

International Science Council (ISC)

Activities' Report - Year 2021

Deputy Representative Augusta Maria Paci

1. Introduction

The International Science Council (ISC) is a non-governmental organization with a unique global membership that brings together over 200 international scientific unions and associations as well as national and regional scientific organizations including academies and research councils. ¹.

CNR is full member of ISC, the newly funded organism in 2018, which represents the previous ICSU and ISSC (International Social Science Council) membership.

ISC promotes worldwide the values and principles of global science for the benefit of society. The ISC mission is “to act as the global voice for science”. ISC promotes science as a global public good for humanity development and operates to mobilize scientific and economic resources to respond to global challenges as depicted by the SDGs of the United Nations 2030 Agenda. ISC promotes interdisciplinary collaboration and dialogue among scientists from all disciplines and all countries to convey expertises, sound opinions and to stimulate thinking ahead for global solutions. Through specific cross-cutting actions, ISC aims to overcome science inequalities, to promote inclusion and participation in the entire world and for this operates in synergy with the United Nations and in partnership with other International organizations. ISC headquarter is based in Paris.

During 2021, ISC discussed and published the final release of ISC Paper “Science as a Global Public Good”² has a referral document expressing the opinions of the ISC Governing Board. The paper explores the importance of science as a source of beneficial and applicable knowledge that is freely available and accessible worldwide, and which can be used by anyone, anywhere, without preventing or impeding its use by others. This principle characterized the Action Plan 2019-21 and ISC will continue to work in this direction in the next three-year Action Plan 2022-24, with the support of the newly elected Governing Board and with the involvement of the entire membership³.

The ISC elections took place during the second ISC General Assembly, held online 11-15 October 2021.

During this GA, the ISC objectives were clearly communicated and discussed by addressing the global base of international members. The elected President Peter Gluckmann and the new composition of the Governing Board will serve in the period 2022-24. During 2021 Italian candidates obtained success in the ISC elections, gaining a positioning of CNR and of Italy in the next period 2022-24 either in the ISC Governing Board and in the Euro-ISC Management Board as reported in par.6.

2. Main activities carried on by ISC during 2021 relevant for Italy and for CNR

CNR Deputy Representative attended several ISC activities such as workshop, survey, project presentation and validation, members' sessions and so on. In particular the Deputy Representative attended online events, listed below, that regarded topics related to research development and related funding opportunities:

- 1) The Roundtable: What does 'transformation(s) to sustainability' mean today? March, 4th, 2021. The Panelists opened a reflection on the meaning of transformation during times of deep structural and global changes.

¹ <https://council.science/about-us/>

² <https://council.science/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/ScienceAsAPublicGood-FINAL.pdf>

DOI: 10.24948/2021.09.

³ PACI Relazione Assemblea Generale

- 2) The Second Global Forum for Funders, Missions for Science to Enable a Prosperous Future for All: Building Global Funding Alliances, April 26th-28th 2021 dedicated to Funding Agencies to highlight conditions for funding.
- 3) The “UnlockingScience: Prioritising Institutional Responses to Distrust In Science” november 10th 2021 World Science Day for Peace and Development.

Standard activities requested by the membership were worked out such as:

- Attendance to Dialogue Sessions online meetings (Knowledge Sharing Session)
- Approval of candidatures of new members
- Attendance to online meetings held by ISC in partnership with United Nations Agencies
- Attendance to the General Assembly, voting and a written report ⁴
- Provision of information and support letters upon request of the ISC Secretariat

3. Activities carried on by Augusta Maria Paci within the International Organism during 2021 and impact on the Italian scientific community

The CNR Deputy Representative dedicated particular effort to disseminate and to connect potential interested CNR researchers to upcoming ISC events. The aim was either to notify ISC about the value of the CNR scientific network and to give CNR experts the opportunity to interact with the ISC team on subjects related events. This participation was facilitated by the online mode. CNR experts were invited by ISC as below:

