

International Science Council

The global voice for science

President's briefing

Regional Knowledge
Dialogue
Kuala Lumpur
October 2023



International



ISC

THE COMPLEX ROAD AHEAD FOR SCIENCE



COVID 19
and future
pandemics



Climate
change and
sustainability
(food, water,
energy,
biodiversity
loss)



Declining
social
cohesion
and mental
health



Conflict,
nationalism,
& a failure of
multilateralism



Humans
and
societies
coexisting
with
rapidly
evolving
technology



Loss of trust
in elites
including
academia &
science



A very
complex
science
& policy
ecosystem

INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE COUNCIL 2022 - 2024

- The ISC was formed in 2018 by the merger of ICSU (natural sciences) and ISSC (social sciences)
- ISC was formed because the two legacy organizations had recognized that their impact could be strengthened with an integrated, stronger and more effective voice
- **ISC's mission is to be the global voice for science**
- **But to be an effective voice, those whom you talk to must be willing to listen – ISC's priority is to *build the audience***
- From 2018-2021 the focus was on merger
- ISC is now progressed beyond its merger phase and is focused on implementing its priorities and building a more effective role with multiple external and internal stakeholders



**International
Science Council**
The global voice for science

- Building meaningful and sustained relationships with core components of the multilateral system
- Promoting the use of evidence in policy making & actionable knowledge
- The Future of Science and Science Systems
- Using science well to address the major challenges
- Freedom, responsibility and trust in science
- Promoting scientific collaboration
- Strengthening the organisation

Building meaningful and sustained relationships with core components of the multilateral system

- Established an office in New York
- Co-secretariat with UNESCO for Group of Friends on Science For Action
- Formal relationship to the Secretary General's science advisory mechanism
- MOU in development with DESA, GSDR 2023
- UNESCO - multiple relationships in natural and social sciences
- UNDP - human development report, affective polarisation
- WHO – trust in science, social determinants of youth mental health
- UNEP – anticipatory foresight
- WMO – World climate research programme
- UNDRR - extensive relationships on hazard reduction
- UNU – MOU just signed
- Discussions underway with OECD, World Economic Forum, UNICEF, EU, etc.
- Participated in G7 and G20 science meetings

Promoting the use of evidence in policy making & actionable knowledge

- Activities with UN and UN agencies
 - Group of Friends
 - UNSG's SAB
 - Partnerships
- Building members' capacities
 - working with INGSA

The Future of Science and Science Systems

- Research assessment
- The future of science publishing
- Transdisciplinarity
- The role of AI in the production and reporting of science
- Centre of Science Futures

Using science well to address the major challenges

- Sustainability
 - The decade for science in sustainability
 - Transdisciplinarity and actionable knowledge
 - Future Earth
- Rapid technology developments
 - AI, generative AI, quantum, synthetic biology etc
- Social Cohesion
 - Affective polarisation
 - Mental health
 - Inequality
- Science diplomacywell

Freedom, responsibility and trust in science

- CFRS
 - Ethics and guidelines
 - Specific cases
 - Diversity
 - Conflict
- Trust in science
 - Production of trustworthy knowledge
 - Addressing the challenges of perceptions of science, disinformation
- Science education and the training of scientists

Promoting scientific collaboration

- Transdisciplinarity
- Strengthening the affiliate bodies
- Advancing the concept of a global fund for sustainability/transdisciplinary research
- Academy of the Pacific
- World Science Forum
- Science diplomacy

