Summary of the 26th Meeting of the Parties to the Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research: 20-21 June 2018

The 26th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP-26) to the Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research (IAI) met in Antigua, Guatemala, from 20-21 June 2018. More than 50 delegates representing government, academia and civil society attended the conference. The CoP was preceded by the 45th meeting of the Executive Council (EC-45), a Science-Policy Workshop, and the joint meeting of the CoP’s advisory bodies: the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) and the Science-Policy Advisory Committee (SPAC).

During the CoP, presentations were made on: Mayan science, culture and civilization; Science-Policy Workshop recommendations; science and technology impact projects in Guatemala; and climate action in Guatemala.

The CoP adopted more than 30 decisions related to, inter alia: financial and budgetary matters; a long-term communication strategy and plan; a 25th anniversary publication; the IAI Scientific Agenda; open data policy; and fundraising-related issues. The CoP also: retired the decision on the Tripartite Agreement; added three new IAI Associates, namely Rede Clima, Future Earth, and the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS); elected new EC and SAC members; and accepted Ecuador’s offer to host CoP-27.

A Brief History of the IAI

The IAI, which was established in 1992 in Montevideo, Uruguay, is an intergovernmental organization used by scientists and decision makers to jointly address issues associated with global change in the Americas. The Institute aims to develop the best possible international coordination of scientific and economic research on the extent, causes and consequences of global change in the region.

The Agreement establishing the IAI (IAI Agreement) describes the IAI’s function as a regional intergovernmental institution that promotes scientific research and capacity building to inform decision makers.

IAI STRUCTURE: The IAI has 19 Parties - countries that have joined the IAI Agreement - who meet every year at the CoP to monitor and direct the IAI’s activities.

More specifically, the CoP:
• establishes, reviews, and updates the Institute’s policies and procedures;
• evaluates its work and accomplishments; and
• reviews and approves the IAI’s Scientific Agenda, annual and long-range plans, and financial budgets.

The IAI also has a nine-member EC, which: develops policy recommendations for submission to and approval by the CoP; and ensures that CoP policies are implemented by the Directorate.

The IAI has two standing committees, the SAC, which was established by the IAI Agreement, and the SPAC, which the CoP established in 2013. The SAC, inter alia: makes recommendations to the CoP regarding the IAI’s Scientific Agenda, long-range plans and annual programme; and assesses the scientific results obtained from IAI-funded science programmes. The SPAC advises the CoP and IAI Directorate regarding the application and design of science in policy and decision making.

The IAI Directorate, including the Integrated Operations and Finance Directorate, is based in Montevideo, Uruguay, and is led by the IAI Executive Director, who is elected by the CoP and is responsible for IAI programmes and operations. The Directorate of Science Development and the Science-Policy Liaison Directorate will be integrated with the Integrated Operations and Finance Directorate in Montevideo.

The CoP can invite States outside the region, regional or international intergovernmental organizations, industries, and other non-governmental and private organizations interested in supporting the IAI’s Scientific Agenda and programmatic activities to become Associates.
In addition, the CoP can designate institutions that submit research project proposals as IAI affiliates for the duration of the project, based on a review of the proposal and SAC views regarding the proposal’s scientific merit and relevance to IAI objectives.

The IAI also has Institute Research Centers, which have long-term commitments to a research programme within the IAI’s objectives and are hosted by countries. AQUASEC, which focuses on water security and adaptive management and is based in the US, is the first such Institute Research Center.

**IAI ACTIVITIES:** The IAI Science Agenda focuses on:
- understanding climate change and variability in the Americas;
- comparative studies of ecosystem, biodiversity, land use and cover, and water resources in the Americas;
- understanding global change modulations of the composition of the atmosphere, oceans and fresh waters; and
- understanding the human dimensions and policy implications of global change, climate variability and land use.

The IAI Science Program integrates the natural and social sciences to provide scientific information to policy and decision makers in the Americas.

The IAI also engages in capacity-building activities through online courses, training events and internships, as well as the Seed Grant Program, which aims to, *inter alia*:
- promote the application of training to real-world issues with a significant global change dimension;
- foster multinational and multidisciplinary collaboration;
- develop and strengthen management capacity for international grants; and
- increase the participation of small countries in IAI research programmes.

The IAI also participates in meeting of international agreements, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). It has also been involved in activities related to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), such as the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF).

### Report of the Meeting

#### Welcome

On Wednesday, 20 June, IAI CoP-26 opened with the national anthem of Guatemala, followed by a minute of silence for the victims following the eruption of Volcán de Fuego on 3 June. CoP Chair Oscar Cobar, National Secretary for Science and Technology (SENCYT), Guatemala, opened the CoP and welcomed delegates. He highlighted that scientific knowledge is the best resource for all countries in all regions to tackle the issues of global change.

Marcos Regis Regis da Silva, IAI Executive Director, emphasized the need for countries in the Americas to work together to address transboundary and cross-cutting global challenges that one country alone cannot solve. He emphasized the IAI’s efforts in providing transdisciplinary research with a regional framework that responds to the needs and priorities of Parties based on scientific knowledge.

Rafael Barrios, speaking on behalf of Guatemalan Vice-President Jafeth Cabrera, underscored the need for more and improved knowledge on climate change, highlighting the relevance of the IAI in this regard.

#### Presentation of the Recommendations of the Science-Policy Workshop

SAC Chair Edwin Castellanos, Universidad del Valle de Guatemala, presented outcomes and recommendations from the Science-Policy Workshop that was held on 19 June. He underlined the importance for the CoP to have a better vision for the IAI’s direction in the coming years. He discussed the work of the SAC and SPAC that was presented in the workshop, related to, *inter alia*, open data for the IAI, the IAI strategic plan, and science diplomacy.

