



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Organisation
des Nations Unies
pour l'éducation,
la science et la culture

Nairobi Office

**Joint Statement of the Chairpersons
of the Six Intergovernmental/International Scientific Programmes
to the Director-General and the 34th session of the General Conference**

**Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC)
International Basic Science Programme (IBSP)
International Geoscience Programme (IGCP)
International Hydrological Programme (IHP)
Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB)
Management of Social Transformations Programme (MOST)**

Meeting of the Chairpersons
(Paris, 22-23 October 2007)

Fully conscious that our meeting takes place at a key juncture for strengthening Science in UNESCO, given the will of the Organization's Member States to strengthen its action in these fields and to enable UNESCO to make significant contributions to United Nations wide initiatives in various critical domains,

I

1. We have taken full cognizance of the recommendations of the Review Committee on Major Programmes II (Natural Sciences) and III (Social and Human Sciences), of the comments of UNESCO's Director-General and of the decision of the Executive Board thereon (176EX/7), and the views of each programme on the Review Committee's recommendations as expressed to the Director-General.
2. We have taken note of the follow-up ensured to date to those recommendations as reflected in the draft 34C/4 and 34C/5 and, in particular, in the implementation plan submitted by the Director-General to the 34th session of the General Conference in document 34C/13, on the basis of the work of the internal Task Force he established in 2007.
3. We have taken into consideration of the nature, scope and modalities of UNESCO's contribution to the implementation of the Consolidated Plan of Action for Science and Technology in Africa as approved by UNESCO's Executive Board at its 177th session.

4. We have also taken note that UNESCO is currently engaged in the development of an intersectoral and integrated strategy on UNESCO's contribution to dealing with major challenges relating to global climate change, an issue of major concern to all the intergovernmental/international scientific programmes.
5. In that context, we wish to underline the need to take fully into account for future action the important achievements of UNESCO's ISPs in the fields of the oceans, basic sciences, geosciences, freshwater, ecology and biodiversity and social transformations, for the advancement of scientific research, science-policy linkages, the strengthening of capacities, sustainable development, and the achievement of the MDGs and other internationally agreed development goals.
6. We emphasize that while the achievement of the objectives set out in the major programming documents referred to above could certainly place UNESCO in a much better position in the field of the natural and the social and human sciences, it also requires a higher and sustainable level of staffing and funding over the period covered by the Draft Medium-Term Strategy.

II

In the light of the above considerations, we the Chairpersons of the ISPs have decided:

7. to strengthen and enhance our shared role as a scientific advisory body to UNESCO as a whole, given the intrinsic intersectoral nature of the strategic objectives of the draft Medium-Term Strategy and the Review Committee's recommendations, in close cooperation with the internal Task Force established by the Director-General and the relevant international organizations with which UNESCO has a long-standing and fruitful cooperation;
8. to contribute to meeting the objectives of the implementation plan of the Review Committee's recommendations as submitted by the Director-General in 34C/13, ensuring close interaction among the different scientific programmes in order to establish the appropriate specific synergies, ensure their sustainability and enhance their impact, in particular on issues relating to:
 - Climate change and its consequences,
 - Natural and human-induced hazards and disasters,
 - Human well-being,
 - Environmental sustainability (MDG 7),
 - Management and sustainable use of natural resources;
9. to strengthen the leading contribution of the Intergovernmental/International Scientific Programmes to United Nations wide initiatives, such as UN-Oceans, UN-Water and UN-Energy, the follow-up of the Copenhagen Summit on Social Development, the Johannesburg Summit on Sustainable Development, the production of the World Water Development Reports, and the development of Tsunami early warning systems;
10. to contribute to the strengthening of science education, and education for sustainable development, human and institutional capacities, the knowledge society and the linkages between science and policy and the decision-making process;

11. to contribute to establishing integrated science policies through close coordination and synergies at the international level and in particular at the national level, at this critical time when countries are giving high priority to developing science-based decision making, and in that framework strengthen the response to the needs of Africa as expressed in the Consolidated Plan of Action for Science and Technology in Africa;
12. to strengthen the delivery of ISPs services and products at the regional and national levels, through close interaction and cooperation with the National Commissions for UNESCO, the ISPs National Committees, category 1 and 2 centres and UNESCO Chairs;
13. to hold periodic consultations throughout the 2008-2009 biennium on progress achieved towards the fulfillment of those major commitments, and also with a view to responding to future challenges to UNESCO's action in the field of science.

Chairpersons:

Savithri Narayanan (IOC)
Jens Jorgen Gaardhoje (IBSP)
Sospeter M. Muhongo (IGCP)
Benedito Braga (IHP)
Zerihun Woldu (MAB)
Zola Skweyiya (MOST)