International Science Council

The global voice for science

ISC Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan 2025-2028

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ISC Strategic Framework 2025–2028

ISC vision and mission

The vision of the International Science Council (ISC) is of science as a global public good, meaning that scientific knowledge and practice should universally be considered a shared resource from which everyone can benefit regardless of their location, gender, economic status, cultural background or other characteristics. To realize its vision, the mission of the Council is to provide a powerful, effective and credible global voice for science.

I. Introduction: Working towards the vision of science as a global public good

The world in 2025 is confronted by major societal challenges, including multiple environmental crises, deepening social inequalities and polarization, international armed conflict, disruptive technologies, and precarious health and wellbeing. The consequences of rapid technological acceleration are unexplored, and a growing socio-political environment of mis- and dis-information is a defining feature of our current epoch. In all these challenges science has played and continues to play a crucial role. But there are also overt and fundamental threats to the place of science in decision making, to the production of science and its institutions, to international scientific cooperation and to its use in addressing issues of the global commons. These challenges intersect and interact with each other in complex and unpredictable ways. They also influence and reflect challenges in science systems across the world, including inequalities in science, pressures on scientific freedom, responsibility and integrity, tensions between different value and knowledge systems, politicization of science, the unrestricted growth of fake science publishing, and the appropriation of publicly-funded science to create learning sets for new AI-based discovery. Overall, there is some evidence of a decline of trust in science as an institution. All these factors preclude science to make its best and necessary contribution to society as a global public good.

This Strategic Framework sets out the priorities that will orient the activities of the ISC over the period 2025–2028, recognizing that we live in a rapidly changing and unpredictable context for science. The Executive Committee and Governing Board will assess and review priorities annually, considering: (1) available resources; (2) the principles underpinning ISC action; (3) the capacities and strengths of the ISC Secretariat and membership; and (4) the unique and distinctive contribution the ISC can make, either on its own or in partnership.

II. The unique ISC role

As a non-profit organization with a global mandate and a pluralistic membership of more than 250 national and international scientific bodies, the ISC federates and represents the scientific community across national and disciplinary borders. Being independent of specific geostrategic interests, and with partnerships across the research ecosystem and the multilateral system, the ISC serves as an impartial platform to set and advance international scientific agendas; to convene debates on critical and sometimes difficult topics in science and around science in society; and to inform and support the governance of science and technology for the benefit of society at regional and global levels.

The ISC, through its predecessor organizations, the International Council for Science (ICSU) and the International Social Sciences Council (ISSC), has a long history of impact in science coordination,

science advice and science diplomacy, facilitating international collaboration in areas like environmental change, space research, and data standards and sharing. In recent years, mandated by its Members as reflected in its Statutes (2025), the ISC has strengthened its capacity at the science-policy-society interface with proactive engagement in the multilateral system.

III. Principles of action

ISC actions are underpinned by the following principles:

a. Advocacy and actions to protect international science and science cooperation.
b. Advocacy and actions to protect the principles of freedom and responsibility in science.
c. Address complex issues of global significance which are of concern to a significant number of our Members, which require international, interdisciplinary and/or transdisciplinary collaboration, and which have the potential for impact on science, practice and policy.
d. Seek to redress global knowledge divides.
e. Respect the ISC core values of excellence, inclusivity and diversity, integrity and transparency; collaborativeness; and sustainability as laid out in the Statutes and Rules of Procedures (2025).
f. Prioritize areas where the ISC is uniquely placed to have impact, partnering with other organizations where appropriate.

IV. The strategic priorities

The revised Statutes and Rules of Procedure (2025) inform the strategic priorities. They define the general areas for action, reflecting the strengths and capacities of the ISC and building on the membership base and partners in the science and policy arenas. These strategic priorities will need to be continually interpreted considering the changing context.