He highlighted work related to dry forest, nitrogen cycles and AGUASCAPES as examples of how the IAI promotes scientific research and links research to the national and international policy agendas.

Pointing to changes, Castellanos underscored the need for the IAI to, *inter alia*:
- understand the region’s cross-cutting issues with a systemic vision to address different options for countries;
- link regional challenges with global ones;
- support a new generation of researchers with innovative and transdisciplinary visions;
- ensure scientific knowledge is accessible, especially to policymakers;
- increase its visibility in the Americas;
- build scientific capacity of countries to work on evidence-based policymaking; and
- leverage financial support for climate adaptation in developing countries.

He stressed that scientists must clearly communicate the concept of “uncertainty,” and differentiate information for use at the national and international levels.

#### Presentation of Science and Technology Impact Projects

CoP Chair Cobar described science and technology in the Guatemalan context, and outlined the ways in which financing is provided for research and science projects in his country. He noted that investment in science, technology and innovation (STI) represents only 0.029% of Guatemala’s GDP, the lowest in the region.

Online at: http://enb.iisd.org/iai/cop26/
Cobar highlighted that: Guatemala is one of the few countries in the region with a constitutional article on science and technology; two laws have been passed to operationalize the article; and the budget exclusively for funding science and technology totals around US$3 million annually. He called for, inter alia: more student involvement in knowledge generation; building research skills; building a “knowledge society” based on STI; and more government investment in STI.

Presentation on Guatemala’s National Action on Climate Change
Edwin Castellanos, speaking in his capacity as professor at the Universidad del Valle de Guatemala, emphasized the need to accelerate national action towards reducing the impacts of climate change and bridging the gap between the current situation in Guatemala and what is required under the Paris Agreement.

He described the creation of the Guatemalan System of Climate Change Science (SGCCC), a national, multi-stakeholder science body on climate change, which: evaluates and generates scientific information on climate science, adaptation and mitigation; passes this information on to policymakers; and emphasizes the importance of indigenous knowledge and traditional ways of life in Guatemala.

Presentation of Mayan Science
Tata Felix Sarazua, a representative from the Sotz’il, a Mayan indigenous community, presented actions on climate change, stating that Mayan science is “the energy” that fosters in-depth research and provides advice to their communities. He explained the concept of ‘cosmovision’ in which Mayan science and technology combine ancestral knowledge, spirituality and epistemology obtained through observation and experimentation, and the formulation and verification of hypotheses.

Sarazua underscored the capacity of Mayan indigenous peoples to adapt to their environment as a result of their scientific knowledge, and that they, therefore, possess alternative solutions that can contribute to climate change adaptation. He underscored differences between Mayan and Western science and ways of accumulating and using knowledge, and called for a mixed approach using both sciences to tackle climate change.

Nana Francisca Salazar, representative from the Sotz’il, conducted a Mayan ceremony representing appreciation of, and communication with, nature.

Presentation of a New Perspective on Mayan Civilization
Tomás Barrientos, Universidad del Valle de Guatemala, spoke about a new perspective on Mayan civilization, emphasizing that what has been learned about the past can help plan for the future. Mayan civilization, he noted, was developed in a forested jungle, making exploration more difficult. He however pointed to technological innovations that have made studying and accessing these areas easier, and have enabled: measuring tree volume and areas below the trees; the ability to observe roads, agriculture, drainage and defense buildings; and better data on rural areas.

Commenting that the complexity of Mayan knowledge has been underestimated, he cited as examples: a complex writing system that is fully phonetic; astronomy and mathematics at an advanced level; and cities designed in relation to the natural environment.

Barrientos said that while the Mayan civilization existed for more than 1,000 years, the focus has been on the moment the cities were abandoned, rather than their origins and on how they survived for so long. He highlighted their efficient organization, social order and leadership, and well-managed resources, noting that agriculture, and water and resource management sustained the culture.

Administrative and Financial Matters
ELECTION OF THE COP BUREAU: CoP Chair Cobar opened the afternoon session, following which Parties elected to the CoP Bureau, Gabriel Aintablian, Uruguay, as 1st Vice-Chair, and Milagro Mainieri, Panama, as 2nd Vice-Chair.
APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA: The CoP adopted the provisional agenda (IAI/COP/26/2).
APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF COP-25: The minutes of CoP-25 (IAI/COP/26/3) were adopted without amendment.
CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE AND STANDING COMMITTEE FOR RULES AND PROCEDURES: Report of the Credentials Committee: The IAI Directorate reported that the Credentials Committee had reviewed the credentials of 12 countries. Parties took note of the report.
Report of the Standing Committee for Rules and Procedures: The US presented this report (IAI/COP/26/4b), explaining that no changes had been made to the existing rules and procedures.

The US proposed establishing a small selection committee to review the SAC candidates’ CVs and make recommendations for new SAC members, to which the CoP agreed.
FINANCIAL AND BUDGETARY MATTERS: On Wednesday afternoon, the CoP considered financial and budgetary matters (IAI/COP/26/5).
Annex 1: Overview of the Financial Status for FY 2017-2018: The IAI Directorate introduced and the CoP took note of this document (IAI/COP/26/5a).
Regis da Silva called for Parties to maintain and make extraordinary contributions, highlighting that 48% of countries have not met their contributions for FY2017-2018 and that, at this rate, IAI operations will be “unsustainable sooner or later.” He proposed that the Directorate establish a working group to analyze the status of country contributions to other international
organizations compared to contributions to the IAI and present the results to Parties, including different options for increasing Party contributions, such as whether to continue using the existing scale or adopt the UN post adjustment scale.

