



IGFA Meeting

Beijing, People's Republic of China 8 -9 October 2014

Meeting Report

8 December 2014

1. Attendance

Members attending in person: Albert van Jaarsveld (NRF, South Africa); Patrick Monfray (ANR, France); Yucheng Chai (NSFC, China); Francois Houllier (AllEnvi, France); Johannes Karte (DFG, Germany); Enrico Brugnoli (ISAC-CNR, Italy); Satoru Ohtake (JST, Japan); Kirsten Broch Mathisen (RCN, Norway); Magnus Tannerfeldt (SSEESS, Sweden); Dick van der Kroef (NWO, The Netherlands); Heide Hackmann (ISSC); Kurt Vandenberghe (European Commission).

Members represented: Carlos Henrique de Brito Cruz (FAPESP, Brazil) represented by Gilberto Camara; Wilfried Kraus (BMBF, Germany) represented by Kristin May; Shailesh Nayak (MoES, India) represented by Swati Basu; Satoshi Tanaka (MEXT, Japan) represented by Akira Takagi; Duncan Wingham (NERK, UK) represented by Sophie Hodgson; Roger Wakimoto (NSF, USA) represented by Maria Uhle; Thomas Armstrong (USGCRP, USA) represented by David Allen.

Apologies: Irene Gabriel (BMFWF, Austria); Andrew Johnson (CSIRO, Australia); Pierre Charest (NSERC, Canada); ICSU representative.

Guests: Andreas Obrecht (OEAD, Austria); Guoxiong Wu (Chinese National Committee – Future Earth); Jenny Lin (Chinese National Committee – Future Earth); Robert Habib (AllEnvi, France); Shiho Hamada (JST, Japan); Hiroshi Tsuda (JST, Japan), Kazuhiko Aoki (JST, Japan); Philippe Freyssinet (Qatar Foundation); Rémi Quirion (Fonds de Recherche du Québec); Yonah Seleti (Department of Science and Technology, South Africa); Ingrid Petersson (Formas, Sweden), Sofie Bjorling (Formas, Sweden), Annakarin Norling (Sida, Sweden); Joao Morais (Sida, Sweden); Kerstin Sahlin (Swedish RC, Sweden); Frans Berkhout (Future Earth); Nordin Hasan (ICSU ROAP); Sybil Seitzinger (IGBP); Pavel Kabat (IIASA); Clark Seipt (START); Gensuo Jia (START); David Carlson (WCRP).

Working Group: Reynaldo Victoria (FAPESP, Brazil); Yongtao Zhang (NSFC, China); Stéphane Blanc (AllEnvi, France); Sandrine Paillard (ANR, France); Christiane Joerk (DFG, Germany); Elisa Palazzi (ISAC-CNR, Italy); Soichi Kubota (JST, Japan); Andrew Kaniki (NRF, South Africa); Ntombizini Manana (NRF, South Africa); Ellenor Devine (SSEESS, Sweden); Kelly Watson (NSF, USA); Marialuisa Tamborra (European Commission); Sarah Moore (ISSC).

NSFC Hosts: Congqiang Liu, Yu Liu, Jianguo Ren, Zhe Liu, Chuang Zhao, Yu Chen

Morning session closed to members

2. Welcome and Introduction

IGFA was co-chaired by Albert van Jaarsveld as the substantive Chair, and Patrick Monfray (BF Co-Chair) standing-in for the IGFA substantive Vice Chair, the former SSEESS representative in IGFA (recently replaced by Magnus Tannerfeldt, SSEESS).

By way of general introduction Belmont Forum Co-Chair Patrick Monfray, explained the objectives of the meeting:

- To review progress in, and make decisions on the development of Collaborative Research Actions (CRAs); and
- To review progress in, and make decisions on the Alliance's Future Earth initiative and related Belmont Forum involvement.
- To consider proposed terms of reference for the merger of IGFA and Belmont Forum, the transition process and the proposed BF [Permanent] Secretariat

Special welcomes were extended to new representatives:

- From SSEESS: Magnus Tannerfeldt
- From NWO: Dick van der Kroef

Apologies were received from Andrew Johnson (CSIRO), Pierre Charest (NSERC), Irene Gabriel (BMWFW) and were followed by round table of introductions of attendees.

