

## ICSU ROLAC 2016 ACTIVITIES REPORT

### **Vision**

The long-term ICSU vision is for a world where science is used for the benefit of all, excellence in science is valued and scientific knowledge is effectively linked to policy-making. In such a world, universal and equitable access to high quality scientific data and information is a reality and all countries have the scientific capacity to use these and to contribute to generating the new knowledge that is necessary to establish their own development pathways in a sustainable manner.

### **Mission**

- . Identify and address major issues of importance to science and society
- . Facilitate interaction amongst scientists across all disciplines and from all countries
- . Promote the participation of all scientists in the international scientific endeavor, regardless of face, citizenship, language, political stance or gender
- . Provide independent, authoritative advice to stimulate constructive dialogue between the scientific community and governments, civil society, and the private sector.

### **ICSU ROLAC Mission**

Promote and implement actions in line with ICSU's strategic priorities.

Assist ICSU in strengthening science and capacity building in developing countries through South-South and North-South collaboration.

Support integration of ICSU's regional and global activities.

Ensure that the views of the scientific communities in the regions are taken fully into account in the development of ICSU's strategic priorities.

Promote increased participation of developing country scientists and regional scientific organizations in the implementation of the ICSU Strategic Plan.

## **Part I Background**

### **International Council for Science**

The International Science Council (ICSU), founded in 1931 in Paris, France, is a non-governmental organization dedicated to planning and coordinating interdisciplinary research; with the purpose of facing major problems of relevance for the sciences and the global society.

ICSU has a long-term vision of serving a world in which science is used for the benefit of all, scientific excellence is valued and scientific knowledge is effectively connected to the creation of scientific policies. On the other hand, the ICSU envisions a universal world with equal access to high-level scientific information and where all countries have the scientific capabilities to use science and contribute to the process of generating new knowledge needed to establish their own orientations of development in a sustainable way.

The mission of ICSU is to strengthen international science for the benefit of humanity by facilitating and promoting collaboration in scientific research, communicating scientific policies, safeguarding the universality of science, and connecting interdisciplinary research and observations of evaluation and scientific policy making.

### **Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean of the International Council for Science (ICSU ROLAC)**

In order to increase the scientific capacity of developing countries and the integration of the work of scientists from developing countries into international research initiatives, ICSU decided in September 2002 to establish three Regional Offices: Africa, Asia and Pacific, America Latina and the Caribbean. Through its offices, the ICSU has managed to play more actively at the regional level its role as promoter, facilitator, and mobilizer of the scientific community to contribute to the strengthening of sciences in the context of global programs, without neglecting the needs regional offices, thus allowing regional offices to develop programs and priorities that fit their reality. The regional offices carry out their functions through (i) meetings, seminars, symposiums and workshops, (ii) creation of thematic social networks (iii) promotion of cross-border and cross-disciplinary research projects in the context of global and regional priorities.

### **Evolution of the ROLAC**

2016 and 2017 were two particular years for ICSU ROLAC. In 2016, the ROLAC celebrated its fifth and last year located in Mexico, hosted at the Mexican Academy of Sciences (AMC). Then, after being five years in the Mexican city, the Regional Office moved to San Salvador, El Salvador on August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016. The ROLAC has ever since been working with the collaboration of the Vice Ministry of Science and Technology of El Salvador.

One year and some months after the Office for Latin America and the Caribbean of the International Council for Science in El Salvador was established, and it is our perception that ROLAC has evolved positively in the new host country. Besides giving continuity to the work of the six priority areas of the office for 2016 (Biodiversity, Sustainable Energy, Risk and Disaster Reduction, Mathematics Teaching, Open Data, and Urban Health), two priority areas were added: INGSA and the Scientific Diaspora. INGSA refers to the International Network for Government Science Advice program, which was adopted by the ICSU headquarters, and urged regional headquarters to adopt the program. The objective of this priority is to bring together emerging and established scientists, responsible for the formulation of policies and key actors living or working in Latin America and the Caribbean to improve their capacity to provide scientific advice for the formulation of policies at all levels of government. . The other added priority, the Scientific Diaspora, was included in the work of the office because of the regional need to facilitate the collaborative relationships of scientists based in first world countries, and their countries of origin.

In addition to the goodwill of all members of the Secretariat in the performance of their work, the constant support of the Vice Ministry of Science and Technology of El Salvador has facilitated the execution of a large number of activities both within and outside the host country. Undoubtedly, ROLAC will continue working to maintain and improve relations with the S & T ministry of El Salvador, as well as other government institutions.

## **Part II Structure and operation of the ICSU ROLAC Office**

In accordance with ICSU guidelines, it is recommended that the Regional Office be composed of a full-time five-member team: director, two Scientific Officers, an Administrative Officer and a Communication Officer. In the following image you can see the organizational structure of the office.

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During the first six months of 2016, while the office was located in Mexico, it was integrated by its regional director, and 3 other officers. Next, the staff of the office is presented, as well as the positions they occupied:

Dr. Manuel Limonta: Regional Director

Dr. Angela Guzmán: Scientific Officer

Lic. Camilo García: Administrative Officer

Licda. Angelica Bucio: Communications Officer

Later, when the office moved to El Salvador, ROLAC hired three officers: Licda. Karla Rodríguez, Administrative Officer; Licda. Claudia Marroquín, Liaison Officer; and Ma. Oscar Reyes, Communications Officer. Following the front of the office Dr. Manuel Limonta.