Brazil called for considering fluctuating exchange rates and different fiscal years depending on the country, while, at the same time, using a single scale to calculate the budget. Panama called for Parties to consider contributing more if they wish to participate more in IAI activities. Peru requested the group carefully consider criteria to be used in the comparative study.

Regis da Silva said the working group will draft and distribute its report at least six months before CoP-27.

On country contributions, Uruguay shared his country’s fundraising experience of establishing a committee to engage relevant line ministries, including ministries of housing and environment. The US highlighted a similar experience in her country, with dialogues among 13 federal agencies, and encouraged Parties to undertake similar exercises.

Regis da Silva said the Directorate is planning to reach out to the private sector and others to help those countries with serious financial situations to meet their financial commitments. Mexico suggested strengthening the capacity of researchers to better communicate their findings, in order to make the IAI more appealing to policymakers.

The CoP approved the core budget for fiscal year 2018-2019.

**Decisions:** On the core budget, the decision states that the CoP accepts and approves the core budget for FY 2018-2019 and the core budget preliminary request for FY 2019-2021.

In the decision, the CoP also:

- urges Parties to submit their contributions to the core budget in a timely manner and in accordance with the basic scale and encourages them to make extraordinary contributions whenever possible and as appropriate; and
- invites Parties to submit their contributions, as far as possible, during the year prior to, or by the beginning of the calendar year to which the contributions apply.
- In the decisions, the CoP also instructs the IAI Directorate to:

- continue monitoring Parties that have pending contributions to the Agreement by sending reminders twice yearly, with copies to permanent missions in Montevideo, Uruguay, and initiating discussions with the permanent missions of those Parties with pending contributions for three or more years; and
- work with the FAC to present to CoP-27, different options regarding increases to Party contributions and possible use of UN post adjustment scales on professional staff salaries.

**Annex 3: Auditor’s Report:** The IAI Directorate presented the document (IAI/COP/26/5c) and requested that the CoP approve the independent auditor’s report, which was reviewed by the EC and the FAC. The CoP approved the report.

**Decision:** In its decision, the CoP approves the independent auditor’s report.

**Annex 4: Report of the FAC:** EC Chair Uhle presented the FAC report (IAI/COP/26/5d), on behalf of FAC Chair William Smith. She noted no proposed increase in contributions in the coming year, with the core budget remaining at roughly US$1.4 million. She mentioned support for using the UN pay scale, but said, given the current budget environment, this may not be possible, and cited ongoing discussions on possible options. The CoP took note of the report.

**MEMBERSHIP OF THE FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE (FAC):** On this agenda item (IAI/COP/26/6), the CoP elected Silvina Barreto, Argentina, to the FAC.

**Report from the Executive Council**

EC Chair Uhle introduced the report of the EC (IAI/COP/26/7) on Wednesday afternoon. She noted the IAI Directorate’s agreement to host the Secretariat of the Belmont Forum in Uruguay, which will expand funding possibilities for projects, and thanked Uruguay for its efforts in this regard.

She said Parties should be encouraged to link work in their countries with the long-term communications strategy; and called for a strategy to diversify IAI funding sources, possibly by registering the IAI as a tax exempt or non-profit organization in the US.

Uhle then presented on issues discussed during EC-45 and the Science-Policy Workshop, which convened on 19 June, including on how regional assessments on biodiversity and ecosystem services can contribute to policymaking.

Citing the open data project, Uhle noted development of its infrastructure and creation of a portal hosted by the Government of Uruguay to house data generated from projects. She also highlighted the challenge of incorporating traditional and indigenous knowledge into projects. Uhle said the EC discussed the IAI strategic plan for the next 25 years, and that it should address how to convey IAI science to policymakers and how to make it more accessible.

In addition, she stressed the need to, _inter alia:_

- build transdisciplinary scientific capacity;
- increase the IAI’s publicity and visibility in the region;
- have the CoP engage in science-policy workshops;
- better integrate the social and physical sciences; and
- apply a systems approach, noting interlinkages among various issues, such as food and water security, social stability, the SDGs and the Paris Agreement.
Uhle also noted discussions on, among other things: fellowships for young scientists; science diplomacy workshops to bring scientists and policymakers together; and drawing on lessons from the Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research (APN).

She highlighted many activities, which overlap with those of the Organization of American States (OAS), and suggested the IAI Directorate draft an MOU between the OAS and IAI to explore opportunities for collaboration, noting the OAS has strong ties in the Caribbean, which the IAI currently lacks.

Executive Director Regis da Silva presented EC-45 recommendations and decisions for consideration by the CoP, including holding joint SAC/SPAC meetings to increase efficiency and to ensure that science-policy can interface better with science and science projects can be integrated into the science-policy process. Regarding timing of the strategic plan, Regis da Silva suggested having a preliminary draft in six months for Parties to comment on, followed by another draft and round of comment before CoP-27.

Delegates discussed the lack of and need to draft formal rules of procedure for the SPAC. Regis da Silva proposed asking the CoP to direct the EC and the Rules of Procedure Committee to draft rules of procedure for the election of SPAC members for consideration by CoP-27.

Regis da Silva said the CoP may decide to provide the SPAC with rules of procedure or the SPAC can adopt its own rules, as the SAC did.

The CoP took note of the EC report and adopted the decisions as presented by Executive Director Regis da Silva.

**Decisions:** The decisions, *inter alia*, invite the CoP to:
- direct the EC and the Rules of Procedure Committee, with the support of the IAI Directorate, to draft rules of procedure for the election of the SPAC for consideration at CoP-27;
- direct the SAC and SPAC to hold their meetings jointly; and
- consider rescheduling SPAC elections until CoP-27.

