



Call for Applications for Future Earth Science Committee

August 2016

Background Information

1. What is Future Earth?

The world needs internationally coordinated research to inform our responses that contribute to solving the planet's most pressing challenges – one nation cannot do it alone because these challenges are at a scale where they are breaching planetary boundaries. We need natural and social scientists and those in the humanities and arts to work with each other in new ways. Moreover, research communities must engage with policy makers and society in new ways to inform solutions with the best-available knowledge and innovation. This is the 10-year mission of Future Earth. Our vision is for people to thrive in a sustainable and equitable world.

Future Earth is an international research programme that builds on the legacy of more than 30 years of global environmental change research programmes. Our mandate is to coordinate ground-breaking research that informs solutions to the most pressing challenges to sustainability around the world. We also strive to bring together diverse stakeholders, including leaders in the private and public sectors, civil society and funding communities, to co- design research that meets the evolving needs of society.

Future Earth will answer fundamental questions about how and why the global environment is changing, how it might change in the future, what the implications are for human development and the diversity of life on Earth and what opportunities exist to reduce risks and vulnerabilities, enhance resilience and innovation and enable and guide transformations to prosperous and equitable futures.

Future Earth is led by a multi-stakeholder Governing Council, a six-member Executive Team within a distributed Secretariat, and two advisory bodies: the Future Earth Science Committee and the Future Earth Engagement Committee. Future Earth has outlined a set of global goals that it will deliver in the next 10 years in the [Future Earth 2025 Vision](#) and [Future Earth 2016 Brief](#). The new 2016-2018 Future Earth Implementation Plan sets out our strategy for implementing the 2025 Vision over a two-year period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2018 within the context of our 10-year roadmap.

We have already begun work to achieve the 2025 Future Earth Vision. We have brought together over 20 global research projects that were formed under previous global environmental change programmes. Now, we are setting up regional centres and offices and national structures across the globe. We are also building the Future Earth Open Network to provide an online platform for the global community to collaborate around research for sustainability and have recently launched a Future Earth Media Lab – a new online incubator for communications, research and more.

Future Earth is also in the process of launching eight **Knowledge-Action Networks** on cities, the water-energy-food nexus, health, finance and economics, natural assets, oceans, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and societal transformations to sustainability. They are coalitions that focus the work of international research communities, in the natural and social sciences, engineering and the humanities and the policy, civil society and private sectors on key challenges and opportunities in global sustainability. They are focused on solutions-oriented research and are committed to the rapid integration of knowledge into policy and practice.

2. The need for a Future Earth Science Committee

a) Description of the Science Committee

The Science Committee is specifically responsible for:

- Advising the Governing Council and Secretariat on scientific matters;
- Defining and recommending ways to implement cross-cutting capabilities;
- Advising on integration, synthesis and foresight across initiatives and challenges of Future Earth;
- Developing, in conjunction with the Secretariat, data policies for Future Earth research;
- Ensuring that the principles of co-design and co-production of knowledge, by scientists in collaboration with societal partners, are embodied in Future Earth programmes;
- Supporting, monitoring and evaluating the contribution of Future Earth programmes and initiatives, providing guidance on how to strengthen and support them and, when needed, recommending modifications to the Governing Council, in conjunction with the Executive Director and the Executive Committee;
- Consultatively approving scientific initiatives, including Knowledge-Action Networks, Fast-Track Initiatives and global research projects.

b) Composition

The Science Committee is comprised of 18 members, including chair(s), appointed for an initial period of two years, renewable twice. It is expected that the period of renewal will vary across the membership to allow for a staggered evolution of the committee. Future Earth is now seeking six new members for the Science Committee. Candidates are invited in the application template to indicate whether they would like to be considered as a chair or vice-chair of the Science Committee if such positions become vacant.

c) Commitment to Future Earth

The Science Committee will, at minimum, meet once a year (multi-day meetings) at the same time as the Engagement Committee to ensure coordination and dialogue. Both committees work collaboratively within six subcommittees that make decisions for and on behalf of the Science and Engagement Committees in areas within their scope. The subcommittees focus on synthesis and foresight, research enabling, communication and science-policy, resources and fundraising, risk management, regional engagement and capacity building.

Between meetings, Science Committee members will work in close collaboration with the Secretariat (monthly to weekly teleconferences and emails) and within their subcommittees. Science Committee members must be willing and able to serve Future Earth for several hours a month, including attending monthly online meetings and occasional attending in-person workshops. As with the Engagement Committee, the Science Committee is expected to operate primarily through consensus building among its members.

Future Earth can offer letter of support for Science and Engagement Committee members to seek a commitment from their respective employers for time to work on Future Earth. Please note that this is a voluntary position. Committee members do not receive a stipend but all relevant travel costs and living expenses for meetings are covered.

3. Future Earth Science Committee Selection Process

a) Criteria for selecting members

Members of the Science Committee will be selected against the following criteria:

- Scientific excellence in a relevant field;
- Competence, experience and appreciation of transdisciplinary and interdisciplinary research;
- Competence and experience in solutions-focused research that engages non-research stakeholders or societal partners in the research process and in the co-design and co-production of knowledge;
- Experience in international collaborative research and well-networked at the international and/or regional level to support the implementation of Future Earth's vision;
- Willingness and ability to network and act as ambassador for Future Earth and its vision;
- Availability and motivation to commit time to Future Earth (as described in section 2c);
- Experience in leading and/or supporting capacity building efforts;
- Competence and experience in working collaboratively across sectors and cultures.

The Selection Committee will ensure the Science Committee is balanced in terms of geography (including representation from developing countries), gender, senior versus earlier-career status, discipline, and backgrounds. As such, Future Earth is open to applicants from all disciplines, regions and experience levels. In order to maintain and build the Science Committee's diversity, we are particularly seeking some members with:

- Origins, base, and/or identity in the African, Asian, Latin American and Middle-East

North Africa regions (particularly in developing countries);

- Disciplinary backgrounds in the social sciences (quantitative and qualitative), humanities, engineering, technology and law;
- Early-career status;
- Experience with engaging with the private sector and citizen science.

b) Process

Those wishing to apply are invited **complete the application form**. We will add six members to the Future Earth Engagement Committee, all of which are expected to be **appointed by 1 December, 2016 and should be present at the Engagement Committee meeting on the week of 20 March, 2017 in Montreal, Canada**.

The selection process is led by the Governing Council of Future Earth and is facilitated by the Future Earth Secretariat. All applications should be submitted no later than **11 September 2016 at 11:00 UTC**.