



## 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:**

[Canadian IAI Secretariat](#)  
[ECCC Inquiry Centre](#)

**COMPENDIUM EDITION:**

October 2018

**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 which manages the organizations science programs.

**EXPECTED RESULTS**

At present, the third Collaborative Research Network Program (CRN 3), 2012-2018 is under way, with 10 approved research proposals 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 is a member of the Working Group to draft a new Strategic Plan.

Canada currently has two members who have been 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); and Dr. James Rusak, (Group Leader, The Dorset Environmental Science Centre, Ontario Ministry of Environment and Climate Change).

Canada provides consistent financial support to the IAI (\$197,575/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. Rupa Bhawal-Montmorency (Director General, Science and Technology Strategies Directorate 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.

Under the previous Collaborative Research Network 2 (CRN2) Canadian researchers produced the greatest number of publications per number of researchers involved, with over 150 publications.

## **RESULTS / PROGRESS**

### **Activities**

The University of Calgary is partnered with the IAI and others to host a seminar on *transdisciplinary approaches to integrating policy and science for sustainability*, held in Calgary, Alberta in 2017.

Under CRN3 (2012-2018), The University of Alberta, is working to complete 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)*.

Dr. Sanchez-Azofeifa was appointed lead author of the International Program on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) Americas Assessment.

Canada's leadership on the Science Policy Advisory Committee (SPAC) has helped advanced 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. It is also hoping to work with member countries to identify priority areas of work to maintain the relevance of this organisation. SPAC is also helping identify potential new partners of the IAI to diversify funding partners of its research programme.