



Finding common ground
*developing partnerships around
shared priorities in the Americas*

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Overview

1. The Americas and shared priorities
2. Key opportunities and challenges
3. Strategies for meeting challenges and identifying opportunities
4. Strategy for identifying, developing and maintaining partnerships
5. Conclusions

Introduction

- Identifying priorities at the science-society-policy nexus
- The view from a regional organization
- Traditional vs new models to translate science to policy

The Americas

A sub-region of the Americas, the Amazon region includes:

- A unique ecosystem with $\frac{1}{4}$ of all known species in the world
- Between 5 to 30 million species of which only 1.4 million are described
- Represents more than half of tropical rainforest in the world
- Approximately 38.7 people live in the region (11% of the population of Amazon region countries)
- An astonishing 420 different indigenous peoples speaking 86 languages and 650 dialects

The Americas and shared priorities

- Priorities are defined at the regional/international level by governance frameworks:
 - The Sustainable Development Goals
 - The UN Strategic Plan for Biodiversity
 - The Paris Agreement
- Among other national obligations within a regional/international framework

The Americas and shared priorities

The traditional model of science to policy at a regional level follows a well defined path:

- Countries identify a problem where solutions must come from regional/international collaboration
- Scientific bodies of Multi-lateral Environmental Agreements make recommendations
- Recommendations go to a Conference of the Parties and are converted into policy

The Americas and shared priorities

Fragmented governance:

World leaders have signed up to an impressive *500 internationally recognized agreements* in the past 50 years, including 61 atmosphere-related; 155 biodiversity-related; 179 related to chemicals, hazardous substances and waste; 46 land conventions; and 196 conventions that are broadly related to issues dealing with water

Key opportunities and challenges

- Within this fragmented governance environment the Americas has been uniquely effective in making its priorities known
- GRULAC, for example, is one of the most effective negotiating blocks in many MEAs
- Such homogeneity in action provides many many opportunities

Key opportunities and challenges

The IAI is the result of American countries deciding to establish a collaborative mechanism to provide its policy makers with the best available scientific information for more informed decision making

In many ways, it reflects the cooperative and successful regional framework found in the Americas

Key opportunities and challenges

From a regional organization's perspective, key opportunities and challenges are identified through:

- The establishment of partnerships—realizing that no one organization can succeed alone;
- Making use of partnerships to establish self-sustaining networks of peers
- Supporting open science and data

Key opportunities and challenges

Open data and science as an example:

- Sustainable Development Goals (the role of information in the science policy interface, para. 83)
- The UN Strategic Plan for Biodiversity and its Aichi Targets (para 6: Insufficient scientific information for policy and decision making is a further obstacle for implementation...)
- Article 17 of the CBD on information exchange

Key opportunities and challenges

- Discussions on the adoption of a “Regional agreement on access to information, participation and justice in environmental matters in Latin America and the Caribbean” UNECLAC (LC/L.4059/Rev.3)
- Principle 10 of Rio Declaration on citizen access to information
- North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation (NAAEC) Article 21 on Provision of Information

Key opportunities and challenges

- UNFCCC: Art. 4, para (h): *Promote and cooperate in the **full, open and prompt exchange of relevant scientific, technological, technical, socio-economic and legal information related to the climate system and climate change, and to the economic and social consequences of various response strategies***

Strategies for meeting challenges and identifying opportunities

The IAI functions in this ecosystem by working with Member Countries to understand national priorities as defined by regional/international frameworks

This understanding provides the context for the science and activities, including capacity building at the regional level, it supports

Strategies for meeting challenges and identifying opportunities

Within this context, the IAI's Collaborative Research Networks (CRN now at its 3rd iteration) is a clear manifestation of the desire by American countries to support a joint mutually beneficial approach to science and the use of results from that science for more effective policy making

Strategy for identifying, developing and maintaining partnerships

The CRN3 funds two types of projects:

- a) 10 five-year projects, funded with between USD 700,000 and 1,000,000, resulted from an initial call for proposals and a second call focusing on Ecosystem Services;
- b) 7 smaller projects, funded with between USD 98,000 to 200,000 for up to 3 years

Strategy for identifying, developing and maintaining partnerships

The impact and success of this and past CRNs should not be underestimated

It has also seeded a uniquely successful network of scientists throughout the Americas

And it has established a number of innovative capacity building activities focusing on transdisciplinary research and science to policy dialogues

Strategy for identifying, developing and maintaining partnerships

None of this could have been possible without:

- Funding to seed the scientific projects
- A collaborative, multinational approach to identifying and researching an issue anchored to national needs and articulated internationally
- Member country involvement through its scientific communities
- Interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research

Conclusions

The Americas offer a unique opportunity for supporting collaborative, multinational effective scientific projects

It has a well established network of peers

As a region, it is uniquely effective in the articulation of its needs and in the involvement of its scientists and policy makers in international fora

Conclusions

In summary, the Americas have will, the expertise and the willingness to:

- *overcome challenges and build opportunities for multi-national collaboration, and*
- *strengthen linkages to global frameworks to leverage extramural funding for Americas Regional priorities*

It only needs your support.

Thank you

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