**SAC and SPAC**

**REPORT OF THE SAC:** On Wednesday afternoon, SAC Chair Castellanos presented the SAC report (IAI/COP/26/8), noting that two members will end their terms this year. He noted the nomination of five candidates by Argentina, Guatemala and Peru, from which two will be selected, and called for selecting members with a social science background in order to strengthen the SAC’s work. He also said the SAC is in the process of selecting two-year projects to be decided by the end of 2018. The US highlighted the importance of the CoP working with the SAC in project selection to ensure that IAI research activities are more transdisciplinary.

The CoP took note of the report.

**REPORT OF THE SPAC:** SPAC member Walter Baethgen, Columbia University, on behalf of SPAC Chair Brigitte Baptiste, presented the SPAC report (IAI/COP/26/9) and highlighted that the SPAC is seeking ways to strengthen its function and better articulate its role. The US said the objective of establishing the SPAC was to make the science-policy interface more workable.

Baethgen suggested more clearly communicating the SPAC’s mandate among the SAC, EC, CoP and IAI Directorate. Uruguay, the US and Brazil proposed rethinking the SPAC’s mandate in terms of the IAI Strategic Plan. Brazil supported organizing joint SAC, SPAC and EC-CoP meetings.

Mexico called for Parties to assess their national climate change policies and identify problems, needs and priorities of countries in the region. She said the IAI’s core competence is transdisciplinary research, which differentiates the IAI from other organizations.

SAC Chair Castellanos expressed caution regarding the tendency of both the SAC and SPAC to act as consultants to governments. Baethgen suggested considering research projects on how science can contribute to policymaking. Panama recommended publishing policy-relevant documents, such as policy briefs.

The CoP took note of the report.

**Ad Hoc Committee Reports**

**ENHANCING ACTIVITY OF IAI MEMBER COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVES:** On Thursday 21 June, IAI Executive Director Regis da Silva presented this report (IAI/COP/26/12) and called for the CoP to review it, noting that the IAI Directorate worked closely with some members including Brazil, the US and Uruguay, to analyze member country participation in the IAI in terms of, *inter alia*, payment of contributions and participation in IAI science projects. The CoP took note of the report.
Associates of the Institute: Rede Clima: Brazil introduced this document (IAI/COP/26/12a), noting that Rede Clima is a Brazilian network of scientists that works closely with the Government of Brazil and provides climate change analysis and studies on climate change by contributing to IPCC assessment reports. He stressed Rede Clima’s connections to other organizations in implementing the Paris Agreement. The CoP adopted the decision inviting Rede Clima to be an IAI Associate.

Decisions: The decisions: encourage the CoP to invite Rede Clima to become an IAI Associate; and instruct the IAI Directorate to draft an invitation to Rede Clima and prepare an Agreement of Association.

Associates of the Institute: AAAS: The US introduced this document (IAI/COP/26/12b), noting that the AAAS has played a key role in developing science diplomacy in the US, is the world’s largest general scientific society, and publishes the journal Science. She emphasized that the IAI has already worked with the AAAS on projects in Argentina, Chile, Mexico, Panama and elsewhere. The CoP adopted the decision inviting AAAS to be an IAI Associate.

Decisions: The decisions: encourage the CoP to invite AAAS to become an Associate of the Institute; and instruct the IAI Directorate to draft an invitation to AAAS and prepare an Agreement of Association.

Associates of the Institute: Future Earth: The US presented this document (IAI/COP/26/12c), noting that Future Earth aims to accelerate transformations to global sustainability through research and innovation by, inter alia, leading co-design and co-production processes, and strengthening global outreach to a wider range of journalists. She noted that Future Earth and IAI have been actively working to connect science to policy processes with shared missions.

The CoP adopted the decision inviting Future Earth to be an IAI Associate.

Decisions: The decisions: encourage the CoP to invite Future Earth to become an IAI Associate; and instruct the IAI Directorate to draft an invitation to Future Earth and prepare an Agreement of Association.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE IAI TRIPARTITE STRUCTURE: Maria Uhle, Chair of the Implementation Committee for the IAI Tripartite Structure, presented the document for this agenda item (IAI/COP/26/13). She noted that discussions on establishing the IAI Science-Policy Liaison Directorate in Argentina and the Science Development Directorate in Brazil have shed light on difficulties faced by these countries regarding hosting the offices and supporting staff. She proposed that the CoP consider merging these functions with the IAI Directorate in Uruguay.

Noting the importance of utilizing the expertise and capabilities of Brazil and Argentina to be able to liaise with the Directorate in Uruguay, Uhle suggested the CoP consider retiring Decision XX/10 on the Tripartite Proposal.

Regis da Silva noted the support of Uruguay and Argentina for the decision, with Uruguay reiterating that it would continue hosting the IAI. Mexico and Regis da Silva said this decision would help decrease expenses. Regis da Silva thanked the National Science Foundation (NSF) for its support for a science-policy officer in the Directorate in Uruguay, and encouraged other countries to make similar investments.

Brazil suggested: Parties could apply for postdocs funded by the IAI, noting it would be problematic to financially support a salary in another country; and further exploring possible funding mechanisms.

The US stressed the need to form stronger ties with associates and partners to seek additional support for these positions in the IAI. Mexico suggested a programme to establish scholarships with associations providing some funds that complement salaries from origin countries.

The IAI Directorate welcomed countries to get involved in the science-policy fellowship programme, noting the training of PhDs and postdocs in policymaking, and mentioned consultations with the SAC and SPAC in this regard.


