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25 September 2024

**EXECUTIVE COUNCIL TO THE
INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL
CHANGE RESEARCH
Fifty-eighth meeting
Videoconference
6 November 2024
Agenda item 5**

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

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

Introduction

2. The summary below describes the main achievements of the IAI 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.
3. Members of the Executive Council may recall that 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 November rather than immediately following the conclusion of the CoP.
4. During discussions on this topic, the Parties agreed that scheduling the meeting near the midpoint of the intersessional period would provide the Executive Council with greater opportunities to exercise its role as the institute's executive body, as per Article VI of the *Agreement establishing the Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research*.

5. Based on the information provided in this document, the Executive Council is invited to assess and provide feedback on the work of the IAI Directorate, take note of outstanding issues, and provide input on science and science diplomacy proposals.
6. Accordingly, this document describes current activities and projects.

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 of the CRA on Migration and Mobility to develop policy-relevant syntheses with key findings for Parties. These will first be shared with SAC and the 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 key findings will first be shared with the SAC and SPAC members and later with Focal Points.
- The Directorate has hired an expert marketing team to assess IAI Focal Points to better understand the Parties' needs and to guide the Directorate's outreach and engagement strategy. The assessment will be conducted in October 2024.
- The Directorate will host an information session in November to discuss present key results of the regional assessment tailored to IAI Parties. The results of the assessment were published earlier this year: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/26395916.2024.2354309>

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 has 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 these outcomes to the Executive Council and the Conference of the Parties.

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 IAI Directorate sent an invitation to CR2 on 29 May 2024. The IAI Directorate and CR2 met on 25 July 2024 in person and on 19 August 2024 virtually to discuss the draft of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), which is under development.
- IAI co-hosted a virtual workshop with CR2 regarding the project of the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative (LACI) focused on the La Plata Basin on 17 June 2024. This project aims to co-design 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 is planned for December 2024.

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 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 FAPESC to become an Associate of the Institute. An MoU was signed with FAPESC on 7 December 2023, and a technical cooperation agreement was signed on 20 August 2024. Other agreements were also signed to finance other joint actions.
- The IAI Directorate and staff met in person in Florianopolis and in July in Brasilia to plan and launch the announcement of the new cohort of STeP fellows placed in five Brazilian national and state agencies for the period 2025-2027. FAPESC is funding this cohort of STeP fellows to advance science-policy work on bioeconomy in Brazil. Moreover, FAPESC will co-host the IAI regional annual STeP conference in 2026.
- The IAI Directorate and FAPESC staff met in person between 12 and 14 August 2024 in Florianopolis during the COLACMAR meeting to discuss the partnership and scope of the Belmont Forum CRA Oceans 2.
- FAPESC and the IAI Directorate are collaborating on the Tropical Forest Transdisciplinary Training Program and co-funding seed grant teams.
- FAPESC and the IAI will co-host a regional training of the Science Diplomacy Center in 2025 to foster capacity building in entrepreneurship, sustainable development goals, and science diplomacy (dates to be determined).

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 is under development.
- 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).
- The IAI and STRI are partnering with Humboldt Institute to hold an event on gender and biodiversity during the CBD COP16 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 IAI Directorate is working with the Science Diplomacy Center Advisory Board to develop the terms of reference (ToR) of this working group, identify potential members, and establish a calendar for its implementation.

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 is planning an information session for staff and fellows in October 2024 and future training sessions for the intersessional period 2024-2025.

XXXII/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 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).
- Workshops were planned for September-October 2024 with representatives from Indigenous groups to discuss the format and governance of the IPAC.
- The EDI committee is developing documents on the committee's role, the procedures for establishing the initial composition, and the call for applicants to the committee, which are expected to be completed after the workshops.

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>

Other actions related to Past CoP decisions

XXVII/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 to implement 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. In May 2024, PIs and team members of IAI funded projects were trained to use these open data platforms.
- The Directorate, the Open Data Working Group, the SAC, and the SPAC developed an Open Data Work Plan for 2024 and 2025. Based on this plan, the Open Data Specialist is working with the Open Research Community Accelerator (ORCA) to update the IAI Open Data Policy.
- An IAI Fellow attended the ORCA training: Open Science “Dynamic Convergence” Workshop in Washington, DC, in September 2024.

