International Council for Science announces Dr. Heide Hackmann to be Executive Director and Dr. Lucilla Spini, Head of Science Programmes

Heide Hackmann, a social scientist with extensive experience running international research organizations, will be Executive Director of the Council's Secretariat from March 2015. Lucilla Spini, a biological anthropologist with experience in international science coordination will take on the newly created role of Head of Science Programmes in early January.

Paris, 8 December 2014 – The International Council for Science today announced that Dr. Heide Hackmann, a dual South African-German national, will take over leadership of the organization's International Secretariat in Paris in March 2015.

Hackmann joins the Council from the International Social Science Council (ISSC), where she has been Executive Director since 2007. During her tenure, she strengthened ISSC's activity profile, membership base and financial position, and forged strong links with the International Council for Science through key partnerships. These include the Integrated Research on Disaster Risk programme and the Science and Technology Alliance for Global Sustainability, the consortium of international organizations that founded Future Earth, the new global research initiative on global sustainability, and coordinating inputs from the international scientific community on key policy processes at the United Nations.

Hackmann also led the launch of the regular World Social Science Forums and spearheaded the development of a new series of World Social Science Reports. She initiated a new global social science research funding and coordination programme on Transformations to Sustainability, which was launched in March 2014 as a major contribution to Future Earth.

Announcing her appointment, Hackmann said that she felt "excited and grateful for the privilege to head the activities of ICSU, an organization with a long track record of strengthening international research collaboration, and now assuming a leadership role in securing effective collaborations between the sciences and with society in order to address global priority problems."

Peter Liss will step down as Interim Executive Director of the International Council for Science, when Hackmann takes up her new role on 2 March, 2015.

President of the International Council for Science, Gordon McBean, said: "We are extremely pleased to announce Heide Hackmann's appointment as Executive Director. During her tenure at ISSC, she has demonstrated her ability to rally scientists from both the natural and social sciences to work together to address some of the biggest challenges facing humanity. ICSU will benefit greatly from her leadership, vision, and ability to build bridges between different disciplines." He added that the Executive Board was "confident that Hackmann will lead the Council to renewed strength and influence."

Hackmann was born in South Africa and completed her PhD in Science and Technology studies at the University of Twente, Netherlands in 2003. From then until 2007 she was Head of the Department of International Relations and National Quality Assurance and Director: CO-REACH (an EU-funded multi-lateral initiative for the Coordination of Research between Europe and China) at the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW).

The Council also announced that Dr. Lucilla Spini will take on the newly created post of Head of Science Programmes, starting from 12 January 2015. In this role, she will manage the development and implementation of ICSU's scientific and science for policy initiatives, as defined in its Strategic Plan. Spini is an Italian national who holds a B.A. in anthropology from New York University, as well as an M.Sc. in human biology and D.Phil. in biological anthropology, both from the University of Oxford. Since 2001, she has worked on science/policy bridging, global environmental change, sustainable development and research coordination for a number of international organizations, including UNESCO, UNU, and the FAO. She is currently a Giorgio Ruffolo Research Fellow in the Sustainability Science Program at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government.

ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE.

The International Council for Science (ICSU) is a non-governmental organisation with a global membership of national scientific bodies (121 Members, representing 141 countries) and International Scientific Unions (31 Members). It mobilizes the knowledge and resources of the international scientific community to strengthen international science for the benefit of society.

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