UNESCO & Human Rights:
Geneva Dialogues for Enhancing Cooperation and Effectiveness

The Right to Science: Understanding Trends in and Enhancing the Effectiveness of Human Rights Mechanisms and Partnership Approaches

Main Outcomes of the Second Thematic Dialogue

Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'éducation, la science et la culture
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Commission suisse pour l'UNESCO
Swiss Commission for UNESCO

UNIVERSITÉ DE GENÈVE

REGARD
Réseau d'information de Genève sur les activités relatives aux droits et libertés

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OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

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Background

In 2021, the Swiss Commission for UNESCO, the UNESCO Geneva Liaison Office and the University of Geneva, in partnership with the OHCHR (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights) and the REGARD NGO platform, launched a new Dialogue series aiming to scale up learning about human rights-based approaches and partnerships in different areas where UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) is active.

These Dialogues offer creative platforms for in-depth discussions about recent trends, current challenges, and ways to ensure more robust and coherent cooperation with regional and global human rights mechanisms, between different UN agencies as well as with civil society. In order to ensure meaningful participation, the Dialogues are held under the Chatham House Rule, adapted here to mean that insights and results are summarized without attributions to specific speakers. Dialogue summaries are meant to capture a cross-selection of key issues and recommendations raised.

The **Right to Science** was selected as the subject for the second thematic Dialogue, which was held in Geneva in April 2022. Enshrined in Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the fundamental Right to Science seeks to guarantee that: 1) "Everyone has the right […] to share in scientific advancement and its benefits", and 2) "Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author". The Right to Science is also established in multiple other normative instruments, such as Article 15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), which mandates states to recognize the right of everyone to:

- enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications,
- conserve, develop, and diffuse science,
- respect the freedom indispensable for scientific research, and
- recognize the benefits of international contacts and co-operation in the scientific field.

As such, the Right to Science encompasses both the protection of the producers and the production of scientific knowledge, on the one hand, and universal access to and use of science and its benefits, on the other. Beyond these dual dimensions, not only is the Right to Science inextricably linked with other human rights, but upholding this right is fundamental to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are underpinned by scientific knowledge derived from the natural and social sciences. Scientific benefits may be conceived of in a holistic manner that includes not only the material outcomes of scientific inquiry and technological development (e.g. vaccines, fertilizers, technological instruments, etc.), but also the inherent value of scientific knowledge. Multiple forms of science inform decision-making and foster critical insights essential to societal development and democratic processes.

The Right to Science, access to scientific knowledge, the safety of scientific researchers and scientific freedom are increasingly receiving more and more attention. Within UNESCO, such topics are spearheaded by the Natural Sciences and the Social and Human Sciences (SHS) sectors, while also remaining of cross-cutting relevance to the Communication and Information, Culture, and Education sectors.

The dialogue described in this brief report underlines these intersections and the value of a cross-sectoral thrust at UNESCO. The event gathered UN officials, UN Special Rapporteurs, NGOs and academics in an open-ended discussion structured around three segments: current trends and challenges, existing human mechanisms, and lessons learned from partnership approaches. On behalf of the co-organizers, the event was opened by Gabriela Ramos, Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences, UNESCO, Nada Al-Nashif, United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights, OHCHR, and Thomas Zeltner, President of the Swiss Commission for UNESCO.

The following pages summarize selected collective insights from the dialogue process.

Key Messages

This report underlines the importance of deepening our understanding of recent trends that affect the Right to Science, as well as enhancing strategic collaborations around existing human rights mechanisms, partnerships and other forms of cooperation.

KEY MESSAGE 1: The Right to Science is at the heart of responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and the triple planetary crisis.

KEY ACTION 1: Prioritize and mainstream the implementation of the Right to Science as a building block for more equitable responses to the global pandemic and the triple planetary crisis.

KEY MESSAGE 2: Attacks against the rights of scientists and their academic freedom are on the increase, yet insufficiently documented.

KEY ACTION 2: Strengthen global alliances for the protection of scientists and academic freedom combined with further outreach to countries currently under the radar.