The Office is located at 87 North Avenue, Colonia Escalón, San Salvador, El Salvador, and its funds are managed by NCONACYT, as the executing unit of projects, designated by the Vice Minister of Science and Technology, Dr. Erlinda Hándal Vega.

### **Priority scientific areas**

The work of ICSU ROLAC is framed within the global initiatives of ICSU to develop the necessary knowledge to effectively respond to the risks of global environmental change and support the transformation towards global sustainability in the coming decades. With this, ICSU aims to mobilize the scientific community and strengthen communication links between it and decision makers. The Program is based on effective interdisciplinary collaboration through natural and social sciences, humanities, economics and technology development, to find interdisciplinary solutions to these problems.

In accordance with the Strategic Plan 2006-2011 of the ICSU, the Regional Committee identified four priority areas to promote and encourage the contribution of science to the improvement of human life through regional scientific programs. The names of these programs have evolved over time to better respond to the discussions that take place in international academic circles. Initially, ICSU ROLAC defined four priority areas:

- Sustainable Energy: evaluation of existing capacities in the LAC region and the social impact of the use and development of new energy resources.
- Disaster Risk Reduction: prevention and mitigation of risks, particularly those of hydro meteorological origin, with special attention to the necessary research in the social sciences.
- Biodiversity: Knowledge, conservation and use of biodiversity in all the countries of the LAC region.

The prior Priority Areas are developed under the umbrella of Future Earth.

- Teaching of Mathematics: seeks to transform current reality, with the vision of offering access to quality math education for all LAC.

However, given that the office relocated to a new host country, and based on new demands and needs, new priority areas have been added to the work of the office. In total, four priority areas have been added, two of them added at the end of 2016 (Open Data, and Urban Health), and two more during the year (INGSA, and the Scientific Diaspora):

**Open Data:** Pushing the agenda of Open Data in the region in order to be at the hand of the current digital revolution, which is historic, and unprecedented.

**Urban Health:** The program proposes a new conceptual framework to consider the multifactorial nature of the determinants and manifestations of health and well-being in urban populations.

**INGSA:** The objective of this priority is to bring together emerging and established scientists, responsible for the formulation of policies and key actors living or working in Latin America and the Caribbean to improve their capacity to provide scientific advice for the formulation of policies at all levels of the government.

**Scientific Diaspora:** Facilitate bridges of collaboration between scientists living outside their native borders, and their countries of origin.

The programs of the priority areas of ICSU ROLAC advance with their own specificities, but with a common multidisciplinary and regional vision. Currently, the programs are being attended as follows:

**Biodiversity:** Dr. Manuel Limonta

**Sustainable Energy:** Dr. Manuel Limonta

**Reduction of Risks and Disasters:** Dr. Manuel Limonta

**Teaching of Mathematics:** Licda. Karla Rodríguez, and Dr. Manuel Limonta

**Open Data:** MA Oscar Reyes, and Dr. Manuel Limonta

**Urban Health:** Licda. Claudia Marroquín, and Dr. Manuel Limonta

**INGSA:** All members of the Secretariat

**Scientific Diaspora:** All members of the Secretariat

## **2016 ACTIVITIES**

### **3.1 Online meeting with the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction**

February 4, 2016

Offices of ICSU ROLAC in Mexico

**Participants:** Barbara Carby, Irasema Alcántara, Sálvano Briceño, Alonso Brenes, Manuel Limonta, Guillermina Echeverría-Lozano.

**Apologies from:** Patricia Alvarado, Allan Lavell, Arturo Martinez, Germán Poveda, José Rubiera, Raúl Salazar.

**Goals:**

1. Report on the negotiations of ICSU ROLAC and the transfer of the office to El Salvador.
2. Discussion of the Work Program of the Committee derived from the recommendations made in the External Consultancy.

Results, expectations for the future and importance for ICSU ROLAC

At this meeting, the director informed those present of the recent negotiations for the transfer of the office to El Salvador in August of this year. Also, the discussion of the Work Program of the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction was initiated. However, given the lack of a quorum, it was decided to postpone the discussion until there was more participation

**3.2 Celebration of the 5th anniversary of ICSU ROLAC in Mexico**

March 2016, Mexico City, Mexico.

**Participants:** ICSU ROLAC staff and the Mexican Academy of Sciences.

**Summary:** On March 1 ICSU ROLAC celebrated its 5th anniversary with a private celebration at the Mexican Academy of Sciences, our host in this country. Manuel Limonta expressed a word of thanks to the Academy and CONACYT for their support and direction during all these years. Dr. Renata Villalba Cohen, Executive Secretary of the Mexican Academy of Sciences, spoke about the contribution and achievements of ICSU in Mexico, as well as the new challenges that it will face as soon as she moves to her new headquarters and the enormous help she can receive. represent ICSU for a country with the characteristics of El Salvador, its new host country.

