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UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

SUBSIDIARY BODY FOR SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE

Twenty-sixth session

Bonn, 7–18 May 2007

Item 6 of the provisional agenda

Research and systematic observation

**Views on how the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice
might facilitate a more effective dialogue between Parties and regional and
international climate change research programmes
in the context of decision 9/CP.11**

Submissions from regional and international climate change research programmes

1. The Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), at its twenty-fourth session, agreed to explore how it might facilitate a more effective dialogue between Parties and the regional and international climate change research programmes, in the context of decision 9/CP.11. The SBSTA invited Parties and these programmes to submit to the secretariat, by 23 February 2007, their views on this subject, for consideration by the SBSTA at its twenty-sixth session (FCCC/SBSTA/2006/5, para. 46).
2. The secretariat has received two such submissions. In accordance with the procedure for miscellaneous documents, these submissions are attached and reproduced* in the language in which they were received and without formal editing.

* These submissions have been electronically imported in order to make them available on electronic systems, including the World Wide Web. The secretariat has made every effort to ensure the correct reproduction of the texts as submitted.

FCCC/SBSTA/2007/MISC.8

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PAPER NO. 1: INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL CHANGE RESEARCH

**Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research (IAI) submission - SBSTA-26
Agenda item 6. Research and Systematic observation**

At its twenty-fourth session, the SBSTA invited climate change research programs to provide a short summary report identifying any gaps in their research programs with respect to research needs of the Convention. Pursuant to that request and the UNFCCC special side-event held during SBSTA-24, the Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research (IAI) submitted a summary report in response to the above-mentioned invitation, contained in document FCC/SBSTA/2006/MISC.15.

The SBSTA also noted the need for enhancing two-way communication and cooperation between the Parties and the regional and international research programs to meet the research needs of the Convention and invited Parties and research programs to provide their views on this issue. The IAI hereby submits its views on how the SBSTA might facilitate this enhanced two-way communication and cooperation.

The IAI, an intergovernmental organization with 19 member countries in the Americas, fosters global change research beyond the scope of national programs in order to increase the scientific capacity of the region and inform and advise policymakers. Global environmental change (GEC) topics include: climate change, stratospheric ozone depletion, loss of biodiversity, changes in hydrological processes and the supply of freshwater, land degradation and environmental stresses on food-producing systems that significantly affect human health and well-being. Effective policy response to GEC requires the integration of political, scientific and technical considerations. To fulfill its mandate towards informed action on GEC in the region, the IAI must identify appropriate audiences for the scientific information it produces and improve mechanisms of communication.

The UNFCCC special side event on research needs relating to the Convention provided an opportunity for the IAI to present its activities to Parties and other research programs. One positive outcome arising from that presentation was the identification of synergies with a climate change governmental Initiative in the Americas, the Ibero-American Network for Climate Change Offices (or Red Iberoamericana de Oficinas de Cambio Climático -- RIOCC). Sixteen IAI member countries in Latin America are also RIOCC member countries. The IAI is currently collaborating with RIOCC to explore climate change and adaptation issues of common-interest in Latin America. This collaboration will strengthen communication between the IAI and representatives from climate change offices in the region. The SBSTA may wish to encourage synergies between regional governmental initiatives and research organizations as a way to enhance communication and cooperation.

One of the main challenges to science is to achieve societal and policy relevance. This will require a dialogue among science, society and policy sectors. The IAI is committed to supporting representation of its scientists, where relevant, at UNFCCC expert meetings as a way to increase awareness of policy-relevant issues among IAI's scientific community.

In this context, the principal investigator of the Collaborative Research Network (CRN) project on "Paleotempestology of the Caribbean Region: A multi-proxy, multi-site study of the spatial and temporal variability of Caribbean hurricane activity", represented the IAI at the UNFCCC Expert meeting on Adaptation for Small Islands Developing States (SIDS), held in Kingston, Jamaica from February 5 to 7, 2007. The 5-year CRN project involves 13 scientists from 10 institutions in four countries (Canada, Costa Rica, Mexico and USA) working on hurricane risks for potential loss of life, economic damage and post-hurricane environmental and health hazards in the Caribbean. The results will be made available to decision makers and the public aiming to reduce vulnerabilities in the region. Through this and other

projects of its “Caribbean Initiative”, which combine paleotempestology with modelling of tropical cyclones, sedimentology and coastal integrity, the IAI can play a role in the development of vulnerability assessment and adaptation strategies for SIDS in the Caribbean.