KEY MESSAGE 3: Persistence of long-standing global inequalities, fragile public infrastructure and the impacts of privatization.

KEY ACTION 3: Make the inequality gap a central target for science policy advocacy efforts and North-South dialogues.

KEY MESSAGE 4: Lack of trust in science and the disregard of scientific recommendations is a human rights issue.

KEY ACTION 4: Develop effective measures for the protection of critical science against the disinformation economy, in particular at the science-policy interface.

KEY MESSAGE 5: Science and technology fields are developing rapidly with new risk scenarios calling for a strengthened human rights framework.

KEY ACTION 5: Ensure that regulatory governance frameworks not only account for unintended and potentially harmful consequences of scientific research and emerging technologies, but are also designed to protect and share scientific benefits for all.

KEY MESSAGE 6: Converging normative frameworks offer a unique foundation for a more comprehensive approach to the Right to Science.

KEY ACTION 6: Launch a global campaign on the normative basis for a human rights-based approach to science.

KEY MESSAGE 7: There is a lack of a common narrative as well as continuous disconnects between actors working for the Right to Science.

KEY ACTION 7: Build and communicate a global narrative on the Right to Science.

KEY MESSAGE 8: Systematic under-reporting on the Right to Science in both human rights processes and emerging UNESCO mechanisms.

KEY ACTION 8: Strengthen reporting practices on the Right to Science in a core group of pioneer countries while adopting effective strategies to increase media coverage.

KEY MESSAGE 9: Existing indicator frameworks do not represent the full bundle of Rights to Science.

KEY ACTION 9: Strengthen core indicators and guiding questions to facilitate systematic reporting and uptake at the national level.

KEY MESSAGE 10: The Right to Science is central to contemporary development and sustainability challenges, yet virtually absent from global policy discussions.

KEY ACTION 10: Train scientists, civil society actors and policymakers in key sustainability arenas on the Right to Science.

KEY MESSAGE 11: Weaknesses in global science policy interfaces are closely tied to the lack of a rights-based foundation.

KEY ACTION 11: Adopt rights-based frameworks for global science policy interfaces informing global decision-making and responses.

KEY MESSAGE 12: There is no specific UN Special Procedures mandate on the Right to Science.

KEY ACTION 12: Explore proposal for a new Special Rapporteur on the Right to Science, in collaboration with a core group of like-minded countries.

KEY MESSAGE 13: The Right to Science embraces inclusivity, diversity and interdisciplinarity.

KEY ACTION 13: Embrace the Right to Science as a call for inclusivity and diversity.

KEY MESSAGE 14: Multi-sector partnerships are critical to the Right to Science.

KEY ACTION 14: Setting up cross-sectoral partnerships reaching out beyond the human rights sphere will be a central driver of change.

KEY MESSAGE 15: Global strategy on promoting the Right to Science should be a core priority for science governance and diplomacy.

KEY ACTION 15: Convene a roundtable of experts to devise a global strategy on the Right to Science.

KEY MESSAGE 16: Need to move from global norms to national standards and practice.

KEY ACTION 16: Craft good practice and regulatory tools in support of implementing national standards and practice.

Segment I.

Global trends and challenges in the field of the Right to Science

"The Right to Science has been dormant for decades, and now it's awakening." [1]

In times when the role of science in society is more debated than ever in polarized, politicized and often partial terms, what part do the Right to Science and rights-based approaches play? The dialogue displayed how the Right to Science covers a wide range of both emerging and long-term issues, ranging from long-standing challenges of ensuring equality and diversity in science to the centrality of science in tackling global societal challenges. However, despite science and technology undeniably being key shaping factors of contemporary society, their human rights dimensions remain poorly understood and addressed. Beneath the grand narrative of a right ignored for decades, discussions revealed how neglect was produced rather than a naturally given state of affairs. Far more explicit attention to global trends is urgently needed.

KEY MESSAGE 1: The Right to Science is at the heart of responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and the triple planetary crisis.

