ANNUAL REPORT 2025

International Science Council

The global voice for science

This report is published by the International Science Council, 5 rue Auguste Vacquerie, 75116 Paris, France.

About the International Science Council
The International Science Council (ISC) works at the global level to catalyse change by convening scientific expertise, advice and influence on issues of major importance to both science and society.

The ISC is an international non-profit organization with a unique global membership that brings together over 250 scientific organizations around the world, including international scientific unions and associations, national science academies and research councils, international and regional federations and societies, and academies and associations of young scientists.

The International Science Council is a membership organization financed principally through annual membership dues. The ISC acknowledges the additional support received in 2025 from the China Association for Science and Technology (CAST), the Frontiers Research Foundation, the International Development Research Centre (IDRC, Canada), the IRDR International Centre of Excellence in Taipei, the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment of New Zealand, the National Science Foundation (United States) and the University of Bergen.

Cover photograph: Oleksii Kriachko

Design: Mr. Clinton

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD BY THE PRESIDENT AND THE CEO

The year 2025 once again confronted the ISC constituency, its Members, Secretariat and regional offices, with a world in rapid and unsettling transformation. Polarization of views, deepening geopolitical fault lines and a fracturing information environment have continued to shape the conditions under which science operates. The stakes are real: funding levels for research and systematic observation, the degree of freedom afforded to science and the extent to which scientific knowledge is instrumentalized to serve geopolitical interests all determine whether the environment for science is stable and enabling, or volatile and constrained.

To these familiar pressures has been added a newer and more disruptive force: the explosion of artificial intelligence (AI) in the production and circulation of content. Much of what AI generates is presented as knowledge while remaining, in fact, opinion uncorroborated by evidence. The distinction between scientific information and legitimate but unverified views is not a technicality. It is increasingly the fault line along which trust in science and public institutions will be won or lost.

The ISC had begun anticipating these shifts earlier than most. In 2021 and 2022, in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Council launched a strategic reorientation grounded in a recognition that the role of science in society was entering a period of profound change. Few foresaw how quickly AI would upend established norms around knowledge production, or how geopolitically fragile the post-pandemic world would become. The Council saw it coming, and it acted.

Persuading Members, governance and management alike of the need for change was not straightforward. But the shift was necessary. The ISC had to go beyond its conventional functions of setting the science agenda and contributing to the evolution of science systems. It needed to invest in science brokerage at the multilateral level, articulate a new form of science diplomacy and reaffirm freedom and responsibility in science as foundational conditions for scientists to play an active and credible role in society.

In 2025 specifically, the Council made tangible progress across several fronts: its role within the United Nations system; science advice to governments; research and monitoring agendas on the global commons; scientists' responsibilities in preserving the integrity of the scientific record; and how scientists can most effectively support diplomatic processes, including on the post-2030 sustainable development agenda.

A transitional year, by definition, is rarely comfortable. But as we now move forward, the Council finds itself on firm ground. With a growing and increasingly diverse membership, firmly recognized as the voice of the active international scientific community, the ISC enters its 2026–2028 strategy and programme of work with clarity of purpose and organizational

coherence. The period ahead will demand no less. Distinguishing evidence from opinion will grow both harder and more consequential, and policy-makers, the private sector, civil society and nations alike will need to reckon fully with what the principles and practice of science can offer: an objective view of our shared world, and the best possible basis for decisions that matter most for peace, wellbeing and sustainability.

The ISC has a central role as the global voice of its Members in defining the role and responsibility of scientists and science organizations in such an evolving context. It also supports scientists and science systems as they adapt and contribute to defining new directions for science in society. Let us continue working together to this end.

Peter Gluckman,
ISC President

Salvatore Aricò,
ISC Chief Executive Officer

1 2025 AT A GLANCE

15
reports published

850
experts mobilized and engaged

70,000+
followers across social media

144
news and blogs published

700+
experts in the ISC roster

725
registrants from

132 countries to the Muscat Global Knowledge Dialogue and General Assembly (43% of them women)

110,000+
newsletter reads

12 new members

2.1 million
unique visitors to the ISC website

58%
of ISC governance and expert group members are women

2 GOVERNANCE AND MEMBERSHIP

In 2025, the ISC focused on strengthening its institutional foundations to operate more effectively as both a convening platform for its Members and a credible actor in international policy and science systems.

This effort was anchored in two parallel dynamics: clarifying strategic direction and reinforcing governance structures to support implementation.

Setting direction in a fragmented context

The Muscat Global Knowledge Dialogue (GKD) (26–28 January 2025) brought together the international scientific community to examine major transformations affecting science and society. Discussions focused on the evolution of science systems, equitable transitions to sustainability, emerging technologies, inequalities in participation, trust in science, science diplomacy and science education. Across these themes, a consistent message emerged: the need for stronger international, interdisciplinary cooperation and for science systems that are more responsive, inclusive and transparent to global challenges.

Across these themes, a consistent message emerged: the need for stronger international, interdisciplinary cooperation and for science systems that are more responsive, inclusive and transparent to global challenges.

The Dialogue concluded with the adoption of the Muscat Declaration, a collective call to action affirming science as a global public good; setting out shared commitments to address pressing challenges; and calling for international, inter- and transdisciplinary collaborations and engagement with funders, policy-makers and other stakeholders.

Following the GKD, the Third ISC General Assembly (29–30 January 2025) focused on the Council's statutory and strategic priorities. Members reviewed the draft 2025–2028 Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan and associated multiannual budget, approved a one-year budget and proposed modifications to the Statutes and Rules of Procedure. They also discussed key strategic priorities including freedom and responsibility in science, inclusivity in scientific systems, science-for-policy engagement and science diplomacy. The final 2025–2028 Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan and associated multiannual budget were adopted in December 2025 through a special vote of the membership.

A significant milestone was achieved during the Muscat meetings with the signing of a letter of intent between the ISC and Oman's Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation to establish a regional ISC presence in Muscat.

Renewing leadership and governance capacities

In January 2025, the ISC renewed its governance with the appointment of a new President-elect and the election of new members to the Governing Board.

Prof. Robbert Dijkgraaf was appointed President-elect of the ISC. A theoretical physicist with extensive experience at the interface of science, policy and international cooperation, Prof. Dijkgraaf previously served as Director and Leon Levy Professor at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, USA, and as Minister of Education, Culture and Science of the Netherlands. His appointment signalled continuity in the ISC's commitment to scientific excellence, multilateral engagement and the strengthening of science systems globally. He will assume the presidency following the completion of the term of the current President, Sir Peter Gluckman, in October 2026.

At the same time, half of the Governing Board membership was renewed, with seven other members joining and seven rotating off. The Board and its Committees maintain a balance of disciplinary, regional and gender representation and are increasingly reflective of early- and mid-career researchers.

Governance structures were further adjusted in line with the revised statutes adopted in 2024. The Standing Committee architecture was reconfigured to strengthen oversight and expertise across core areas. The Committee for Outreach and Engagement was replaced by a new Committee for Membership; the Committee for Finance, Compliance and Risk was expanded and largely renewed; and the Committee for Freedom and Responsibility

in Science also underwent significant changes in its structure. The refreshed composition of these Committees maintains regional and disciplinary diversity while reinforcing the expertise required to support programme delivery, financial stewardship and policy engagement. From 2025 onwards, half of the membership of Standing Committees will rotate every two years, thus ensuring continuity while maintaining renewal and diversity of expertise.

An ad hoc Working Group on membership dues structure revision continued its work throughout the year, developing options for a unified dues framework. Following consultations with Members and presentation of initial principles at the General Assembly, the Group delivered recommendations to the Governing Board in October 2025. A proposal will be submitted to the membership in 2026.

Expanding and diversifying membership

The addition of twelve new Members, including several young academies, reinforces the ISC's role as a platform that reflects the diversity of the global scientific community. The inclusion of early- and mid-career scientist organizations is particularly significant, bringing the number of such Members to 23 and strengthening intergenerational representation in global scientific discussions.

More importantly, Members are not only represented within the ISC, but they are increasingly mobilized through it: whether through participation in global dialogues, contribution to expert groups or engagement in policy processes, the Council's influence depends on its ability to activate this distributed network.

3 FREEDOM, RESPONSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVITY IN SCIENCE

In 2025, the ISC advanced its work on freedom, responsibility and inclusivity in science in response to a shifting global context marked by declining trust in institutions, increasing political pressure on scientific activity and persistent inequalities in access to and participation in science.

Across its programmes, the Council and its Members addressed a shared concern: the conditions that enable science to act as a global public good are under strain. Together, they have pursued action to protect and promote interdependent constituents of resilient science systems: safeguarding scientific freedom, strengthening responsibility and broadening participation, all while reinforcing the Council's position as a credible voice in international debates on scientific governance.

Advancing the right to participate in and benefit from science

The ISC produced a new interpretation of the right to participate in and benefit from science.

This interpretation clarifies what this right entails in institutional and systemic terms: equitable access to knowledge, meaningful participation in research systems and the existence of environments that enable and protect scientific work.

Members engaged with this framework as a basis for reflection and, in some cases, integration into their own institutional strategies. The endorsement by the Royal Society Te Apārangi illustrates how national academies can translate a rights-based approach into concrete positioning, linking scientific activity more explicitly to societal obligations and public accountability.

Scientific freedom and inclusivity are interdependent, as barriers to participation directly affect both the quality and legitimacy of science.

This work also opened opportunities for broader public engagement. In December 2025, seminars hosted in Aotearoa New Zealand examined scientific freedom explicitly as a human right, bringing legal, institutional and scientific perspectives into dialogue. These discussions underscored a key point: scientific freedom and inclusivity are interdependent, as barriers to participation directly affect both the quality and legitimacy of science.

Trust, integrity and the responsible conduct of scientists

The question of trust in science remained central throughout the year. The ISC and its Members addressed the issue as a structural challenge, linked to how science is conducted, evaluated and communicated.

The Council emphasized that trust must be sustained through openness, rigorous quality assurance, equitable participation and clear communication about uncertainty and limitations.

Trust must be sustained through openness, rigorous quality assurance, equitable participation and clear communication about uncertainty and limitations.

Members of the Committee for Freedom and Responsibility in Science contributed to this agenda through a series of blogs responding to a report published following a 2024 workshop on 'Trust in science for policy nexus', held in collaboration with the European Commission's Joint Research Centre. These contributions positioned the ISC within broader international debates on how scientific institutions can maintain credibility in contested information environments.

Advancing gender equality in scientific organizations

In 2025, the ISC consolidated work started in 2024 on gender equality in science and kick-started the 'Advancing gender equality in scientific organizations' project in collaboration with the InterAcademy Partnership and the Standing Committee for Gender Equality in Science.

The project is structured around two complementary components. First, a global institutional survey was distributed to scientific academies and international scientific unions to assess women's representation and participation. The survey examined membership and leadership composition, as well as governance structures, nomination and election procedures, and the presence and impact of equality policies. A total of 136 organizations participated. Second, a global survey of individual scientists collected over 800 responses, providing insight into lived experiences of participation, leadership pathways, organizational culture and perceived barriers within scientific organizations.

To ensure methodological rigour, the Council established an independent 14-member expert panel selected from more than 270 candidates within the ISC network of member institutions. The panel provides oversight of data analysis and contributes to the development of evidence-based recommendations.

The Council also maintained public engagement on gender equality, including a dedicated session during the Muscat GKD and marking the International Day of Women and Girls in Science on 11 February 2025.