They are:

- Freedom, responsibility and inclusivity in science
- International science agenda-setting
- The evolution of science
- Science for evidence-based policy making
- Science diplomacy

Priority area 1: Freedom, responsibility and inclusivity in science

Pursuing the vision of science as a global public good means ensuring that the scientific process is trustworthy, that the practice of science is free, responsible, equitable and inclusive, and that scientists contribute their knowledge in the public space. The principles of freedom and responsibility in science are enshrined in Statute 8 of the Council's Statutes and Rules of Procedure (2025).

These principles are more important than ever in the context of growing scepticism, misinformation and distrust in institutions, which is threatening the credibility of science, and political and economic pressures that restrict scientific freedom and the independence of scientific inquiry.

Responsibility in science is vital in light of scientific and technological advances that offer great advantages, but also significant risks, such as artificial intelligence (AI) and synthetic biology. Science itself is undergoing change. AI will significantly change the production and reporting of knowledge. The private sector is a significant producer of both discoveries and applied science; technology companies are now significant players in the landscape of global science. In this evolving context, structural and systemic inequalities are already now hampering access to the production and use of scientific knowledge in ways which are detrimental to science and society.

The Council's Committee for Freedom and Responsibility in Science (CFRS) monitors general cases of scientists whose freedoms and rights are restricted as a result of carrying out their scientific research, or while acting as scientists. It provides assistance where its intervention can leverage relief and support the activities of other relevant actors. The CFRS responses and actions include public announcements or statements, commentaries, and letters to the heads of relevant authorities.

The Council and its partners will improve understanding of and advocacy for the right to participate in and benefit from science, through elaboration of normative concepts, guidelines and related awareness campaigns.

It will address new challenges in defining scientific integrity as fundamental changes in the way science is performed and reported, and it keeps pace with emerging technologies. Increasingly, such research may involve relationships and interactions between the public and the private sector.

The ISC will collaborate with its partners to establish, monitor, share, and promote the use of evidence on gender policies and programmes in scientific organizations.

Priority area 2: International science agenda-setting

Global challenges such as biodiversity loss, food security, climate change, inequality and public health are complex and interconnected. A solution in one area has the potential to create unintended consequences in another area. Planetary stewardship, moreover, extends beyond national borders. The atmosphere, ocean, polar regions and space are shared, and without a shared scientific agenda and advocacy in the policy space, they are extremely vulnerable.

The nature of the challenges facing us demands cross-disciplinary, cross-border and cross-sectoral responses, including non-academic forms of knowledge. These responses require coordinated science agendas on issues of global concern.

The ISC will undertake systematic horizon-scanning process with Members, Affiliated Bodies and partners to identify emerging issues for the science agenda. As an outcome, the ISC will convene its Members to act on such emerging issues, for example through landscape mapping, reports, fundraising, or raising such issues within policy forums.

The ISC, together with key strategic partners, will coordinate science and science-policy-society interfaces on challenges relating to the global commons, including on issues such as food security and climate change, and aligning these with high level international efforts, such as international decades or years.

The Council will convene the breadth of its community on efforts in the area of social sciences related to inequality, societal polarization, well-being, and lack of trust in institutions (including scientific institutions). These issues intersect with sustainability challenges and emerging technologies. The crucial role of fundamental science in underpinning the broader sustainable development agenda will be highlighted by the Council within policy and funding forums, and through support of Member-led activities.

Priority area 3: The evolution of science

The world of science is changing. Global centres of scientific production are shifting, with increasing contributions from the Global South, and so is the balance of knowledge production between the public and private sector. Technology is changing the way science is conducted and reported. Misaligned incentives and uncoordinated stakeholder interests are hindering science's ability to meet societal needs. The ISC informs on and monitors changes in science practices and science systems, to better influence their evolution.

Emerging sciences and technologies such as AI, data science, quantum science, and synthetic biology, are significantly changing the tools and practice of science, and have broader impacts on the ethics related to performing science. These technologies hold both challenges and opportunities for infrastructure development and international collaboration. They often have a direct and significant impact on society, and hence it is necessary to create principles for their safe and ethical use in science.

