



Coalitions activated by climate change



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Extreme weather events are becoming more frequent and intense, and every time they happen, we are once again reminded that as with the Coronavirus, there is a challenge without frontiers and cannot be ignored: climate change. Although it is a known phenomenon, we do not know everything about it, we still have a lot to discover, as well as connecting current knowledge with our day-to-day decisions, to change our possible futures.

For this reason, at UNDP Uruguay we decided to explore how to achieve greater dialogue between the generation of knowledge and decision-making in public policy for climate action, through three key questions:

1. What would be the most effective mechanisms and tools for cooperation between academia and public policies, in the framework of greater climate ambition in Uruguay?
2. What research topics are considered essential to face climate change?
3. How to increase the ambition and involvement of citizens regarding climate change from academia and public policy?

Within the [Nationally Determined Contribution](#) (NDC) two measures involve academia and research:

- Promotion of research lines
- Strengthening of scientific-technical exchange networks.

Trying to answer these questions and considering the NDC, together with the [National Agency for Research and Innovation \(ANII\)](#) and the [Ministry of Environment \(MA\)](#), and within the framework of the [Climate Promise](#), we [launched "Research for Climate"](#) a call to support research that seeks to generate a positive impact in the mitigation or adaptation to climate change, as well as the reduction of its effects and early warning.

This [call](#) allowed us to stimulate the application of research groups in various areas of knowledge with the purpose of:

- Generating research's map in the area
- Encourage lines of research between different disciplines and with a gender perspective
- Support two projects with funds for their execution
- Contribute to the dialogue with public policy

In record time, 10 group projects were presented from Montevideo, Durazno, Rocha, and Salto, bringing together more than 70 people, which aroused the interest and capacities of our country towards climate action from an interdisciplinary perspective.

In addition to being able to financially support two investigations, this call had the objective of promoting dialogues and building bridges between academia and public policy for climate action. That is why on December 16, we held an event that consisted of two instances:

- Public presentation of the [two investigations](#) selected by the evaluation court:
 - One project aims to address the effects of climate variability on cyanobacterial blooms.
 - The other focuses on the social and human sciences, seeking to identify opportunities and strategies for improving the communication of climate change in Uruguay.
- On the other hand, there was an instance of dialogue and interaction between research groups and public policy.



The three guiding questions of this process allowed us to open a space for discussion, creation, and proposal, which gave clues to the need and value of these spaces. We share the main answers of the conversation.

What would be the most effective mechanisms and tools for cooperation between academia and public policies, in the framework of greater climate ambition in Uruguay?

- Diversify the voices and opinions in the areas of discussion, design, and definition of public policies, integrating other dimensions such as health and economy.
- Distribute power concentrated in a group of actors or organizations.
- Greater support for the development of knowledge through funds, calls, and research instruments.
- Establish more clearly defined channels and interlocutors between the public sector and academia to promote more fluid dialogue.
- Emphasize strategic communication and develop actions towards public opinion.
- Recognize contributions from academia to policy.

What research topics are considered essential to face climate change?

- Opportunities for Uruguay as a sustainable model.
- Quantify to a greater extent the costs associated with the impact of climate change and investigate alternatives to the prevailing economic model to achieve a more sustainable one.
- Map good practices and existing knowledge, both in academia and in the public sector and society.
- Integrate other sciences and methodologies such as social and behavioral sciences, health, and law related to climate change and its effects.

How to increase the ambition and involvement of citizens regarding climate change from the academy and public policy?

- Promote monitoring and citizen science actions.
- Integrate communities in research and public policy processes on climate change, as well as greater dialogue with civil society organizations in the field.
- Expand and recognize the projects framed in the educational system, there are good experiences and opportunities.
- Value the empirical/experiential knowledge of the communities.
- Consolidate spaces for dialogue, integrating a greater diversity of groups, such as the private sector.
- Involve the third level of government, the municipalities, which are key.

At the Accelerator Lab, we believe that the challenge is to continue connecting these dimensions: public policy and knowledge generation. Promote greater participation of research in public policies, not only to make the debate more complex, but also to improve the interventions, and the development of experiments that allows the generation of learnings and evidence to be collected in public policy.

As our regional director, Luis Felipe López Calva, highlighted during his visit to Uruguay, it is essential to bet on the development of active coalitions, where there are safe spaces to talk freely, based on a common interest to invite actors who have elements to influence decisions. It is necessary to understand and bring new actors to the table without prejudice, and in this regard, the role of UNDP will continue to be key, as an integrator towards collective climate action.

We invite you to access the Climate Research report [here](#)

The generic use of the masculine used in this article responds to the intention of simplifying the writing and reducing the overload in reading. Therefore, in no way does it intend to constitute discrimination between women and men, which is a concern for this work team.