The Co-Chair situated IGFA in the context of the Belmont Forum (BF) and explained the decision by BF to open up the CRA's for participation by other IGFA members outside the BF, and the broader GEC research funding communities. This opening up would enable IGFA to make inputs into the BF processes while also promoting a community of practice in GEC research.

3. Cape Town Meeting Summary

The Cape Town Meeting report was adopted, with the following note: "countries" should be replaced with "funding agencies" throughout the document

The Agenda for the Beijing meeting was adopted, with no comments

4. Proposed IGFA/BF Terms of Reference

Proposal:

- The proposed merger of IGFA and the Belmont Forum is designed to open up the Belmont Forum process to all willing partners, but also ensure that the informal IGFA group delivers on the Future Earth program. It is important to maintain the momentum from the Belmont Forum CRAs. The proposed conditions of participation are: 1) Belmont Forum members need to support CRAs and 2) Funders should contribute toward the secretariat.

Questions and discussion:

- There was a discussion about the role of the proposed “executive council” versus the role of the working group and there was a proposal to merge the executive council and the working group. However, these are two separate roles. The intent of the executive council was to ensure that decisions made by the larger group are implemented. It would also serve as a sounding board for the two co-chairs. The decision-making body would still be the larger Belmont Forum.
- There was a discussion on the name of the executive council and a suggestion to rename it to steering committee, to better reflect the role of the committee.
- It was suggested that the executive council consist of a fixed number of representatives instead of a percentage of the Belmont Forum membership.
- There was discussion as to whether the executive council needs to be geographically balanced. Some members expressed discomfort with this provision of the proposal.
- What would the tasks of the new Belmont Forum be? The current proposal focuses on CRA's, but the traditional IGFA goals of aligning research strategies and encouraging information exchange should be carried forward into the new Belmont Forum, as well.
- This proposal sends a message to the Global Change Research community that funding agencies are supportive of Future Earth. However, the proposal should clarify the relationship between the new Belmont Forum and the GCR programs and regional networks.
- The proposed governance structure needs clarification on the following:
 - Is the annual fee cash or in-kind?
 - What are the definitions of members, associated members, and partners? Where do countries with multiple funding agencies (e.g. SSEESS), ICSU and ISSC fit in? Should there be an observer category? Issues of responsibilities, privileges etc. will follow.
 - What will the secretariat resources fund?
 - Will decisions be made by consensus or majority?
 - Are some agencies permanently on the executive council?
 - How will the transition period differ from the long-term rotation of the executive council?
 - The proposal should clearly state that the decision-making body is the members, not the executive council.
 - Will the membership be defined annually or for the long-term? Some agencies have trouble making long-term commitments.

- The Belmont Forum/IGFA is a coalition of the willing. No legal entity is being proposed and contributions are voluntary. It was suggested that the Terms of Reference be a living document for the next year.
- Discussion of the secretariat
 - What is the length of agencies' contributions to the secretariat? It is important to know well in advance who will be receiving the fee.
 - How will the Belmont Forum secretariat differ from the Future Earth secretariat in terms of supporting the co-chairs' role in the S&T Alliance, forward-looking activities, and the production of publications and policy briefs?
 - Planning is better suited for the executive council instead of the secretariat.
 - Current Belmont Forum PIs do not know that they are part of Future Earth. This is something that should be fixed.

