**International Science Council
Founding General Assembly**
Paris, 3-5 July 2018

**Membership meeting
Tuesday 3 July 2018**
Venue: Maison des Océans
195 rue Saint-Jacques, Paris

Draft Minutes

Chairs: Alberto Martinelli (ISSC President) and Gordon McBean (ICSU President)

Alberto Martinelli and Gordon McBean welcomed the delegates to this historical event launching the new International Science Council (ISC). They acknowledged the generous contribution by *Académie des Sciences* for hosting the events of the coming days and thanked the *Maison des Océans* for providing the use of its magnificent hall. Acknowledgements were also made to the excellent collaboration between the teams at *Académie*, *Maison* and the ISC Secretariat in preparing this meeting.

The delegates were reminded that the Membership meeting does not mark the beginning of the formal General Assembly and could therefore remain more informal. The proposed agenda, which did not need formal approval, included (i) a brief overview of key achievements since the Taipei meeting; (ii) a brainstorming session on new potential activities for the Council; (iii) a preparatory briefing from the Elections Committee on the elections of 4 July; there were also (iv) opportunities for network and side meetings, during the afternoon.

09:30-10:00   Key achievements since the joint meeting in Taipei, October 2017

The ISC Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Heide Hackmann acknowledged the warmth and dedication of the Members also exhibited by their participation in three assemblies in less than three years. She reported on the activities conducted by the combined Secretariat, with a focus on the (i) merger implementation and launch; (ii) governance meetings; and (iii) ongoing scientific commitments. She acknowledged the work done by the Secretariat in order to carry the enormous amount of work required by the merger and to continue delivering the core commitments and activities.

10:00-12:00	Towards new initiatives for the new Council

In his introduction, Alberto Martinelli referred to the document 1GA/Membership meeting "Towards new initiatives for the new Council" and noted that the purpose of the session was to generate ideas of new initiatives and not to make decisions. He explained that the test-bed ideas prepared by the Executives were meant to help stimulate creative and focused discussions amongst Members, and encouraged Members to identify additional ideas.

The plenary broke into two groups for about 45 minutes: Group (1) Unions and Associations moderated by Gudmund Hernes; and Group (2) Member Organisations moderated by Cheryl de la Rey.

In her report back to the plenary, Cheryl de la Rey highlighted
- the sense of a need for a distinct coordination role for the ISC in capacity-building activities;
- the importance of maintaining a focus on curiosity-driven and fundamental science while advancing new interdisciplinary approaches;
- the urgency of rebuilding public trust in science;
- the interest of the group for STEM education that would include the social sciences.

While her group did not survey the 8 test-bed ideas systematically, they provided feedback on some of them. They felt for instance that AI (including issues related to data, ethics of new technology, linkages with private sector, trust, and consequences for society), scientific publishing, science education, and indigenous and local knowledge were relevant issues for the new Council. The group also noted that "urban" and urbanisation are crowded academic and policy spaces, and that ISC would best advised to identify a clearly identifiable and relevant niche before entering into this field.

Additional potential priority issues discussed by this group included:
- Mobility and migration;

- Wellbeing (in the context of SDGs);
- Complexity;
- Science of the brain;
- Gender parity;
- Molecular genetics;
- Universality of science for the benefit of inclusive societies

Reporting back on the discussions by the Member Unions and Associations, Gudmund Hernes highlighted the main comments about some of the test-bed ideas:

- Scientific publishing: there are indeed some alarming trends around the evaluation and valuation of science that are driven by powerful commercial interests.
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML): an obvious area of potentially important work by the new Council, with relevance for sustainability science, science advice and research on inequality and employment. The ethical implications and links with developments associated with Big Data should be part of any initiative in that area, which should be developed in partnership with relevant stakeholders.
- Indigenous and Local Knowledge (ILK) systems: the discussion helped clarify that at least 7 Member Union and Associations already have dedicated ILK commissions. The participants highlighted the importance of holistic approaches, which encompass knowledge systems developed in the North and the South, by "local" as well as "indigenous" communities.
- Mental Health: a potential focus could include Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) related to key challenges (e.g., migration, displacements and wars). Reference was made to the work already done by International Union of Psychological Sciences, and on the importance of establishing links with key players, such as WHO.
- Science Education: it was noted that while many Member Unions and Associations already have working groups on science education, a genuine integrated and encompassing approach of science education is missing. This could be one element of an ISC initiative in an otherwise very crowded area.
- Sustainable urban living: Members in this group highlighted as well the necessity of identifying a clearly identifiable niche, given a plethora of programmes and the interfaces with other crowded fields such as culture, water, energy, etc. One focus could be the links with inequality.