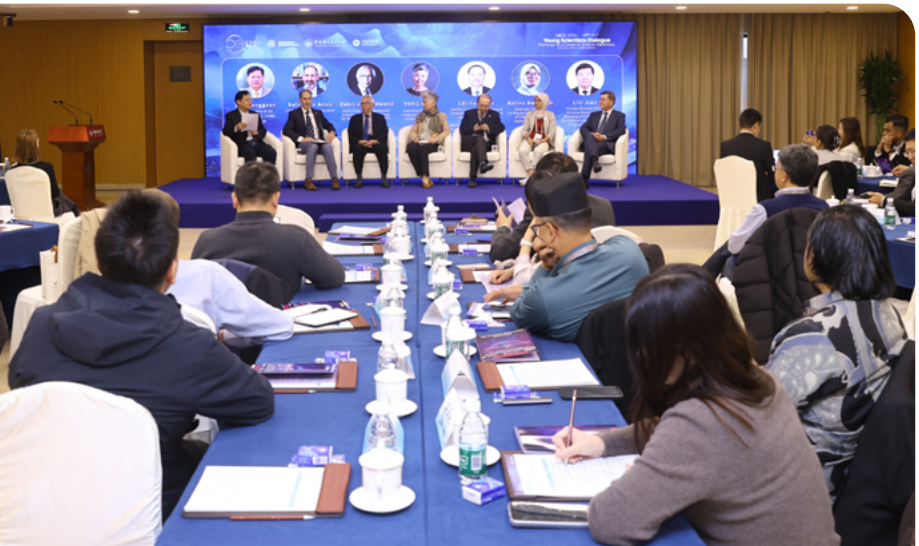
This work resulted in a report, 'Towards gender equality in scientific organizations', published in February 2026.

Supporting early- and mid-career researchers

The ISC continued to capitalize on work related to early- and mid-career researchers as part of its broader effort to strengthen the resilience and inclusivity of science systems.

Through a joint initiative with the China Association for Science and Technology (CAST), 25 young scientists were supported to participate in the ISC General Assembly in Muscat. A dedicated roundtable brought together 50 participants from across the membership to examine how emerging researchers engage with science–policy processes and international collaboration.

As part of the joint initiative with CAST, the ISC launched 'Rethinking scientific careers in a changing world', a special six-part podcast series produced with *Nature*. The series examined how early- and mid-career researchers can build meaningful careers in a rapidly evolving research landscape.



Additional engagements, including a science diplomacy workshop in Beijing and collaboration with partners such as the Global Young Academy, the Marie Curie Alumni Association and the International Institute for Applied Systems

Analysis, contributed to building networks and capabilities among early-career researchers. These efforts position the next generation not only as future leaders, but as current participants in shaping more inclusive and adaptable science systems.

Strengthening institutional safeguards and public positions

The ISC maintained targeted interventions to uphold scientific integrity and protect the conditions under which science operates.

The Council issued a position on research funding transparency, underscoring the need for clear disclosure of funding sources, conflicts of interest and governance arrangements. Transparent funding structures were presented as a structural condition for both responsibility and public trust.

The Council also published the statement 'International scientific collaboration: Vital yet vulnerable', which underscored the essential role of global research cooperation while drawing attention to its increasing exposure to political and economic pressures. It called for shared responsibility in protecting collaborative scientific infrastructures.

Through its Committee for Freedom and Responsibility in Science, the ISC also continued to monitor individual cases where scientific freedoms are under threat. A notable intervention concerned the retrial of Andreas Georgiou, former head of Greece's statistical office. The Council reaffirmed the importance of safeguarding statistical integrity and protecting professionals acting in accordance with scientific standards from political or judicial pressure. These actions reflect a broader commitment to defending both individual researchers and the institutional conditions that enable independent science.

4 INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE AGENDA-SETTING

In 2025, the ISC continued to operate as a coordinating platform through which its Members and Affiliated Bodies contribute to identifying, structuring and advancing shared scientific agendas. This involves balancing disciplinary contributions, challenging dominant frameworks and aligning scientific efforts with emerging global needs, particularly in the context of sustainability and planetary stewardship.

The Council strengthened its role in setting and shaping the international science agenda to promote coherence in and synergies among disciplines, regions and policy domains.

Balancing disciplinary contributions: Social Science Matters

Efforts to shape the international agenda increasingly point to a structural imbalance: while many global challenges are social in nature, the research funding and policy frameworks guiding international responses remain unevenly informed by the social sciences and humanities.

In response, the ISC launched the Social Science Matters Programme, aimed at strengthening the role of the social sciences and humanities in international science–policy processes. Through a Steering Group of leading social scientists and an Expert Network of around 100 researchers and practitioners across regions and disciplines, Members contribute expertise, build interdisciplinary linkages and support more comprehensive approaches to complex challenges and discussions on sustainability.

Recognition mechanisms also play a role in shaping these priorities. The annual Stein Rokkan Prize recognizes advancements in comparative social science research. In 2025, the jury recognized Vincente Valentim for his book *The Normalization of the Radical Right: A Norms Theory of Political Supply and Demand* (Oxford University Press, 2024), which "sets a new benchmark for research on radical-right politics, and will remain essential reading for anyone seeking to understand its growth".

Rethinking development metrics: beyond GDP

How progress is defined and measured has long been an issue identified in the international science agenda. Conventional indicators such as gross domestic product (GDP), traditionally used to guide policy and investment, are increasingly seen as insufficient to capture environmental limits, social inequalities and long-term resilience.

In this context, analytical work on wellbeing metrics has contributed to reframing ongoing debates. In 2025, the ISC and its Members engaged in international debates on development metrics, particularly around the limitations of conventional indicators. The analytical publication 'How do we measure wellbeing? Rethinking the Human Development Index' examined the conceptual and methodological constraints of existing metrics, particularly their limited capacity to account for environmental sustainability, inequality and long-term resilience.

This work fed into broader policy discussions, including the Second World Summit for Social Development held in Doha in November 2025. At the Summit, the ISC delivered a statement on behalf of the Scientific and Technological Community Major Group, emphasizing the need for stronger integration of science into social development strategies and for sustained international collaboration.

In parallel, the Council co-hosted a side event with the United Nations Development Programme and the Qatar Research Development and Innovation Council, focusing on multidimensional approaches to wellbeing. The session contributed to the work of the United Nations High-Level Expert Group on Beyond GDP, facilitating exchange between international organizations, research institutions and policy actors on methodological challenges and policy applications.

Funding for transdisciplinary mission-oriented science for sustainable development

As global challenges become more complex, the limits of fragmented research efforts are increasingly apparent. This has led to growing interest in mission-oriented approaches that align scientific activity around shared objectives.

In 2025, work on mission-oriented science for sustainable development moved from conceptual design to implementation with the launch of pilot Science Missions for Sustainability. These pilots mobilize transdisciplinary consortia to deliver local and actionable solutions, with an emphasis on co-design with policy-makers and stakeholders and on overcoming fragmentation across disciplines and sectors.

A key step in advancing this model was engagement with funding actors. In March 2025, the ISC co-convened a meeting in Paris with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), 'Enabling Transformative Science for Sustainable Development: A call to science funders', bringing together funders and representatives of

twelve selected pilot missions. Discussions focused on aligning funding mechanisms with the needs of mission-oriented research and addressing structural constraints in financing transdisciplinary work.

In 2025, the Science Missions for Sustainability initiative was endorsed as an official programme of the United Nations International Decade of Sciences for Sustainable Development, marking its recognition as a potential delivery mechanism for global sustainability objectives.

The ISC also positioned these issues within broader international financing discussions. At the fourth International Conference on Financing for Development, it contributed to debates on the role of science in the financing for development agenda. Through two side events co-organized with partners including UNESCO, the Belmont Forum, the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), the Council examined elements of funding models, including mission-driven approaches, blended finance and strengthened international cooperation.

Science for climate action at COP30

Climate governance continues to illustrate both the centrality of science and the challenges of integrating it effectively into policy.

Through its Members and Affiliated Bodies, the ISC contributed to the United Nations climate process at COP30 (in Belém, Brazil, in November 2025), with the goal of strengthening the role of science in climate negotiations and implementation.

Through its co-convening of the Planetary Science Pavilion and the organization of and contribution to side events, the Council facilitated exchanges between scientists, policy-makers and practitioners. In the lead-up to COP30, the ISC and its Affiliated Bodies issued a statement calling for sustained international scientific collaboration and rallied support to research systems. Experts including ISC Fellows were mobilized to this end.

Key priorities emerging from these engagements include strengthening observation systems, advancing transdisciplinary research, integrating local and experiential knowledge, addressing disinformation and improving dialogue between scientific and policy communities.

World Science Day for Peace and Development

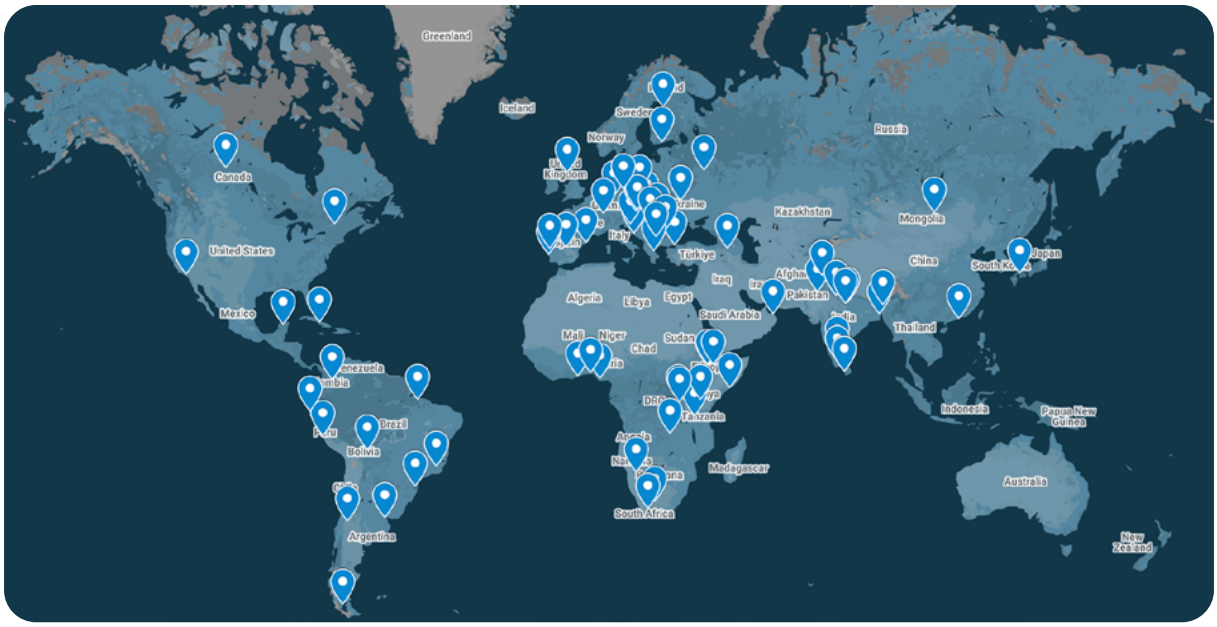
Agenda-setting is also shaped by how scientific communities are mobilized across contexts.

On 10 November 2025, the ISC marked World Science Day for Peace and Development, celebrated under the theme 'Trust, Transformation, and Tomorrow: The Science We Need for 2050'.

Rather than organizing a single central event, the Council mobilized its global network, resulting in more than 80 events worldwide led by Members, Fellows and partners.

The Day serves as an annual opportunity to reaffirm the role of science in advancing peace, sustainable development and societal wellbeing.

The Day serves as an annual opportunity to reaffirm the role of science in advancing peace, sustainable development and societal wellbeing. Its origins trace back to the 1999 World Conference on Science in Budapest, co-organized by UNESCO and the ISC's predecessor, the International Council for Science, which reinforced commitments set out in the Declaration on Science and the Use of Scientific Knowledge. UNESCO formally proclaimed the Day in 2001, and it has since catalysed global initiatives and programmes aimed at strengthening science as a cornerstone of progress.



Over 80 events sprung up around the globe on the occasion of the World Science Day for Peace and Development.

Long-term frameworks for science mobilization

Beyond immediate policy processes, the international science agenda is increasingly structured through long-term frameworks designed to coordinate research over extended time horizons.