**Photos:**

[https://www.flickr.com/photos/icsu\\_lac/albums/72157665331466895/with/25325527771/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/icsu_lac/albums/72157665331466895/with/25325527771/)

**3.3 V Workshop on Mathematics Education in Latin America**

Santo Domingo Dominican Republic. March 9-11, 2016

**Participants:** Manuel Limonta, Camilo García, Patricio Felmer, Lilliam Álvarez.

**Goals:**

1. Promote the implementation of mathematical standards for primary and secondary school teachers.

2. Promote local and international relations through the interaction between researchers, students, teachers and other professionals of different agencies and institutes by sharing experiences, processes and development of innovative educational projects and propagate the successful results of training projects in the area of basic mathematics in the countries of the region
3. Promote the exchange of ideas, experiences, knowledge and actions to find solutions to the current crisis in education in general and in mathematics education in particular, at different educational levels.
4. Promote capacity building in local communities of mathematics teachers through workshops on problem solving

### **Results, expectations for the future and importance for ICSU ROLAC**

This workshop is part of the program of the priority area of mathematics, carried out since the office was created in Mexico in 2010. One of the issues that has emerged as a priority within the Priority Area of Mathematics Teaching, has been the implementation of standards in the teaching of mathematics. It is intended that the countries of Central America and the Caribbean have minimum standards to be met by primary and secondary school mathematics teachers. The intention is that this line of action and this type of workshops continue as an integral part of the Priority Area of Teaching in Mathematics.

### **3.4 Workshop of the Committee on Freedom and Responsibility in Research (CFRS) on "Gender issues in field research"**

**México DF, México. April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

**Participants:** David, Black, Richard Bourgeois-Doyle, Guéladio Cissé, Roberta D'Alessandro, Kumie Inose, Alberto J. Núñez Sellés, Valérie Schini-Kerth, Leiv K. Sydnes, Mark Thorley, Silke Schicktz, Roger Pfister, Gaven Martin, Merry Bullock, Susan Barr, Ranjini Bandyopadhyay, Jaime Urrutia Fucugauchi, Erika Pani, Dora Medina, Rohini Rao, Alice Abreu, Norma Blazquez Graf, Ma. Esther Orozco, Arturo Martínez, Patricio Felmer, Juan Jaen, Lilliam Alvarez, Ana Rada, Carmen Cisneros, Manuel Limonta Vidal, Camilo Garcia, Guillermina Echeverría Lozano, Dení Rayn.

#### **Goals:**

1. Prepare a consultative note on the topic to circulate through the members of ICSU and their social networks and publications to sensitize the scientific community about gender equality as an important part of the internationalization of science.

2. The event consisted of 6 presentations, after which a discussion was held with the theme: Responsibility taking: gender issues in field research.

3. Leiv K. Sydnes, chairman of the committee presented and signed the Manifesto UNESCO & L'Oreal Women in Science on behalf of CFRS / ICSU and asked everyone present to sign it online in their personal capacity.

#### *Conclusions and concluding observations for the draft of the advisory note*

1. Establish the context

2. Gender equity in field research. Mobility and internationalization of science

2.1 Acquisition and interpretation of data

2.2 Culture and traditions

2.3 Policies and procedures

2.4 Mobility and support networks

2.5 Mass media and promotion

2.6 Education and counseling

2.7 Codes of conduct

3. Principle of universality of science

David Black, proposed to create awareness through ICSU and its Focal Points

Silke Schicktanz, member of the CFRS suggested making specific recommendations for projects funded by ICSU.

Merry Bullock, member of the CFRS recommended having a separate point for the harassment in the field.

Arturo Martínez vice president of the Regional Committee of ICSU ROLAC proposed that the advisory note be published in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals

#### **Results, expectations for the future and importance for ICSU ROLAC**

ICSU aims to contribute to improving the situation of women in the field of scientific activities as part of its program of Universality of Science. This event is part of an international effort to achieve gender equity. ICSU ROLAC aspires to be a pillar in the region in this area.

### **3.5 19th Meeting of the Regional Committee of ICSU ROLAC (RCLAC 19)**

Mexico City, Mexico April 28-29, 2016

**Participants:** Arturo J. Martínez, Patricio Felmer, Lilliam Álvarez, Juan Jaén, Ana Rada, María del Carmen Cisneros, Manuel Limonta, Guillermina Echeverría-Lozano, Camilo García, Dení Rayn Villalba.

**Apologies from:** José Luis Morán-López, German Poveda, Elisa Reis.

The objectives of the meeting were the following:

1. Review and discuss the 2016 Business Plan of ICSU ROLAC.
2. To elect the new members of the Regional Committee.
3. Review and propose changes to the Terms of Reference of the Regional Committee and the Scientific Committees.
4. Inform about the change of location of the Regional Office of Latin America and the Caribbean.
5. Follow up on the decisions of the RCLAC18 meeting.
6. Review the progress in Priority Areas and Extension Activities for the period from November 2015 to April 2016).
7. Review the finances of the Secretariat, as well as the strategies of Communications and Early Career Scientists.
8. Review the progress in the responsibilities of leadership and supervision among the members of the Regional Committee in relation to the progress of the work agenda of the ROLAC ICSU.

*Summary of the topics covered in the meeting, recommendations and decisions:*

Manuel Limonta provided a detailed account of the first and most recent criticisms of the relocation of the office. He informed that on May 10 and 11, 2016 a meeting was scheduled in El Salvador for the signing of the Agreement of Understanding with the government of that country.

The discussion of the 2016 Business Plan of ICSU ROLAC was on the agenda and some points were discussed, including the possible approaches in the areas of Urban Health and Data. However, an extra month was given to the members of the committee to carefully review the Business Plan and to send their comments by mail to Guillermina Echeverría, scientific officer of ICSU ROLAC.