Previous to this initiative, IAI participated in two UNFCCC Workshops on the Preparation of National Communications from non-Annex I Parties (Mauritius, 2003 and Phillipines, 2004). The IAI remains committed to supporting national communication of its member countries by updating and distributing reports on scientific, capacity-building and training activities to country representatives. In 2006, the IAI contributed to the elaboration of the second national report of its host country, Brazil. The SBSTA may wish to assist Parties, regional and international research programs to identify suitable audiences in the policy sector to effectively strengthen that communication.

The IAI, jointly with the Scientific Committee on Problems of the Environment, SCOPE, has analyzed the interactions between its science programs, society and the policy arena. This analysis will be published in 2007 as part of the SCOPE series by Island Press. The IAI analysis identified the following issues needed to construct a cycle of policy-relevant science to guide scientifically-informed policy:

- societal concerns are incorporated into the agenda of public decision-making based on knowledge generated by scientific research;
- policies are changed to effectively integrate scientific knowledge into concrete actions; and,
- actual results of policies change the scientific agenda by identifying knowledge gaps, prompting further research.

In order for SBSTA to facilitate an enhanced two-way communication and cooperation, Parties and research organizations may wish to understand current obstacles and identify strategies that can be used to overcome these obstacles resulting in enhanced communication. The SBSTA may also wish to identify a channel for that dialogue to take place.

IAI member countries are: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, United States of America and Venezuela.

PAPER NO. 2: WORLD CLIMATE RESEARCH PROGRAMME ON BEHALF OF
THE EARTH SYSTEM SCIENCE PARTNERSHIP

Submission by the WCRP on behalf of the ESSP

Improving Dialogue on the Research Needs of the Convention

In response to the invitation by the SBSTA at its twenty-fourth session to provide views on how the SBSTA might facilitate a more effective dialogue between Parties and the regional and international climate change research programmes, suggestions for improving dialogue between Parties and the regional and international climate change research programmes are outlined below. This response was prepared by the World Climate Research Programme on behalf of the Earth System Science Partnership (the World Climate Research Programme, the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme, the International Human Dimensions Programme, Diversitas and ESSP's four joint projects on carbon, food, water and health).

We propose three activities:

1. Focused side events at each even-numbered SBSTA Session, commencing at the twenty-sixth session of SBSTA (May 2007). These side events should be especially targeted to high profile and timely issues. For May 2007, we propose to hold a side event on **"Connecting Earth System Science Research to Climate Change Policy"** (see attached description). This side event is appropriate now to assist in planning the research required to underpin a possible IPCC Assessment in the 2013 time frame. We bring to your attention that the information to be presented in this Side Event is central to and underpins the needs of the "Five-year programme of work on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change".
2. An in session workshop on research needs of the Parties. This workshop should be held as soon as possible and potentially at the twenty-eighth session of SBSTA. We note that Decisions taken at the twenty-fifth session of SBSTA call for an in-session workshop on Climate modelling, scenarios and downscaling. This is clearly an area of expertise of the ESSP and WCRP in particular and we would be keen to contribute to this in-session workshop.
3. There are likely to be specific needs and concerns of the Parties and SBSTA for which the ESSP could provide sound, informed and timely advice. We note that there have been previous examples where direct advice from the ESSP has been valuable in resolving issues and in preparing joint workshops and we are keen to partake in a two-way dialogue which would lead to such direct requests and subsequent advice.

The ESSP and the WCRP look forward to further and fruitful interactions on the SBSTA.

SBSTA 26: ESSP SIDE EVENT
Connecting Earth System Science Research to Climate Change Policy

Event Overview

The Earth System Science Partnership (ESSP) aims to deliver research outputs of value to users seeking information regarding changes that are occurring to the Earth System and the implications of these changes for global sustainability. Growing observational and modelling evidence is clearly indicating that climate change induced by increasing concentrations of anthropogenic greenhouse gases has the potential of having major consequences on human societies and natural ecosystems. The SBSTA 26 Side Event serves to strengthen the dialogue between scientists and the policy community to better incorporate scientific results in the development of policies focused on anthropogenic climate change. In particular, the event focuses on further identifying relevant Earth System science research that will meet the needs and requirements of UNFCCC.

For more information see the ESSP summary report of research needs developed from SBSTA 24 at <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2006/sbsta/eng/misc15.pdf>.