The Council and its Members, including the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research and the International Arctic Science Committee, contributed to preparatory work for the 5th International Polar Year (2032–2033), ensuring early coordination of scientific, logistical and diplomatic dimensions. Efforts were made to align these initiatives with related programmes, such as the Decade of Action for Cryospheric Sciences (2025–2034), to reduce fragmentation and strengthen the integration of social sciences and transdisciplinary approaches.

The launch of the World Day for Glaciers and the Decade of Action for Cryospheric Sciences underscored the urgency of coordinated research on the cryosphere in the context of climate change. The Decade of Action, which the ISC supports, aims to strengthen observational systems, improve predictive capacity and inform mitigation and adaptation strategies in vulnerable regions.

Proclaimed by the 77th session of the United Nations General Assembly in 2023, the International Decade of Sciences for Sustainable Development (2024–2033) aims to promote a coordinated, collaborative scientific approach that provides policy-makers with the evidence-based analyses and data needed to implement effective, inclusive policies.

The ISC and its Members are actively engaged across multiple fronts. The ISC serves on the Executive Committee of the Decade, and its Science Missions for Sustainability programme is officially endorsed under the Decade. ISC Members are contributing expertise across multiple other activities: the International Union of Pure and Applied Physics leads the Earth-Humanity Coalition, mobilizing scientific organizations worldwide for transformative action; InterPore, in collaboration with the ISC and other Members, maps scientific institutions' contributions to the Sustainable Development Goals; the International Union of Soil Sciences' Decade of Soil Sciences 2025–2034 is officially endorsed as a Decade programme; the International Union of Forest Research Organizations publishes Forest Science-Policy Assessments; and the International Cartographic Association produces the Atlas of Sustainability.

Frontiers Planet Prize

In 2025, the ISC continued its partnership with the Frontiers Research Foundation in support of the Frontiers Planet Prize, which announced its 2025 International Champions. The Prize recognizes scientists whose research provides globally scalable solutions to keep humanity within planetary boundaries. By contributing to the nomination and scientific validation process, the ISC helps ensure disciplinary breadth, geographic diversity and scientific rigour in the selection of laureates.

5 THE EVOLUTION OF SCIENCE SYSTEMS

Structural weaknesses in how science is organized, evaluated and resourced continue to limit its ability to respond to global challenges. In 2025, the ISC advanced a programme of work aimed at reshaping key components of science systems, including publishing, research assessment, digital transformation and the integration of emerging technologies.

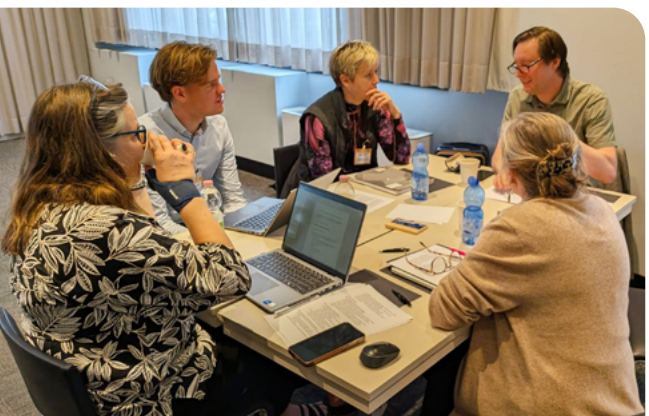
Reforming publishing and research assessment

Through its Forum on Publishing and Research Assessment, the ISC continued to convene actors across the research ecosystem to address structural imbalances in how research is disseminated and evaluated. The Forum brings together academies, funders, publishers and researchers to coordinate reforms in publishing and research assessment, and to reshape incentive structures across the global research ecosystem.

In 2025, a Steering Group was established to connect the Council's work on publishing and research assessment, reflecting the recognition that both are governed by interdependent incentive structures. Prevailing models, often reliant on narrow bibliometric indicators, continue to distort research priorities and disadvantage certain disciplines, languages and regions. There is a need to rely on novel indicators better capturing, inter alia, science production in the Global South, inter- and transdisciplinarity, team work and scientists' participation in and contribution to policy-making processes.

Prevailing models, often reliant on narrow bibliometric indicators, continue to distort research priorities and disadvantage certain disciplines, languages and regions.

A key milestone was a workshop held in Pisa in October 2025, co-organized with the Declaration on Research Assessment, Leiden University's Centre for Science and Technology Studies, and Accelerating Science And Publication In Biology (ASAPbio). The meeting brought together international experts and reform initiatives to identify areas of convergence and strengthen coordination across ongoing efforts.



Through this work, the ISC promotes a shift towards more transparent, inclusive and context-sensitive approaches to evaluating research, with greater alignment between how knowledge is produced, disseminated and recognized.

Advancing open science

Open science continued to gain traction as a central component of more equitable and effective science systems, as it is increasingly understood as a structural condition for participation, transparency and collaboration.

In 2025, the United Nations Secretary-General's Scientific Advisory Board adopted a landmark statement on open science, reinforcing global commitments to accessibility, transparency and knowledge sharing. The ISC welcomed this development and also continued its regular 'Open Science Round-up', curated briefing notes that track and synthesize global developments related to open science. The round-ups are distributed through a dedicated newsletter and published on the ISC website to inform Members of evolving policy frameworks, best practices and implementation challenges. This engagement with open science aligns with the Council's broader reform agenda: equitable participation in knowledge production, transparent research processes and improved accessibility to scientific outputs are structural conditions for resilient and inclusive science systems.

The Council also organized a webinar – 'Owning our knowledge: non-commercial pathways for open access publishing' – during International Open Access Week in October 2025, which showcased community-led and scholar-driven approaches to scholarly publishing, featuring innovative platforms including SciELO South Africa, Érudit and the Royal Society's Subscribe to Open initiative.

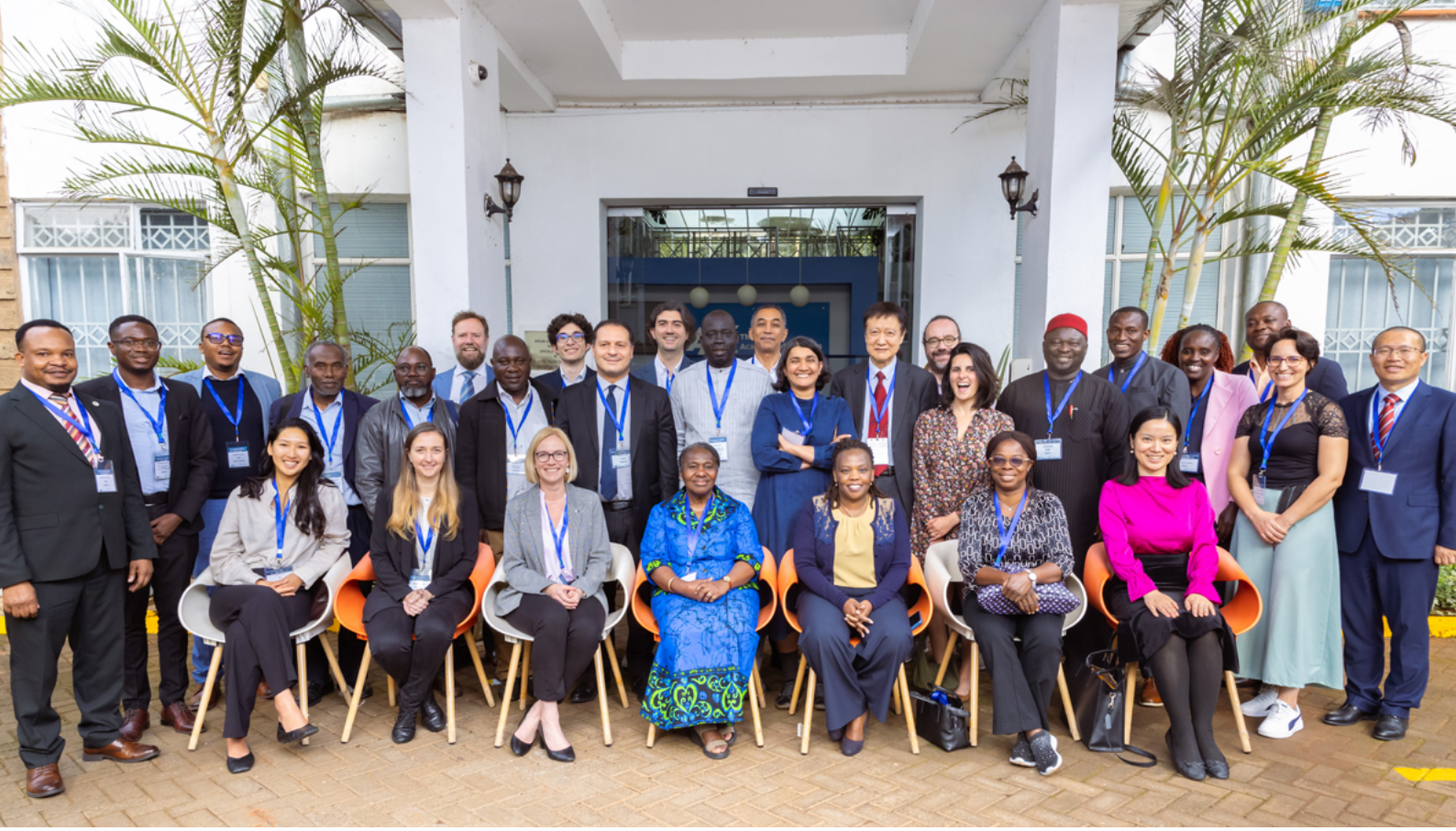
Artificial intelligence in national research ecosystems

The growing integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into research systems is reshaping how knowledge is produced, reported on, accessed and governed. At the same time, it is exposing and, in some cases, amplifying existing inequalities between regions and institutions.

In 2025, analytical work on AI in national research ecosystems focused in particular on these asymmetries. Expanded policy analysis highlighted disparities in infrastructure, data access and regulatory capacity, especially affecting countries in the Global South. This edition highlights asymmetries in infrastructure, data access and regulatory capacity, underscoring the risk that AI-driven transformations may exacerbate existing inequalities if not accompanied by inclusive governance and capacity building.

To complement this work, the ISC launched AI primers designed to equip science organizations and policy-makers with accessible, evidence-based guidance on AI integration. Together, these outputs position the ISC as a reference point for balanced, globally informed approaches to AI adoption in science systems.

International coordination, inclusive governance and sustained investment are essential to ensure these technologies strengthen, rather than fragment, global scientific collaboration.



The ISC also convened discussions on the impact of emerging technologies on science in the Global South, highlighting the risk that existing inequalities in infrastructure, funding and governance could be amplified. It stressed that international coordination, inclusive governance and sustained investment are essential to ensure these technologies strengthen, rather than fragment, global scientific collaboration.

Equipping science organizations for the digital age

Beyond specific technologies, the ability of scientific organizations to adapt to digital change remains uneven. Many institutions face constraints not only in technical infrastructure, but in skills, governance frameworks and strategic orientation.

Recognizing that institutional readiness is a prerequisite for effective digital transformation, the ISC launched the Digital Journeys initiative to support science organizations in developing digital capabilities.

Building on an earlier survey of ISC Members, the programme provided tailored training and upskilling to a pilot group of Members in low- and middle-income countries, alongside the development of practical tools and frameworks. Outputs released in 2025 included the Digital Maturity Compass, guidance on user journey mapping and a conference planning toolkit designed to support organizations in effectively harnessing digital technologies.