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 migration and mobility projects
 - The three projects completed their first year and submitted annual technical and financial reports in April 2024. Project teams participated in an Open Data training session in May 2024 facilitated by the IAI Open Data Specialist.
- Ongoing work with Climate, Environment and Health (CEH) seed grants
 - Twelve CEH seed grant teams continue to implement transdisciplinary projects involving researchers from 15 countries of the Americas.
 - 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. Four of the 12 projects funded by the IAI will complete their activities by the end of 2024. Other projects have encountered challenges and delays, including delays in initially signing the Agreement or related to the international/institutional transfer of funds, resulting in requests for a No-Cost Extension. The last project is expected to conclude in July 2025.
 - In May 2024, project teams participated in an Open Data training session facilitated by the IAI Open Data Specialist.
- Status of the Collaborative Research Action on Tropical Forests: Global Implications and Pressing Actions (FOREST CRA)
 - The FOREST CRA opened in June 2024, and the deadline to submit pre-proposals is 12 November 2024. Final proposals are due by 30 May 2025. The FOREST CRA currently involves 19 funding agencies, and discussions are ongoing with three additional agencies interested in joining the Call. In the next three weeks, a joint IAI-Belmont Forum team will hold six open “Office hours” meetings to allow interested individuals to ask general questions regarding the Call and application process. These sessions will 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 will be held on 3 October 2024 at the University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona Campus in Kingston, Jamaica.
- The Tropical Forest Transdisciplinary (TD) Training Program call opened in April 2024 in partnership with the Foundation for Research and Innovation of the State of Santa Catarina (FAPESC). The IAI received 79 expressions of interest from TD teams that 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 stakeholder. Twenty teams were accepted in the training program, encompassing 12 of the 19 IAI member states. A total of 112 people, including teams and individual applicants, have completed 20 hours of self-paced training in TD practices in four modules

plus 12 hours of synchronous training divided into eight live sessions hosted by the IAI TD Academy. The teams have delivered 14 project proposals undergoing a double-masked peer review process with support from SAC and SPAC members. The IAI, in partnership with FAPESC, will fund up to 10 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 later in this report.
- The Directorate is supporting the development of the new Oceans CRA. In particular, the Directorate, including two STeP Fellows, participated in a scoping event for the Oceans CRA on August 2024 at COLACMAR in Itajaí, Santa Catarina, Brazil. Further details are included under Decision XXXI/6 later 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.
- 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 by the Transdisciplinary Academy of the IAI aimed to define and understand best practices in transdisciplinary coordination.

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 in XXVII/16, 12 research teams with participants from 15 countries are working on seed grants 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 is expected by October 2024.
- The IAI's CEH steering committee met in August and September 2024 to discuss the strategic actions of the Directorate.
- The IAI is co-chairing the Keystone Symposium global conference on Climate and Health, to be held in June 2025 in Germany.

- As a member of the Global Forum on Humanitarian Health Research 2025 Steering Committee, the IAI is contributing to the co-construction of 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.
- The IAI is hosting the “Climate Change, Migration and Health in Latin America and the Caribbean” webinar series with the Global Consortium on Climate and Health Education, Lancet Migration and Universidad del Desarrollo (Chile).
- For the CBD COP16, the IAI submitted side events focused on Climate, Environment, and Health. One event was accepted for the Peru pavilion in the Blue Zone, and a second event submitted to Brazil’s pavilion is pending confirmation.
- The IAI 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.

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 committee on oceans, islands, and coastal systems continues making collaborative efforts 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 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 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, including the period preceding the Ocean Decade agenda. It will also highlight trends in international collaboration and explore future opportunities through IAI's transdisciplinary programs.

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

- The Directorate met regularly with IDEAM to plan a joint agenda for the CBD COP16.
- The Directorate submitted 12 side events to CBD COP16 with the Parties. Three of these events were directed to the CBD Secretariat, while the remaining were allocated to country pavilions in the Blue Zone: two for Colombia, two for Peru, and four for Brazil.
- The Directorate participated in the subregional training workshop on Target 3 of the 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.
- In preparation for the CBD COP16, two information sessions were held virtually. The first session, held on 17 July 2024, focused on climate-biodiversity issues and was organized by the IAI for its Parties and staff. The second session, held on 7 August 2024, was a dedicated preparation meeting for the IAI delegation attending CBD COP16, specifically for the Directorate staff.
- The Directorate was invited to serve on the UNFCCC CoP-29 Science Advisory Body to the Presidency, which will host a pre-CoP science summit in October 2024 in Baku, Azerbaijan.

- The Directorate was invited to serve on the Planning Committee for a Workshop on *Pandemic Risk Assessment and its Intersection with Climate Change: Needs, Opportunities, and Design Considerations* organized by the UN Foundation. The workshop will be held in Brazil in October 2024.
- A representative of the IAI Science Diplomacy Center attended the G20 meeting in Brazil as part of the IAI and Belmont Forum delegation.
- 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 was invited to participate in 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.
- 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 to participate in a session led by USGCRP at the Annual Conference of the American Geophysical Union (AGU) to showcase the LACI program and how the IAI STeP Program can support science, policy, and diplomacy activities to strengthen LACI project collaboration across the Americas, between 9-13 December 2024 in Washington, DC. The Directorate has requested funding from NSF to support a STeP fellow for the LACI program.