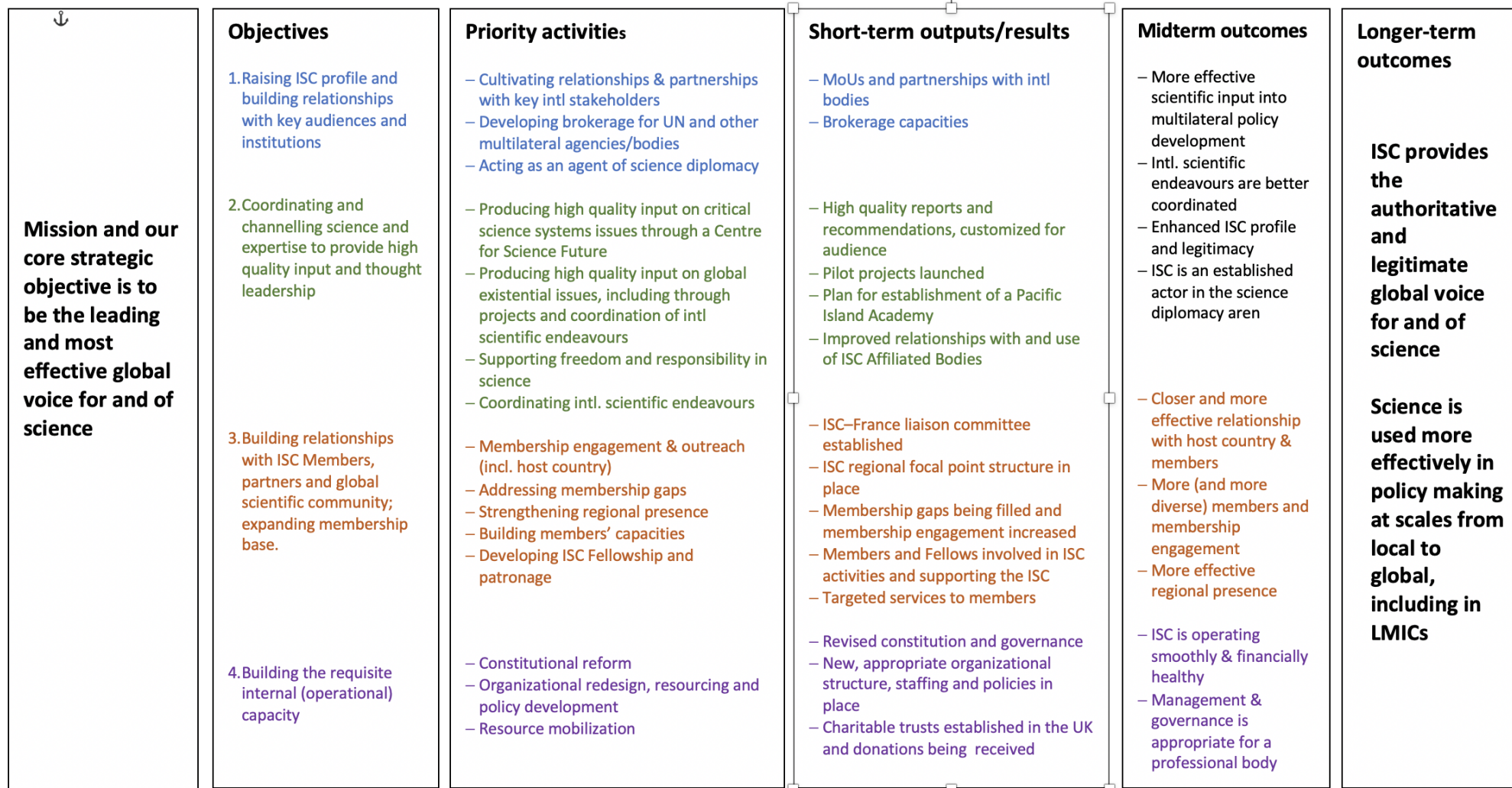
A COMPLEX ECOSYSTEM – A BIG CHALLENGE

- The international policy space is complex
- All science is ‘political’ in some respect and more so when looked at through an international framing.
- The international science ecosystem is duplicative, competitive and yet leaves gaps.
- There is competition for access, influence, and funds.
- There is an extraordinary number of scientific organisations, funders etc. acting in an uncoordinated manner.
- Multiple voices are often weaker than a singular strong voice when dealing with the policy community.
- The question is whether more effective integration/coordination is possible.
- In some areas ISC already has a role (e.g. through its affiliate bodies, linkage to GRC, GFF etc).
- *Can the ISC play a greater role as a facilitator/broker/coordinator?*

Strengthening the organisation

- Theory of change
- Constitutional change
 - governance
 - membership
 - the gaps
 - category 3
 - young academies and scientific organisations
- The ISC fellowship
- Relationship to host country - host liaison committee
- Rebuilding the regional footprints
- Establishing the ISC Foundation (Charitable trust)
- Strengthening the relationship to affiliate bodies

Vision/goal: Science is used effectively to advance the global public and common good.



Principles: Excellence and professionalism, inclusivity and diversity, transparency and integrity, innovation and sustainability

Partners: ISC members, Affiliated Bodies, UN and agencies, development banks, funders, etc.

Impact: Reduced existential risks – resilience & sustainability – greater appreciation of science all over the world – science systems have evolved to meet societal needs

ISC MEMBERSHIP

- Our legitimacy as a global voice depends on being comprehensive in our membership.
- We have geographical and disciplinary gaps.
- There are a large number of potential disciplinary bodies that are not yet members. Many do not fit the 'union' model.
- But we also have a very complicated constitution regarding membership and the rights and obligations (voting, dues, nominations etc.) associated with it. The merger deferred resolution on a number of related issues
- The scope of membership merits reflection.
- The range of members does not easily fit into two categories plus affiliates.

ISC SPONSORED AND AFFILIATED INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC BODIES

