

iLEAPS Organisational Structure and Terms of Reference

The Integrated Land Ecosystem Atmospheric Process Studies (iLEAPS) will work under this Terms of Reference (ToR).

Overview

iLEAPS is a Future Earth Global Research Project (GRP) and acts as a communication hub and coordinator of world-wide scientific research and training in the field of ecosystem-atmosphere exchanges and the impact of those exchanges on key societal issues. The activities of iLEAPS are overseen by a Scientific Steering Committee (SSC), supported by an International Project Office (IPO). The SSC is the elected, operational decision-making body working on behalf of iLEAPS. The SSC oversees the strategic and scientific direction of iLEAPS and supports timely decision processes to advance its agenda, strategies, activities and structures.

Governance

Scientific Steering Committee

The activities of iLEAPS will be governed by a Scientific Steering Committee representing the relevant scientific and stakeholder communities. The SSC is lead by two co-chairs elected from the existing SSC members by the SSC. The primary role of the SSC is to oversee the development and implementation of iLEAPS in accordance with this ToR.

The composition of SSCs should represent the international and demographic diversity of the community and should foster leadership capacity in under-represented sectors. The SSC also consists of a representative from the Early Career Research Network (ECSN). Ideally, the ECSN consists of a representative from each continent in their Scientific Committee (SC).

The SSC's role is to define, develop and prioritize plans for iLEAPS. Furthermore it ensures that the activities of iLEAPS contribute to the agenda of Future Earth and other relevant networks and programs. The current members of the Scientific Steering Committee (SSC) are listed [here](#).

International Project Office

The administration of the iLEAPS project is carried out by the International Project Office (IPO), currently hosted at the UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology (UKCEH) in the United Kingdom. The IPO was established in 2004 and is the focal point for management and administration, communication and network development. It serves as the secretariat and administers the project on a day-to-day basis. It is responsible for assisting the Scientific Steering Committee in all aspects of its work and liaising with key stakeholders at regional, national and local levels. The IPO also disseminates any relevant announcements and/opportunities from Future Earth or other GRPs and Knowledge Action Networks (KANs) to SSC.

The IPO shall make decisions pertaining to –

- Annual iLEAPS project budget
- Agenda for SSC meetings
- Action Items arising from SSC meetings
- Delegated responsibilities listed through action items decided upon by SSC
- Day to day management of project offices

- Reviews key initiatives/outcomes in the past year, including the science highlights
- Conflict resolution
- Reviews budget and gives advice: past and the following year

The IPO can make decisions in physical and virtual meetings and through 'round robin' processes via email or other means. All decisions brought before the SSC shall require consensus agreement by members present in meetings, or by the members who respond in 'round robin' processes.

The SSC Mandate:

- SSC members should represent scientific excellence as well as achieving a balance in terms of expertise, science specialisms, nationalities, gender, and career stage.
- SSC should act in accordance with the iLEAPS vision, mission and objectives, as well as the core values, which are: inclusiveness, diversity, sustainability, transparency and impartiality
- Elects new SSC members during the SSC meeting and in the process of selection – existing SSC members should declare any 'conflict of interest' during a nominations process and the corresponding SSC members will not have the voting rights for that particular candidate.
- Providing scientific guidance to and oversee the development, planning and implementation of iLEAPS and its science goals globally.
- Encouraging the promotion and wide awareness of iLEAPS amongst science communities including looking for opportunities to produce iLEAPS publications/papers and within a regional/national setting.
- SSC members should use their own position within the science world to encourage collaboration between iLEAPS and other International Programmes and Agencies concerned with the scientific study and assessment of global change.
- SSC members should commit to mentoring/working with the Early Careers Researcher Network to enable capacity building and to establish a strong community of researchers across disciplines and institutions globally.

