

IANAS STRATEGIC PLAN

IANAS is the Inter American Network of Academies of Science made up of 19 national science academies, 3 regional Academies and one Academy with observer status from throughout the Americas. The goals of IANAS are:

- To strengthen and empower science communities in the American hemisphere by enhancing the capacities of academies and science associations.
- To serve as formal and informal sources of S&T advice and expertise to all levels of government and civil society in the Americas.
- To develop programs on scientific capacity building, science education, science communication and other science-related issues of significance to the Americas;
- To collaborate with the Global Network of Science Academies (IAP), the Inter Academy Council (IAC) and allied organizations such as ICSU and TWAS.

IANAS is an organization of science academies. Science academies are self-renewing honorific organizations, independent of governments, in which members are elected on the basis of scientific merit. By virtue of their credibility and independence from government, academies provide an independent perspective on societal issues related to science, technology, health and education.

Networks are powerful instruments for sharing and rapidly disseminating information, best practices and novel ideas through a larger community. As the science academy network for the Americas, IANAS is dedicated to strengthening and empowering science communities in the hemisphere by enhancing the capacities of academies and science associations. The major issues of the 21st century transcend national borders and IANAS seeks to play a coordinating role in bringing effective solutions to governments and societies within the Americas.

Vision: IANAS aspires to make the academies of the Americas more effective instruments in providing science advice to governments, in engaging society in implementing S&T based solutions to pressing problems, and in so doing, to contribute to social and economic development in the hemisphere.

Mission: IANAS works through the science academies of the Americas to (1) enhance human resource development in science, technology and health by improving the quality of science education at all levels; (2) develop programs that employ science to provide solutions to major societal challenges such as water resource needs, energy development, disease surveillance, disaster mitigation,

biodiversity loss, environmental pollution, climate change and other problems; and (3) promote STI (science, technology and innovation) strategies essential for economic development, poverty reduction and quality of life at the national and regional levels.

Accomplishments in the first decade: IANAS was established as a consequence of a meeting of the Academies of the hemisphere in Santiago, Chile in May 2004. In the first decade since its inception IANAS has initiated active programs in academy capacity building, science education, water resources, energy, and women for science. Each of these programs has developed a series of successful activities and these were detailed in the 2013 strategic plan accepted at the IANAS General Assembly at Punta Cana, Dominican Republic on 18th Jul, 2013

Accomplishments in 2013-2016: The overarching goal remained the strengthening science communities in the hemisphere and to provide an independent source of science policy advice to governments on key challenges.

This was achieved in a number of ways. For example, in 2014 a number of the IANAS executive helped evaluate potential candidates for the newly founded Academy of Science in Ecuador and the newly elected Fellows were inducted in February 2015. Another important initiative, in response to a request to the Nicaraguan Academy of Science, was to help organize and seek funding for an international workshop to identify major scientific and technical questions associated with the proposed Interoceanic Canal Project in Nicaragua.

The Science Education working group has continued to work on improving the Indagala web portal that aims to provide support for primary and high school science teachers (www.indagala.org) that they established with support for the Mexican Academy of Sciences. They are also working on a report "*Ten years of the IANAS Science Education Program in the Americas*" which should be released in 2016. They have also been working with the Women for Science on subjects of common interest.

Women for Science have been working on two major initiatives. The first was the "*Survey of Women in the Academies of the Americas*" a report released in May. The second is the preparation of "*Young Women Scientists: A bright future for the Americas*" that was released on March 8, 2016, International Women's Day,. This is follow-up of their first publication "*Women Scientists in the Americas*", which highlighted senior scientists in the different countries (and has been downloaded from the IANAS website more than 400,000 times)

The Water working group released a second major publication "*Urban Water Challenges in the Americas: A view from the academies of sciences*" in March 2015. It should be noted that the first book published by the committee, "*Diagnostico del Agua en las Americas*" (first released in Spanish in 2012, and now available in English) has been downloaded in excess of 900,000 times. The Water working group has also been forging links with their counterparts in NASAC: they already held one joint meeting in, with another in the planning stage.

The Energy working group has been actively working on a major publication "*Science Guide towards a sustainable energy for the future. A path proposed by the Academies*" with an expected release date in early 2016. It is important to note that there will be a chapter "*Gender, Energy and Water*" that was prepared in conjunction with the Women for Science

and the Water Program working groups. This reflects the desire of the IANAS Executive to forge stronger links between the existing working groups.

IANAS has just become involved in a new project organized by IAP, with funding from The German Ministry of Education and Research. IANAS selected a group of experts from the Americas to participate in the initial planning meeting for the IAP Project on in Halle on 1-2 June, also attended by representatives from IANAS's counterparts in Europe (EASAC), Africa (NASAC) and Asia (AASSA). Over the next two years each of the four regional networks will establish expert panels to prepare a report for the different countries in their perspective regions.

A report on all recent IANAS activities was published by Clegg et al. (2015) and may be accessed at

<http://www.sciencediplomacy.org/article/2015/interamerican-network-academies-sciences>

Goals for 2016-2019 and beyond

To ensure IANAS is a key provider of science policy advice throughout the Americas, we will continue to assist national Academies establish links with their government officials, either directly or through reports that address matters of national/international importance. The recent publications of IANAS certainly have provided such opportunities and the appropriate selection of projects will ensure the same in the years to come. The participation of the IANAS member Academies in the ongoing “*Food and nutrition security and agriculture*” will certainly be one activity that will help achieve these goals.

Since its inception IANAS has maintained Science in Schools, Women for Science, Water and Energy as specific themes and, as noted above, significant advances have been made by each of the working groups. The possibility of initiating activities other areas of broad interest has been raised at a number of Executive meetings this certainly merits serious consideration. However, IANAS has limited funds and is very much dependent on the support of member Academies to function in the current state. Thus, expanding our activities would pose serious challenges. By undertaking more activities without additional funding we run the danger of producing rather superficial products and this would tarnish the excellent reputation IANAS has established to date. Consequently, there are two major initiatives for the coming three years that are, in many ways, interlinked.

We need to undertake a serious assessment of the current targeted areas to determine if these are the priorities we wish to carry forward into the future. In part the decision will be determined by a rigorous evaluation of each group and the impact the outcomes have had in achieving the goals set out at the beginning. It is possible that the decision will be to keep a given theme but to totally rethink the manner in which the desired goals are to be met. For the themes retained a major item at the first focal point meeting must be to determine the specific short-term goals (3-5 years), as well a clear plan outlining how they will be achieved. If any of the current themes are not continued member Academies will need to actively participate in the selection of new themes, and the specific goals to be achieved within the IANAS context.

Whatever the outcome of the evaluation, it is essential that we raise sufficient funds to allow IANAS to achieve its stated goals. Clearly, concise targeted activities will have a much greater chance of being funded than broad sweeping requests, explaining the need for well-focused projects. Fund raising has been on the IANAS agenda for some time but this must be a priority for 2016-2019

There is no doubt that IANAS has had an exceptional track record over the past 12 years. However, while we have both the expertise and the willingness to do even better in the coming years the major constraint will be a matter of finances. And there is making major contributions in all of the areas