Decisions: The decisions:
• invite the CoP to retire Decision XX/10, on the Tripartite Proposal for hosting the IAI;
• invite the CoP to instruct the Integrated Operations and Finance Directorate to merge with the Science Development Directorate and the Science Policy Liaison Directorate in Montevideo; and
• encourage Parties to support work related to science and policy undertaken through the Integrated Operations and Finance Directorate.

Report of the IAI Directorate
SCIENCE REPORT: The IAI Directorate introduced the science report (IAI/COP/26/14), and highlighted action priorities such as:
• maintaining the scientific excellence standards of the IAI through close monitoring of research;
• increasing peer-review through enhancing SAC participation and augmenting SPAC interventions, which require reinforcing the coordination functions of the Directorate’s scientific team; and
• continuing the IAI’s leadership role in the production of science relevant for policymaking.

Regarding the latter, she said the IAI can achieve this through:
• research from co-design of projects, including on climate adaptation in mega-cities and sustainability;
• planning a demand-driven CRN4; and
• exploring possibilities of future research programmes aimed at informing policies that address systemic global problems, such as poverty.

The US underscored the “groundbreaking” nature of the co-design process. The IAI Directorate welcomed letters from governments expressing support for the co-design process, noting this provided legitimacy to the process. The US suggested reaching out to Future Earth’s Urban Knowledge-Action Network.

Regarding publishing a special issue in a peer-reviewed journal and producing a catalog of science-policy experiences highlighting activities and products from CRN3, Canada supported making the publication accessible to a range of readers and publishing it in an open access journal.

On gathering information about Parties’ national priorities on science and policy, Canada asked that the IAI Directorate develop a structured method for gathering this information, for example, in the form of a questionnaire similar to those used in the IPCC report scoping process. Regis da Silva responded that the IAI Directorate is in the process of developing such a survey.

Regarding harmonizing Parties’ science and technology funding schemes to match IAI calls, particularly for the CRN4, Canada suggested encouraging the IAI Directorate to develop a timeline well in advance of the launch of CRN4 to help Parties explore possible alignment between the IAI’s and
Parties’ research funding schemes. Regis da Silva mentioned consultations with Parties on this decision, encouraging national funding strategies to support funding programmes, similar to the Belmont funding mechanism.

The CoP adopted six decisions related to science.

Decisions: The decisions direct the IAI Directorate to:
• develop the synthesis and dissemination activities and products of the last phase of the CRN3 programme, including a special issue in a peer-reviewed journal and a catalog of science-policy experiences;
• continue working jointly with the National Scientific and Technical Research Council (CONICET) of Argentina in the CONICET-IAI research programme;
• gather information on Parties’ national priorities on science and science policy, especially in the context of international environmental frameworks such as the SDGs, necessary to implement the IAI Scientific Agenda and CRN4; and
• continue working in collaboration with the SAC and SPAC on promoting science by developing alliances, generating synergies with partners and seeking funds to develop scientific programmes aimed at completing the scientific knowledge needed to respond to the challenges of global change, in the context of international environmental frameworks such as the SDGs.

The decisions also invite Parties to:
• collaborate with the IAI Directorate in gathering information on their national priorities on science and science policy; and
• work with the Directorate to harmonize their science and technology funding schemes to match IAI calls, in particular with the upcoming call for CRN4.

CAPACITY-BUILDING REPORT: The IAI Directorate presented this report (IAI/COP/26/15), noting the invaluable contribution that IAI capacity-building activities have made to both science and society in the Americas.

Brazil stressed the importance of including students in the capacity-building programmes. The US suggested that the IAI should ensure that capacity-building activities are more systematic and that the IAI could potentially become a regional leader in this field. Uruguay underscored the need to conduct “training the trainer” programmes on transdisciplinary approaches.

Decisions: The decisions instruct the IAI Directorate to:
• continue to develop capacity-building programmes and activities for professionals from the Americas;
• engage with strategic partners, and support Parties by providing training in areas of national and regional interest;
• develop a new Seed Grant Program associated with the Professional Development Seminars to be implemented in 2019-2020;
• develop the IAI Science and Technology Policy Fellowships Program and submit it to CoP-27 for review and possible adoption; and
• invite Parties to participate in the IAI Research Internship Program and report back at CoP-27.

GLOBAL OUTREACH AND COOPERATION: The IAI Directorate introduced this agenda item (IAI/COP/26/16), noting activities and efforts developed and implemented by the IAI Directorate to enhance partnerships with multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, highlighting recently signed MOUs with Future Earth and IPBES.

She said the Directorate has developed partnerships with the UN Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC), the UNFCCC Regional Collaboration Centre (RCC) for Latin America and the Caribbean, and the PVBLIC Foundation, an organization that harnesses the power of media to drive social change. Representatives of the partner organizations addressed the CoP via video presentations.
Jorge Chediek, UNOSSC Director and Envoy of the Secretary-General on South-South Cooperation, noting the importance of the IAI’s leadership on climate change in the Americas, stressed that his office is ready to intensify collaboration with the IAI on efforts towards achieving the Paris Agreement and the SDGs.

Carlos Ruiz, Regional Coordinator, UNFCCC RCC for Latin America and the Caribbean, highlighted that working with the IAI on science diplomacy would help foster evidence-based policymaking.

Sergio Fernandez de Cordova, Chairman, PVBLIC Foundation, noted his organization’s mission to generate impact on policymaking and society through media outreach. He said partnering with the IAI would enable the provision of robust solutions through science communication and scientific knowledge.

Executive Director Regis da Silva presented the request from the OAS to adopt a decision on partnering with the IAI. The US suggested the Directorate ask the OAS to include similar language regarding the IAI in its equivalent process. Mexico stated that such a decision should focus on continuing dialogue with the OAS on potential collaboration, rather than on approval of a formal partnership.