Decisions:

- **All members support the merger of IGFA and the Belmont Forum.**
- **The new Belmont Forum will elect two co-chairs for three-year terms. There will be a one-year lag between the co-chairs. For the transition period, the first co-chair will have a 3-year term, the second co-chair will have a 2-year term, and all following co-chairs will have 3-year terms.**
- **The executive council will be renamed Steering committee in all documents.**
- **There will be an obligatory rotating Steering Committee that is open to all members.**
- **The Working Group and the Steering Committee will have separate roles. The Working Group will carry out work between Belmont Forum meetings. The Steering Committee supports, advises, and aligns the activities of the co-chairs.**
- **The Terms of Reference will be a working document for the next year (until the 2015 Belmont Forum meeting).**
- **A distributed secretariat will be in place, effective January 1st, 2015.**
- **Only funding agencies (science or development funding) will be considered members of the new Belmont Forum. ICSU and ISSC will be associate members. Groups such as IIASA will be partners/observers.**
- **The secretariat will distribute a list of agencies that currently qualify for Belmont Forum membership based on their contributions to CRAs. The secretariat will also distribute a list of prospective 2015 members based on expected contributions. These members would elect an interim Steering Committee**
- **All members accept the following transition process: the interim Steering Committee will select an acting co-chair and the final Terms of Reference will be agreed upon at the 2015 Belmont Forum meeting.**

End of Closed Session

5. Welcome and Introductions

Guests and donors introduced themselves and their affiliations.

The Vice President of National Science Foundation (NSF) China Dr. Cong-Qiang LIU – welcomed all to Beijing and re-iterated the importance and need for collaborative in areas such as complex environmental challenges as driven by IGFA/BF.

Apologies from Hiroshi Tsujihara (APN), Holm Tiessen (IAI), Eva Spehn (DIVERSITAS), and Anne-Helene Prieur-Richard (DIVERSITAS).

6. Future Earth and Alliance Updates

Heide Hackman, Co-Chair: Science and Technology Alliance (<https://www.igfagcr.org/sites/default/files/meetings/2014/Alliance%20Introduction%20October%202014.pdf>) provided background on the Future Earth initiative, its development, and its relationship with the Belmont Forum and the Alliance. Her remarks also provided basics as presented at Cape Town meeting, but with updates where there have been changes.

Professor Frans Berkhout, Director: Future Earth Interim Secretariat Updated the plenary regarding developments related to the implementation the Future Earth platform initiative (<https://www.igfagcr.org/sites/default/files/meetings/2014/Future-Earth%20Update%20IGFABelmont%20Berkhout%20081014.pdf>). He highlighted the progress made in incorporating the 25 Core environmental global research programmes into Future Earth. He mentioned the appointment of the Engagement Committee Chair: Jairam Ramesh (<http://www.futureearth.org/blog/2014-oct-27/qa-jairam-ramesh>), a former minister in India. Also mentioned the work done on the Future Earth Vision 2025 (<https://www.igfagcr.org/sites/default/files/meetings/2014/IGFA14-3.2-Future%20Earth%20in%202025.docx>).

Professor Berkhout informed the plenary that United States National Science Foundation (NSF) had provided a grant of \$1m to Future Earth for short-term initiatives. One key activity funded is the work/study on *What it means to do co-design and co-production*.

Professor Berkhout further gave a description of the process followed by Future Earth Secretariat and Science Committee in developing the draft *Strategic Research Agenda of Future Earth* (<https://www.igfagcr.org/sites/default/files/meetings/2014/IGFA14-3.1-Future%20Earth%20Strategic%20Research%20Agenda%202014.docx>) that will be considered by the Alliance. A highlight of the process included three sets of inputs i.e.

1. Consultation with the community/core project in DC;
2. Global online consultation – more than 500 inputs;
3. Desk-top research

The outcome of the above (three-pronged research) was about 500 research questions raised. Priority-setting workshop/meeting (using the Sutherland approach) was held in Beijing in 2014. This resulted in a consolidation of 9 Sub-themes (62 Priorities). It is hoped that these priorities will align with BF and some of its CRAs. It is further hoped that Future Earth would be seen/used as an ideas factory for the Belmont Forum going forward – refer back to the BF and CRAs.

Members were also informed that the core projects under IHDP, Diversitas and IGBP are all underway to be incorporated into Future Earth by invitation and signing of a MoU.