In undertaking these responsibilities, the SSC shall collectively:

- meet regularly to review progress of the implementation of the iLEAPS Science Plan.
- Per annum iLEAPS holds 3 virtual and 1 x face to face SSC meetings. The face to face meetings are usually part funded by the IPO and it is desirable that all members of the SSC attend this. It is also expected that SSC members attend a minimum of 2/3 virtual meetings.
- identify research projects that could be affiliated to iLEAPS

SSC members are expected, in addition to respecting the above Terms of Reference, to:

- have at least 75% attendance in the SSC meeting per year, in order to keep their position as a SSC member.
- provide the best possible scientific information and advice concerning their field of specialisation as it relates to the iLEAPS mission.
- represent the scientific interests of iLEAPS at relevant scientific meetings.
- support the Chair and IPO to organise, convene, and conduct meetings, workshops and summer schools.
- provide guidance as requested or needed by the regional programmes.
- keep the iLEAPS SSC and IPO informed of all actions directly or indirectly related to iLEAPS.
- assist in securing financial and other support for the implementation of the iLEAPS Science Plan.

In addition to the duties of SSC members, the Co- Chairs of the iLEAPS SSC is expected to:

- chair the meetings of the SSC.
- conduct the meetings in accordance with "best practice" guidelines.
- undertake advocacy on behalf of iLEAPS and ensure wide international participation in iLEAPS.
- work with the SSC and IPO to implement agreed activities between meetings of the SSC.

The Early Career Scientists Network (ECSN) Mandate:

- ECSN mainly follows all the mandates as the SSC.
- ECSN works closely with the iLEAPS IPO.
- The election of new members to the ECSN SC should follow the same guidelines as the SSC election. One representative from the IPO must be present in the final election meeting for the results to be valid.
- Commit to organising a workshop that will capacity build within the iLEAPS ECSN – you will be required to find the funding for such an activity but will receive IPO support in the organisation & publicising of such an event – this must be undertaken during your tenure.

Minutes

Minutes shall be drafted by the IPOs for SSC meetings. Draft minutes shall be presented to the SSC members for comment and amendment. Once finalised, minutes shall be approved by the SSC (depending on the meeting in question) by email or through another online process shortly after the meeting in question.

Minutes shall not be verbatim transcripts, but shall form concise summaries of all pertinent discussions which lead to decisions. Bullet points are acceptable. Action items arising from meetings shall be listed in a table which details the action item, the person(s) upon whom the action falls, the expected date of completion, and columns for updates on progress, comments, and hyperlinks to pertinent online materials.

Organising Conferences/Workshops under iLEAPS logo

While SSC/ECSN members do not need to seek permission from iLEAPS IPO to conduct or organise any conferences/workshops/meetings under iLEAPS banner. However it is recommended to liaise and agree in advance with IPO in order to make the event communicated and executed efficiently as well as to obtain any technical/logistical support from IPO.

iLEAPS Finances

iLEAPS has four distinct sources of income:

- Project sponsorship from Future Earth
- Sponsorship of International Project Offices
- Income generated by IPOs through registration fees and external sponsorship
- Income generated by Regional Programmes, and Working Groups through registration fees and external sponsorship
- The funds available to iLEAPS are largely administered by the IPOs.

iLEAPS's policy of equality and diversity

iLEAPS members are bound by the workplace policies of their host institutions and the laws of the countries they work in. iLEAPS adheres to the laws against discrimination on the basis of gender, marital status, pregnancy or parental responsibilities, race (including ethnic origin, colour, nationality and national origin), disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, or age. iLEAPS also has its own policy on equality and diversity. This policy applies to iLEAPS members, individuals (volunteers or paid) representing iLEAPS, and participants in iLEAPS meetings, workshops and conferences. iLEAPS is committed to promoting diversity across discipline, country, socioeconomic status, gender and ethnicity. This includes decisions pertaining to the election of SSC members, the location of meetings, and the acceptance of participants. As such, iLEAPS actively promotes the inclusion of otherwise underrepresented demographics in international scientific fora, including women and non-binary genders, individuals from the Global South, and members of Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic, and Indigenous communities.

Use of Logos

The logo of iLEAPS project can be used for dissemination purposes only wherein the subject matter falls under the purview of the scientific objectives of the project. All such instances shall be approved by the IPO before dissemination.

Amendments to the Terms of Reference (ToR)

Amendments to the ToR can be made at a quorate (with 2/3rd attendance) meeting of the SSC.