The CoP adopted a number of decisions related to this sub-agenda item. **Decisions:** The decisions direct the IAI Directorate to:

- **continue to work with partners;**
- **identify opportunities to facilitate the science-policy interface, including through science communication initiatives;**
- **facilitate dissemination of scientific knowledge required for the implementation of national and international policies; and**
- **continue the dialogue already begun with the OAS to analyze the possibility of agreeing on an MOU that would enable unification of efforts in areas of common interest in the Americas.**

Another decision notes that the IAI Scientific Agenda can contribute to sustainable development in the Americas. It calls on the IAI Directorate to achieve the best possible international coordination of scientific and economic research on global change in the Americas, so the IAI can serve as an effective interface between science and the policy process.

**SCIENCE-POLICY:** IAI Executive Director Regis da Silva introduced this document (IAI/COP/26/17), noting challenges with integrating science capacity building in the science-policy interface. He said the science-policy interface will be incorporated into the new strategic plan, and would respond to the needs of local communities and other stakeholders.

The IAI Directorate noted the IAI is seeking observer status under the UN Convention to Combat Desertification. She said the IAI could play a role in facilitating synergies among conventions, noting efforts to do this, including through organizing a science-policy forum during the CBD COP 13 in Cancun in 2016.

The CoP adopted two decisions on collaboration between the IAI Directorate and MEAs and organizations. **Decisions:** The first decision invites Parties to facilitate collaboration between the IAI Directorate and national focal points to the CBD, UNFCCC and the HLPF, among others, for the communication of relevant IAI scientific project information for consideration in drafting national reports.

The second decision encourages Parties to organize side events, science-policy dialogues and other events with the IAI Directorate to explore synergies and increase the IAI’s visibility.

**COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH: IAI Long-Term Communication Strategy and Plan:** The IAI Directorate introduced this document (IAI/COP/26/18a), noting that the IAI Directorate does not currently have a staff member dedicated to implementing communications activities.

The IAI Directorate also noted the IAI’s organization of side events at UNFCCC COPs, and asked for suggestions on how to best organize such events during future COPs. She also mentioned that the Earth Negotiations Bulletin (ENB) was covering the IAI for the first time to enhance the IAI’s visibility, and pointed to the ENB’s large outreach via its social media, website and mailing lists, as well as delegates in other processes.

She said the IAI was the first to use the #scienceforaction hashtag, which the UNFCCC is now using. She presented videos produced on the IAI and the SDGs for COP 23 in collaboration with PVBLIC, and said the IAI is working with PVBLIC on a fundraising strategy.

The US suggested embedding communications when designing projects and activities, as well as having journalism students follow projects. The IAI Directorate mentioned discussions with the Yale Program on Climate Change Communication, and the possibility of working with the Inter American Press Association, which has a scholarship programme.

Costa Rica suggested introducing the IAI to meteorological institutes, which have experience in providing climate services to users and could potentially be IAI partners. Mexico suggested researchers compile important findings from IAI-funded projects and knowledge achieved through the IAI’s work to increase IAI visibility.

Brazil noted discussions with other Conventions, in addition to the UNFCCC, and asked to add specific reference to them. The CoP agreed to add a general reference to “other conventions, organizations and strategic partners” in the decision on organizing regional science communication initiatives. The CoP adopted three decisions on the long-term communications strategy. **Decisions:** The decisions:

- **instruct the IAI Directorate to adopt the IAI communication strategy and plan to increase awareness of the IAI’s Scientific Agenda, the IAI’s capacity-building programme, and activities related to provision of data and information to policymakers and other stakeholders;**
• direct the IAI Directorate to support Parties in promoting synergies, and to cooperate with MEAs and international organizations in the design and implementation of science communication activities and projects; and
• direct the IAI Directorate to organize, with the UNFCCC and other conventions, organizations and strategic partners, regional science communication initiatives to improve the provision of data and information to policymakers, and dissemination of scientific knowledge needed for the implementation of policies in light of the Paris Agreement and other MEAs.

**Outreach Brochure of the IAI:** The IAI Directorate introduced this document (IAI/COP/26/18b), noting that a brochure was developed by the IAI Directorate and will be updated annually. She highlighted that the brochure will be used as a capacity-building tool and noted the possibility of creating other outreach products. The CoP adopted the decision on the outreach brochure.

**Decision:** The decision instructs the IAI Directorate to adopt the outreach brochure and to update it annually.

**Augmenting Science Communication Capacities in IAI Research Projects:** The IAI Directorate presented this document (IAI/COP/26/18c), noting that it outlines the Directorate’s efforts to enhance capacity to communicate research results to stakeholders, including discussions, with the UNFCCC Secretariat, about organizing a workshop in the Americas on science communication. Parties took note of this document.

**25th Anniversary Publication:** The IAI Directorate presented this document (IAI/COP/26/18d), noting that the IAI Directorate has analyzed the possible contents of two publications, requested by CoP-25: a 25th anniversary publication; and a special volume in a journal with scientific, peer-reviewed articles on interdisciplinarity, science-policy integration and co-design projects.

Highlighting the need to raise awareness of the IAI in the scientific community, he called for the CoP to consider consolidating the two options in a peer-reviewed journal. Parties said the combined publication should be made available in digital form and translated into English to reach a wider audience. The US noted the importance of policy-oriented publications, such as a summary for policymakers. The CoP adopted a decision related to this sub-agenda item.

**Decision:** The decision instructs the IAI Directorate to communicate with the editors of relevant peer-reviewed journals for the publication of a special issue on the IAI, subject to the availability of financial resources, that focuses on, *inter alia*, past and current scientific projects under the CRNs, capacity-building activities, the Small Grants Program, and the potential impact of these projects on national and regional policies and decisions.

