



COMPENDIUM OF CANADA'S ENGAGEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS AND INSTRUMENTS

Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research (IAI)

SUBJECT CATEGORY:

Climate Change

TYPE OF AGREEMENT / INSTRUMENT:

Voluntary International Instrument

FORM:

Cooperative Forum

STATUS:

Canada has been a member of the IAI since it was established in 1991.

LEAD & PARTNER DEPARTMENTS:

Lead: Environment and Climate Change Canada

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:**Web Links:**

- [IAI web site](#)

Contacts:

[ECCC Inquiry Centre](#)

COMPENDIUM EDITION:

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PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY

Humans have affected practically all ecosystems on earth. As a result, the 21st-century is faced with environmental changes from local to global scales that require large efforts and cooperation between countries to address. The IAI supports science to help governments and other organizations make decisions about how to deal with these global changes and to prevent future ones. By being a member of the IAI, Canada supports the creation of information needed to solve global change challenges in the Americas. Canada has been an active participant in the IAI since it started in 1991.

OBJECTIVE

The IAI is a regional international organization that promotes scientific research and capacity building to inform decisions-makers in the Americas. Its objective is to develop the best possible international coordination of scientific and economic research on the extent, causes and consequences of global change in the Americas.

KEY ELEMENTS

The IAI is comprised of 19 member countries. Government representatives from each country convene at an annual Conference of the Parties to establish, review and update the Institute's policies and procedures and evaluate its work and accomplishments. It also approves the IAI's scientific agenda, annual and long-range plans and financial budgets.

The Conference of the Parties is supported by a 9 member Executive Council, the Scientific Advisory Committee, Science Policy Advisory Committee and the IAI Directorate that manages the organizations science programs.

EXPECTED RESULTS

The Small Grants Program (2019-2021) funded six projects, which focused on the role of ecosystem services in adaptation to global change for human wellbeing. Canada led as Principal Investigators in two projects and supported two additional projects in collaboration with academics from the Americas.

The third Collaborative Research Network Program (CRN 3), 2012-2019 concluded, with 17 research projects addressing impacts of anthropic activities on terrestrial and marine ecosystems. Such activities -which include agriculture, building of roads, urban development, among others- affect ecosystems and ultimately human health.

The IAI also continues to support technical and professional development workshops and seminars to foster better science-policy integration and application of scientific information in decision-making in support of capacity building in the Americas.

CANADA'S INVOLVEMENT

Canada has been an active member of the IAI since its inception, holding leadership positions on the Executive Council and on the Science Advisory and Science Policy Advisory Committees. Canada currently has one member elected to the IAI's Science Policy Advisory Committee: Dr. Javier Gracia-Garza, (Director General, Science and Technology Branch at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada).

Canada provides consistent financial support to the IAI (\$190,575/year) and is the second largest contributor to the IAI behind the United States. This funding is directed towards supporting the operational costs of the organization. Marc D'lorio (Assistant Deputy Minister, Science and Technology Branch at Environment and Climate Change Canada) is Canada's Focal Point and head of delegation for the IAI.

Canada maintains a central function in the organization, supporting: capacity building for research development; development of research models and methods; scientific cooperation and production; and transparent operations.

RESULTS / PROGRESS

Activities

Canada will continue to work with the IAI in 2022/23 to advance key priorities identified in the last Conference of Parties and Executive Council meetings (June 2021 and November 2021, respectively). The IAI has begun work planning to assist member countries in developing regional climate change assessments; Canada has offered to provide expertise in this area to help guide this initiative as it progresses.

Under the Small Grant Program (2019-2021), Canadian academics received a total of \$391,784 USD to complete two projects. Gabriela Alonso Yanez, University of Calgary, collaborated with academics from Chile, Columbia, and Uruguay on *Incorporating Local and Traditional Knowledge Systems: New Insights for Ecosystem Services and Transdisciplinary Collaborations*. Jeremy Pittman, University of Waterloo, collaborated with academics from Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador, and Uruguay on *Small-scale Fisheries and Marine Ecosystem Services: Adaptation and Transformation to Secure Human Wellbeing*. Results were presented to member countries in advance of the latest intersessional Executive Council meeting in Fall 2021.

Under CRN3 (2012-2019), The University of Alberta, completed its research project ((led by Dr. Sanchez-Azofeifa, Director, Center for Earth Observation Sciences, University of Alberta)), on *Enhancing the Knowledge Exchange for Conservation and Management of Tropic Dry Forest in the Americas (TROPI-DRY)*.

Canada's leadership on the Science Policy Advisory Committee (SPAC) has helped advance the dialogue among members of the Conference of the Parties on the importance of science policy integration. Through discussions with the IAI governance bodies, SPAC is aiming to improve the use of the knowledge generated by researchers of the IAI by country members. SPAC is also helping identify potential new partners of the IAI to diversify funding partners of its research programme, and is exploring linkages and opportunities for collaboration with the Belmont Forum's Collaborative Research Action program.