- 1) ISC Workshop for the Project COVID-19 Outcomes Scenarios, ISC Lead, 3rd August 2021, Antonio Tintori, IRPPS-CNR
- 2) Conference The Power of Food Science and Technology and Nutrition for Sustainable Planet Health 16th-17th nov 2021 held in partnership by ISC and the International Union of Food Science and Technology (IUFoST) and the International Union of Nutritional Sciences (IUNS), with the invitation to CNR Directors Antonio Lo Grieco CNR-ISPA and Michelangelo Pascale CNR-ISA
- 3) Symposium on Women in Chemistry, lead by OPWC (Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons) 1st July 2021, dr. Silvia Borsacchi of ICCOM-CNR and Member of the Italian Commission NAO-CNR IUPAC.
- 4) IUPAC World Conference hosted the “IUPAC | CCCE 2021 Sustainable Development Goals” workshop: dr. Maurizio Peruzzini in co-authorship with Mario Malinconico and Augusta Maria Paci published IUPAC | CCCE 2021_Talk on the IYCN symposium "The UN SDGs for the Benefit of Society". This Talk was suspended as dr. Malinconico passed away during these days. Later on, the organizers requested permission to upload this contribution which is now on You Tube channel⁵.

4. Evaluation of the participation in terms of benefits and membership cost

The participation to ISC can bring new relevant elements for the development of a global perspective into scientific activities held by Research Councils, such as CNR. It can increase understanding and awareness regarding major international policies initiatives, such as the role of funding institutions with related conditions. At global level, the participation to global discussions highlights factors regarding the relationship between science, economy and society. These factors influence decision-making processes. In general, ISC Dialogue sessions offer members the possibility to interact in informal panel dealing with science but including social, cultural and geographic differences. This approach lowers communication barriers among the ISC members from continents and facilitates knowledge sharing.

In the same spirit, the ISC Secretariat through the website and newsletter supported very well the membership and was helpful in disseminating, by a CNR request, on the specific ISC website page news of CNR international events to the ISC global membership.

5. Evaluation of Italians’ attendance and how to improve interest and involvement

It is important to continue to increase the involvement of CNR experts, particularly the middle age researchers with high scientific cvs, either in thematic ISC events as well as in membership activities. It is important to continue to grow interest in ISC from CNR experts.

The understanding of any international scientific organisms is rather difficult, as it requires time, personal interest, fluent language. This is particularly true for ISC which is an overarching organism for Science at

⁴ The report is public available online on CNR website <https://www.cnr.it/it/organismi-scientifici-internazionali/relazione/427/paci-report-2nd-isc-general-assembly-eng.pdf>.

⁵ IYCN symposium "The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals for the Benefit of Society" at IUPAC YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=68v6PHpKwio&t=41s>

highest level. However, in these times of transformation and need of policy development within research institutions, it may be useful to increase interest in ISC for its very relevant international objectives. In this sense, a proposal is to replicate a good practice which is undergoing with the CNR National Commission of the IUPAC NAO-CNR from 2019-2022 and that can be a starter to make ISC activities more attractive.

In this practice, during 2020 and 2021 the Commission President dr. Maurizio Peruzzini invited ISC Delegates to attend the NAO-CNR Commission meetings to inform and share with members ideas and cross-cutting topics and opportunities of reciprocal interest of IUPAC and ISC.

This practice represents an innovative approach for building value relationships between international organizations and by leveraging the National level of the respective membership. Cross-cutting international projects are runned and managed centrally at the Union's Governing Board level. This requires each national Commission related to a scientific Union to fulfill many duties and resources in similar cross-cutting activities. By introducing this novel approach, the national effort led by CNR can be strengthened and optimized with a maximized impact.

This proposal is considering that in ISC, the Scientific Unions held a prominent role together with Academy of Sciences and that CNR has a network of excellent delegates to attend the rich portfolio of Membership to the thematic Scientific Unions.

Another proposal for building awareness is to provide the CNR Delegates network and the National Commissions of the Unions with a presentation of the ISC three-year Action plan. This could be done through an online event dedicated to updating strategies, knowledge sharing particularly regarding policies for Young researchers recruitment, policies for international awards and focus on cross-cutting themes: Open science, Science Advice, Science Diplomacy, Women equality Plans, etc. The model of the You Tube presentation reported in note 4 could be replicated.