ICSU ROLAC received five nominations for the Regional Committee. The curricula of the candidates were reviewed and discussed. The members of the committee decided to elect Hernán Thomas from Argentina, and Kit Fai Pun from Trinidad and Tobago. The decision will be sent to ICSU Paris for the Executive Committee to evaluate the proposals.

The Terms of Reference of the Disaster Risk Reduction and Sustainable Energy Committees were reviewed and a series of changes were suggested. The new version of the ToRs will be worked by the Scientific Officer and sent to the respective Committees.

The staff of ICSU ROLAC presented the advances within each of the Priority Areas. Regarding the Priority Area of Mathematics Education, it was reported that the progress continues successfully. In the Area of Disaster Risk Reduction, it was reported that the Committee would have a meeting on May 24 and 25 in which a medium-term work program would be discussed. Work in the Sustainable Energy Area remains on hold, but before the office moves, an online meeting will be held to resume activities. Regarding the Biodiversity Area, it was reported that a meeting was planned for June together with the Thematic Network of Biocultural Heritage of CONACYT.

The members of the Regional Committee also took note of the activities carried out with respect to the Communications Strategy and the Strategy of Early Career Scientists, as well as regarding the Extension Activities.

The Administrative Officer reported on the financial negotiations with the government of El Salvador, as well as on the manner in which the financial report will be presented once the office moves to El Salvador.

The members of the Committee reviewed the leadership and supervision responsibilities assigned to them previously.

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### **3.6 Seventh Meeting of the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction**

San Salvador, El Salvador. May 24 and 25, 2016.

**Participants:** Barbara Carby, Irasema Alcántara, Luis Carlos Martínez, Sálvano Briceño, Allan Lavell, José Rubiera, Alonso Brenes, Zelmira May, Patricia Alvarado, Manuel Limonta, Guillermina Echeverría Lozano.

#### **Goals:**

1. Update the members of the SCDRR regarding the imminent move of the ICSU ROLAC office to El Salvador.
2. Inform the members of the SCDRR about the changes suggested by the Regional Committee to the Terms of Reference of the SCDRR.
3. Present the previous work carried out regarding the SCDRR Work Program.
4. Discuss and agree on the SCDRR Work Program.

### *Results, expectations for the future and importance for ICSU ROLAC*

Up until November of last year, the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction (SCDRR) had been working on its integration and strengthening. However, it was imperative that the SCDRR had a medium-term strategy that 1) allowed ICSU ROLAC to meet its objectives, 2) responded to the suggestions made by the CSPR in the external review to which ICSU ROLAC was submitted, and 3) respond to the international frameworks that, on the subject, occurred during 2015.

Due to the above, the preparation of a Work Program for said Committee is an achievement that will allow ICSU ROLAC a better planning of activities and budget, a more efficient fundraising and a better focused regional collaboration.

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### **3.7 Symposium on the Biocultural Heritage of Mexico**

Mexico City, Mexico. 09 and June 10, 2016.

**Participants:** Alejandro Argumedo, Onel Marsadule, Freddy Delgado, Jorge Ellis of Lucca, Julia Tagueña Parga, Veronica Bunge, Ramón Mariaca Méndez, Francisco Rosado May, Adelita San Vicente, Benjamin Ortiz Espejel, Margarita Velázquez Gutiérrez, Alberto Betancourt, Viviana Figueroa, Manuel Limonta, Dení Rayn, Camilo García, Arturo Argueta Villamar.

**Objectives:** To focus on the problems that affect and the proposed solutions, on the Biocultural Heritage of Mexico, through the confluence of diverse opinions and the participation of the diverse sectors that participate in the subject.

*Agreements:*

*The main agreements reached in the symposium were the following:*

- Design and recommend public policies for the protection of biocultural heritage that promote gender equality, social justice and the rights of indigenous peoples, combining economic development with harmonious holistic systems created by communities.
- Conduct discussion events on the biocultural heritage within indigenous communities, to have their direct participation and thus promote the co-production of knowledge.
- Highlight the theme of spirituality and the sacred places in the defense of the biocultural heritage, elements lacking in the scientific knowledge that constitute the basis of traditional knowledge.
- Establish a network of living laboratories to monitor changes in ecosystems, where new knowledge resulting from intercultural dialogue can be applied.

- Conduct a fair of the seeds of the world in the Zócalo of Mexico City, to bring together producers from different places, fostering the dialogue of knowledge.
- Internationalize the "Maize Day" proposal to raise awareness in the world society about the importance of defending biodiversity in the face of the danger posed by the introduction of transgenic crops.
- Promote the interdisciplinary approach in research, implementing the relationship between the various existing networks, the creation of new ones and the internationalization of them.
- Stimulate education with a focus on complex systems that allows building a new perspective with the help of the vision and knowledge of indigenous communities.
- Reconstruct the thinking of the deep America and follow the history and experiences of inter-scientific dialogue to strengthen interculturality and the dialogue of knowledge.
- Finally, it was pointed out that this type of meetings are advancing in the way of closing the gap between two different ways of relating to nature, two worldviews that have remained opposed through history, their interrelation and dialogue appear today as the alternative that allows us to overcome the crisis that the current world is facing at different levels.
- The attendees also established a commitment to rework the presentations as chapters, for a book that will be edited by the convening institutions.