Questions and discussion:

- There was a discussion about how BF members need to more strongly support and communicate the importance of interdisciplinary research to the research community and other organizations.
- Several members also thought that relationship between BF and Future Earth needs to be more clear, especially from a communication perspective.
- There was a concern by members how the relationship between Future Earth and WCRP develops and if there is a way for BF to support the process.
- The questions are relevant and provide a good overview of what the community think is key priorities and can be very useful for many BF members. However, the number of questions should be slimmed down and the document should include stakeholder involvement, policy implementation and impact as well. It is unclear if this document can be called a strategic document at its current state.

Joint presentation of Diversitas/IGBP/WCRP on transition funding issues

(https://www.igfaqcr.org/sites/default/files/meetings/2014/08.4GECs_Master_final%20from%20Johannes%20with%20working%20animation.pdf) was given. The meeting reiterated the need to ensure smooth transition of the assimilation/close-out of the various programmes into Future Earth, but also continued funding to these initiatives through the Future Earth Platform

Questions and discussion:

- During the presentation the following was suggested; the endorsement of a 'shared pool' funding concept of Future Earth, consideration of a 5 % 'administrative fee' on Belmont Forum funded initiatives and support for existing contributions for GEC programmes to be re-directed to Future Earth 'shared pool'.
- Due to legal reasons though, the shared pool idea is still under development.
- Some members raised the concern that an administrative charge might be difficult for their organizations to handle. It is therefore important to clarify what the 5% administrative fee will be going towards.
- As stated by Future Earth fee can be compared to a membership fee and it will earn the organization the right to brand CRA as Future Earth initiative.
- Further the Future Earth budget need to be clarified to explain why it has more than doubled compared to the total budget of the former programs.

Stéphane Blanc and Rémi Quirion: Future Earth secretariat. The plenary was updated on the latest developments related to the implementation of the globally distributed secretariat for Future Earth.

Guoxiong Wu: Progress of Future Earth in China

(https://www.igfaqcr.org/sites/default/files/meetings/2014/Progress%20of%20FE%20Activities%20in%20China_IGFA-Wu-lin.pdf). The plenary was updated on Future Earth-related activities in China to date.

Frans Berkhout: Future Earth Strategic Agenda

(<https://www.igfaqcr.org/sites/default/files/meetings/2014/Future->

[Earth%20SRA_IGFABelmont%20081014%20Berkhout.pdf](#)). Professor Berkhout introduced the plenary to the Future Earth Strategic Research Agenda.

Sybil Seitzinger and Frans Berkhout: Presentation (Diversitas/IGBP/WCRP) on transition funding issues / Future Earth Funding Strategy

(https://www.igfaqcr.org/sites/default/files/meetings/2014/Future-Earth_Funding%20model_IGFABelmont%20Berkhout%20081014.pdf). Sybil Seitzinger gave a presentation encouraging everyone to move their current funding for the programs to Future Earth, followed by a presentation by Professor Berkhout describing a new, more stable and simpler strategy for funding Future Earth for the plenary to discuss and consider.

7. Ideas for new Collaborative Research Actions

Urban Pathways, Tipping Points, Food and Water Nexus, Consumption, Future Earth Fast Track Initiatives CAs, Future Earth ECR, IIASA International School of Excellence in Systems Analysis, and the Critical Zones proposals for CRA

(<https://www.igfaqcr.org/sites/default/files/meetings/2014/ISE%20Concept%20Paper%20Final.pdf>, <https://www.igfaqcr.org/sites/default/files/meetings/2014/IGFA14-5.7-New%20Ideas%20of%20CRA%20ISE%20%281%29.pdf>) (IIASA)

(<https://www.igfaqcr.org/sites/default/files/meetings/2014/CRA%20Critical%20zone%2014%20Houllier.pdf>) (Critical Zones)

The Chair asked for indication of interest among IGFA members and recommendation for further consideration by the Belmont Forum.