Driving change for the public good will require the participation of the full spectrum of the scientific community as well as multiple other stakeholders: funders, publishers, policy-makers, technology firms, academic and research institutions, research infrastructure providers, networks and research platforms.

The ISC will, in conjunction with these partners, and through its membership, assess the impacts of emerging technologies on the production and the reporting of science and contribute to global discussions and social and ethical issues arising from the use of these technologies.

Building on the ISC's work on the value and challenges of undertaking transdisciplinary research, the Council will continue to build capacity of Members and partners to produce actionable knowledge through the application of demonstrated transdisciplinary research methods. It will assist the research funding community, including private research funders, to mainstream transdisciplinary science into their efforts and work to identify appropriate means of assessment for such research. It will aim to provide guidelines and principles on the education of scientists beyond their disciplinary knowledge and technical skills to enable a cohort of transdisciplinary-ready scientists.

The ISC will continue acting as a global and regional forum for relevant stakeholders (the scientific community, funders, publishers, consortia of universities, the private sector) to define the needs for change in scientific publishing and research assessment, and to support and align different existing initiatives.

Priority area 4: Science for evidence-based policymaking

While science is recognized as an important part of the solutions to many global issues, the gap between available knowledge and policy action is widening, and trends of mis-information and dis-information, inequalities and conflict threaten cooperation at a time when it is most needed. New forms of public engagement and approaches to accessing and using information demand more agile and contextualized approaches at the science-policy-society interfaces. The scientific community needs to strengthen its collective capabilities in synthesizing and translating scientific information, and in communicating the limitations and implications of science.

The Council will contribute to evidence-based decision- and policy-making by mobilizing relevant expertise from within the ISC membership in the brokerage between science and policy at multiple scales, from national to multilateral, on diverse issues and at diverse fora.

This will entail working with key components of the multilateral system including member states and the UN Secretary-General's office, the office of the President of the UN General Assembly, and UN organizations to advocate for science and science cooperation and to assist with ensuring that expert and pluralistic brokerage is available.

In order to enhance the capacity of Members to provide science advice to governments and understand the science-policy brokerage function, the ISC will support tailored training, designed and delivered with Affiliated Bodies and Members.

The ISC will advise on and assist with the development of new and/or enhanced interface mechanisms in the multilateral system to better mobilize scientific knowledge for evidence-based policy-making to support transformative change within and across different contexts and levels.

Priority area 5: Science diplomacy

From global pandemics requiring scientific collaboration and exchange, to pressures to explore and exploit space or the deep sea, global risks and the protection of global commons necessitate a stronger engagement of science in international policy and diplomatic debates. The knowledge, capacity and resource divides between countries undermine the ability of nations to contribute individually and collectively to solutions; they also reduce trust in institutional ability to deliver fair and global outcomes. Conversely, growing and persistent diplomatic tensions between countries are also affecting science, including what science is prioritized, how science is produced and shared, and what collaborations are encouraged or discouraged. In this regard, the goal of the ISC is to harness the role of science in facilitating peaceful dialogues.

Science diplomacy as a field is evolving and is receiving increasing attention as an important function for science in the current geopolitical situation. The Council will develop partnerships with the key and most relevant parts of the multilateral system, in particular with the UN system and organizations in New York and Geneva, to ensure better communication between the global voice for science and the global policy community.

The Council will facilitate debates and fora with multilateral agencies on scientific issues that present major political, economic and security implications, and will work with its network of Members to strengthen scientific inputs into foreign ministries and diplomatic missions. The Council will leverage its capacities and ability to bridge beyond geostrategic divides to support efforts at reducing tensions and promoting cooperation through science.

V. The ISC community

The ISC is first and foremost a membership organization. The achievement of its vision and strategic priorities depends on having an empowered and cohesive membership, a close network of Affiliated Bodies, an engaged Fellowship and productive partnerships. The ISC will do the following to engage and support its Members and the extended 'family'.