The Right to Science is at the heart of responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and the triple planetary crisis. The pandemic not only revealed inequalities of access to health care, but resistance to tackling unequal access to and distribution of vaccine technologies and waiving intellectual property rights for the common good. The coronavirus crisis demonstrated how the right to benefit from science was side-lined by other priorities. In many ways, it highlighted challenges of science and research as an increasingly privatized domain. The Right to Science also features at the heart of issues such as climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, the so-called triple planetary crisis. Contrary to the idea of ivory tower science, isolated in distant laboratories and academia, the Right to Science is undeniably at the heart of understanding and responding to global sustainability challenges. The meeting acknowledged, however, the long-standing challenges of linking science, society and politics, while also pointing to the central dimension of the Right to Science as a cornerstone for effective, inclusive and equitable solutions.

KEY ACTION 1: Prioritize and mainstream the implementation of the Right to Science as a building block for more equitable responses to the global pandemic and the triple planetary crisis.

1 All quotes are direct citations of statements made by participants during the Dialogue.

KEY MESSAGE 2: Attacks against the rights of scientists and their academic freedom are on the increase, yet insufficiently documented.

The meeting revealed the deepening crisis of attacks against scientists and their freedom of expression, involving both individual and institutional dimensions. Multiple forms of safety, security and protection concerns were uncovered, ranging from toxic personal attacks on social media to institutional restrictions on freedom of expression, critical perspectives and policy restrictions on certain 'sensitive' research topics. Scientific freedom is increasingly compromised through high levels of censorship and attacks on scientists in certain countries. In 2021, 332 attacks on higher education staff were recorded. Corporate attacks, including lawsuits, reveal evolving business practices building on the tobacco tactics of the 1950s, yet expanding into other domains.

"The contributions of scientists to the environment and societies [the benefits] are maximized when they are given freedom of research."

Documentation, however, remains patchy, leading many scientists and researchers at risk to remain unrecorded as such and thus, eventually unprotected. The case of Ukraine led to discussions on academia at risk in contexts of conflict and war, as well as responses such as host arrangements abroad. Although science networks have established ongoing efforts to set up global platforms to reach out to and support refugee scientists, they are in need of reinforcement. Governments need to be urged to systematically provide information about the state of scientific freedom in their jurisdictions. Different organizations work in the fields of academic freedom and protection efforts for scientists at risk. The meeting identified multiple opportunities to strengthen intersections, and build bridges and cooperation around the definitions, data and implementation of collective and joined efforts. Another area that was highlighted was the interdependence of scientific freedom and social responsibility in all areas of research.

KEY ACTION 2: Strengthen global alliances for the protection of scientists and academic freedom combined with further outreach to countries currently under the radar.

KEY MESSAGE 3: Persistence of long-standing global inequalities, fragile public infrastructure and the impacts of privatization.

The Dialogue space drew attention to multiple inequalities in science, research and technology. The North-South divide and uneven access to COVID-19 vaccines around the world is ongoing, as are the long-standing gender and intergenerational equity concerns in research and education. The internet divide and highly unequal terms of access to scientific knowledge and intellectual property rights, and the deepening impacts of privatized science, intellectual property rights barriers and Northern-centred technology development were also raised as part of the inequality challenge. Highly unequal conditions of public scientific infrastructure and research funding represents a major challenge, particularly in the Global South. The privatization of science, illustrated by the cases of pharmaceuticals and chemicals research concentrated in the private domain, raises multiple questions around corporate capture, conflicts of interest and the risks of biased technologies and systems likely to cement rather than reduce inequalities. An effective rights-based approach to science and science diplomacy will need to build a bridge between human rights standards and other spheres in order to tackle global inequalities head-on.

KEY ACTION 3: Make the inequality gap a central target for science-policy advocacy efforts and North-South dialogues.

KEY MESSAGE 4: Lack of trust in science and the disregard of scientific recommendations is a human rights issue.