**FUNDRAISING: IAI Long-Term Funding Strategy:** Executive Director Regis da Silva introduced this document (IAI/COP/26/19a), noting that the strategy is intended to be dynamic rather than static and that it can be fine-tuned and revised as needed, as emerging issues arise and as alternate funding sources are sought.

Following a request from Brazil to elaborate on the funding strategy, Regis da Silva noted that the extra-budgetary funds mainly come from the NSF, and highlighted the need to diversify funding sources. He pointed out that there are very few research programmes in the Caribbean, and said this could benefit from more IAI involvement.

He envisioned a US$100 million endowment for consecutive projects that would follow a transdisciplinary approach, be integrated and build on each preceding project. He mentioned, among other things: foundations, individual donors and development banks as possible funding sources; the need to obtain tax-free status for the IAI to receive these types of funds; and the need for professional advice to secure such funding.

The US suggested a crowdfunding campaign as a possible funding option.

The CoP adopted a decision on the IAI long-term funding strategy.

**Decision:** The decision directs the IAI Directorate to adopt the IAI long-term funding strategy to guide efforts to secure alternate funding sources, particularly the establishment of an IAI endowment in support, *inter alia*, of the IAI Scientific Agenda, the capacity-building programme, and the provision of information to policymakers and stakeholders.

**Participation in the Belmont Forum America Information Days:** In discussing this issue (IAI/COP/26/19b), the US highlighted that the Joint Programming Initiative (JPI) in Europe is keen to work in Latin America, noted communications between the Belmont Forum and the JPI, and said the JPIs are addressing cities, climate change, biodiversity, and science and innovation. The CoP adopted a decision on this issue.

**Decision:** The decision invites the CoP to encourage national funding mechanisms and institutions, and regional and international development banks, to participate in discussions on establishing a flexible mechanism to facilitate the funding of scientific projects on global change in the Americas.

**Reporting to the CoP on Fundraising Activities by the Executive Director:** Executive Director Regis da Silva introduced this document (IAI/COP/26/19c), noting:
• the undertaking of a gap analysis to determine needs;
• preliminary discussions on crowdfunding;
• efforts to obtain tax-exempt status in the US;
• tapping into funds from the Inter-American Development Bank and the Development Bank of Latin America; and
• hosting the Belmont Forum at the IAI Directorate.

The CoP took note of the report.

DATA AND INFORMATION: The IAI Directorate presented the report on computer and network technologies (IAI/COP/26/20), highlighted the need for revamping the IAI website to make it more user friendly, and called for additional support and external funding to do this.

Mexico suggested seeking private sector contributions, noting the possibility of joint activities with the private sector for the IAI’s 25th anniversary. The CoP adopted two decisions on enhancement of the website with minor amendments.

Decisions: The decisions:
• invite Parties to provide extraordinary resources and/or technical support to enhance the IAI’s website, including use of a new content management system and database technologies; and
• direct the IAI Directorate to make efforts to secure external funding for website enhancement.

Open Data and Principles: The IAI Directorate introduced this document and draft decision (IAI/COP/26/20a), noting that the Directorate has communicated with experts working to establish open data catalogs to understand the financial and human requirement of such policies. Parties adopted the decision with a minor amendment.

Decision: The decision directs the IAI Directorate to use the open data policy and principles to provide open access, as appropriate, to data and information generated by IAI-funded research.

Member Country Data-Sheets: The IAI Directorate presented this document (IAI/COP/26/20b), noting efforts of the IAI Directorate to post individual member country data-sheets, which provide information on benefits each member country receives from the IAI and the country’s contributions to the Institute, on the IAI website. He invited the CoP to review the data-sheets and send comments for improvement to the IAI Directorate. Parties took note of the document.

Access to Official IAI Documents: The IAI Directorate presented this document (IAI/COP/26/20c), noting the Directorate’s efforts to make them available with a numbering system, which facilitates monitoring of activities related to decisions and provides a means to better cite decisions and resolutions in official documents and bibliographies. Parties took note of the document.

Elections

EC MEMBERS: EC Chair Uhle presented the document on the selection of EC members (IAI/COP/26/21), and recommended that the CoP elect a maximum of nine members, including the EC Chair, for the years 2018-2020. Several delegates questioned whether non-active member countries could be candidates. Regis da Silva and the EC Chair said voting would not exclude non-active members.

Parties then voted and selected the US, Mexico, Brazil, Panama, Uruguay, the Dominican Republic, Chile, Guatemala and Colombia as EC members for 2018-2020.

SAC MEMBERS: EC Chair Uhle presented this document (IAI/COP/26/22), and highlighted the criteria for the selection of members, such as understanding the role of, and relationships between, policymakers, resource managers, social scientists and natural scientists.

Uhle said a review of the candidates’ CVs by a selection committee recommended two candidates from the five nominations: Edwin Castellanos from Guatemala; and Mariana Meerhoff Scaffo from Uruguay.

The CoP voted and elected Castellanos and Meerhoff Scaffo as SAC members.

SPAC MEMBERS: This election was postponed and will take place at CoP-27.

Outstanding Issues and Conclusion of Meeting

DATE AND VENUE OF COP-27: Parties were invited to consider hosting IAI CoP-27. Ecuador offered to host the next meeting and the CoP accepted Ecuador’s offer.

CLOSING REMARKS: Delegates thanked the Government of Guatemala for hosting the conference, and the IAI Directorate for its hard work in preparing documents, facilitating the discussions and ensuring a smooth conference. Peru said he will be promoting the IAI’s work in his country. Panama said the meeting helped advance critical issues that will define the IAI in the years to come.