Increasing membership engagement and interaction

The ISC Secretariat will continue to work closely with Members to maximize opportunities to engage with each other and with the ISC in the delivery of the strategic priorities. The Secretariat will continue its regular, tailored communication with Members and stakeholder mailing lists and other platforms to keep them apprised of opportunities and news at the ISC and among the ISC family.

The premier occasion for the Members to meet each other in person and take strategic decisions is the ordinary session of the General Assembly, in late 2028 following the 2025 General Assembly in Oman. A midterm meeting without voting business is inscribed in the Statutes and Rules of Procedure. The next one will fall in late 2026.

The Secretariat will endeavour to facilitate initiatives of the Members to organize and undertake activities among subgroups, e.g. among union members or topical interest groups.

Ensuring representativity and inclusiveness in the membership

For the ISC to be maximally effective, it is vital that the ISC membership reflect the full spectrum of sciences as well as possible, including natural, social, mathematical, medical and engineering sciences and science-related humanities. Efforts will continue to add to its membership base in scientific domains not well represented and to engage early- and mid-career scientists and researchers (EMCR) even more systematically in its membership, bodies and activities. The membership of the ISC should also be globally representative of the scientific community. It is a priority to extend the membership into countries where the ISC does not currently have a national Member and to consolidate the ISC's presence, networks and relevance in all regions, particularly in Asia, the Middle East and Africa.

Capacity development for ISC Members

The ISC will continue to help its Members help each other to build capacity through knowledge exchange, collaboration, skill building and mentorship in critical areas such as digital transformation, science communication and science-policy engagement.

Increasing the ISC's reach through the ISC Fellowship and ISC Patron(s)

By 2028 the Fellowship will have reached its intended capacity of 600–700 Fellows and will be a rich resource for the ISC and the Members to draw on for expertise, counsel and influence. Fellows will be mobilized to help identify opportunities for the ISC, deliver the Council's programmes of work and promote that work among key communities.

Developing partnerships

The ISC will continue cultivating partnerships and promoting coordination with key actors in the global science and policy ecosystem, including at regional and global level. The new Category 4 membership category allows for actors in the broader science ecosystem to become observer Members of the ISC. The ISC will continue working closely with its Affiliate Bodies to strengthen their capacity to operate in this changing world.

Fairness and financial sustainability

A Working Group has been established to revise the ISC dues structure, with the aim of presenting a proposal for the approval of the membership before the end of 2025 and application as of 2026. The aim of the revision of the dues structure will be to unify the parallel dues systems of former ICSU and ISSC Members and to develop a fairer, more acceptable and more sustainable dues structure, in the context of increasing pressures on our Members' own finances.

VI. Resources and infrastructure

Establishing a curated database of experts

To have capacity to respond rapidly to opportunities to contribute to international science-policy-society interfaces, and to diversify the pool of experts that it can call on to drive its activities, the ISC will develop its curated database of experts drawn from Member and self-nominations, ISC Fellows and partners.

Diversifying income streams

To maintain the current high level of activity and achievement going forward, income will have to increase. As income from membership dues is, however, not expected to rise substantially in the coming years, new sources of income will be required to sustain the ISC's increased ambitions.

The key avenue to increasing the Secretariat's financial capacity is to develop philanthropic giving and additional support from donor nations. The ISC Foundation UK, a charitable trust based in the UK, is operational and able to receive funds. The ISC needs to develop and sustain relationships with philanthropic organizations and donors whose interests and practices align with the vision and values of the ISC, which will require investment in fundraising and marketing. When external funders support discrete projects, they must cover the real costs.

Increasing Secretariat capacities

The Council intends to increase its operational capacity in various ways:

- A secondment scheme, whereby ISC Members can 'donate' expertise to the ISC in the form of a staff member who works at the ISC for 12–18 months in the framework of an 'Expertise-based Philanthropy Agreement'.
- Establishing new regional structures, notably in central Asia/Transcaucasia, Africa and the Middle East regions.
- Engaging and facilitating Members in the leadership and delivery of projects.
- Adopting and leveraging new tools, including digital tools, to work more efficiently, effectively and inclusively and to build the capacity of its Members.