Several members showed interest in Urban Pathways (NSF/RCN/JST/MEXT), Tipping Points (RCN/JST/MEXT), and Food and Water Nexus (NSF/JST/MEXT). The Future Earth ECR CRA got some interest from EC and FAPESP. NRF also indicated interest in participating in IIASA International School of Excellence in System Analysis, since NRF is already involved with IIASA in running a similar programme.

The Critical Zone study could potentially link with other Critical zone studies that are already funded by a variety of countries. However, FAPESP expressed concern that this proposal is not significantly different from the Nexus proposal. In fact, FAPESP is more supportive of the NEXUS proposal because it includes humanities and goes beyond the critical zone.

The co-Chairs suggest that rather than having a series of CRA's roll out, the Belmont Forum could roll out a Future Earth CRA that has a number of mechanisms associated with it (Suggesting two: Competitive Seed Funding and Capacity Building (https://www.igfaqcr.org/sites/default/files/meetings/2014/Future%20Earth%20CRA_09oct14.pdf)).

Members expressed interest in the proposed "Future Earth" CRA by the co-Chairs noting similarities to other programs sponsored by the European Commission. Concerned were expressed about detailed discussion of an item that was not on the agenda or read-ahead materials. It was also suggested that it would be useful to learn from the EuroCORS program, which is very similar in approach prior to embarking on such a program.

Meeting Report

9 October 2014

Discussion of Yesterday's Proposals for New Collaborative Research Actions

Patrick gave a presentation to encourage discussion of how the Belmont Forum can improve its relationship with Future Earth. It is possible for the Belmont Forum to work with the Future Earth secretariat to fund individual projects, but the Belmont Forum would always maintain its own criteria (e.g. stakeholder engagement, transdisciplinarity, etc.). Some of the Future Earth proposals are more developed than others.

The day's session started with presentation of Proposal for the alignment of Belmont Forum work with Future Earth work in respect of funding and supporting Future Earth. The deliberation of the previous day had resulted in an proposal prepared by the Co-Chairs on how to support and accept CRA's proposed by BF members; CRAs proposed by Future Earth Science Committee and community, and support for non-mainstream CRAs, such as those related to capacity development, e.g. Transdisciplinarity Training, the International School of Excellence etc. There was intense discussion of the "impromptu" proposal.

Decision:

- **It was agreed that the proposal (Future Earth – Funding strategy slide) will be developed further and presented as a formal proposal for consideration at the October 2015, to be hosted by RCN in Norway.**

1. Updates from Programs and Regional Networks

Presentations of the development and progress, work being done in the various global environmental related programmes, partners and other similar new/potential partners were made individually/in some cases and collectively in others by the following:

- IGBP – International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme, DIVERSITAS – an International programme of biodiversity science, WCRP- World Climate Research Programme
(https://www.igfagcr.org/sites/default/files/meetings/2014/GECs_IGFA2014with%20working%20animation.pdf)
- IIASA – International Institute for Analytical and System (New partner)(https://www.igfagcr.org/sites/default/files/meetings/2014/IIASAtoBELMONT_IGFA_Beijing2014.pdf)
- APN – Asian Pacific Network for Global Change Research
(<https://www.igfagcr.org/sites/default/files/meetings/2014/IGFA%20Meeting%20Beijing%20APN.pdf>)
- IAI- Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research (Oral remarks by Maria Uhle in behalf of Holm Tiessen.
- The SysTem for Analysis, Research and Training (START)
(https://www.igfagcr.org/sites/default/files/meetings/2014/START_IGFABELMONT2014_PPT.pdf) reiterated its mission to increase “research capacity by doing” –

works on knowledge systems; the knowledge generation through USGCRP- and primary funding through NSF-USA (70% of funds; 30% is from “selling” time) Advancing Knowledge for Action.