Mexico said the IAI can help advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The US thanked the Directorate for efforts to streamline the organization under the new Executive Director’s leadership.
Guatemala expressed his country’s commitment to more actively participate in the IAI and involve more Guatemalan scientists. Chile said that the enhanced interaction with the SAC and SPAC enriched discussions at the conference.

Ecuador noted her country’s promotion of innovation and technology, mentioning, *inter alia*, the establishment of a university in the jungle. Castellanos called for increased CoP interaction with the SAC going forward.

IAI Executive Director Regis da Silva said that the IAI Directorate is always at the service of the CoP, and thanked his team at the Directorate. CoP Chair Cobar commended the focused agenda, which prioritized IAI objectives, and the Institute’s unique efforts to bring together science and policy. He said that the meeting had increased his understanding of how the results of research and knowledge can impact policy. He closed the meeting at 3:45 pm.

**Upcoming Meetings**

**Latin American & Caribbean Climate Week (LACCW2018):** LACCW2018 aims to advance regional climate actions and support implementation of countries’ Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and climate action to deliver on the SDGs. **dates:** 20-23 August 2018 **location:** Montevideo, Uruguay **www:** https://nfppartnership.org/latin-american-caribbean-climate-week/

**CBD Workshop on the Outcomes of the IPBES-6:** Participants will discuss IPBES-6 outcomes. **dates:** 30 June 2018 **location:** Montreal, Canada **contact:** CBD Secretariat **www:** https://www.cbd.int/events/

**Twenty-second Meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (CBD SBSTTA-22):** This meeting will convene in July. **dates:** 2-7 July 2018 **location:** Montreal, Canada **contact:** CBD Secretariat **www:** https://www.cbd.int/meetings/SBSTTA-22 https://www.cbd.int/sbstta

**HLPF 2018:** HLPF 2018 will convene under the theme ‘Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies.’ Forty-seven countries are expected to present their Voluntary National Reviews, and a three-day ministerial meeting will convene from 16-18 July. **dates:** 9-18 July 2018 **location:** New York City, US **www:** https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf/2018

**The 23rd Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research (APN) Intergovernmental Meeting and Science Planning Group Meeting:** The National Research Council of Thailand will host the 23rd APN Intergovernmental Meeting and Science Planning Group Meeting. **dates:** 11-12 July 2018 **location:** Bangkok, Thailand **www:** https://www.apn-gcr.org/

**São Paulo School of Advanced Science on Ocean Interdisciplinary Research and Governance:** Instituto Oceanográfico will organize a workshop to provide graduate students with advanced knowledge on interdisciplinary ocean research and integrated science and governance. **dates:** 13-25 August 2018 **location:** São Paulo, Brazil **contact:** Instituto Oceanográfico de la Armada del Ecuador **www:** http://especa.fapesp.br/school/sao_paulo_school_of_advanced_science_on_ocean_interdisciplinary_research_and_governance/72/

**World Social Science Forum 2018 (WSSF2018):** The IAI and the Comparative Research Programme on Poverty (CROP) will jointly organize a session on poverty, water and sustainable development under global change. **dates:** 25-28 September 2018 **location:** Fukuoka, Japan **contact:** WSSF2018 Secretariat **www:** http://www.wssf2018.org/ **IPCC-48:** IPCC-48 is expected to approve the Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C (SR15). **dates:** 1-5 October 2018 **location:** Incheon, Republic of Korea **contact:** IPCC Secretariat **www:** http://www.ipcc.ch/scripts/_calendar_template.php?wg=8

**UNFCCC COP 24:** The Katowice Climate Change Conference is expected to adopt the Paris Agreement Work Programme. **dates:** 3-14 December 2018 **location:** Katowice, Poland **contact:** UNFCCC Secretariat **www:** https://unfccc.int/calendar

**IPBES-7:** IPBES-7 is expected to approve the global assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services. **dates:** 29 April - 4 May 2019 **location:** Paris, France **contact:** IPBES Secretariat **www:** https://www.ipbes.net/event/ipbes-7

**IAI CoP-27:** CoP-27 will be held in Ecuador in 2019. **dates:** TBA **location:** Ecuador **www:** http://www.iai.int/

**Glossary**

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<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAAS</td>
<td>American Association for the Advancement of Science</td>
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<td>APN</td>
<td>Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research</td>
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<td>CBD</td>
<td>Convention on Biological Diversity</td>
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<td>CIESIN</td>
<td>Center for International Earth Science Information Network</td>
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<td>CRN</td>
<td>Collaborative Research Network</td>
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<td>CoP</td>
<td>Conference of the Parties</td>
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<td>EC</td>
<td>Executive Council</td>
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<td>FAC</td>
<td>Financial and Administration Committee</td>
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<td>HLPF</td>
<td>High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development</td>
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<td>IAI</td>
<td>Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research</td>
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<td>IPBES</td>
<td>Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services</td>
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<td>IPCC</td>
<td>Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change</td>
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<td>JPI</td>
<td>Joint Programme Initiative</td>
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<td>MEA</td>
<td>multilateral environmental agreement</td>
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<td>MOU</td>
<td>Memorandum of Understanding</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>non-governmental organization</td>
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<td>NSF</td>
<td>National Science Foundation</td>
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<td>OAS</td>
<td>Organization of American States</td>
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<td>SAC</td>
<td>Scientific Advisory Committee</td>
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<td>Sustainable Development Goals</td>
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<td>SPAC</td>
<td>IAI Science-Policy Liaison Advisory Committee</td>
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<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<td>UNFCCC</td>
<td>United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change</td>
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