6 SCIENCE FOR GLOBAL POLICY-MAKING

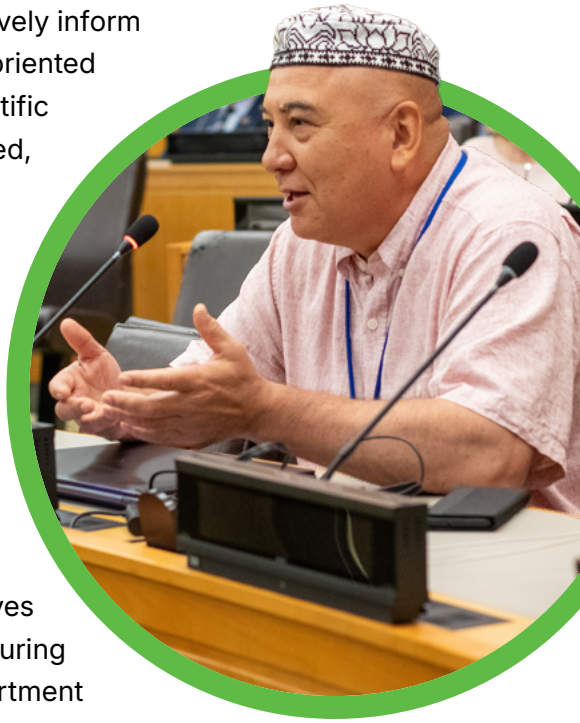
The integration of scientific evidence into global policy processes remains uneven, shaped by institutional fragmentation and varying levels of access to expertise. Within this context, the role of intermediary actors, capable of connecting scientific communities with decision-making systems, has become increasingly significant.

Across multiple processes, the ISC and its Members operated within this space, focusing on reinforcing institutional linkages, producing policy-relevant outputs and facilitating access to scientific expertise across key global processes to inform policy more consistently and effectively.

Strengthening the United Nations science–policy interface

The ISC maintained an active presence across major United Nations platforms, working to move from ad hoc scientific input towards more structured and sustained engagement by embedding science more consistently within policy systems, through targeted outputs, institutional partnerships and direct engagement with policy-makers.

At the 2025 United Nations Science, Technology and Innovation Forum, the Council elevated discussions on how science can more effectively inform global policy debates, emphasizing systemic reform, mission-oriented research and inclusive participation. The ISC argued that scientific input must move beyond ad hoc consultation towards structured, continuous engagement within multilateral processes.



At the 2025 High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), the ISC convened scientists to engage in multistakeholder conversations about progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda as part of its role in co-chairing the Scientific and Technological Community Major Group. ISC published 'Five Years to Course Correct', assessing the trajectory of sustainable development efforts and identifying evidence-based pathways for acceleration. Science Day at the HLPF offered a platform to showcase integrated scientific perspectives and to highlight gaps between ambition and implementation. During the HLPF, the ISC also partnered with the United Nations Department

of Global Communications' Academic Impact initiative for the Global Higher Education Symposium to discuss the role of higher education in addressing global challenges and strengthening the role of science and knowledge in society.

These efforts were complemented by more direct diplomatic engagement. Throughout the year, the ISC leadership, including the President-elect and members of the Governing Board, also held around 25 bilateral meetings in New York with senior representatives of Permanent Missions, United Nations entities and partner organizations. These engagements included discussions with representatives of Japan, Belgium, India, Jamaica, Tuvalu, the Netherlands, South Africa, France, Canada and the European Union, as well as with the United Nations University, UN DESA, the Office of the President of the General Assembly, the United Nations Economic and Social Council, UNESCO, the Scholar Rescue Fund and Scholars at Risk. The meetings strengthened relationships with Member States and key institutional partners, supported alignment with United Nations processes and helped position the ISC as a trusted interlocutor at the science–policy interface.

Member involvement was central to this work. Across UN processes, the ISC drew on its Members to identify and mobilize relevant expertise, develop policy-relevant inputs and ensure that its contributions reflected a broad disciplinary, regional and institutional base.

Institutionally, the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the ISC and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) reinforced cooperation on disaster risk science and hazard understanding.

Member involvement was central to this work. Across UN processes, the ISC drew on its Members to identify and mobilize relevant expertise, develop policy-relevant inputs and ensure that its contributions reflected a broad disciplinary, regional and institutional base. Members contributed through expert nominations, advisory groups, surveys, consultations, case studies and participation in delegations and events. This included Member-nominated experts for the ocean, plastics, Biological Weapons Convention and Hazard Information Profiles workstreams; contributions from more than 30 Members to the 2025 HLPF case study process, with ten case studies featured in the final publication; inputs from more than 130 Member organizations mapped for the ISC-INGSA science advice training programme; and Member participation in surveys on science diplomacy priorities and science-policy capacity needs. This engagement helped ensure that the ISC's global policy work was not only secretariat-led, but grounded in the knowledge, capacities and priorities of its membership.

United Nations Secretary-General's Scientific Advisory Board

Informing policy systems also depends on access to advisory structures at the highest levels.

As a knowledge member of the United Nations Secretary-General's Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) network, the ISC continued to contribute to shaping the Board's work and

strengthening its connection to the global scientific community. The ISC supported agenda-setting processes, identified experts from its membership to contribute to SAB roundtables and briefs, and advanced horizon-scanning efforts through a global survey capturing priority science and technology developments requiring United Nations attention. It also led the preparation of a statement on open science launched following the 2025 SAB retreat, attended by the ISC President-elect.

In this capacity, the Council also welcomed a message from the United Nations Secretary General António Guterres, reaffirming the importance of independent scientific advice within the United Nations system:

"The International Science Council is an indispensable bridge between science and policy, connecting researchers to the work of global decision-makers."

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres

Supporting more resilient and forward-looking decision-making

Beyond access, the effectiveness of science–policy interaction depends on the form and usability of scientific input.

To strengthen the capacity of policy systems to respond to long-term and complex challenges, the ISC co-published a report with the United Nations Futures Lab/Global Hub, 'Futures thinking and strategic foresight in action: Insights from the Global South', examining how futures thinking and strategic foresight are applied across the Global South to inform decision-making and address complex societal challenges. Drawing on 14 case studies from diverse regions and sectors, the publication documents practical applications of foresight in areas such as climate resilience, food systems, digital governance and social protection.

The report highlights the diversity of approaches and tools used – including horizon-scanning, scenario development and participatory methods – and identifies eight typologies of impact, ranging from policy innovation and organizational change to the integration of Indigenous and local knowledge.

By foregrounding experiences and methodologies developed in the Global South, the publication addresses a persistent imbalance in global foresight discourse and demonstrates the value of context-specific, inclusive and action-oriented approaches. It also formulates a set of cross-cutting recommendations to strengthen the use of foresight in policy-making and support more anticipatory and resilient governance systems.

UN Ocean Conference

This combination of institutional positioning and analytical work was applied in concrete policy contexts. The 2025 United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC-3) represented a major opportunity to operationalize science-informed policy engagement in a high-stakes thematic context. The ISC contributed to UNOC-3 through scientific briefings, policy-oriented outputs and targeted engagement with policy-makers and media.

This work was supported by an ISC Expert Group on Ocean, established through Member and network nominations, bringing together expertise from ocean science, climate science, social sciences and sustainability research across regions.

Ahead of the conference, the Council issued a scientific briefing outlining science-based priorities for ocean sustainability, emphasizing coordinated international research, ecosystem-based management and equitable access to marine knowledge. An accompanying ocean solutions policy brief translated scientific findings into actionable recommendations for governments and stakeholders.

Through a series of analytical contributions, the ISC highlighted the need to close the action gap through inclusive and science-based ocean governance, to rethink ocean science funding and coordination models and to ensure that governance frameworks are equitable and globally representative. The Council's position is clear: the ocean crisis demands structural reform in how ocean science is organized, financed and integrated into decision-making.

At the conference, the ISC supported a delegation of 40 scientists and facilitated access to expertise from across its network for policy and media stakeholders through the development and dissemination of a multidisciplinary list of ocean experts.

Extensive media engagement by the Secretariat and ISC experts led to the first ISC media briefing ahead of UNOC-3, organized in collaboration with the Science Media Centre. This generated numerous media opportunities for affiliated experts, including interviews and coverage in top-tier outlets, such as *The Times* and the BBC.

Plastics Treaty negotiations

The ISC continued its engagement with the global negotiations towards a Plastics Treaty, contributing scientific perspectives through commentary, analysis and advocacy from its dedicated expert group. The expert group was established following a call for nominations to ISC Members and brought together multidisciplinary expertise from across the ISC community, including experts affiliated with the Global Young Academy, Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research, Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research and International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry. Following the disappointing outcomes of the fifth round of negotiations (INC-5) the Council reiterated the need for legally robust, science-based commitments addressing the full lifecycle of plastics. Notably, the expert

group on plastic pollution published a commentary in *Nature Sustainability*, setting out clear scientific priorities to strengthen the treaty's ongoing negotiations – arguing that the effectiveness of the future agreement will depend on embedding independent, evidence-based guidance throughout both its design and implementation.

Hazard Information Profiles

Science–policy interaction also depends on shared technical references that enable coordination across institutions and sectors.

Updated Hazard Information Profiles (HIPs) provide consolidated, scientifically grounded definitions and characterizations of hazards relevant to disaster risk reduction. By strengthening alignment between scientific understanding and policy frameworks, the HIPs promote a multi-hazard approach essential to early warning systems, emergency planning and disaster resilience.

The 2025 revision brought together contributions from across the United Nations system, the private sector and the global scientific community, including ISC Members and Affiliated Bodies, such as the Integrated Research on Disaster Risk Programme, the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry, the International Union of Soil Sciences, the Scientific Committee of Problems of the Environment, the Committee on Space Research, the International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics, the International Statistical Institute and the Global Land Programme. In total, more than 200 experts contributed directly to the update, with over 100 users and reviewers involved in testing and refining the content – reflecting a growing and engaged community of practice.

By strengthening alignment between scientific understanding and policy frameworks, the HIPs promote a multi-hazard approach essential to early warning systems, emergency planning and disaster resilience.

The revised UNDRR-ISC HIPs were launched at the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in Geneva in June 2025. They are now used for hazard classification in key international systems, such as the UNDRR Disaster Loss and Damages Tracking and Analysis System and the Global Disaster-Related Statistics Framework (G-DRSF), approved by the United Nations Statistical Commission in March 2026. The original version remains widely applied across research, health and risk modelling tools, including those developed by the Insurance Development Forum, the World Health Organization and SNOMED International. The HIPs are also used in community-based training, as highlighted by non-governmental organizations during their launch, and have been incorporated into several peer-reviewed publications.

Biological Weapons Convention and emerging security challenges

In parallel, the Council engaged with emerging security challenges through its work on the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), highlighting the need to align governance mechanisms with rapid developments in biotechnology. Through a series of dedicated publications and informal science–policy discussions with diplomats, the Council examined how scientific and technological developments, particularly in biotechnology, intersect with global security governance.

The work was informed by an ISC Expert Group composed of specialists nominated through the ISC network, including experts affiliated with ISC Members such as the National Research Council of the Philippines, the Academy of Scientific Research and Technology of Egypt, the Indian National Science Academy, the Islamic World Academy of Sciences and the Global Young Academy.

The ISC's contribution emphasized the importance of strengthening scientific advisory mechanisms within the BWC framework to ensure that policy responses keep pace with rapid technological change and promote equitable access to scientific information across all countries.

ISC-INGSA training programme on science advice to policy

Recognizing that effective science-policy interaction depends on capacity as much as on structures, the International Science Council, in partnership with the International Network for Governmental Science Advice (INGSA), advanced the development of a training programme on science advice to policy, grounded in extensive Member engagement. A 2024 needs assessment survey across the ISC network revealed strong demand for greater individual and institutional capacity in science advice, especially in national contexts. In 2025, this was complemented by a mapping of science-policy activities and resources among more than 130 Member organizations, a dedicated workshop at the ISC Global Knowledge Dialogue and Third General Assembly in Muscat, and the creation of an ISC-INGSA Member Advisory Group to guide the programme's content, relevance and implementation.

7 SCIENCE DIPLOMACY

In 2025, the ISC strengthened its engagement in science diplomacy as both a practical mechanism for international cooperation and a stabilizing force in a context of geopolitical tension. Its approach focused on maintaining open channels for scientific collaboration, reinforcing connections between scientific and diplomatic communities and supporting more equitable participation in global science–policy processes.

