

Members Report: International Network for Government Science Advice (INGSA) conference in Tokyo



GYA members at the 2018 International Network for Government Science Advice conference in Tokyo, Japan.

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On 6 and 7 November 2018, more than 20 GYA members and alumni attended the 2018 biennial conference of the [International Network for Government Science Advice](#) (INGSA) in Tokyo, Japan. The conference theme was Science Advice for a Changing World and explored the principles, practices, and dynamics of working at the science-policy interface, particularly in relation to achieving the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Emerging technologies, artificial intelligence (AI), science diplomacy, and the future of science advice were high on the list of discussed topics.

The meeting started strongly with a keynote by Helen Clark, Former New Zealand Prime Minister, who stated that, ‘in a post-truth world science and science advice will be challenged so we must be ready’, and in discussion with Peter Gluckman, she addressed the glaring lack of science advice at the highest level of the UN. In another keynote, Vladimir Sucha showed one of the most captivating slides of the conference: ‘Facts vs citizens estimations in relation to the percentage of migration in their countries’ which showed a 14 fold difference (14X) between reality and citizen’s perceptions with regards to the number of migrants in their country. Many of our GYA members took the stage to give talks, chair sessions, and summarize the results of the day. GYA Co-Chair [Connie Nshemereirwe](#) and member [Akihiro Kishimura](#) (Japan) gave the conference’s closing remarks. Connie’s words resonated in all of us: ‘As scientists, we

have a responsibility to engage and lead in science advice, even if we get no reward or recognition by our institutions’.



GYA members at the capacity building, science leadership and science advice workshop.

Prior to the main INGSA Conference the GYA, in partnership with the [Young Academy of Japan](#) and INGSA, organised a one-day Science Leadership training workshop. Attended by about 40 young scientists and policymakers, the aim of the workshop was two-fold: to introduce participants to the use of scientific evidence in informing policy at all levels of government; and to develop a personal strategy for their engagement with the science advice enterprise. It was great to see that the number of scientists interested in science advice is increasing, that young policy-makers of Japan actively participated in the workshop and listened to what young scientists had to say, and that we are helping prepare them all for important roles at the interface of science and policy making!

GYA members also participated in many satellite events, such as a Science Diplomacy Workshop, a Science in the Global South meeting, a Cities and Urban Science Advice Workshop, and a Parliamentary Advice Workshop.

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