The lack of trust in science and in the recommendations voiced by scientists has clear human rights implications. In 2019, the WHO considered the lack of vaccine trust because of misinformation one of the top 10 threats to global health. First, lack of trust concerns the worsening conditions and infrastructure of the scientific community, including neglected mechanisms for outreach to communicate science effectively and equitably. Second, lack of trust is far from a natural condition, but often actively produced through a vibrant disinformation economy, defamation and an 'infodemic'. It is not uncommon for critical science, deemed inconvenient by corporate and government voices, to be targeted by so-called mercenary scientists and fake research aimed at destabilizing science-policy recommendations. Deliberate efforts to hide or conceal critical science is not only a violation of the individual institution's or researchers' rights, but directly infringes upon the general public's right to access and benefit from science.

KEY ACTION 4: Develop effective measures for the protection of critical science against the disinformation economy, in particular at the science-policy interface.

KEY MESSAGE 5: Science and technology fields are developing rapidly with new risk scenarios calling for a strengthened human rights framework.

Science and technology developments reveal new risk scenarios with new opportunities (e.g. Open Science), changing policy landscapes and regulatory challenges. New technologies such as geoengineering, biotechnology, nanotechnology, genome editing (CRISPR), artificial intelligence and chemicals research often involve little-understood impacts on humans, the environment, and society, while operating within a poor regulatory governance framework.

"We should not just be thinking about how to use science and its applications for good, but also how to prevent science from having harmful impacts."

The meeting also highlighted the dynamics of a democratic deficit in setting scientific priorities, and the potential of citizen science and open science. Dialogues recognized the importance of additional measures to prevent harmful impacts, not least through the use of the precautionary principle as part of a consolidated human rights framework for the Right to Science, connecting rights with responsibilities and obligations of both public and private research institutions.

"If we take the Right to Science seriously, the duty of states is not only to produce science, but there is also an obligation to disseminate science. This dissemination of science, in turn, is directly linked to the possibility of producing new scientific knowledge."

This should be a positive-sum arrangement for producers and users of scientific knowledge.

KEY ACTION 5: Ensure that regulatory governance frameworks not only account for unintended and potentially harmful consequences of scientific research and emerging technologies, but are also designed to protect and share scientific benefits for all.

Segment 2.

Experiences with human rights mechanisms and instruments - ways forward

The Dialogue sought to identify lessons learned in effectively using both global and regional mechanisms, including the identification of gaps and opportunities for better collaboration. There was a clear understanding that existing global and regional mechanisms are yet to effectively pick up on the growing normative attention to the Right to Science in an adequate and comprehensive manner.

"It's quite likely that the Right to Science is often overlooked because it is one of the last rights listed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights."

Although the world of science may appear stable from the outside, it is undergoing massive transformations. Declining public budgets, controlled research agendas and the privatization of research all have considerable implications from a right to science perspective. The meeting identified lack of inputs and systematic reporting on changes in the conditions of science as a significant stumbling block. Three different internal reviews by UN bodies and civil society all coincided in observing virtually non-existent reporting and engagement with global human rights mechanisms on the Right to Science. This translates into a loss of opportunities in terms of nurturing systematic discussion, accountability mechanisms and mutual learning.

"Due to the lack of use of the Right to Science in country reporting, it's difficult for international treaty bodies to develop jurisprudence in this right."

It is clear that much of the normative clarity established around the Right to Science in global terms in recent years is yet to result in a clearer rights-based framework for science at the national level. For some, this was considered as lack of operationalization (in terms of doctrine, indicators and mechanisms). For others, this reflected a fundamental disconnect and limitation of human rights mechanisms in terms of actual follow-up on the Right to Science within the existing human rights system and mechanisms. As a consequence, even where the Right to Science is subject to blatant violations and infringements at the national level, mechanisms are yet to be put in place to allow adequate monitoring, analysis and technical cooperation.

KEY MESSAGE 6: Converging normative frameworks offer a unique foundation for a more comprehensive approach to the Right to Science.

