



The role of the national representatives to the IAI

The purpose of this document is to enhance the understanding of the national representatives to the IAI regarding their role in the Institute, based on the institutional documents produced by the IAI Parties, such as the Agreement Establishing the IAI and the Rules of Procedure of the Conference of the Parties.

Background

According to the [*Rules of the Conference of the Parties of the Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research \(IAI\)*](#), each Party shall designate one Permanent Representative and one or more Alternate Permanent Representatives to the IAI. Each Party shall send such designations to the Executive Director through its competent diplomatic authority (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Embassy or Consulate).

The Conference of the Parties

The [*Agreement Establishing the Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research*](#), states that:

1. The Conference of the Parties shall be the principal policy-making organ of the Institute.
2. Each Party shall be a member of the Conference of the Parties.
3. The Conference of the Parties shall meet at least once every year.
4. The Conference of the Parties shall:
 - a) consider and adopt measures to establish, review and update the policies and procedures of the Institute, as well as to evaluate its work and the accomplishment of its objectives;
 - b) review periodically and approve, on the basis of recommendations of the Scientific Advisory Committee, the Scientific Agenda of the Institute and to consider and approve its long-range plans and annual program and budget, taking into account:
 - i) The processes or issues that are unique to the region and their significance on a global scale;
 - ii) The research strengths within the region and how those strengths can be best utilized in order to contribute to the global effort to understand global change; and
 - iii) The need to integrate research on global issues through cooperation among research institutes, among States and among the different parts of the Inter-American region, and with regional and international global change research programs.
 - c) Consider and approve the financial policies, the annual budget and the financial records of the Institute submitted by the Director;

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- d) Elect the Members of the Executive Council and the members of the
- e) Advisory Committee, and the Director;
- f) Consider and approve the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Council;
- g) Decide on the venue for its annual ordinary and extraordinary meetings, which shall be rotated among the Parties;

- h) Issue, through the Director, invitations to become Associates of the Institute, as provided in Article XI of this Agreement
- i) Authorize the Director to conclude with an accepting Associate an Agreement of Association;
- j) Decide on the development and designation of Institute Research Centers and on their location, as provided in Article IX;
- k) Make decisions regarding the location of the Directorate;
- l) Establish ad hoc committees as necessary;
- m) Approve amendments to this Agreement in accordance with Article XV, Section 3; and
- n) Perform other functions as necessary to achieve the objectives of the Institute

The Conference of the Parties meets typically in May or June, alternating between in-person and virtual meetings each year. It is strongly encouraged that representatives participate in this meeting. Accredited representatives have the right to speak and vote on behalf of their country. They can also volunteer to serve in ad-hoc committees that maintain activities between sessions to meet specific objectives. Alternatively, in some cases they may nominate representatives to those committees.

Parties with membership in the [Executive Council](#) (EC) are represented by its national representatives. The Executive Council is composed of nine (of 19) Parties elected by the Conference of the Parties for two-year terms. The Executive Council develops policy recommendations for submission to and approval by the Conference of the Parties and ensures that policies adopted by the Conference of the Parties are implemented by the Directorate.

The Executive Council meets twice a year: right before the CoP in May or June alternating between in-person and virtual meetings each year, and again in November, typically virtually. It is strongly encouraged that Representatives which countries have membership in the EC, participate in this meeting.

The Directorate of the IAI may sponsor the travel costs of representatives to the meetings of the Conference of the Parties and the Executive Council, subject to the availability of funds. However, member countries are advised to reserve funds for these expenses when planning their financial participation in the IAI.

Representatives are expected to maintain an active role between sessions, disseminating IAI activities in their country and providing the IAI with relevant data and information about activities in their country.

The Role of the national representatives

National representatives are expected to enhance the connection between the IAI and States, as well as the scientific community and other stakeholders at the national level. They play a crucial role in nominating experts to the [Scientific Advisory Committee \(SAC\)](#) and the [Science-Policy Advisory Committee \(SPAC\)](#) and in sharing information regarding workshops and other activities undertaken by the IAI.

In accordance with the IAI work plan, the designated national representatives will serve on a continuous basis.

