

The Executive Committee of IANAS held their annual meeting at the National Academy of Sciences, Washington, DC on 14th - 15th January. The original objective, as with all previous annual EC meetings, was to discuss activities for the coming year. However, just prior to the meeting two events impacted the entire process. Firstly, the Mexican Academy of Sciences received significant and unforeseen cuts to their budget, forcing them to withdraw their offer to host the IANAS Secretariat for the next three years and eliminate the executive director's salary. Secondly, as with the other regional IAP networks, we were informed that there would be a significant cut in the financial support received and that funding would not be available until July 2019. Furthermore, the IANAS focal point groups had submitted funding requests for special projects but these funds were also no longer available. Thus, the discussions concentrated on ways of sustaining IANAS activities, with the decision to hold off until the AGM scheduled in May, in order to receive feedback from all members on the various options available.

The general assembly of IANAS, held on 26th and 27th May, 2019, was generously hosted by the Colombian Academy of Exact, Physical and Natural Sciences in Bogota. It was attended by representatives from 22 academies of the Americas who also participated in the excellent activities, with both national and international speakers, celebrating the 83rd Anniversary on May 28th.

Jeremy McNeil (Royal Society of Canada) was re-elected as Co-chair for a second term and Helena Nader (Brazilian Academy of Science) was elected to replace Juan Asenjo (Chilean Academy of Science). There were seven Academies on the slate of candidates for the next EC. The following were elected: Academia Nacional de Ciencias Exactas, Físicas y Naturales (Buenos Aires), Academia de Ciencias Médicas, Físicas y Naturales de Guatemala, Academia Mexicana de Ciencias, Academia Nacional de Ciencias de Peru, The Caribbean Academy of Sciences and The US National Academy of Science.

The Academia Nacional de Ciencias de Argentina (Cordoba) was originally on the ballot but withdrew from the election as they generously agreed to host the IANAS Secretariat. The new Executive Director of IANAS is Prof. Beatriz Capputo.

The different focal groups co-chairs presented on the activities that had occurred since the previous AGM and their initial plans for future projects. However, given the financial constraints many proposed activities had to be delayed, including joint projects between the Water and Energy programmes and the Women for Science and Science in Schools programmes. In addition, it was decided that the travel costs of focal points to any given meeting would be limited number of key representatives.

The collected assembly acknowledged the excellent contributions Prof. Juan Asenjo during his two mandates as co-chair of IANAS. They also recognised the incredible accomplishments of Dr. Adriana De la Cruz during her time as the executive director of IANAS. Her contributions to the organisation were evident on all fronts, but her dedication to the ensuring the timely production of the IANAS publications was underlined.

The IANAS Water Program held its annual meeting on December 10-11, 2019 at the Beckman Center in Irvine, California. This was attended by 11 focal points with 5 more participating by SKYPE at a summary session the end of the meeting. The agenda was devoted almost entirely to the development and preparation of a strategic plan to guide the water program through an era with less support from previous sources. One important outcome of the meeting was to identify future locations of annual meetings and efforts for involving the various country academies more fully in the activities of the IANAS Water Program.

The Water Programme finalized and arranged for publication of several documents in 2019, the foremost being *Water Quality in the Americas: Risks and Opportunities* published in both Spanish and English. Copies were sent to all 21 country focal points and received wide distribution thanks to a series of special events organized by the Academies to launch the book on World Water Day, March 22.

The Women for Science Women for Science held a very successful meeting on the 13-14th August, hosted in Bogota by the Colombian Academy of Science. Given the reduction in available funds for regional meetings a plan was developed to encourage each academy to undertake more local activities designed to increase female membership and promote the awareness of the roles of women in science. This has resulted in several academies establishing special commissions to promote the participation of women in science and to organize scientific meetings and networks of women scientists and speakers. A number of academies celebrated the publication of *Water Quality in the Americas: Risks and Opportunities*, highlighting the important chapter on 'Gender, Women and the Quality of Water' produced by the WfS program

The group also updated the membership census and the results of a questionnaire sent to all academies show a very moderate improvement in numbers of women being elected and holding executive positions. Clearly, there is still a long way to go.

The biographies of women scientists are still being collected from academies that did not participate in the earlier biography project and several academies are committed to producing videos of women scientists and students in various stages of their programs. Furthermore, there was a decision to change the scope of a project initially looking at "Women Scientists as Entrepreneurs" to 'Women Scientists as Leaders' in order to include a wide variety of fields, such as journalism, politics and sport. Each country will prepare a text on a woman scientific leader who has developed a successful career outside academia, with the goal of producing publication for general distribution. The group also decided to continue presenting the Anneke Levelt Sengers Prize every two years, and the next call is to be launched in 2020.



The IANAS Women for Science meeting in Bogota



The IANAS Water Programme meeting in California