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# The New International Science Council – A Global Voice for Science

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On 3–5 July 2018, the founding general assembly of the new International Science Council (ISC) took place in Paris. The ISC is a new international body, representing more than 200 scientific organisations from 127 countries. This novel council results from the merger of two previous organisations: the ICSU (International Council for Science) and the ISSC (International Social Science Council).

Its mission is to represent science and scientists in a world that seems to need science more than ever and, at the same time, presents science with new challenges concerning its role in society, in economy and in politics.

This new body aims to represent all sciences, to be a global voice for science and to advance science as a global public good. As stated on the ISC website: “scientific knowledge, data and expertise must be universally accessible and its benefits universally shared. The practice of science must be inclusive and equitable, also in opportunities for scientific education and capacity development.”

The council’s goals are twofold. On one hand, it intends to stimulate and support international scientific research on major issues of global concern, such as global sustainability, poverty, disaster risk reduction, urban health or wellbeing, coordinating studies and efforts in

these directions. On the other hand, the council aims to promote the rigour and the relevance of science in analysing complex situations, and speak for the value of all sciences and the need for evidence-informed decision-making.

A particularly strong effort is devoted to the defence of the free and responsible practice of science. This includes concerns for the way in which science is currently evaluated and the need for science and scientific education to be free and accessible worldwide. Furthermore, the ISC pours energy into filling the gender and economic gaps that prevent many potential researchers from participating in the quest for knowledge.

These topics are also of particular interest to the mathematics community and the ISC can amplify the public concerns of mathematicians. As public opinion struggles with fake news, distorted data and a widespread mistrust of science and quantitative data, a body such as the ISC can help to increase the impact of the scientific point of view in decision-making. Mathematicians, and scientists in general, should be more aware of the importance of the ISC as their global voice and also the opportunities that it provides to interact with other sciences and propose solutions to global issues concerning the future of our planet and our societies.

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