Results, expectations for the future and importance for ICSU ROLAC

Part of the Biodiversity priority area program. The aim is to create a network on this topic throughout Latin America with the support of the Thematic Network on Biocultural Heritage of CONACYT, which has established exchange and collaboration relationships between the Latin American Society of Ethnobiology (SOLAE) and the Ethnobiological Group of Latin America (GELA), and with different researchers, networks and homologous work groups in Latin America.

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### **3.8 IX International Congress "Didactics of Sciences" XIII International Workshop on the Teaching of Physics**

Havana, Cuba. March 28 to April 01, 2016.

**Participants:** Manuel Limonta, Camilo García, Lilliam Álvarez.

Main topics:

- Science education and sustainable development
- XIII International Workshop on the Teaching of Physics

- Teaching Mathematics
- Teaching learning of Chemistry
- Teaching biology learning
- Teaching learning of Earth and Space Sciences
- Teaching of sciences in the early ages
- Outreach and out-of-school forms of science education.
- Information and communication technologies applied to science education

Results, expectations for the future and importance for ICSU ROLAC.

Participation in the Congress was very useful for the Regional Office, due to the possibility of listening to the presentations of outstanding researchers from around 25 countries of the region and the world; and the possibility of developing links with several of them. As a way to publicize the efforts of the Regional Office of ICSU in the priority area of mathematics teaching, Camilo García presented the paper "Contributing to the improvement of the teaching of mathematics through non-formal channels from the International Council for the Sciences" in Latin America and the Caribbean".

**Photos:** [https://www.flickr.com/photos/icsu\\_lac/sets/72157650905940032](https://www.flickr.com/photos/icsu_lac/sets/72157650905940032)

### **3.9 3rd Meeting of the Inter-agency Group and Experts on the Development of SDG Indicators**

Mexico City, Mexico March 30 - April 1, 2016.

**Participants:** Guillermina Echeverría.

**Objectives:** to establish a system of levels for the indicators, to establish procedures for the methodological revision of the indicators, and to develop a global mechanism for the presentation of reports.

*Results, expectations for the future and importance for ICSU ROLAC.*

Considering that various activities of ICSU have to do with sustainable development, this meeting was important to have up-to-date information regarding the progress in establishing the indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals. Guillermina Echeverría Lozano, Scientific Officer of ICSU ROLAC, attended the meeting and sent a report on that meeting to ICSU Paris.

### **3.10 Centenary of the Brazilian Academy of Sciences: Building a better future**

Rio de Janeiro Brazil. May 4 and 5, 2016.

**Participants:** Manuel Limonta

*Results, expectations for the future and importance for ICSU ROLAC.*

It is an opportunity to interact with prestigious scientists from Latin America and the whole world, and with the organizations present at the event such as IANAS. In addition, listen to very high level lectures and the scientific presentation of the different fields of science.

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### **3.11 31st Ministerial Meeting and High Level Authorities on the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in the Americas**

Asuncion, Paraguay. June 8 and 9, 2015

**Participants:** Guillermina Echeverría Lozano.

#### **Goals:**

1. Adopt a framework for post-2015 disaster risk reduction that is concise, specific, prepared with vision and action-oriented;
2. Finalize the evaluation and review of the Implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Build the resilience of nations and communities in the face of disasters;
3. Take into account the experience gained through strategies, institutions, as well as regional plans and agreements for disaster risk reduction at the national and regional levels for the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action.
4. Determine cooperation modalities based on commitments towards the implementation of a post-2015 risk reduction framework;
5. Identify the modalities for the periodic review of the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

*Results, future expectations and importance for ICSU ROLAC*

This conference was of particular importance for ICSU ROLAC at this time due to the fact that the preparation of a medium-term Work Program is underway. The exhibitions allowed Guillermina Echeverría, Scientific Officer and responsible for coordinating the activities in the Priority Area of Disaster Risk Reduction, to have a broader picture about the advances, challenges and opportunities in the region in terms of disaster risk reduction.

Photos: [https://www.flickr.com/photos/icsu\\_lac/sets/72157667425245013](https://www.flickr.com/photos/icsu_lac/sets/72157667425245013)

### **3.12 3rd Meeting of the Interagency Group and Experts on the Development of SDG Indicators**

Mexico City, Mexico March 30 - April, 2016

**Participants:** Guillermina Echeverría.

**Objectives:** to establish a system of levels for the indicators, to establish procedures for the methodological revision of the indicators, and to develop a global mechanism for the presentation of reports.

*Results, expectations for the future and importance for ICSU ROLAC.*

Considering that various activities of ICSU have to do with sustainable development, this meeting was important to have up-to-date information regarding the progress in establishing the indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals. Guillermina Echeverría Lozano, Scientific Officer of ICSU ROLAC, attended the meeting and sent a report on that meeting to ICSU Paris.

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### **3.13 1st Ministerial Meeting and High Level Authorities on the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in the Americas "**

Asuncion, Paraguay. June 8 and 9, 2015

**Participants:** Guillermina Echeverría Lozano.

**Goals:**

1. Adopt a framework for post-2015 disaster risk reduction that is concise, specific, prepared with vision and action-oriented;
2. Finalize the evaluation and review of the Implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Build the resilience of nations and communities in the face of disasters;
3. Take into account the experience gained through strategies, institutions, as well as regional plans and agreements for disaster risk reduction at the national and regional levels for the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action.
4. Determine cooperation modalities based on commitments towards the implementation of a post-2015 risk reduction framework;
5. Identify the modalities for the periodic review of the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

*Results, future expectations and importance for ICSU ROLAC*

This conference was of particular importance for ICSU ROLAC at this time due to the fact that the preparation of a medium-term Work Program is underway. The exhibitions allowed Guillermina Echeverría, Scientific Officer and responsible for coordinating the activities in the Priority Area of Disaster Risk Reduction, to have a broader picture about the advances, challenges and opportunities in the region in terms of disaster risk reduction.