If historic neglect can be partly explained by the lack of normative clarity, the recent UNESCO Recommendation on Science and Scientific Researchers (2017), alongside the General Comment No. 25 of the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on the Right to Science, underscore the converging policy frameworks around

the Right to Science. The 2017 UNESCO Recommendation provides an innovative and comprehensive vision of anchoring science in human rights, as well as a framework for translating this vision into action. Key priority areas of the UNESCO 2017 Recommendation on Science and Scientific Researchers include:

- Science has responsibility towards the United Nations' ideals
- Member States should take measures to promote scientific research for peace-building & peaceful application
- Scientific knowledge should inform national policy decision-making
- Science should be treated as a common good
- Access to science should be ensured on a non-discriminatory basis
- The freedoms, rights and responsibilities of researchers need to be balanced
- Intellectual and academic science (and the relationship between the two with the Right to Science)
- Scientific integrity

In addition, the UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence (2021) and the UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science (2021) offer a broader view on the linkages between science and society. There are clear opportunities to translate normative implications into a more comprehensive human rights-based approach. At the same time, important challenges need to be overcome to improve their use by states, including the development of indicators, the collection of data on critical issues and the expansion of technical assistance to states.

KEY ACTION 6: Launch a global campaign on the normative basis for a human rights-based approach to science.

KEY MESSAGE 7: There is a lack of a common narrative as well as continuous disconnects between actors working for the Right to Science.

The dialogue revealed a wealth of actors working on and for the Right to Science, without necessarily articulating it as such. Whether framed as academic freedom or working for sharing scientific knowledge in the fields of health, core Right to Science challenges and debates often take place without being acknowledged as such. Recent events around COVID-19, intellectual property rights and vaccine technologies are a case in point. While human rights mechanisms haven't had as much engagement from the scientific community, this is probably not due to a lack of interest in human rights, but rather to a lack of literacy on both sides. Indeed, while there is a lack of human rights literacy on the scientific side, human rights practitioners need greater scientific literacy as well. A more comprehensive narrative around the Right to Science could have the benefit of facilitating better connections and contributing to a basis for advocacy, awareness raising and interaction.

KEY ACTION 7: Build and communicate a global narrative on the Right to Science.

KEY MESSAGE 8: Systematic under-reporting on the Right to Science in both human rights processes and emerging UNESCO mechanisms.

Despite some efforts to address the Right to Science in the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), and other UN mechanisms within the reporting cycles on the 2017 UNESCO Recommendation, the meeting identified systematic under-reporting. Hardly any references to the Right to Science are made by states in their UPR reports or in their reports to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The Danish Institute of Human Rights analysed more than 60,000 recommendations which have been accepted by Member States and found only 20 addressing the issue of scientific investigation.[2] This results in very few recommendations addressing the Right to Science directly and insufficient guidance on the implementation of the Right, which in turn reinforces a vicious circle of neglect. Normative ambiguities and the lack of sufficient evidence and data are central challenges to the implementation and monitoring of the Right to Science. This situation is affected by but also impacts the quality of information submitted by states, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society organizations (CSOs) more broadly on issues relating to the realization of the Right to Science. The underdevelopment of the Right limits its justiciability and prevents the development of relevant jurisprudence. Participants called for more systematic country reporting on science and human rights, not least in connection with the 2017 Recommendation on Science and Scientific Researchers. States, NGOs and CSOs are urged to systematically submit data on the implementation of the Recommendation.

2 https://unesco.um.dk/-/media/country-sites/unesco/front-page/critical-voices.ashx

KEY ACTION 8: Strengthen reporting practices on the Right to Science in a core group of pioneer countries while adopting effective strategies to increase media coverage.

"It is important that academia reaches out to and tries to build bridges with other parts of the same community that advocates freedom of expression […] in order to adopt strategies that increase media coverage."

KEY MESSAGE 9: Existing indicator frameworks do not represent the full bundle of Rights to Science.