Global dialogue and thought leadership

As geopolitical divisions deepen, the role of science as a form of transnational engagement has gained renewed relevance. Scientific collaboration offers one of the few spaces where dialogue can persist across political boundaries.

The ISC contributed to high-level discussions on the global state of science diplomacy, including engagement around the UNESCO Global Ministerial Dialogue, where science diplomacy featured prominently. Through policy commentaries and convenings, the Council highlighted the need to reinforce channels between scientific communities and diplomatic actors, particularly in periods of strained international relations.

The ISC President publicly called for strengthened science diplomacy, emphasizing that scientific collaboration must remain open and protected even where political relationships are complex. The Council argued that sustained scientific exchange supports peacebuilding, reduces misunderstanding and contributes to evidence-informed multilateral processes.

Scientific collaboration must remain open and protected even where political relationships are complex. Sustained scientific exchange supports peacebuilding, reduces misunderstanding and contributes to evidence-informed multilateral processes.

To inform its strategic direction, the ISC launched a global survey on science diplomacy, gathering input from Members and partners on priorities, gaps and emerging needs. The results are being used to shape future programming, with a focus on targeted support mechanisms and more effective coordination across regions and disciplines.

Science Forum South Africa

Beyond general advocacy, efforts in 2025 focused on better understanding how science diplomacy is practised across regions and where gaps remain.

At the 2025 Science Forum South Africa, the ISC contributed to a series of high-level discussions on inclusive and future-ready science systems, with a particular focus on science diplomacy. One of the ISC's main contributions was the session 'Science as a bridge builder: the role of science diplomacy in promoting inclusive global collaboration on shared challenges'. The session examined how science diplomacy is evolving in a context of geopolitical tensions, technological disruption and unequal access to science. It brought together perspectives from Africa and beyond to discuss how science can continue to function as a global public good, and how non-governmental scientific organizations can support more equitable international collaboration.

In addition, the ISC convened a session on emerging technologies and participated in partner-led panels on science diplomacy and support for early-career African researchers. Across these engagements, the ISC advanced priorities related to equitable access to science, responsible innovation and strengthened international cooperation, while contributing insights from its global consultations to ongoing regional and global discussions.

Capacity building and next-generation engagement

Recognizing persistent disparities in science diplomacy capacity, particularly across low- and middle-income regions, the ISC also supported targeted capacity building efforts.

The ISC supported initiatives aimed at strengthening science, technology and innovation (STI) expertise within African missions to the United Nations. Through targeted engagement and dialogue, the Council contributed to capacity building efforts designed to enhance the ability of missions to engage effectively in science-related negotiations and policy discussions.

The ISC also leveraged its presence in New York to partner with the Coalition on STI for Africa's Development, chaired by Morocco and UN DESA, and provide a capacity building workshop for diplomats on the role of science for development and highlighting the complementary role of scientists and diplomats in promoting international collaboration and informed decision-making on shared global challenges.

8 REGIONAL PRESENCE

In 2025, the ISC strengthened its regional engagement to ensure comprehensive regional presence, better connect local scientific communities with global processes and ensure that science systems are more representative of and responsive to diverse contexts. Across regions, the focus was on consolidating institutional presence, supporting capacity building and reinforcing science–policy interfaces.

Latin America and the Caribbean

The ISC Regional Focal Point for Latin America and the Caribbean (ISC RFP–LAC) entered a phase of institutional consolidation in 2025, advancing its mandate to strengthen regional science systems and ensure that Latin American and Caribbean perspectives are integrated into global policy. Under new leadership and guided by a member-endorsed Regional Action Plan (2025–2028), the ISC RFP–LAC transitioned towards a more participatory governance model, operationalizing four specialized committees to drive regional action.

A central pillar of the ISC RFP–LAC's work was the institutionalization of science–policy interfaces. Through a landmark science advice pilot programme with ParlAmericas, the ISC RFP–LAC contributed technical evidence and strategic foresight to 35 national legislatures. This initiative moved beyond dialogue to operational delivery, establishing a Regional Roster of Experts to connect parliamentarians with transdisciplinary scientific advice. The success of this first phase, validated by a 90 percent participant mandate for continuity, provides an evidence base for a permanent regional science advice channel.

Core programmes accelerated in 2025 to address structural infrastructure and knowledge gaps. The inaugural Caribbean Crystallography School in Jamaica empowered 26 regional researchers and led to the formal establishment of the Caribbean Regional Committee for Crystallography, a strategic step towards scientific autonomy in the sub-region. Simultaneously, the LAC Knowledge-Sharing Series was launched as a recurring peer-learning platform, delivering expert-led sessions on AI ethics, decarbonization pathways and strategies to mitigate 'brain drain'. These initiatives are complemented by mentorship and training programmes developed in partnership with other organizations in the region.

The ISC RFP–LAC significantly expanded its role as a regional interlocutor within international scientific and multilateral frameworks. Strategic contributions to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Recommendation on Emerging Biotechnologies and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Open Science Alliance ensured that international regulatory standards reflect the socio-economic realities of the Global South.

The ISC RFP–LAC also reinforced its role as a safety net for the scientific community. The RFP–LAC Science Policy & Freedom and Responsibility in Science Committee advocated for academic freedom in response to regional challenges and is mobilizing scientific solidarity for Caribbean Academy of Sciences members affected by environmental crises.

These milestones reflect the steady growth of the ISC RFP–LAC as a dedicated platform for scientific cooperation.

Asia and the Pacific

In 2025, the ISC further strengthened its presence in the Asia and the Pacific region. A senior science diplomat was appointed to lead the Regional Focal Point for Asia and the Pacific (RFP–AP), reinforcing the Council's commitment to deepening regional engagement, strengthening science diplomacy and enhancing coordination among Members across Asia and the Pacific. The further strengthening of the RFP–AP signals a more structured effort to consolidate the ISC's regional activities and support more effective representation of regional priorities in global science–policy discussions.

The RFP–AP progressed its strategic objective to promote the voices of the Global South in international science and enhance scientific capability across the region through its capacity building initiatives and strategic partnerships.

The RFP–AP co-facilitated or supported a series of high-impact workshops across the region, spanning research ethics, climate communication, women's leadership in science, waste management, science education and sustainable plastics, and engaging more than 1,000 participants across South Asia, Southeast Asia and the Pacific. These activities generated practical outputs, including policy recommendations, toolkits and new networks. A major Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) science diplomacy event supported by the RFP–AP also advanced regional capacity and put forward proposals for establishing an ASEAN Centre for Science Diplomacy.

Core programmes of the RFP–AP progressed over the year:

- The Asia Science Mission transitioned into implementation, establishing governance structures and selecting its first demonstration sites in the Philippines and West Bengal, providing an initial test of a more community-led and place-based approach to science.
- The Pacific Academy of Sciences – established with support from the RFP–AP – continued to expand its activities and prepared to host its first congress in Apia, Samoa, in 2026. The RFP–AP also welcomed the announcement that 13 new Fellows joined the Academy. The expansion of the Academy promotes scientific leadership and collaboration across Pacific Island countries and territories, contributing to regional capacity building and amplifying Pacific scientific voices in international fora.
- The Asia Pacific Academic Mentoring Program expanded to new countries, enabling in-person engagement between 20 mentees from the region and 19 mentors from Australia for a 1-year mentoring commitment.

- The Seeds of Science Asia programme was restructured and scaled, awarding ten new grants focused on the science–policy nexus.
- New funding initiatives, such as the Tupu Pacific Research Grants, were also launched, deepening collaboration with Pacific universities towards solutions aligned with the Blue Pacific economy.

Extensive diplomatic and institutional engagement further strengthened partnerships across governments, multilateral bodies and regional networks.

These activities reflect the growing role of the RFP–AP in strengthening science systems, supporting policy engagement and fostering regional collaboration across Asia and the Pacific.

Middle East and North Africa

In January 2025 the ISC and the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation of Oman signed a letter of intent to establish an ISC Regional Focal Point in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). The initiative aims to strengthen cooperation in STI within and beyond the region, facilitate international research exchange and promote cross-regional dialogue on global challenges.

The signing took place during the Muscat GKD, under the patronage of His Highness Sayyid Asaad bin Tariq Al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for International Relations and Cooperation Affairs and Personal Representative of His Majesty the Sultan. The proposed Focal Point, which is intended to provide a platform for regional collaboration, enhance scientific solidarity and reinforce MENA's contribution to global science, will be established in 2026.

Central Asia and Transcaucasia

In October 2025 following the Consultative Meeting on Science Priorities and ISC Regional Focal Point for Central Asia–Transcaucasia, regional stakeholders adopted the Tashkent Declaration, marking a significant step towards establishing a future ISC Regional Focal Point in Central Asia and Transcaucasia. The Declaration outlines a shared commitment to strengthening regional scientific cooperation, enhancing connectivity with global science networks and supporting evidence-informed policy-making. By advancing discussions on a dedicated regional mechanism, the ISC and its partners laid the groundwork for more structured engagement in a region of growing strategic and scientific importance.

Africa

In January 2025, a report to the ISC Governing Board at the Third ISC General Assembly set out recommendations on the ISC's future presence in Africa and pathways to accelerate the development of science on the continent and enhance its global voice and influence. ISC Governing Board member Prof. Walter Oyawa explored options for hosting a Regional Focal Point for Africa, and the ISC Secretariat subsequently held a virtual consultative meeting with ISC Members and key stakeholders to advance the discussion.

9 ISC SECRETARIAT

Leadership

Salvatore Aricò
CEO

Vanessa McBride
Science Director, Acting Head of the Centre for Science Futures

Sarah Moore
Operations Director, Acting Director for Membership

Science

Megha Sud
Senior Science Officer

Felix Dijkstal
Science Officer

Dureen Samandar Eweis
Science Officer (until June 2025)

Freedom and Responsibility in Science

Vivi Stavrou
CFRS Executive Secretary / Senior Science Officer (until January 2026)

Johannes Waldmüller
CFRS Executive Secretary / Senior Science Officer

Gustav Kessel
CFRS Special Advisor

Global Science Policy Unit

Anne-Sophie Stevance
Head of Unit / Senior Science Officer

Anda Popovici
Science Officer (until June 2025)

James Waddell
Science Officer and ISC Liaison Officer to New York

Morgan Seag
ISC Liaison to the United Nations system (until January 2026)

Hélène Jacot des Combes
Project Manager (until April 2025)

Communications

Zhenya Tsoy
Head of Communications / Senior Officer

Léa Nacache
Communications Officer

Sarah Clausen
Junior Communications Officer (until February 2025)

Operations

Natacha de Marchi
Senior Financial Officer

Mayette Geronimo
Financial Officer

Alexandra Guennec
Senior Human Resources Officer

Yun-Kang Ahn
IT Officer

Eric Leparmentier
General Services

Miia Ylöstalo-Joubert
Senior Administrative Officer and PA to the CEO

Jane Guillier
Administrative Officer

Olivia Tighe
Administrative Officer

Membership

Anne Thieme
Membership Liaison Officer (until October 2025)

Gabriela Ivan
Partnerships and Membership Development Officer

Sarajuddin Barekzai
Administrative Officer

Regional focal points

Helena Groot de Restrepo
Director, Latin America and the Caribbean (until December 2025)

Carolina Santacruz-Perez
Senior Science Officer, Latin American and the Caribbean

Ronit Prawer
Director, Asia and the Pacific

Aleta Johnston
Communications Manager, Asia and the Pacific (until April 2025)

Salote Austin
Oceania Programme Manager, Asia and the Pacific (until October 2025)

Nina Maher
Projects Officer, Asia and the Pacific (until December 2025)

