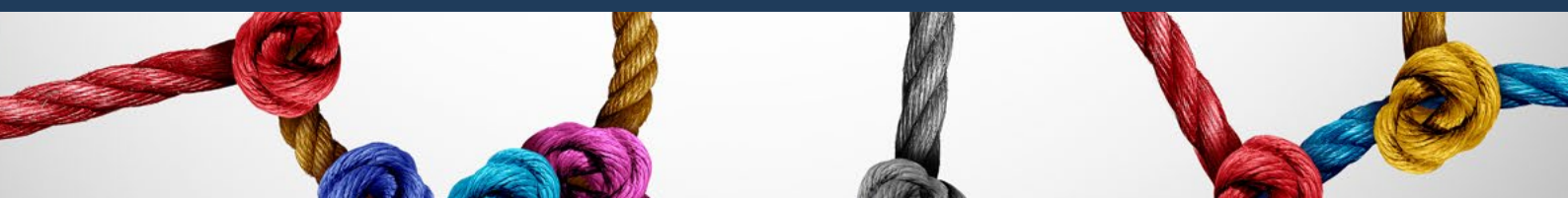


ISC Fellows Letter to the Scientific Community on the occasion of the Summit of the Future



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



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As Chair of the International Science Council (ISC) Fellowship representing a community of scientists committed to promoting science for the global public good, I am privileged to write at this crucial moment in history ahead of the UN Summit of the Future, a high-level event where world leaders will gather. Conceived as a once in a generation opportunity for the reset of global cooperation and rejuvenation of our actions toward sustainable development and peace, its success is imperilled by growing political divides. To ensure the Summit delivers on its promise, it must not remain siloed in the realm of diplomacy; rather, it should be a clarion call to the scientific community to prepare and provide our expertise and innovative solutions for today's challenges.

Being scientists, we know that the only way through intricate global challenges is by evidence-informed decision-making. We also know that science can be a linchpin bridging global divides. Our contribution is therefore essential if we are to ensure that decisions are underpinned by the best available science. However, the way history views the Summit will depend not only on what takes place in New York in September, but on how the ideas and promises the Summit generates are turned into action. It is here that we, the global scientific community, will play our most vital role.

Effective cooperation on a global scale has never been more imperative for our survival but remains extraordinarily difficult within the atmosphere of distrust and archaic structures. This summit will culminate in adopting the Pact for the Future, which will include a Global Digital Compact and a Declaration on Future Generations. Together, these documents outline a global vision for leveraging science and technology for a sustainable and equitable world. We must play a role in realising this vision.

As we approach this critical milestone, scientists from all disciplines must be prepared to engage with Member States and other stakeholders. The issues involved, from climate change and biodiversity loss to food security and public health, are such that they require a new brand of mission-based transdisciplinary science. As part of its efforts in representing the scientific and technological community at the UN, the ISC has already shared country-based case studies where scientific experts and knowledge brokers have provided clear and actionable insights that help shape policy interventions and transformative pathways for sustainability (see <https://council.science/publications/from-science-to-action-hlpf2024/>).

Through these case studies and further examples of transdisciplinary science in action, we have shown that STI is an essential beacon of hope, providing tools and strategies with evidence-based accelerators of progress on several of the SDGs. We now need to scale this further by ensuring that technology and innovation are at the forefront of the fair implementation of the SDGs. This can be achieved through collaboration with scientific knowledge building capacity, mentorship, and interdisciplinary cooperation.

This is why the International Science Council is on an ambitious path to pilot a “big science approach” to sustainability challenges, having invited novel, innovative, collaborative consortia, as well as visionary funders, to co-design and embark on Science Missions for Sustainability. These ambitious plans will require a whole-of-community approach, including calling scientists to action to be part of the solution.

Fellow scientists, the world is facing growing divides, conflict, and polycrisis, and we as scientists have a crucial role to play. Let us be prepared and available for service to those on the front lines of decision-making and action, from local governments and civil society to UN leaders and Member States, both during the Summit of the Future and in the months and years to come. The Summit offers us a launch pad to strengthen the scientific community’s role. May we seize this opportunity in ensuring that science stays at the forefront in the fixing of crises of humanity and the planet. Together, we can achieve a sustainable and resilient future.

Sincerely,

Dr. Terrence Forrester

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Terrence Forrester". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'T'.

Chair of the ISC Fellowship Council

ISC Fellowship Signatories

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