Normative ambiguities and the lack of sufficient evidence and data are central challenges to the implementation and monitoring of the Right to Science. This situation is affected by but also impacts the quality of information submitted by states, NGOs and civil society more broadly on issues relating to the realization of the Right to Science. The underdevelopment of the right limits its justiciability and prevents the development of relevant jurisprudence. Participants called for more systematic country reporting on science and human rights, not least in connection with the 2017 Recommendation. States, NGOs and CSOs are urged to systematically submit data on the implementation of the Recommendation. Whereas the UNESCO Recommendation calls for national reporting, substantive indicator frameworks are yet to be developed (see Larsen & Pamintuan[3]). There is a clear need and opportunity for more countries to

3 Peter Bille Larsen and Marjorie Pamintuan, 2022. "The Human Right to Science: From Fragmentation to Comprehensive Implementation?". South Center, Research Paper No. 163, 23 pp. https://www.southcentre.int/research-paper-163-19-august-2022/

report on the intersection between science and human rights in order to learn from both progress and challenges met. The inclusion in state reports of information on critical issues relating to the Right to Science would create opportunities to further elucidate its content, identify challenges and also trigger concrete follow-up action.

A set of strategic questions (tentatively three to four) could be proposed that would point to possible priority issues. The questions should be formulated in such a way to be relevant in diverse contexts (e.g. on access to the benefits of science, disaggregated by ethnic origin, sex, etc.). By providing guidance to states, they would promote the uptake of the Right in reports to different UN mechanisms. The intention is not to narrow the scope of the Right but rather to create opportunities for its inclusion by highlighting its significance, both as a field of rights in itself and as an enabler for the enjoyment of other human rights (such as the right to education, cultural rights, ethnolinguistic rights, and the right to development, among others). Enhanced capacity building specifically targeting developing countries will allow the levelling up of the implementation of the Recommendation.

KEY ACTION 9: Strengthen core indicators and guiding questions to facilitate systematic reporting and uptake at the national level.

KEY MESSAGE 10: The Right to Science is central to contemporary development and sustainability challenges, yet virtually absent from global policy discussions.

The challenge here is not only about reinforcing the Right to Science within the human rights system and discourse, but one of bringing the expertise of the Right to Science community to a wider panorama of sustainable development discussions. From health to climate change, different dimensions of the Right to Science could be instrumental in advancing more equitable and effective solutions in the long term. However, this will require that the Right to Science is more clearly articulated in these fora – not least when addressed by UN bodies and science-based organizations active in wider sustainability arenas. For science-policy arenas, this requires a concerted science diplomacy effort to connect the dots of the Right to Science into such mechanisms and policy dialogues. The 2021 Report of the Special Rapporteur on Toxics and Human Rights, Marcos Orellana, on the Right to Science in the context of toxics was highlighted as good practice.[4]

KEY ACTION 10: Train scientists, civil society actors and policymakers in key sustainability arenas on the Right to Science.

4 https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3936864?ln=en

KEY MESSAGE 11: Weaknesses in global science-policy interfaces are closely tied to the lack of a rights-based foundation.

As science-policy interfaces proliferate as mechanisms to connect science to the challenges of climate change, biodiversity and pollution, there is a marked concern about transparency, corporate interference, negotiated outcomes and continuous attacks against science-based conclusions and recommendations. The Right to Science is a key enabler in securing effective, inclusive and equitable science-policy platforms.

KEY ACTION 11: Adopt rights-based frameworks for global science policy interfaces informing global decision-making and responses.

KEY MESSAGE 12: There is no specific UN Special Procedures mandate on the Right to Science.

The UN Special Procedures mandate holder on Cultural Rights has been instrumental in triggering new discussions on the Right to Science over the last decades, just as other thematic or country-specific mandates have drawn attention to violations of academic freedom, for example. Nonetheless, the meeting made it abundantly clear that the breadth of issues and global significance of the Right to Science clearly warrants serious consideration of establishing a dedicated mandate for a Special Rapporteur on the Right to Science. Such a mandate could play an instrumental role in facilitating the drive from normative attention to operational significance, clarifying emerging questions as well as working with states to address the Right to Science at the national level.