### **3.14 Inauguration of ICSU ROLAC in El Salvador, and Seminar entitled "Open Imperative of Science: Challenges and Opportunities"**

San Salvador, El Salvador, August 30, 2016.

**Participants:** Erlinda Hándal Vega, Heide Hackmann, Geoffrey Boulton, Jorge Tezón, David Black, José Luis Morán López, Maria Uhle, Arturo Martínez, Lito Ibarra, Pedro Urra, Vivaldo Moura, Sergio Pastrana, Jeremy Mc Neil, Gioconda San Blas, Javier Luque, Trevor Alleyne, Jonathan Baker, Winston Mellowes, Milciades Mejía, Jorge A. Huete-Pérez, Carlos Rodríguez Castellanos, Enrique Forero González, Pedro León Azofeifa, Nicole Moreau, Mario Lanza Santamaría, Pilar Alvarez-Laso, María del Carmen Samayoa, Juan Antonio Jaén Osorio, y Claudio Bifano.

#### **Summary:**

After spending five years in Mexico City, the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean of the International Council for Science (ICSU ROLAC) moved to San Salvador, El Salvador, an act that was formalized on August 30, 2016 with the opening of the office. This event was attended by a large number of experts, scientists, and personalities of the highest level in the scientific field. Among the guests of honor are Heide Hackmann, Geoffrey Boulton, David Black, Carlos Canjura, Erlinda Hándal, Roberto Lorenzana, among others.

Following the inauguration, the guests were able to participate in the seminar entitled "Open Imperative of Science: Challenges and Opportunities". During this seminar it was possible to address issues such as: the development of science and technology in El Salvador, open access information policies, introduction to international science and good open information practices. Likewise, on the creation and preservation of scientific results.

**Photographs:** [https://www.flickr.com/photos/icsu\\_lac/sets/72157680410582760](https://www.flickr.com/photos/icsu_lac/sets/72157680410582760)

### **3.16 Regional Director meets with the President of El Salvador**

San Salvador, El Salvador.

**Participants:** David Black, Maria Uhle, Nicolo Moreau, Jeremy McNeal, Sergio Pastrana, Erlinda Hándal, Jose Luis Moran Dr. Limonta, presidente Sanchez Cerén.

## **Summary**

Prof. Manuel Limonta meets with the President of El Salvador, Salvador Sánchez Cerén. Dr. Limonta and Prof. Sánchez Cerén have met twice in San Salvador, El Salvador. The first meeting took place in June 2017 and in it, the Regional Director was able to inform President Sánchez Cerén about the relocation of the ICSU office in El Salvador. The second meeting took place at the opening of the Regional Office in El Salvador on August 30, 2016. In it, honored guests such as David Black, Maria Uhle, Nicolo Moreau, Jeremy McNeal, Sergio Pastrana, Erlinda Hándal and José Luis Moran He joined Dr. Limonta and had the opportunity to speak briefly with President Sánchez Cerén.

**Photographs:** [https://www.flickr.com/photos/icsu\\_lac/sets/72157678495767170](https://www.flickr.com/photos/icsu_lac/sets/72157678495767170)

### **3.17 Global Climate Observing System**

Guayaquil, Ecuador. October 3-6, 2016

**Participants:** Dr. Manuel Limonta

#### **Summary:**

#### **# Global Climate Observing System**

ICSU ROLAC participates at 24<sup>th</sup> Steering Committee Meeting of the Global Climate Observing System (GCOS), the meeting took place on October 3-6, 2016 in Guayaquil, Ecuador. In it, Regional Director, Manuel Limonta presented about the work ICSU ROLAC does in the region through its priority areas and programmes. As well, Limonta had the chance to listen to the efforts and initiatives taken by GCOS on climate change monitoring.

### **3.18 First workshop on urban health in El Salvador: "Current and future opportunities for the urban health situation in El Salvador"**

El Salvador, October 11 and 12, 2016

**Participants:** Franz Gatzweiler, José Sirí, local authorities, ICSU ROLAC Secretariat.

#### **Summary:**

From October 11 to 12, the Regional Office of the International Council for Science in Latin America and the Caribbean (ICSU ROLAC) partnered with the Ministry of Science and Technology to organize the first Urban Health Workshop in El Salvador. The objective of the workshop was

to assess the conditions of urban health and identify the current challenges of the country and the region, as well as to identify knowledge gaps and research needs on the subject and estimate the role of government actors and different organizations .

Dr. Franz Gatzweiler, Executive Director of the International Program Office (IPO) of the Urban Health Program of ICSU and Dr. José Siri, epidemiologist and researcher of the United Nations University, were the invited experts to present at this workshop two days Both presenters addressed key issues to consider when it comes to urban health, such as the recognition of global and regional objectives, challenges and opportunities for El Salvador, Latin America and the Caribbean, good practices in urban health and models to understand the complex interaction of factors in the Urban Health Theme.