A priority for the Secretariat is to maintain and enhance the Council's communications and outreach capability, ensuring that it is able to provide a responsive resource for Members, as well as an effective source of information for wider publics.

Improving inclusivity and sustainability

The Council will work to ensure that inclusivity and sustainability are prioritized in its ways of working, through rigorous respect of its values and application of its policies.

ISC Implementation Plan 2025–2028

I. Introduction

The priorities set out in the ISC Strategic Framework will orient the activities of the ISC over the period 2025–2028. These priorities are consistent with general areas for action defined in the ISC Statutes and Rules of Procedure (2025). This Implementation Plan articulates the priority areas for action described in the Strategic Framework, for the period 2025–2028.

Building on the principles underpinning ISC actions that are contained in the Strategic Framework, the Implementation Plan relies on the following principles-based framework:

- The choice of issue is timely and relevant to the Council's mission;
- The issue offers a clear, and ideally unique role for the Council;
- There is a clear target audience and the possibility to build a pathway to influence, and a strong possibility of positive impact;
- The activity contributes towards achieving the ISC mission and strategic goals;
- There is value-added in tackling the issue collaboratively across membership;
- The issue speaks to the interests of multiple disciplines/regions.

Using the criteria above, the ISC strategic plan should be populated by a portfolio of activities that balance:

- Proactive/planned vs. reactive/opportunistic;
- Resourced (using existing staff capacity & budget) vs. activities that need fund-raising;
- Direct vs. indirect benefit to Members;
- Emerging issues vs long-term areas of investment.

This implementation plan therefore aims to: (i) propose a focused portfolio of activities in order to maximize impact against human and financial resources; and (ii) provide a tool to monitor progress in the realization of the Council's strategic priorities.

These are particularly unstable times for international science. The ISC recognizes that the very fluid situation in which science operates requires that priorities may shift to meet the vision, mission and values laid out in our Statutes, and which are under threat in multiple ways. Taking into account these evolving circumstances, it is intended that the ISC Members will review progress and direction in the implementation of the priority areas of action at their mid-term meeting in October 2026.

II. Implementation plan

The ISC's mission to be the global voice for science requires it to be a connector between the many parts of the global scientific community represented by its membership and the relevant policy communities, and by promoting alignment and amplification of its members' efforts. The ISC helps frame and promote the global science agenda. It convenes key discussions on the evolution of science and science systems, the place of science in society, and the interfaces between science, policy and diplomacy. The ISC promotes the use of science in tackling emerging and unresolved issues and mobilizes evidence for policy, especially at the multilateral level. In a time of global tensions, the ISC epitomizes how international scientific collaboration represents an investment for both the present and future, building bridges between countries, stakeholders and generations.

The broad membership of the ISC, covering both the natural and social sciences and all parts of the globe, along with its college of ISC Fellows, allows the ISC to make unique interdisciplinary contributions to our understanding of critical issues for science and society, and to the identification of potential solutions and translation into action.

The ISC's mandate is delivered through core activities that aim to strengthen its global scientific community and enhance the impact of science as a global public good.

These core activities are supplemented by strategic projects or programmes that respond to needs and opportunities relevant to ISC strategic objectives and for which resources can be found.

Activities are a mix of predetermined activities and responsive activities that react to the changing and unstable situation for international science and the use of science.