KEY ACTION 12: Explore proposal for a new Special Rapporteur on the Right to Science, in collaboration with a core group of like-minded countries.

KEY MESSAGE 13: The Right to Science embraces inclusivity, diversity and interdisciplinarity.

The meeting highlighted the importance of inclusivity and diversity as fundamentals in delineating the scope of the Right to Science. Whereas science is, at times, limited to ideas of hard natural sciences, participants drew attention to the need to accept different scientific approaches, including the growing recognition of traditional knowledge systems and practices. Ranging from discussions about traditional knowledge vs. positivist science to critical epistemologies, the Dialogue space drew attention to the need for the right to diversity as an integral dimension.

"What science are we talking about? Science does not limit itself to hard science. Unfortunately, every discipline is caught up in silos, which limits the scope and the visibility of the Right to Science."

The last decade has seen a growing body of analysis by research and UN mechanisms shedding light on the Right to Science confirming the importance of an inclusive approach in terms of different ways of creating knowledge. At the same time, the COVID-19-related lockdowns also revealed the dominance of biomedical approaches with very limited attention to scientific contributions from other disciplines to wider health and social impacts. Any conversations about the Right to Science should embrace the honest recognition that it is imperative to preserve and promote the diversity of science. This entails not just focusing on the exact and natural sciences, but also integrating an interdisciplinary approach which includes the social and human sciences.

KEY ACTION 13: Embrace the Right to Science as a call for inclusivity and diversity.

Segment 3.

Partnerships, programs and cooperation: lessons and recommendations. How are existing partnerships working for the Right to Science and how can cooperation be strengthened?

KEY MESSAGE 14: Multi-sector partnerships are critical to the Right to Science.

From the use of flexibilities in the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) to ethics in Artificial Intelligence and global environmental policy making, the Right to Science is a central cross-cutting perspective for a range of quickly evolving fields of science and technology, trade and economic policy. A multi-sectoral partnership and cooperation is a *sine qua non* condition to take the Right to Science from the periphery of the global human rights framework to form a central cross-cutting ingredient in policy making. Discussions around the waiver of Intellectual Property Rights for vaccines or treatments taking place in the WTO is a case in point.

KEY ACTION 14: Setting up cross-sectoral partnerships reaching out beyond the human rights sphere will be a central driver of change.

KEY MESSAGE 15: Global strategy on promoting the Right to Science should be a core priority for science governance and diplomacy.

Although a lot is being done in the area of science governance, from science organizations to UNESCO, it is also clear that many efforts are disconnected from the Right to Science. On the one hand, researchers, institutions and science organizations may not identify themselves with human rights concepts and not view policy challenges and opportunities through that lens. Indeed, while science organizations are increasingly organized and some have consultative status within the UN, only a few work with human rights organizations and institutions on a sustained basis.

On the other hand, global sustainability challenges are only partially being framed as a matter of Right to Science. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development aims to enhance international cooperation to achieve the targets of the SDGs. The wider science, research and technology community covers multiple ecosystems of stakeholders, activities and networks with significant human rights potentialities. The meeting triggered a call for the development of a global strategy for the Right to Science, mobilizing relevant United

Nations agencies, science and civil society organizations.

KEY ACTION 15: Convene a roundtable of experts to devise a global strategy on the Right to Science.

"The building blocks are there, the interests are there, the shared goals are there, reporting on the SDGs, on the UNESCO Recommendation on Science and Scientists, it's all there. We just need to bring them all together to advance key parts and to identify the opportunities for collaboration."

There is now an urgent need to strengthen national partnerships between science organizations and human rights institutions to move from global normativity to national frameworks.

KEY MESSAGE 16: Need to move from global norms to national standards and practice.

The meeting revealed converging global normative frameworks from both the human rights system and scientific governance, more broadly consolidating the Right to Science as a central pillar for decision-making.

KEY ACTION 16: Craft good practice and regulatory tools in support of implementing national standards and practice.

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