Wendy Wakwella
Engagement and Communications Manager, Asia and the Pacific

Kunzang Choden
Asia Programme Manager, Asia and the Pacific

10 GOVERNING BOARD

Officers

Peter Gluckman
President

Robbert Dijkgraaf
ISC President-elect

Marcia Barbosa
Vice-President for Freedom and Responsibility in Science

Motoko Kotani
Vice-President for Science Programmes

Sawako Shirahase
Vice-President for Finance, Compliance and Risk

Yongguan Zhu
Vice-President for Membership

Ordinary Members

Karina Batthyány

Françoise Baylis

Geoffrey Boulton

Frances Colón

Catherine Jami

María Estelí Jarquín

Nalini Joshi

Mobolaji Oladoyin Odubanjo

Walter O. Oyawa

Maria Paradiso

11 ANNEXES

Annex I: 2025 List of ISC Members

CATEGORY 1

- International Arctic Social Sciences Association
- International Association of Legal Science
- International Astronomical Union
- International Cartographic Association
- International Commission for Optics
- International Commission on Illumination
- International Council for Industrial and Applied Mathematics
- International Federation of Societies for Microscopy
- International Geographical Union
- International Mathematical Union
- International Peace Research Association
- International Political Science Association
- International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing
- International Sociological Association
- International Union for Physical and Engineering Sciences in Medicine
- International Union for Pure and Applied Biophysics
- International Union for Quaternary Research
- International Union for the Scientific Study of Population
- International Union of Basic and Clinical Pharmacology
- International Union of Biological Sciences
- International Union of Crystallography
- International Union of Food Science and Technology
- International Union of Forest Research Organizations
- International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics
- International Union of Geological Sciences
- International Union of History and Philosophy of Science and Technology
- International Union of Immunological Societies
- International Union of Materials Research Societies
- International Union of Microbiological Societies
- International Union of Nutritional Sciences
- International Union of Physiological Sciences
- International Union of Psychological Science
- International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry
- International Union of Pure and Applied Physics

- International Union of Radio Science
- International Union of Soil Sciences
- International Union of Speleology
- International Union of Theoretical and Applied Mechanics
- International Union of Toxicology
- Society for Social Studies of Science
- World Anthropological Union

CATEGORY 2 (* Joined in 2025)

- Albania, Academy of Sciences of Albania
- Algeria, Algerian Academy of Science and Technology
- Andorra, Andorra Research and Innovation
- Argentina, Latin American Council of Social Sciences
- Armenia, National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia
- Australia, Association of Asian Social Science Research Councils *
- Australia, Australian Academy of Science
- Austria, Austrian Academy of Sciences
- Azerbaijan, Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences
- Bangladesh, Bangladesh Academy of Sciences
- Belarus, National Academy of Sciences of Belarus
- Belgium, International Union of Academies
- Belgium, Royal Academies for Science and the Arts of Belgium
- Benin, National Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters of Benin *
- Bolivia, Plurinational State of, National Academy of Sciences of Bolivia
- Bosnia and Herzegovina, Academy of Sciences and Arts of Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Academy of Sciences and Arts of the Republic of Srpska
- Botswana, Botswana Academy of Science*
- Brazil, Brazilian Academy of Sciences
- Brazil, National Association of Graduate Studies and Research in Social Sciences of Brazil
- Bulgaria, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences
- Cameroon, Cameroon Academy of Sciences
- Canada, National Research Council of Canada
- Chile, Chilean Academy of Sciences
- China, China Association for Science and Technology
- China, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences
- China: Taipei, Academy of Sciences located in Taipei
- Colombia, Colombian Academy of Exact, Physical and Natural Sciences
- Congo, Democratic Republic of, Congolese Academy of Sciences *
- Costa Rica, National Academy of Sciences of Costa Rica
- Cote d'Ivoire, Academy of Sciences, Arts, African Cultures and Diasporas
- Cuba, Cuban Academy of Sciences
- Cyprus, Cyprus Academy of Sciences, Letters and Arts *

- Denmark, Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters
- Dominican Republic, Academy of Sciences of the Dominican Republic
- Egypt, Academy of Scientific Research and Technology of Egypt
- Estonia, Estonian Academy of Sciences
- Ethiopia, Ethiopia, Ministry of Innovation and Technology of Ethiopia
- Ethiopia, Ethiopian Academy of Sciences
- Fiji, University of the South Pacific
- Finland, Council of Finnish Academies
- France, Agence Nationale de la Recherche
- France, French Academy of Sciences
- Georgia, Georgian National Academy of Science
- Germany, Germany, Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (German Research Foundation)
- Ghana, Ghana Academy of Arts & Sciences
- Greece, Academy of Athens
- Guatemala, Academy of Medical, Physical and Natural Sciences of Guatemala
- Honduras, National Academy of Sciences of Honduras
- Hungary, Hungarian Academy of Sciences
- Hungary, Hungarian Research Network *
- Iceland, Icelandic Centre for Research
- India, Indian Council of Social Science Research
- India, Indian National Science Academy
- Iran, Islamic Republic of, University of Tehran
- Iraq, Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research Iraq
- Ireland, Royal Irish Academy
- Israel, Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities
- Italy, Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei *
- Italy, National Research Council Italy
- Jamaica, Scientific Research Council of Jamaica
- Japan, Science Council of Japan
- Jordan, Royal Scientific Society of Jordan
- Kazakhstan, National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Kazakhstan
- Kenya, Kenya National Academy of Sciences
- Kenya, Kenya, National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation *
- Korea, Republic of, National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Korea
- Kuwait, Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences
- Latvia, Latvian Academy of Sciences
- Lebanon, Arab Council of Social Sciences
- Lebanon, Lebanese Academy *
- Lesotho, Department of Science and Technology of Lesotho
- Lithuania, Lithuanian Academy of Sciences
- Luxembourg, Luxembourg National Research Fund
- Malawi, Malawi, National Commission for Science and Technology of Malawi
- Malaysia, Academy of Sciences Malaysia
- Mauritius, Mauritius Academy of Science and Technology
- Moldova, Republic of, Academy of Sciences of Moldova
- Monaco, Centre Scientifique de Monaco

- Mongolia, Mongolian Academy of Sciences
- Montenegro, Montenegrin Academy of Sciences and Arts
- Namibia, National Commission on Research, Science and Technology of Namibia
- Nepal, Nepal Academy of Science and Technology
- Netherlands, Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences
- New Zealand, Royal Society Te Aparangi of New Zealand
- Nicaragua, Academy of Sciences of Nicaragua *
- Nigeria, Nigerian Academy of Science
- North Macedonia, Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts
- Norway, Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters
- Norway, University of Bergen
- Oman, Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, Oman
- Panama, Universidad de Panama
- Peru, National Academy of Sciences of Peru
- Philippines, National Research Council of the Philippines
- Philippines, Philippine Social Science Council
- Poland, Polish Academy of Sciences
- Portugal, Academy of Sciences of Lisbon
- Qatar, Qatar Research Development and Innovation Council *
- Romania, Romanian Academy
- Russian Federation, Russian Academy of Sciences
- Rwanda, Rwanda Academy of Sciences
- Senegal, Senegal Academy of Science and Technology *
- Serbia, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts
- Singapore, Singapore National Academy of Science
- Slovakia, Slovak Academy of Sciences
- South Africa, Human Sciences Research Council of South Africa (HSRC)
- South Africa, National Research Foundation of South Africa
- Spain, Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities of Spain
- Sri Lanka, National Science Foundation of Sri Lanka
- Sudan, Sudan National Centre for Research *
- Sudan, Sudanese National Academy of Sciences
- Sweden, Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences
- Switzerland, Swiss Academy of Humanities and Social Sciences
- Switzerland, Swiss Academy of Sciences
- Tajikistan, National Academy of Sciences of Tajikistan
- Thailand, National Research Council of Thailand
- Trinidad & Tabago, Caribbean Academy of Sciences
- Tunisia, Université Tunis El Manar
- Turkey, Bilim Akademisi
- Turkey, Turkish Academy of Sciences
- Uganda, Uganda National Academy of Sciences *

- Ukraine, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine
- United Arab Emirates, Advanced Technology Research Council *
- United Kingdom, Academy of Medical Sciences (UK) *
- United Kingdom, British Academy
- United Kingdom, Royal Society UK
- United States, National Academy of Sciences USA
- Uruguay, National Academy of Sciences of Uruguay
- Uruguay, National Council of Innovation, Science and Technology of Uruguay
- Vatican City, Vatican, Pontifical Academies of Sciences and Social Sciences
- Vietnam, Vietnam Union of Science and Technology Associations
- Palestine, Palestine Academy for Science and Technology *
- Zambia, Zambia Academy of Sciences
- Zimbabwe, Research Council of Zimbabwe *

CATEGORY 3 (* Joined in 2025)

- Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia
- African Academy of Sciences
- Barcelona Science and Technology Diplomacy Hub
- Consortium of Humanities Centers and Institutes
- European Association of Development Research and Training Institutes
- European Consortium for Political Research
- Institute for Global Environmental Strategies
- Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research
- International Arctic Science Committee
- International Association for Urban Climate
- International Association of Applied Psychology
- International Commission for Acoustics
- International Consortium of Research Staff Associations
- International Council for Laboratory Animal Science
- International Council for Scientific and Technical Information
- International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions
- International Federation of Surveyors
- International Institute for Applied System Analysis
- International Network for Advancing Science and Policy
- International Society for Digital Earth
- International Society for Porous Media
- International Statistical Institute
- International Union for Vacuum Science, Technique and Applications
- International Visual Sociology Association
- Islamic World Academy of Sciences
- Organization for Women in Science for the Developing World (OWSD)
- Pacific Science Association (PSA)

- Scientific Committee of Problems of the Environment (SCOPE)
- Society for the Advancement of Science in Africa
- Somali Natural Resources Research Center (SONRREC)
- Transnational Institute
- University of the Arctic
- World Academy of Sciences

Young academies and associations

- Australian Early- and Mid-Career Researchers Forum
- Danish Young Academy
- Ghana Young Academy
- Global Young Academy
- Indian National Young Academy of Sciences
- Indonesian Young Academy of Sciences
- International Association of Physics Students
- Marie Curie Alumni Association
- National Academy of Young Scientists Pakistan
- National Young Academy of Bangladesh
- Nigerian Young Academy
- Polish Young Academy
- Royal Society of Canada's College of New Scholars, Artists and Scientists
- TWAS Young Affiliates Network
- UK Young Academy *
- Young Academy Finland *
- Young Academy of Argentina *
- Young Academy of Belgium *
- Young Academy of Colombia
- Young Academy of Europe
- Young Academy of India
- Young Academy of Portugal - Young Scientists Seminar *
- Young Academy of Spain

CATEGORY 4

- Academy of Sciences of Ecuador
- Committee on Data of the International Council for Science
- Committee on Space Research
- Crossref
- Future Earth
- Global Climate Observing System
- Global Ocean Observing System
- Global Research Programme on Inequality
- Integrated Research on Disaster Risk
- International Network for Governmental Science Advice
- Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research
- Scientific Committee On Frequency Allocations For Radio Astronomy And Space Science
- Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research
- Scientific Committee on Solar-Terrestrial Physics
- Urban Health and Wellbeing Programme
- World Climate Research Programme
- World Data System

Annex II: Reports and papers published in 2025

Publication title	Date published	Involved ISC Members
Annual Report 2024	23/10/2025	
Annual Report 2024 – Regional Focal Point for Latin America and the Caribbean	21/10/2025	**ISC Member,** Colombian Academy of Exact, Physical and Natural Sciences, **hosted the ISC Regional Focal Point and produced this report.**
Strengthening digital maturity: a practical toolkit for science organizations	24/09/2025	**ISC Members contributed to case studies and received training, which formed the basis for this report:** Caribbean Academy of Sciences Nigerian Young Academy International Astronomical Union International Society for Digital Earth International Sociological Association International Union of Immunological Societies Scientific Research Council, Jamaica Sudanese National Academy of Sciences Philippine Social Science Council The University of the South Pacific The World Academy of Sciences
Harnessing "digital" for science in lower-resource settings	24/09/2025	**ISC Members contributed to case studies and received training, which formed the basis for this report:** Caribbean Academy of Sciences Nigerian Young Academy International Astronomical Union International Society for Digital Earth International Sociological Association International Union of Immunological Societies Scientific Research Council, Jamaica Sudanese National Academy of Sciences Philippine Social Science Council The University of the South Pacific The World Academy of Sciences
Data and AI for science: Key considerations	08/09/2025	
Considerations on the environmental impact of AI in science	08/09/2025	