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 attended the ANDEX annual planning meeting on 24 May 2024 in Lima, Peru.
- The Directorate is involved in a newly funded project titled *Andean Climate Change Observations Research and Discovery*, which focuses on mountain ecosystems and is supported by AccelNet through the US National Science Foundation. The project's next major meeting is scheduled for December 2024 in Washington, DC.

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 has been established to support the development of the IAI Science Diplomacy Center (SDC). The board met in person last April in Guatemala and is holding virtual meetings. The board is working on implementing a working group on emerging issues.
- A workshop for government officials on science diplomacy was held in June 2024 in Panama to implement the SDC training program. Initial results were the development of national science diplomacy hubs collaborating with the SDC, a whitepaper on the conservation of estuaries and mangroves, a transdisciplinary research team working on a project proposal for the upcoming IAI Seed Grant Program and Belmont Forum CRA on Tropical Forests. In addition, the next two science diplomacy training workshops will be hosted by Brazil in December 2024, in Brasilia, Brazil, and by Paraguay in May 2025, in Asunción, Paraguay.
- A white paper on estuaries was published, as a result of the science diplomacy workshop held in June 2024, in Panama: *Recommendations for the Conservation of Estuaries and Restoration of Mangroves in Central and South America*: [https://www.iai.int/administrador/assets/images/ckfinder/files/Estuarios IAI EN 2024.pdf](https://www.iai.int/administrador/assets/images/ckfinder/files/Estuarios%20IAI%20EN%202024.pdf)

Other actions related to the Strategic Plan

Theme I, Goal 1, Objective iv, Action d
Theme I, Goal 3, Objective iii

Scholarships

- Nine scholarships will be 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 will address topics related to the priorities of IAI's strategic plan.
- The Directorate is funding one student 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, to be hosted on 15-23 March 2025, in Honolulu, Hawaii, USA.

Theme I, Goal 1, Objective iv
Theme I, Goal 2
Theme I, Goal 3, Objective iii

Other relevant events/workshops:

Theme II, Goal 5, Objective ii

Theme III, Goal 1, Objective i, (Actions b, c, d, and e)

- The Directorate is co-hosting a hybrid half-day hurricane symposium, addressing lessons learned, best practices, and resilient development for Caribbean nations. This symposium is scheduled for 3 October 2024 in collaboration with the University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona Campus, and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). The event will be broadcast in English and Spanish.
- The Directorate participated in the USGCRP International Partners meeting in Washington DC on 18-19 September 2024.

Other partners: EPIC

Theme III, Goal 1, Objective i

Theme II, Goal 5, Objective iv

- The IAI continues to collaborate with the EPIC Network LAC steering Committee. The IAI and EPIC-N are implementing the Global EbA Fund grant “Catalyzing Unconventional Partnerships in the Global South for Urban Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA).” The project will award seed grants and host hands-on workshops to support community-university TD team EbA projects in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Through participation in the Network of Earth Observation Laboratories focused on disaster risk reduction in LAC (RED LABOT), the IAI sponsored and participated in the Youth Congress on Earth Observations on 2-5 July 2024 in Chitre, Panama.

Communications, Website and Virtual Campus

Theme III, Goal 2, Objective i

- The Directorate launched the new compendium “Health, climate and the environment in Latin America and the Caribbean” in print and digital versions with free access in Spanish, English, and Portuguese.

Theme II, Goal 7

- The Directorate launched a new call for a compendium focusing on biodiversity in partnership with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and Latinoamerica 21. Seventeen participating researchers will write articles to be published in national newspapers, of which a selection will be compiled in book form in Spanish, English, and Portuguese. Invited authors received virtual training in science communication in partnership with L21 on 3 September 2024.

Theme III, Goal 1, Objective i

Theme III, Goal 1, Objective ii

- Individual country sheets are being updated to reflect the latest events, fellowships, research funding, and activities.
- The website is migrating to a new server with the capacity to host the repository of publications, improve indexing in search engines, and install cookies.

Theme I, Goal 3, Objective iii

- Two new courses have been launched in beta versions in Spanish, English, and Portuguese: “Science Diplomacy and Global Environmental Change in the Americas” and “Advances in Transdisciplinary Research on Global Environmental Change in Latin America and the Caribbean.” The courses have been tested with synchronous students and are being adjusted to launch on IAI’s Virtual Campus as self-managed, open, certificate-based online courses without cost to the public. Both courses are accompanied by books of real-world case studies from Latin America and the Caribbean.

Theme III, Goal 1, Objective i, Action b

- The IAI has partnered with NASA to develop a new virtual training program on remote sensing tools for global change challenges in Latin America. The program will be launched in the last quarter of 2024.

Staff retreat/ 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 engaging in 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 to 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 was dedicated to reviewing 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 aims to review and discuss outcomes from the previous workshops, reinforce communication strategies, and define the following steps to sustain ongoing collaboration across the Directorate.

Conclusions

7. 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

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