In this two-day workshop, more than 340 participants including researchers, legislators, science educators, government representatives and university students attended 4 presentations, 3 question and answer sessions and 2 group sessions. Each day of the workshop, all the participants were discussed by the two experts as a whole and then the audience was divided into three working groups that were asked to brainstorm and debate about problems, main actors, decision makers, possible solutions and tools available to face the problem of urban health.

The first day of the workshop focused on identifying and diagnosing the main problems of Urban Health in El Salvador through the active participation of experts, moderators and the entire audience. Once the diagnostic phase was completed, the second day focused on finding possible solutions by using the tools currently available in the country and to establish clear and achievable objectives in urban health issues.

In summary, the workshop successfully achieved the following objectives:

1. Evaluate urban health conditions and identify the current challenges for El Salvador and the region.

2. Identify knowledge gaps and research needs for urban health in El Salvador and the region.

Consider the role of government actors and different organizations with the New Urban Agenda as frameworks to improve urban health

4. Introduce thought systems as a tool to solve complex health problems and urban sustainability.

5. Introduce ROLAC, ICSU-LAC Urban Health, and Urban Health as resources to improve urban health in El Salvador.

6. Create a monitoring team composed of legislators, experts, researchers, government representatives and others to continue the work on the subject and create a draft agenda for a Regional Workshop in October 2017.

There is no doubt that this workshop has established a starting point for the Urban Health agenda in El Salvador and in the Region as it brought together important points of view and points of

view of various actors in society that showed great interest in continuing working on this important issue.

**Photographs:** [https://www.flickr.com/photos/icsu\\_lac/albums/72157677919043772](https://www.flickr.com/photos/icsu_lac/albums/72157677919043772)

### **3.19 Habitat III**

Quito, Ecuador. October 17-20, 2016

**Participants:** Dr. Ana Rada

#### **Summary:**

Dr. Ana Rada attended the Habitat III Conference as a delegate of ICSU. The event took place in Quito, Ecuador, from October 17 to 20, 2016 in Quito, Ecuador. In it, a lot of time and effort was devoted to the exhibition space, it was called "HABITAT X CHANGE", with a set of activities ranging from dialogues, networking, master classes and workshops, to immersive experiences of new media. This strategic space was shared by ICSU (International Council for Science), Future Earth (Research for Global Sustainability) and FHP (Fachhochschule Potsdam University of Applied Sciences)

In addition, Dr. Rada participated in side events, networking events, exhibition spaces, dialogues with stakeholders, attending negotiations and getting involved with the urbanization community in general.

### **3.20 Young Scientists Conference**

San Salvador, El Salvador, 7-8 November 2016

**Participants:** Young scientists from Argentina, Barbados, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Peru and Uruguay.

Members of the ICSU ROLAC committee (1); Young scientists (19); Academics / Researchers (63); Teachers (73); Policy makers (x); Means (15); Students (539); ICSU junctions (x); National members of ICSU (x)

#### **Summary**

The Conference of Young Scientists organized by TWAS ROLAC and ICSU ROLAC was held in San Salvador, El Salvador from November 7 to 8, 2013. Five objectives were established for this meeting. 1) Increase the number of Latin American countries that participate in the activities of TWAS and ICSU ROLAC. 2) Strengthen the current regional links between TWAS and ICSU. 3) Create bridges between the different disciplines to provoke an exchange of perceptions and

visions. 4) Extend the presence of ICSU ROLAC among young scientists, with a gender perspective. 5) Promote the "Future Earth" project in the context of the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) region.

The participants consisted of two members of the TWAS ROLAC Executive Committee: Dr. Prof. Harold Ramkissoon -The University of the West Indies-, and Dr. Prof. Rafael Vicuña -Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile-, Secretary of the ICSU ROLAC, and 19 Young Scientists under 40 years nominated by the Presidents of 17 National Academies -Argentina, Barbados, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Peru and Uruguay. We also had guest speakers, PhD. Prof. Rafael Vicuña from Chile and PhD. Prof. Harold Ramkissoon of Trinidad and Tobago.

We welcomed more than 700 participants in this two-day conference, among which we can mention different representatives of universities, independent researchers, government representatives, students and others. The public enjoyed 18 presentations by the Young Scientists of the countries mentioned above and also key conferences by Prof. Vicuña and Prof. Ramkissoon.

On November 7, the conference began at 9:00 AM and had the following people at the main table: PhD. Prof. Manuel Limonta, director of ICSU-ROLAC; MD María Isabel Rodríguez, Presidential Adviser; Dr. William Mejía, Manager of National Education in Science and Technology of the Ministry of Education; Dr. Gorka Garate, Outstanding Performance Manager, of the Young Talents Program, Ministry of Education.

The opening conference was given by PhD. Prof. Harold Ramkissoon Executive member of TWAS-ROLAC that addressed the public on the topic of Science and Technology in the Caribbean. During the morning session, Prof. Ramkissoon was followed by the presentation of four young scientists from Colombia, Ecuador, Uruguay, Peru and the Dominican Republic, respectively. In the afternoon session, there was a forum with three Young Scientists from El Salvador, and soon after, there was a discussion time where the audience and the Young Scientists could interact directly through questions and answers.

Day 2 of the conference began with a keynote address by Prof. Vicuña, who addressed the participants on the topic "Plastics in the ocean: a current perspective on its biodegradation", followed by three other presentations by young scientists from Nicaragua, Panama and Brazil. Finally, young scientists from Costa Rica, Trinidad and Tobago, Brazil, Mexico, Honduras and Chile presented their research in their work in the afternoon session.