Other potential priority issues were identified by the Unions/Associations, for instance:

- The Earth: developing encompassing and interdisciplinary approaches; deep Earth (including past changes) to help future predictions;
- Science entrepreneurship: from lab to market (incl. connections to industry);
- Gender balance in science (in partnership with Member Unions and Associations);
- Cultural heritage;
- Using Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as overall policy framework for the various initiatives of the Council, to ensure coherence and added value to any individual project
- Protection of scientists;
- Science communication (with a focus on fake science);
- Science Ethics.

This brainstorming session also highlighted the importance of ensuring the broadest possible participation from Members in the identification of priorities and the development of actions by the Council. While noting that not every Member needed to be involved in everything, it will be important to consult and work with Members to ensure involvement across regions and disciplines, and harness their knowledge on a given issue. For that purpose, the development of a platform for membership engagement (incl. collaborations between members) would be very useful.

The plenary discussion on the breakout sessions' reports noted how many of the issues discussed raised ethical questions linked to: the mobility of scientists to attend conferences and do work in other countries; the digital revolution and use and access to data; freedom and responsibility in the conduct of science; gender parity; the trust in science and the growth of "fake science"; growing popular concerns about environmental and health-related issues, such as mining and water scarcity, or vaccinations and pandemics. Several Members reiterated the relevance of framing ISC activities within the context of Agenda 2030 so as to feed results into UN policy processes. Finally, the importance of defining the notion of "science a public good" and developing clear priority-setting procedures was underscored.

12:00-12:30	Membership engagement platform

Presentation by Johannes Mengel, from the Secretariat, together with the designer of one model of digital platform

As means of an introduction, Johannes Mengel explained that the intention behind this agenda item is to initiate a conversation within ISC around the use of digital tools to support membership engagement. For that purpose, "Upform", a membership engagement platform, was presented by one of its developers. He showed Upform or similar platforms enable users to access more, better and up-to-date information about the membership of the organization, and facilitate collaborations between them. He invited delegates to share views on the kinds of information they would like to have on the membership (e.g., funding sources, trends). For that purpose, a survey was put in place: https://bnform.typeform.com/to/S98GQf.

During the discussion, some Members expressed concerns about allowing a private company to come and present in a scientific event, and that the time could have been used for longer brainstorming on new initiatives. Others highlighted how the presented platform would actually need important re-shaping in order to be relevant to ISC Members. Gordon McBean and Johannes Mengel encouraged Members to complete the survey, and stressed the importance of building on Members' expertise and needs to develop the adequate structure.

12:30-13:30   Lunch break

13:30-14:15   Elections Committee Report and briefing about elections and voting procedures
Presentation by the two co-chairs of the Elections Committee

As co-chair of the Elections Committee, Gordon McBean delivered the report. He started by thanking the members of the Election Committee, and recalled the main steps of the nomination process and for finalising the list of candidates. This list included a total of 74 candidates. McBean also provided information on the elections process on 4 July, highlighting that each candidate to an Officer position will be invited to address the assembly for 3 minutes, while candidates for an Ordinary Member position will have 90 seconds.

While preparing the ballots, a potential flaw in the point system suggested by the Elections Committee has appeared. The Elections Committee had originally

foreseen a system whereby each candidate (excluding the President and the Vice-Presidents) would represent one point and be identified as being either a social or natural scientist, or as someone working in areas of both. The elections of a candidate would mean that her/his point goes to social or natural sciences (or a half-point each for candidates working in areas of both). The minimum representation of social scientists would mean gathering at least 4.5 points (1/3 of 13 positions = 4.333). The potential problem resulted from the fact that 9 candidates for ordinary Member positions were identified as "both", whereas 7 of them were much more social scientists. An unforeseen worst-case scenario could be that 8 out of 10 Ordinary Members are social scientists (7 x 0.5 + another one) even though they have received less votes than natural scientists. In order to avoid potential distortions of the representation made possible by the half-point system, the Elections Committee Co-Chairs agreed on a simplified procedure. They rejected the half-points and re-classified the nine scientists concerned as being either natural scientists or social scientists. The abandonment of the points system meant that at least 5 social scientists (out of 13 positions) would have to be elected. This proposal was not contested by anyone.

In conclusion, the report of the Elections Committee noted the high number of nominations by Members, an interest that needs to be encouraged and built upon to help reduce critical gender, disciplinary and geographical imbalances in the future. It was suggested that the new Governing Board may propose, for approval by the General Assembly, revisions on the nominations procedures.

Members were thanked for their participation in the meeting today. The plenary meeting adjourned to enable networking and side-meetings.

14:30-16:00	**Networking and poster session**

16:00-18:00	*Time set aside for group or side meetings*