Core activities

The ISC gives priority to those actions which require the collective voice or inputs of the international science community either on its own or in partnership and activities that reflect the unique membership of the Council:

a) Engaging at the multilateral science-policy and science-diplomacy nexuses, including:

   i. Co-convening (with WFEO) the UN Scientific and Technological Community Major Group;
   ii. Co-convening (with UNESCO) the Group of Friend for Science for Action;
   iii. Assisting the UN Science Advisory Board and UNDESA with scientific input;
   iv. Partnering with UN technical agencies including UNDP, UNEP, UNDRR, UNESCO, WMO, WIPO and FAO on agreed matters.

b) Promoting interdisciplinary international scientific cooperation:

   i. Providing scientific input into relevant multilateral coordinating bodies (e.g. International Decade of Sciences for Sustainable Development, International Polar Year);
   ii. Supporting the work of the Affiliated Bodies and convening them to identify synergies and promoting their research and related contributions for the protection of the global commons;

iii. Facilitating collaborations led by the social and human sciences to define research questions and scientific knowledge addressing the cultural, social, economic and political dimensions of sustainable development;
iv. Promoting intra- and inter-regional interaction and collaboration through the ISC regional presence (currently Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific).

c) Addressing ongoing needs in protecting freedom and encouraging responsibility in science through the Committee for Freedom and Responsibility in Science and through partnerships with UNESCO.

d) Facilitating exchange, learning and collaboration between ISC Members and their communities in all their disciplinary and geographic diversity, including by:

i. Considering and responding to changes in science and science systems, ethical and social and policy issues;
ii. Convening fora of stakeholders including publishers (via STM) for considering new, coherent approaches to the interlinked issues of scientific publishing and research assessment;
iii. Seeding member-driven, interdisciplinary initiatives;
iv. Facilitating distribution of Members' own relevant work/reports amongst the global science community;
v. Giving visibility to and promoting the voice and participation of early and mid-career scientists in ISC and other global scientific and policy fora;
vi. Further developing the ISC Fellowship.

e) Coordinating with partner bodies including IAP, WFEO, Scholars at Risk, UNESCO.

f) Ensuring a viable and effective organisation. This includes:

i. Managing within budget and maintaining an adequate reserve;
ii. Fundraising for additional activities;
iii. Ensuring an effective relationship with the host country;
iv. Exploring whether to change status to an international (non-governmental) organisation;
v. Continuing the process of organizational reform with a particular focus on membership scope and criteria;
vi. Developing context-specific regional focal points to ensure greater inclusivity and membership liaison;
vii. Organizing the two-yearly membership meeting/General Assembly.

Flagship activities

The core activities of the ISC are given emphasis by a particular focus on targeted, discrete activities supported by core and assured external funding: if fundraising allows, they will be further expanded or additional activities added. The five planned sets of flagship activities for the current planning period (2025–2028) are described below. While they are presented as distinct clusters, they are integrated, and some activities serve more than one objective. Major partners are identified but this is not an exclusive listing.

Flagship 1: Trust in science

The current information environment and geopolitical context is characterized by increased polarization of views, a decline in trust in institutions, and a disconnect between views and evidence, compromising the potential of science to contribute positively to policy and society. At the same time, the social contract for science needs to be reviewed and re-envisioned to account for the evolving science community worldwide, and to strengthen the position of science as a global public good.

- The ISC will convene further (with appropriate partners) dialogues on trust in science and how to reimagine the social contract for science, with the aim of strengthening confidence in scientific evidence and the contribution of science to evidence-based decision and policy making.
- CFRS will continue to develop guidelines that assist in ensuring the trustworthy production of knowledge (see also flagship 2).
- ISC will convene dialogues on knowledge management for policy making in the context of AI (see also Flagship 3).

Partners: European Commission Joint Research Centre, Frontiers Foundation.

Flagship 2: The free and responsible practice of science

Freedom and responsibility in science are foundational for science systems to fully perform their knowledge generation function and contribute to the common public good. The ISC, working with its members and partners, is the custodian of the principles of free and responsible practice of science; the ISC provides a reference in terms of both its non-partisanship and its accumulated experience.

- The ISC will further systematize and strengthen its work in the domain of freedom and responsibility in science by working with Members and partners to develop guidelines on scientific integrity in an era of new and emerging technologies.
- It will explore potential gaps in the guidelines related to the conduct of science reflecting the evolving landscape of science (see also Flagship 4).
- It will continue to explore interactions between science and other knowledge systems and how science communication needs to evolve to sustain the social contract for science (see also Flagship 4).