### *Specific results*

One of the best results of this Conference of Young Scientists was the massive influx of participants. Not only was it surprising that more than 700 people attended the event, but also the varied places they came from and the ages of the participants as well. There were people from 12 departments of El Salvador. There were many bright students of the Young Talents

program of El Salvador and for them, this conference and to have the opportunity to interact with the Young Scientists through their presentations and also through questions and answers, was a special way of encouragement to continue his way to the sciences.

A second achievement of this event was the creation of different knowledge networks among Young Scientists. It was mentioned by some of the young scientists who were already thinking and devising future efforts and collaborative projects in common areas through their research and institutions of origin.

**Photographs:** [https://www.flickr.com/photos/icsu\\_lac/sets/72157676408995314](https://www.flickr.com/photos/icsu_lac/sets/72157676408995314)

### **3.21 27th TWAS General Assembly**

Kigali, Rwanda in Africa from November 12 to 14, 2016.

**Participants:** Dr. Manuel Limonta

#### **Summary**

Dr. Manuel Limonta participated in the 27th TWAS General Meeting in Kigali, Rwanda, in Africa, from November 12 to 14, 2016. The event was held at the Kigali Convention Center and welcomed hundreds of members from TWAS, special guests and winners of the science prize. In addition to high-level conferences, symposiums and awards ceremonies, the results of the Young Scientists Conference (joint effort of TWAS-ICSU ROLAC) were present for the participants by Luiz Davidovich, president of TWAS.

### **3.22 20th Meeting of the Regional Committee**

El Salvador, November 29-30, 2016.

**Participants:** José Luis Morán-López, Lilliam Álvarez, Ana Rada Tarifa, German Poveda, Juan Jaén, Hernán Thomas, and Paloma González., Engineer Carlos Canjura, Vice Minister of Education and Dr. María Isabel Rodríguez, special adviser to the President of El Salvador, members of the ICSU ROLAC Secretariat.

#### **Summary**

From November 29 to 30, 2016, the Regional Committee held its 20th regional meeting in San Salvador, El Salvador. Seven members of the regional committee attended: José Luis Morán-López, Lilliam Álvarez, Ana Rada Tarifa, German Poveda, Juan Jaén, Hernán Thomas and Paloma González. The pressure issues were the core of the discussions about the work of the ROLAC office. In addition, Ing. Carlos Canjura, Vice Minister of Education and Dr. María Isabel Rodríguez, special adviser to the President of El Salvador, attended the meeting and presented the "Young

Talents" program to the members of the Committee. In addition, Dr. Juan Jaén was appointed as the new Chair of the Committee and the new staff of ICSU ROLAC was introduced to the members of the regional committee. Other topics addressed were: review of progress in Priority Areas and outreach activities.

### **3.23 Meeting of the International Union of Soil Sciences**

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, November 20-25, 2016

**Participants:** Dr. Manuel Limonta

#### **Summary**

The director of ICSU ROLAC participates in the Inter-congress Meeting of the International Union of Soil Sciences (UISS) from 20 to 25 November 2016 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil through the representation of Dr. Manuel Limonta, Director Regional for Latin America and the Caribbean of the International Council of Science (ICSU ROLAC). The UISS, which has been a member of the scientific union of ICSU for more than two decades, invited ICSU ROLAC to its annual discussion on matters related to the IUSS. In this way, ICSU and IUSS continue to strengthen their relationships and commitment to cooperate in their areas of mutual interest.

### **3.24 Conference on "The role of universities in scientific development" in UNASA**

Santa Ana, El Salvador. December 13, 2016

**Participants:** Secretary of ICSU ROLAC.

#### **Summary**

Dr. Manuel Limonta gave a lecture as guest of honor at the Research Congress, Community Extension and University Extension of the Autonomous University of Santa Ana (UNASA) on December 13, 2016. Due to his experience and background, Limonta was invited to talk about the topic "The role of universities in scientific development". The conference was well received by the university authorities of the UNASA, as well as by authorities of important institutions such as the Vice Ministry of Science and Technology; CICES (National Center for Scientific Research of El Salvador) and others. s in Scientific Development "at UNASA

### **3.25 ICSU ROLAC present in the media**

#### **Summary**

Since the opening of ICSU ROLAC in San Salvador, El Salvador, on August 30, 2016, the Regional Office has been active in different media channels. Prof. Manuel Limonta has been invited to various media activities: four interviews on national television; six radio interviews; about 7 interviews for newspapers (print and online) and related activities. Dr. Limonta's interviews have created spaces to explain the nature of the office, its origin, work, objectives and challenges. Dr. Limonta also emphasized the importance of El Salvador being the host country of the Regional Office.

During the time since the opening of the office, it has been made clear that the general public, and institutions such as government ministries, universities, private organizations, NGOs have developed a great interest in the existing programs and priority areas of ICSU and therefore, having the opportunity to approach the masses through television, radio, newspapers and others is an important and central part of the ICSU ROLAC strategy to promote the advancement of science for the benefit not only of the country , but of the region as a whole

**Links of interest:**

<http://orbitatv.com/programas/la-entrevista-630am/limonta-tecnologia-puede-mejorar-economia-pais-34/>

<http://www.tves10.com/multimedia/videos/watch.php?vid=2d88a4517>