Objectives

National representatives work to strengthen the connection between the IAI at the global level and government agencies, scientific institutions, individual experts, and other stakeholders at the national level. They coordinate national efforts relevant to the IAI and act as a link between the IAI and the national level. The specific tasks of national representatives are detailed below.

Criteria

Given the importance of establishing a representative for each State participating in the IAI, the national representative should work in an appropriate national authority or institution. States may consider professionals working in ministries or national secretariats in environmental sciences, particularly those with experience related to the science-policy interface in environment, science, technology, health, oceans, biodiversity, and agriculture.

Nominations of national representatives should be made in writing by its competent diplomatic authority (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Embassy or Consulate) to the IAI Directorate at soledad.noya@dir.iai. The notification should include the full name, position, and department/institution of the nominated national representative as well as their e-mail address. This information will be published on the IAI website in the [list of Representatives](#).

Mandate

National representatives will:

- Facilitate the nomination of experts to the SAC and SPAC.
- Promote the exchange and dissemination of information.
- Raise awareness regarding matters relevant to the IAI.
- Provide assistance in organizing workshops and other activities in support of the IAI.
- Contribute to the overall functioning of the IAI.
- National representatives may collaborate among themselves and with the IAI [Associates](#), as appropriate.

Tasks of the national representatives

1. **Facilitate the nomination of experts to the SAC and SPAC:**
 - Reach out to relevant government agencies, national scientific institutions, and other organizations to secure qualified experts, considering gender balance.
 - Identify potential experts to fill expertise gaps and secure their nominations.
2. **Ensure contact details are up-to-date in the IAI Directorate databases.**
3. **Promote the exchange and dissemination of information:**
 - Share information received about IAI activities with national stakeholders.
 - Share relevant national-level information (e.g., assessments, scientific papers) with the IAI Directorate.
 - Contribute to identifying and sharing information on science and policy priorities and capacity-building needs and opportunities.
 - Provide input on the development of the IAI's outreach and engagement strategy, reflecting national needs and experiences.
4. **Raise awareness about the IAI and promote its outputs at the national level:**
 - Share IAI-related information products with national stakeholders.
 - Present information about the IAI to national stakeholders using materials prepared by the IAI Directorate.
 - Answer questions about the IAI from national stakeholders and share the nature of requests with the Directorate to aid in developing standard responses.
 - Support the implementation of the IAI's outreach and engagement strategy, as appropriate.
5. **Assist in organizing workshops and other activities:**
 - Share information about workshops and other activities with national stakeholders.
 - Nominate experts for workshops and other activities, considering gender balance.
 - Assist in organizing regional workshops as required.
 - Disseminate outcomes of workshops and activities at the national level.
 - Provide input to the development and implementation of the [Strategic Plan](#), the [STeP program](#), capacity-building program, and [Science Diplomacy Center \(SDC\)](#), upon request.
6. **Contribute to the overall functioning of the IAI:**
 - Provide feedback on existing processes.
 - Provide input on developing mechanisms, strategies, processes, and templates, upon request.
 - Coordinate national stakeholder participation in IAI-related processes and activities.

- Share lessons learned and best practices relevant to the IAI.
- 7. Collaborate with other national representatives and Associates:**
- Develop regional or subregional networks of representatives.
 - Maintain exchanges and cooperate with national representatives to other organizations and processes that may offer beneficial insights or experiences.

Tasks of the Directorate

The contact point for all national representatives will be the Directorate, which will:

1. Share regular updates on the progress of activities, including work plan outputs.
2. Share data produced by IAI science projects as well as the advisory committees' contributions to the IAI.
3. Share information materials and tools produced by the Directorate.
4. Hold virtual meetings with representatives at intervals determined in consultation with representatives.
5. Communicate with national agencies, institutions, and diplomatic authorities, copying the relevant national representative.
6. Collect relevant information from national representatives (e.g., assessments, scientific papers, national plans, relevant activities) and share it with advisory committees, ad-hoc committees, working groups, the Executive Council Bureau, and/or on the IAI website.
7. Provide a centralized source of information on the IAI targeted to the representative.

[IAI's brochure](#)