Types of AI and their use in science	08/09/2025	
How do we measure wellbeing? Rethinking the Human Development Index	21/07/2025	**ISC Members provided expertise for this paper:** Global Young Academy Latin American Council of Social Sciences International Network for Governmental Science Advice Global Research Programme on Inequality University of Bergen International Institute of Applied System Analysis National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Korea
Strengthening the Biological Weapons Convention through science	07/07/2025	**ISC Members provided expertise for this paper:** National Research Council of the Philippines Uganda National Academy of Sciences Academy of Scientific Research and Technology Indian National Science Academy Islamic World Academy of Sciences Global Young Academy
Five years to course correct – Science and engineering for a world off track	30/06/2025	**ISC Members provided case studies included in this paper:** Committee on Data International Union of Forest Research Organizations The University of the South Pacific Scientific Committee of Problems of the Environment Congolese Academy of Sciences China Association for Science and Technology
Update of the UNDRR-ISC hazard information profiles	04/06/2025	**ISC Members provided expertise for this paper:** Australian Academy of Science International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry Future Earth Committee on Data Integrated Research on Disaster Risk International Statistical Institute International Union of Soil Sciences Scientific Committee of Problems of the Environment Committee on Space Research
Co-producing ocean actionable knowledge for transformative solutions and global cooperation	04/06/2025	**ISC Members provided expertise for this paper:** University of Bergen The University of the South Pacific Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research
Trust in science for policy nexus	13/05/2025	

Futures thinking and strategic foresight in action: Insights from the Global South	06/05/2025	**ISC Members provided expertise and case studies for this paper:** International Network for Governmental Science Advice National Academy of Sciences of Bolivia International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis

Annex III: Projects active in 2025

Title	Partners	Involved ISC Members	Start	End
FREEDOM, RESPONSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVITY IN SCIENCE				
Right to participate in and benefit from science		Royal Society Te Aparangi, New Zealand	2023-05	
Case management, briefs, communications and outreach	Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, New Zealand Scholars at Risk	International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics		2030-12
Advancing gender equality in scientific organizations	InterAcademy Partnership		2024-09	2025-11
Trust and trustworthiness in science	European Commission's Joint Research Centre		2024-11	2025-04
The social contract for science	Frontiers Research Foundation		2025-06	2026-06
INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE AGENDA-SETTING				
5th International Polar Year, 2032-2033	World Meteorological Organization	International Arctic Science Committee Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research		2033-12
Social Science Matters			2025-05	2025-12
Decade of Action for Cryospheric Sciences	UNESCO	International Arctic Science Committee Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research	2025-01	2034-12
Programme on FAIR data and emergencies		Committee on Data	2024-09	2026-05

Global Commission on Science Missions for Sustainability		Future Earth Australian Academy of Sciences		2025-12
EVOLUTION OF SCIENCE SYSTEMS				
AI for science: current discussions in national science systems	International Development Research Centre, Canada	National Commission on Research Science and Technology, Namibia Romanian Academy Hungarian Academy of Sciences Rwanda Academy of Sciences	2023-07	2026
Digital journeys	International Development Research Centre, Canada	Caribbean Academy of Sciences Nigerian Young Academy International Astronomical Union International Society for Digital Earth International Sociological Association International Union of Immunological Societies Scientific Research Council, Jamaica Sudanese National Academy of Sciences Philippine Social Science Council The University of the South Pacific The World Academy of Sciences	2024-04	2025-09

Empowering Early- and Mid-Career Researchers in international science and policy	China Association for Science and Technology	Australian Early-and Mid-Career Researcher Forum College of New Scholars, Artists and Scientists of the Royal Society of Canada Danish Young Academy Global Young Academy Ghana Young Academy Indonesian Young Academy of Science International Association of Physics Students Marie Curie Alumni Association National Academy of Young Scientists Pakistan National Young Academy of Bangladesh Indian National Young Academy of Science Nigerian Young Academy Polish Young Academy TWAS Young Affiliates Network Young Academy of Argentina Young Academy of Belgium Young Academy of Colombia Young Academy of Europe Young Academy of India Young Academy of Spain Young Academy Finland Young Academy of Portugal UK Young Academy	2022-06	2026-07
Impact of emerging technologies on science systems	International Development Research Centre, Canada	African Academy of Sciences National Commission on Research, Science and Technology of Namibia Centre for Development and Transfer of Technology, Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology Research Council of Zimbabwe Fundo Nacional de Investigação, Mozambique	2024-04	2025-10

Forum on publishing and research assessment	Centre for Science and Technology Studies ASAPBio Declaration on Research Assessment	Global Young Academy InterPore Latin American Council of Social Sciences Royal Society, United Kingdom Chinese Academy of Social Sciences	2025-06	2026-12
SCIENCE FOR EVIDENCE-BASED POLICY-MAKING				
Hazards definition and classification (Phase II)	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction	Australian Academy of Science International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry Future Earth Committee on Data Integrated Research on Disaster Risk International Statistical Institute International Union of Soil Sciences Scientific Committee of Problems of the Environment Committee on Space Research	2023-10	2025-09
UN Futures Lab: study on foresight and decision-making		International Network for Governmental Science Advice National Academy of Sciences of Bolivia International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis	2023-12	2025-05
UNEP-ISC Environmental Foresight	United Nations Environment Programme	800 scientists from across the ISC membership and UNEP's expert communities participated in the survey. 9 members of the Foresight Panel were selected from ISC Members nominations.	2022-09	2025-05

3rd UN Ocean Conference (UNOC-3)		10-member expert group from nominations by ISC Members 60 experts from the ISC membership formed the expert book 5 events co-organized with ISC Members and partners: Global Ocean Observing System Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research Centre Scientifique de Monaco University of Bergen	2024-08	2025-06
UN Forums 2025 (STI Forum, High Level Political Forum)	World Federation of Engineering Organizations		2025-01	2025-07
ISC-INGSA science advice training modules for members		International Network for Governmental Science Advice	2025-08	2026-09
Roster of experts		765 experts from an open call to the ISC Membership	2024-09	2026-12
FAO-ISC issue paper on science communication for agri-food systems transformations	Food and Agriculture Organization		2025-01	2026-12
Plastic pollution INC negotiations		10 experts nominated by ISC Members were engaged in consultative workshops	2022-11	2026-12
5. SCIENCE DIPLOMACY				
Report on the evolution of science diplomacy and the role of the ISC		20 Category 1 Members 61 Category 2 Members 19 Category 3 Members 10 Category 4 Members	2024-07	2026-12
Strengthening the Biological Weapons Convention through science		10-member expert group made of nominations from ISC Members National Research Council of the Philippines Indian National Science Academy Islamic Academy of Sciences Academy of Scientific Research & Technology of Egypt Global Young Academy Uganda National Academy of Sciences	2024-06	2025-09

Annex IV: International scientific coordination through ISC Affiliated Bodies

International Science Council affiliated bodies are international scientific programmes and initiatives co-sponsored by the ISC and partner organizations to advance global collaboration and coordinate research on shared scientific priorities.

In 2025, the ISC's Affiliated Bodies and scientific programmes continued to support international scientific coordination across a wide range of domains, including climate, ocean science, disaster risk, space research, urban health and data governance. Through research coordination, observing systems, capacity development and science-policy engagement, these bodies contributed to strengthening global scientific collaboration and supporting evidence-informed responses to complex global challenges.

COMMITTEE ON DATA OF THE INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE COUNCIL (CODATA)

In 2025, CODATA continued to advance its Cross-Domain Interoperability Framework (CDIF), culminating in the publication of the CDIF Book and a suite of case studies covering climate adaptation, disaster risk reduction and public health. A major milestone was the successful submission of the CDIF4EOSC project proposal to the European Commission, which due to start in 2026.

CODATA also released the UNESCO-CODATA Toolkit for Data Policy in Times of Crisis, co-organized a programme of AI-focused sessions during International Data Week in Brisbaneand approved eight new Task Groups at its October General Assembly. The CODATA Secretariat expanded to 16 staff members in 2025, supported by a portfolio of 13 funded projects.

COMMITTEE ON SPACE RESEARCH (COSPAR)

COSPAR advanced its work on sustainable and internationally coordinated space exploration in 2025. At the COSPAR 6th Symposium, "Space Exploration 2025: Humanity's Challenges and Celestial Solutions", held in Nicosia, Cyprus, more than 300 participants from the international space science community gathered to discuss key scientific and policy issues. During the symposium, COSPAR launched the Heliophysics Guidelines initiative to establish shared international principles for studying the Sun and its effects.

COSPAR also strengthened its institutional and international collaboration efforts by establishing new Task Groups on Early Careers and International Space Societiesand on Sites of Special Scientific Interest. In parallel, a revised Memorandum of Understanding was signed with the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA), covering cooperation on space traffic management, space debris, planetary protection and defence, space weather, capacity building and the socio-economic impacts of environmental degradation and climate change.

FUTURE EARTH

In 2025, Future Earth strengthened its global engagement on climate and sustainability through partnerships, scientific conveningsand knowledge initiatives. Together with the ISC and other climate-focused organizations, Future Earth contributed to the Planetary Science Pavilion at COP30 in Belém, Braziland convened the 2025 Sustainability Research and Innovation Congress in Chicago.

Key publications included "10 New Insights in Climate Science 2025/26", produced in partnership with the World Climate Research Programme (WCRP), "Resilience Science Must Knows"and the 2025 Global Carbon Budget released by the Global Carbon Project.

Future Earth Asia also continued to advance the Asia Science Mission, a multi-country platform supporting resilience and sustainability through science–policy–community partnerships. In 2025, the initiative was selected as a pilot programme under the ISC Science Missions for Sustainability framework.

GLOBAL CLIMATE OBSERVING SYSTEM (GCOS)

In 2025, the GCOS advanced efforts to strengthen the monitoring and governance of Essential Climate Variables (ECVs), the physical, chemicaland biological variables used to understand Earth's climate system. Work focused on identifying global data repositories for the 55 recognized ECVs, reviewing observation and management practicesand developing a formal process for evaluating and adopting new variables to improve consistency and scientific relevance.

GCOS also expanded its Surface Reference Network and Reference Upper Air Network by bringing additional stations online and monitoring operational performance. The Global Terrestrial Network for Rivers (GTN-R) was accredited as a GCOS Affiliated Network.

In parallel, the GCOS Secretariat launched the iClimateAction project under the European Commission's Horizon Europe programme t to strengthen coordination among the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the Group on Earth Observations (GEO), GCOS and related climate initiatives. Initial work included analysing governance structures and assessing the Earth observation value chain for ECVs to identify gaps affecting climate services. GCOS also contributed to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) 61 in Bonn and participated in COP30 in Belém, where it highlighted growing threats to global climate observing systems.

GLOBAL OCEAN OBSERVING SYSTEM (GOOS)

The Global Ocean Observing System Status Report 2025 provided an interactive overview of the global ocean observing system and its capacity to monitor biological and ecosystem Essential Ocean Variables (EOVs). The report assessed how effectively ocean conditions can be monitored to better understand the ocean's response to climate change and support ocean health protection efforts. In 2025, the in situ ocean observing system was supported by 64 countries and 17 global ocean observing networks.

Throughout the year, GOOS continued an institutional reform process initiated by the Executive Council of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission. The reform aims to refine the mission of GOOS and establish an operational structure better aligned with long-term observing and coordination needs.

INTERNATIONAL NETWORK FOR GOVERNMENTAL SCIENCE ADVICE (INGSA)

In 2025, INGSA launched a European chapter, while preparations advanced for future chapters in the Middle East and North America. INGSA also continued its collaboration with the ISC Regional Focal Point for Asia and the Pacific.