Partners: UNESCO, UNESCO-COMEST, IAP, European Commission.

Flagship 3: Science advice and brokerage

The ISC advances the role of science in multilateral policy through formal and informal mechanisms. This serves the interest of the science community by creating and crystallizing pathways for science input in policy processes. The ISC's role as a neutral liaison between the scientific community and the multilateral system is now well established. The ISC is recognized at the United Nations in New York (UN Member States' Group of Friends on Science for Action; UN Secretary-General's Scientific Advisory Board) and through programmatic collaborations with several UN policy and delivery organizations based in other parts of the world.

The ISC will continue providing scientific input to policy by:

- Encouraging, promoting and brokering the input of expertise gathered from its membership into relevant processes of the multilateral system;
- Giving scientific input to the post 2030 Agenda;
- Building closer relations with the UN technical agencies including establishment of a Geneva liaison position (funding provided external to core funding);
- Building new and reinforcing existing pathways for science input to multilateral decision-making capacity-building activities in science for policy-makers and diplomats;
- Building the capacities of ISC members in science advice to their own governments via INGSA.

Partners: UNEP, UNDP, DESA, WMO, FAO, UNESCO, UNDRR, INGSA, etc.

Flagship 4: Coordination of international science collaboration

The ISC, building on the work of its predecessors, has a long tradition of promoting international scientific collaboration. In an increasingly complex, interconnected and multipolar geopolitical context, international scientific collaboration is more needed than ever. Moreover, in the face of the current polycrisis, the social and natural sciences must work in lock-step to help protect the global commons – the climate systems, the poles, the world ocean and space – and to address inequalities, and preserve social and cultural commons.

The Council will promote the role of science in fostering collaboration and the protection of the global commons, by:

- Developing principles and values for international scientific collaboration, supported by a three-year grant from the European Commission;
- Assisting its Affiliated Bodies in their domain-specific roles in international science cooperation;
- Of particular focus are the International Decade of Sciences for Sustainable Development and preparing for the International Polar Year;
- Conducting a horizon-scanning exercise with ISC Members to detect emerging issues in science, society and/or science systems.

Partners: Co-sponsors of ISC Affiliated Bodies, OECD, UNESCO, UNEP, UNDP, UNSAB, European Commission, IAP etc.

Flagship 5: The evolution of science and science systems

Science and science systems have undergone major changes due to shifting conditions, such as in funding and research evaluation. These shifts are compounded by the rise of artificial intelligence and other disruptive technologies, which are reshaping how scientific knowledge is produced and reported. There is also a pressing need for transdisciplinary science in order to maximize the impact of science in addressing key challenges.

The ISC will reinforce its efforts in this area through:

- Re-convening the Global Forum of Funders, and other discussions including with university organizations, to highlight and close the gap for funding transdisciplinary science (including via the Commission for transdisciplinary research and Science Missions for Sustainability);
- Developing discussions with foundations to consider alternative and better ways of assessing, funding and supporting international science, at various scales;
- Exploring the present and potential impacts of emerging technologies on science systems, with a special focus on the Global South.

Partners: Global Research Council, Belmont Forum, IDRC, the ISC Global Commission on Science Missions for Sustainability.

III. Progress indicators

The following progress indicators will be applied throughout the priority areas:

Qualitative

- Findings of ISC reports taken into account by ISC Members, other key scientific organizations, funders, policy-makers and key multilateral platforms and funders
- The work of Affiliated Bodies highlighted by other scientific organizations and at key multilateral platforms
- Publication/dissemination of results of emerging issues from and for science
- Co-produced outputs with authoritative organizations demonstrating the ISC's convening and catalytic role

Quantitative

- Number of Members engaged
- Number of countries engaged
- Number of briefings
- Number of discussions (roundtables, other events) convened or facilitated discussions
- Number of experts trained/engaged in science policy processes across disciplines, regions and gender
- Additional funding raised