with additional opportunities and leverage financial resources for joint programs and funding are ongoing.</p> <p>The IAI Directorate staff has also been invited to serve as a member of the selection committee for the AAAS David and Betty Hamburg Award for Science Diplomacy for the 2021, 2022 and 2023 cycles.</p>	<p>Opportunities to strengthen the collaboration of the IAI Directorate with Canada.</p> <p>Opportunities to expand and strengthen IAI programs and activities with the support and experience of Mitacs.</p> <p>These agreements will allow for further collaborations between Latin America, the Caribbean and Canada with the IAI in research, capacity building and science-policy interface.</p>

<p>Strategic Plan, Theme I, Goal 1, Objective vi: Improve public awareness and provide scientific information to governments of the development of public policy relevant to global change.</p>	<p>The Directorate has designed and launched the <i>IAI Transdisciplinary (TD) Academy</i> to provide training on transdisciplinary approaches and skills to advance knowledge and practice on environmental change research, and to support the provision of scientific information to the public and private sectors. The IAI TD academy held its first webinar on 10 September 2021.</p> <p>The IAI Directorate is working on the organization of the professional development seminar on Climate, Environment and Health (CEH) to support the development of transdisciplinary science, research proposals and policy teams, in coordination with the IAI CEH steering committee, composed of representatives from research, governmental, policy, and funding organizations and in connection and collaboration with the Belmont Forum.</p> <p>-IAI Directorate in collaboration with Past Global Changes (PAGES) program launched in June 2021 the International mobility research Fellowship Program for Latin American and Caribbean early career scientists on past global changes sciences”. Sixteen applicants from six countries were received by the Directorate. The fellowships will be funded by PAGES and administered by the IAI.</p> <p>The Directorate hosted 4 STeP virtual training events and</p>	<p>TD academy supports the development of human and institutional capacities in TD research and linkages to policy and funding opportunities.</p> <p>TD academy fosters the development of TD networks and teams composed of multiple areas of scientific and practical knowledge, and connections with policy and decision makers and other stakeholders working on global change.</p> <p>The Directorate is developing new partnerships to offer IAI Parties opportunities for student exchange within Latin America and the Caribbean (South-South collaboration) while diversifying funding resources for scientific and capacity building programs.</p> <p>The Directorate has worked on strengthening its outreach and dissemination of the work of the IAI in several international conferences.</p>
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	<p>participated in 2 international conferences together with STeP Fellows (AmeriGEO and International Transdisciplinarity Conference 2021).</p> <p>The Directorate hosted the first Science Diplomacy Project Forum where Fellows presented their work to over 75 partners including IAI Focal Points, IAI Associates and incoming fellows..Five Science Diplomacy groups were established to advance teamwork among the fellows, their host institutions, and participating countries.</p> <p>The Directorate will be presenting a Capacity Building session on fostering science advice at the Canadian Science Policy Conference together with STeP and Mitacs Fellows, the IAI Canadian Focal Point and president of NSERC, and other officials. The Directorate is also drafting an editorial with the Canadian Focal Point and session panelists for publication.</p> <p>Discussions with Canada NSERC have led to discussions on IAI participation in parallel sessions at the Global Research Council (GRC) to be held in Argentina in 2021 and annual meetings in May 2022 in Panama.</p>	
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<p>Strategic Plan,</p> <p>Theme I, Goal 1, Objective vi: Improve public awareness and provide scientific information to governments of the development of public policy relevant to global change.</p> <p>Theme III, Goal 1: The Directorate's communication and outreach initiatives facilitated and promoted communication of science in the region with a view to achieving sustainability in the Americas.</p>	<p>Directorate has developed a series of communication and outreach material to showcase the program, its strategic partnership, and professional development training. These materials are described in CoP-29 document IAI/COP/29/14<sup>2</sup>.</p> <p>The IAI Directorate has created a special unique Twitter account for the STeP program: @STeP_IAI which showcases the highlights, webinars, and conferences.</p> <p>The IAI Directorate carried out a review and selection of useful resources for researchers in the region in transdisciplinary approaches through the creation of a virtual library on the IAI TD Academy website<sup>3</sup>.</p>	<p>Greater awareness of the STeP Program by Parties and the IAI policy and research communities.</p>
	<p>The Directorate worked with SISSA (Drought Information System for Southern South America) to secure financial support from Euroclima and the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation for a project in La Plata basin countries. The SISSA project will be administered by the Directorate with funding of approximately 1.3 million Euros and led by Argentina's National Meteorological Service on behalf of the South of South America Regional Climate Center during 2021-2024.</p>	<p>The Directorate has worked on strategies to diversify financial resources to fund research, capacity building, and science-policy activities and projects for IAI Parties.</p> <p>This project will provide urgently needed information to researchers and policy makers on the occurrence of droughts in the La Plata region.</p>

<sup>2</sup> See: <https://www.iai.int/administrador/assets/images/ckfinder/files/iai-cop-29-14-en.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> See: <https://www.iai.int/en/post/detail/The-IAI-Transdisciplinary-Academy>

## Report on publications, data and information

Decision	Strategic Plan	Actions by the IAI Directorate	Results
	Theme I, Goal 1, Objective vi: Improve public awareness and provide scientific information to governments for the development of public policy relevant to global change.	The IAI Directorate has completed its work as a member of the project <i>Harnessing the world's academies to combat predatory academic journals and conferences</i> organized by the Inter-Academy Partnership.	A report will be issued and a workshop on predatory publishing is being organized to be held in early 2022 in conjunction with the Inter-Academy Partnership.
		The IAI Directorate has completed its work as a member of the Advisory Steering Group members on the ISC strategy in the intergovernmental system.	A report will be issued on the provision of scientific information to United Nations bodies and agreements and how the process can be improved and enhanced.

## Conclusions

6. This report does not purport to present a complete summary of activities organized by the IAI Directorate. Updates on activities omitted from this report will be provided to Parties on an ongoing basis during the 2020-2021 intersessional period.
7. The IAI Directorate notes that activities described are fully supportive of Decisions adopted by CoP-29 and are aligned with the IAI Strategic Plan and Scientific Agenda.
8. The IAI Directorate is grateful for the support received from the Executive Council, Parties and its partners that made achievement of the IAI work plan possible.

## Recommendation

9. The Executive Council is invited to take note of this report.