INGSA and the ISC jointly launched a new training programme on science advice to policy. The programme was developed through a co-design process that included a 2024 needs assessment survey across the ISC network, a mapping of science–policy activities and resources among more than 130 member organizationsand a practical workshop held during the 3rd ISC General Assembly in Muscat.

By the end of 2025, more than 400 participants had registered for the training programme, which is scheduled to begin in 2026.

INTEGRATED RESEARCH ON DISASTER RISK (IRDR)

In 2025, IRDR advanced several flagship initiatives, including work on the updated UNDRR–ISC Hazard Information Profiles and contributions to the Global Assessment Report 2025. The programme also expanded its global network through the establishment of three additional International Centres of Excellence, bringing the total number to 17 worldwide.

IRDR continued to support capacity development through a range of training programmes, workshopsand hackathons aimed at strengthening interdisciplinary disaster risk research and practice across regions and sectors.

INTER-UNION COMMITTEE ON THE ALLOCATION OF FREQUENCIES (IUCAF)

IUCAF continued to represent the interests of passive radio sciences in international spectrum management processes during 2025. Members participated in seven ITU Radiocommunication Sector (ITU-R) Working Party and Study Group meetings and contributed to national spectrum management activities.

Key technical work included studies on the compatibility of radio astronomy observations with satellite communications, terrestrial antenna infrastructure and high-frequency radar systems used in vehicles. IUCAF also continued to assess the implications of rapidly increasing satellite activity for passive radio observations.

A major highlight of the year was the 6th International School on Spectrum Management for Radio Astronomy, held in Spain, which brought together 45 in-person participants from 17 countries, alongside an additional 30 online participants. During the year, IUCAF also adopted updates to its terms of reference, compositionand operating practices in order to support its evolving activities and mandate.

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE ON ANTARCTIC RESEARCH (SCAR)

SCAR's 2025 activities focused on coordinating Antarctic science through its thematic research programmes, advisory contributions to the Antarctic Treaty Systemand the delivery of horizon-scanning and synthesis activities. A notable publication was A Brief Guide to Publishing Data for the Polar Research Community, developed to support researchers in making data more findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable (FAIR).

Two new repositories were also made available to the research community: a repository of peer-reviewed studies on tourism impacts, governanceand management in Antarcticaand a community-driven repository highlighting Antarctic geological and palaeontological collections held in institutions worldwide.

In 2025, the Antarctic Environments Portal, which supports evidence-informed Antarctic policy-making by providing accessible scientific information, received funding from the Prince Albert II Foundation. SCAR also continued work to strengthen diversity and inclusion across its activities and to develop a strategy for managing its organizational carbon footprint.

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE ON OCEANIC RESEARCH (SCOR)

SCOR established three new Working Groups in 2025: Observational Requirements in the Context of AI Prediction Systems for Sea Ice (ORCAS), Small Plastics in the Ocean's Interior: Coherent Analysis and Synthesis for Better Scrutiny (SPASS)and the Subsurface Marine Heatwaves Working Group (SubMHW-WG). These groups bring together international experts to address focused ocean science questions over a three- to four-year period.

SCOR's capacity development programmes continued to support researchers from low- and middle-income countries through visiting scholar placements, POGO-SCOR Fellowshipsand travel support for early-career scientists participating in ocean science meetings and training activities. In total, 59 early-career scientists received travel support during 2025.

The organization also continued to monitor the implications of a challenging international funding environment for global ocean science collaboration and coordination activities.

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE ON SOLAR-TERRESTRIAL PHYSICS (SCOSTEP)

SCOSTEP continued to promote interdisciplinary research in solar-terrestrial physics through scientific programmes, international collaboration, data exchange and capacity development activities.

In 2025, SCOSTEP transitioned to its new four-year scientific programme, Cross-scale Coupling Processes in the Solar-Terrestrial System (COURSE). The programme focuses on three main themes: sources of space weather and space climate; coupling processes between the solar wind, magnetosphereand ionosphere; and interactions between external forcing and the internal dynamics of Earth's atmosphere. Details of the programme were published in Laurenza et al. (2025).

The 2025 SCOSTEP awards recognized Professor Katya Georgieva (Bulgaria) with the Distinguished Service Award and Dr Cora E. Randall (USA) with the SCOSTEP Fellow Award. SCOSTEP also supported 21 graduate students through its visiting scholar programme during the year.

URBAN HEALTH AND WELLBEING PROGRAMME (UHWB)

In 2025, UHWB entered a new ten-year phase following the signing of a renewed cooperation agreement between the ISC, the International Society for Urban Health (ISUH) and the Institute of Urban Environment of the Chinese Academy of Sciences at the 3rd ISC General Assembly in Muscat, Oman. A global search for a new Executive Director was also launched to support the programme's next phase of implementation.

UHWB continued to strengthen international collaboration through activities including the Asian Regional International Symposium on "Urban Biodiversity and Sustainable Development", a summer school on "Urban Science and Development"and a symposium on "One Health in Rapid Urbanization". The programme also expanded discussions on regional partnerships, including a potential centre of excellence in urban health in Eastern Europeand participated in the 21st International Conference on Urban Health in New Zealand.

WORLD CLIMATE RESEARCH PROGRAMME (WCRP)

In 2025, the WCRP launched a new Status Brief series to provide accessible climate science insights for decision-makers and the public, with the first edition focusing on global sea-level rise. Together with Future Earth and the Earth League, WCRP also published the 2025 edition of "10 New Insights in Climate Science", synthesizing key findings for policy-makers.

WCRP's APARC project further released a major international assessment of the 2022 Hunga Tonga–Hunga Ha'apai volcanic eruption, showing that it injected unprecedented amounts of water vapour into the stratosphere, with effects persisting through 2025. The assessment brought together 159 scientists from 21 countries and highlighted the importance of global observing systems and international collaboration.

Throughout the year, WCRP and its partners also organized ten workshops, hackathons and related activities to support collaborative climate research and knowledge exchange.

WORLD DATA SYSTEM (WDS)

In 2025, WDS published its 2025–2027 Action Plan and relaunched the Data Stewardship Award, receiving 15 nominations. International Data Week in Brisbane served as a major convening opportunity, with WDS contributing sessions on repository certification, data stewardshipand long-term sustainability.

WDS also launched a Delphi Study to identify the ten principal value-added benefits of data repositories, with analysis and publication of results underway. In parallel, the organization expanded its International Policy Paper Series on open science policies in Latin America through publications covering several countries, including Argentina, Colombia, Chile and Cuba.

During the year, WDS also became a supporting organization of the Barcelona Declaration on Open Research Information, reinforcing its commitment to open and transparent research infrastructures.

Annex V: Events organized or co-organized by the ISC

TITLE OF EVENT	LOCATION (COUNTRY OR ONLINE)	START DATE
Online launch of the ISC digital journeys project	Online	16/01/2025
Muscat Global Knowledge Dialogue	Oman	26/01/2025
ISC General Assembly	Oman	29/01/2025
Meeting of the Group of Friends on Science for Action: "Ocean science as a driver of action towards the 2025 UN Ocean Conference"	USA	18/02/2025
Funding actionable science: Advancing mission-oriented research for sustainability	France	16/03/2025
Webinar: AI in national research ecosystems: progress, challenges and lessons learned	Online	03/04/2025
Introduction to science filmmaking (with Ethnografilm Festival)	France	21/04/2025
4th roundtable of ISC unions and associations	Online	25/04/2025
Futures thinking and strategic foresight in action: insights from the Global South (at the 2025 STI Forum)	Online	06/05/2025
Safeguarding scientific data in times of crisis: a joint IAP-ISC Science in Exile network webinar	Online	21/05/2025
Strategic retreat on impact of emerging technologies on science systems	Kenya	21/05/2025
Impact of emerging technologies on the Global South science systems	Kenya	22/05/2025
ISC GeoUnions Distinguished Lecture Series "Decolonizing African agriculture: food security, agroecology and the need for radical transformation"	Online	25/05/2025
Side-event at the 2025 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction: "Implementation of Sendai Framework for DRR: role of science and technology in advancing implementation at a local level"	Switzerland	02/06/2025
Side-event at the 2025 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction: "Disaster Tracking Systems: understanding losses and damages to better inform DRR and climate action"	Switzerland	02/06/2025
Meeting of the ISC Regional Focal Point for Latin America & the Caribbean Liaison Committee	Chile	02/06/2025

Launch of the UNESCO open science toolkit resources: data policies for times of crisis facilitated by open science	France	04/06/2025
From data to action: strengthening the understanding of disaster impact data and its application in decision-making (side-event at the 2025 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction)	Switzerland	05/06/2025
Learning how to use UNDRR's Risk Understanding Tools: National Disaster Risk Assessment (NDRA) and Hazard Information Profiles (HIPs)	Switzerland	06/06/2025
Meeting of the ISC Regional Focal Point for Latin America and the Caribbean operational committees	Online	07/06/2025
5th Roundtable of ISC unions and associations	Online	10/06/2025
Webinar on the right to participate in and benefit from science	Online	11/06/2025
ISC project updates: Science Systems Futures	Online	18/06/2025
Scientific freedom and the safety of scientists: ensuring open, safe, and inclusive ecosystems for science (at CILAC Forum)	Online	25/06/2025
Science Day 2025: unlocking tomorrow's solutions, today (HLPF special event)	USA	15/07/2025
Global Higher Education Symposium (at HLPF)	USA	18/07/2025
Strengthening parliamentary science advice in Latin America and the Caribbean	Online	05/09/2025
6th roundtable of ISC unions and associations	Online	16/09/2025
Launch of the FAO-ISC issue paper on science communication for agri-food systems	France	22/09/2025
Launch of the practical digital toolkit for science organizations	Online	25/09/2025
Special webinar for the 2025 International Open Access Week: "Owning our Knowledge: non-commercial pathways for open access publishing"	Online	20/10/2025
Regional update meeting for ISC Members in Latin America and the Caribbean	Online	22/10/2025
LAC knowledge-sharing session 1: "Buying a stairway to heaven? On the use of AI models in publishing research results"	Online	28/10/2025
Side-event at the Second World Summit for Social Development: "Re-thinking development: insights for accelerated action in today's world"	Qatar	06/11/2025
ISC-Frontiers/Policy Labs: New contract for science	Switzerland	10/11/2025
Workshop: "Joint challenges and actions for publishing and research assessment reform"	Italy	14/11/2025
COP30 side-event: "Climate science: key takeaways 2025"	Brazil	15/11/2025
7th roundtable of ISC unions and associations	Online	25/11/2025
LAC knowledge-sharing session 2: From immunologist to science communicator and policy advisor: bringing science to policy	Online	26/11/2025

ISC at Science Forum South Africa 2025	South Africa	27/11/2025
Panel discussion #1 in Wellington: “Freedom and responsibility in science”	New Zealand	03/12/2025
Meeting of the Group of Friends on Science for Action: “Science-policy roundtable on rare earth minerals and sustainable development”	USA	04/12/2025
Panel discussion #2 in Aukland: “Freedom and responsibility in science”	New Zealand	08/12/2025
LAC knowledge-sharing session 3: Achieving net zero CO2 emissions in Latin America and the Caribbean	Online	19/12/2025

Work with the ISC to advance science as a global public good.

About the International Science Council

The International Science Council (ISC) works at the global level to catalyse change by convening scientific expertise, advice and influence on issues of major importance to both science and society.

The ISC is a non-governmental organization with a unique global membership that brings together more than 250 international scientific unions and associations, national and regional scientific organizations including academies and research councils, international federations and societies, and young academies and associations.

Connect with us at:
council.science
secretariat@council.science
International Science Council
5 rue Auguste Vacquerie
75116 Paris, France

bsky.app/profile/sciencecouncil.bsky.social
threads.net/@council.science
facebook.com/InternationalScience
https://www.linkedin.com/company/international-science-council
instagram.com/council.science