



# FOREWORD

The IAI is an intergovernmental organization in the Americas dedicated to collaborative global environmental change research and its socio-economic implications. To fulfill its mandate of building scientific capacity in the Americas and informing and advising policy, the IAI has created its own unique cycle of science programs that are geared to the systematic creation of multinational and multidisciplinary research networks based on rigorous scientific planning and a competitive selection process.

The IAI's thematic priority areas IAI are outlined in the Institute's Science Agenda, which is evolving to ensure the incorporation of changing regional priorities and of the needs of IAI member countries regarding global change research. Through its research the IAI attempts to provide the best possible scientific basis for documenting, understanding and projecting global environmental changes and to facilitate full use of scientific information in policy and decision making. A major challenge in this endeavor is the communication of interdisciplinary scientific results and knowledge to a variety of audiences, including policy and decision makers, state agencies, NGOs, civil society groups, and the public at large.

To improve communication between the policy sector, represented by its Executive Council (EC) and Conference of the Parties (CoP), and its scientists, the first "IAI Science Forum" was held on 3 June 1998 in Arlington, Virginia, USA in conjunction with the 7th EC and 5th CoP. The second forum "Building collaborative global change research in the Americas" was held on 16 June 1999 in conjunction with the 9th EC and 6th CoP in Ottawa, Canada. The very positive feedback received has resulted in the continuation of the fora, which provide an excellent platform for dialogue between the different groups. They are attended by the IAI delegates, observers and invited guests, and are commonly open to the public, fostering the exchange of ideas and the reconciliation of different priorities and needs. In addition, these science fora raise the profile of the IAI in the country hosting the event, while in return highlighting opportunities for the host country to augment and expand its global change research activities through collaboration with IAI programs in other parts of the Americas.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the organizers of the international science symposium "Global Change: Building the Adaptive Capacity to Global Environmental Change", held in Montreal, Quebec, Canada on 15 May 2005 in conjunction with the 20th EC and 12th CoP, specifically Heather Auld, Adam Fenech and Don MacIver, but also all speakers and the participants for their contribution and interest.

**Holm Tiessen**  
IAI Director

**Gerhard Breulmann**  
Scientific Officer