- Capacity Building through:
 - Fellowships: PhD support from NORAD and also institutions to host students/fellows – Pan Asian Risk Reduction (PARR) Fellowship Programme; Research Grants and Assessments; Integrated Capacity building programme; GEC Education
- ICSU Regional Office of Asia and the Pacific (OAP)
(<https://www.igfaqcr.org/sites/default/files/meetings/2014/Nordin%27s%20Presentations%20FINAL%20for%20IGFA%209%20October%202014.pdf>)

2. National Activities Updates

As is the tradition of the IGFA meetings, each member presented and shared highlights and key developments related to the global environmental research, Belmont Forum related agenda, and of course engagement with Future earth in his/her country (<https://www.igfaqcr.org/sites/default/files/meetings/2014/National%20ActivitiesPresentations%20IGFA%202014%20copy.pdf>).

3. Soweto Meeting Follow-up

Donor Agencies and BF: due to limited time and the fact that only one donor agencies (SIDA) attended the meeting, the presentation on donor agencies meeting and outcomes of the Soweto meeting, and going forward was not done. Members were requested to review the narrative report and power point presentation that were made available. BF will pick on this matter, how to work closely with development/donor agencies going forward.

4. CRAs

Transformations to Sustainability

Presentation from Heide Hackmann

(https://www.igfaqcr.org/sites/default/files/meetings/2014/T2S%20IGFA%20BF%20Update%20Oct%20_final.pdf)

Questions and discussion:

- Sida funds can be used to fund researchers in any country. The current funds from Sida can be used to fund 3 Transformative Knowledge Networks (TKN). Additional funds from the Belmont Forum would mean funding more TKNs.
- The grants are for research, not just networking.
- Belmont Forum funders do not have to contribute to a common pot of money. They can fund projects that they want to fund, as well as researchers in their own countries.
- This is not a Belmont Forum activity, but it is an opportunity for Belmont Forum members to partner with ISSC.

NSF, BMBF, FAPESP, NRF, EC, and Japan are interested.

Transdisciplinary Workshops

Presentation from Heide Hackmann

(<https://www.igfagcr.org/sites/default/files/meetings/2014/TD%20Proposal%20Oct%202014.pdf>),

Questions and discussion:

- This is a training initiative. Some agencies can contribute to this type of project.
- There was a discussion on whether this initiative could be BF activity since the Belmont Challenge does indicate that training the next generation is part of the Belmont Forum.

NRF, NSF, JST, EC, and AllEnvi are interested.

Mountains as Sentinels of Change

Presentation from Elisa Palazzi

(https://www.igfagcr.org/sites/default/files/meetings/2014/Mountain_CRA_Call%20copy.pdf)

Note that the timeline indicates funding in 2016, not 2015.

NSF, NERC, DFG, FAPESP, ANR, NSFC, CNR, and BMWFW (in-kind) are interested.

TPO will be CNR and NSF.

Climate Services

Presentation from Patrick Monfray

(<https://www.igfagcr.org/sites/default/files/meetings/2014/Climate%20CRA%2009oct14.pdf>)

Questions and discussion:

- There was a suggestion to remove the emphasis on monsoon, Mediterranean or Arctic systems.
- A two-step approach was suggested, although the tight focus on the months-to-decadal approach may only attract a small number of proposals. If a two-step review is used, the funding would be for 2016.
- Based on past experiences, it was suggested that type 1 projects be removed from the call.

FAPESP, MEXT/JST, NRF, MOES, ANR, NSF, NSFC, NERC, CSIRO, Qatar, RCN (pending JPI Climate), and Quebec are interested.

TPO would be ANR and MoES

E-infrastructures and Data Management

Presentation by Maria Uhle (prepared by the Secretariat of this CRA)

Questions and discussion:

- This collaborative format can be used in other CRAs.
- Many members congratulated the work achieved so far by this group and expressed their continued support.
- It was suggested that the group focus on reproducible science. For example, the proposed exemplars could contribute to demonstrating that important scientific results are reproducible.

- The final report from this CRA will be the first Belmont Forum product. This has implications for Belmont Forum branding.
- The spirit of the Belmont Forum is that data should be open and shareable, although the current policy is to follow national funding requirements.

5. Closing

- This marks the beginning of the new Belmont Forum.