In a possible online event, objectives carried on by ISC could be presented to the Italian audience by the ISC President Peter Gluckmann supported by one or more members of the Governing Board or specific committees. The result would aim to improve synergies between the CNR Delegates and the Boards of the Scientific Unions and Academies of Sciences, in order to increase the positioning Italian experts.

6. Italian experts with important roles within the International Organism or within related Commissions and Programs (if known)

In the **ISC Governing Board elections** during the General Assembly 11-15 october 2021⁶, Italy got a great success with the election of prof. Maria Paradiso from Università Federico II Naples, geographer and CNR Full Representative at the International Geographical Union (IGU/UGI). For the first time, Italy will be represented in the Governing Board for 2022-24⁷.

The Governing Board is the Decision-making body in charge of bring forward the projects and objective approved by the General Assembly. An important role of the Governing Body is also to support the vision and the perspective of the membership and to sustain actions in international settings to achieve the best possible results for people and planet.

In **Euro-ISC management Board elections**, CNR submitted the CNR candidate dr. Mario Malinconico and this candidature was very successful. During summer, Mario Malinconico passed away and the New President of the Euro-ISC Group together with the newly elected members expressed their big sorrow for the loss of the CNR scientist and the will to keep CNR as Institutional member. Following this proposal, CNR REI Office proposed Augusta Maria Paci, technology director associate to ICCOM-CNR, ISC and Deputy Representative with a consolidated experience in research programme and projects, international activities and scientific organizations.

The Euro-ISC Management Board is composed by Institutional members from European Academies of Sciences. The task of this board is to define a perspective of European members within the global ISC outlook which will include collaboration and synergy with the United Nations and international partners

7. If Union with CNR Commission, short summary about the 2021 CNR Commission activities

There is no Italian Committee for ISC. However during 2021 the Representatives put forward preliminary contacts with the Italian Academy of Science Lincei's International Relations Office. There is interest to consider participation to valuable relevant proposals related to ISC actions.

8. Notes

⁷ <https://www.cnr.it/it/news/10659>

Due to the passed away of Mario Malinconico the Former ISC President Daya Reddy and the Staff of ISC sent condolences to CNR colleagues and to the family. The Euro-ISC President and the members of the Euro-ISC new Management Board and the former President Jurg Pfister participated as well with great sorrow.

A very intense memory of Malinconico was given by the President of IUPAC during the General Assembly and by the organizers of the International Youth Chemistry Network at the beginning of the Symposium IUPAC | CCCE 2021 _Talk on the IYCN symposium "The UN SDGs for the Benefit of Society" reported in par.3.

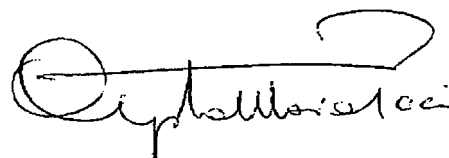
The memory of Mario Malinconico at DSCTM 2021 conference. The President of NAO-CNR, Maurizio Peruzzini, recalled the fundamental contribution of Mario Malinconico, who suddenly and prematurely passed away in August 2021, to the role of Italy in the prestigious IUPAC and ISC (International Science Council) international unions, also as a lesson to CNR researchers in their professional experience ⁸.

9. Conclusions

Taking the many activities of ISC that have been mentioned during 2021, the relevant positions gained by Italy and CNR and the increase in the attendance of CNR experts in online ISC events, it is possible to believe in the increase of CNR value interactions in this global network. CNR could gain better visibility and new elements for collaborations and partnership. The interconnections that are available trough the ISC membership can open perspectives and open opportunities improving a greater awareness of global issues for science policy. The catch up of collaboration through ISC in the next three years can support pathways to converge on global perspectives and to rise resources and knowledge increasing the individual and institutional capacity to maximize the impact of scientific outcomes.

Firma
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Luogo e data
30 aprile 2022



⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kcbPdRkMIxE>