Organization of American States

PAN AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

REPORT OF ACTIVITIES
March 2013 – February 2014

http://www.ipgh.org
The Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH) was founded on February 7, 1928 at the Sixth International Conference of the Americas held in Havana, Cuba. In 1930, the government of Mexico offered the use of the building located on Ex Arzobispado #29 in Mexico City, which is the permanent headquarters of the organization. In January 1949, the PAIGH became the first agency of the inter-American system when it signed the agreement between the Council of the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Institute. Afterwards, in May 1974, within the framework of the Buenos Aires Protocol a new agreement was formalized, which currently guides the relationship between the OAS and the PAIGH.

PURPOSES

The purposes of the PAIGH, stipulated in article 1 of its Organic Statutes, are:

- To encourage, coordinate and publicize cartographic, geographic, historical and geophysical studies, as well as studies on related sciences, which are of interest to the Americas.

- To promote and coordinate scientific and technical development, research, relationships amongst institutions and specialists, work and training in the fields of cartography, geography, geophysics and history.

- To foster and further cooperation amongst the institutions specializing in the four fields in the Americas, as well as international organizations.

STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION

The Institute’s organizational structure is as follows:

- The General Assembly
- The Directing Council
- The Meeting of Officers
- The General Secretariat
- The Commissions on Cartography, Geography, History and Geophysics
- The National Sections

The General Assembly: This is the supreme organ of the PAIGH and its mission is to set the scientific, administrative and financial policies of the Institute. It meets every four years and elects the officers of the Institute. The General Assembly consists of the delegations from the Member States, the Officers of the PAIGH and invited Observers. Each delegation from the Member States has the right to a vote.
**The Directing Council:** This is the Pan American organ of the PAIGH, which is responsible for performing the duties of the General Assembly during the intervals between its meetings. It meets once a year and consists of representatives from all the Member States and the Officers of the PAIGH.

**The Meeting of Officers:** This is the governing organ and coordinates the activities of the Institute between the Meetings of the Directing Council. It meets twice a year and consists of the President, Vice President, Commission Chairs and the Secretary General.

**The General Secretariat:** This is the core and permanent organ of the PAIGH and is responsible for its management, coordination of activities, providing the necessary assistance so they can be carried out properly, implementation of tasks it is entrusted with and ensuring agreements reached for the adequate performance of the PAIGH are complied with. The Secretary General is the representative of the PAIGH and holds the post for four years.

**The Commissions:** These are the organs entrusted with promoting the scientific and technical development of their respective fields in the Member States, as well as coordinating, fostering and overseeing the projects and other research agreements approved by the General Assembly or Directing Council. There are four commissions: Cartography, Geography, History and Geophysics, which are in turn subdivided into Committees and Work Groups. The Commissions meet every two years.

**The National Sections:** These are the bodies established by each Member State to carry out the purposes of the PAIGH in their own countries and have the financial assistance of their governments. The National Sections consist of the people named by the governments of the Member States as representatives before PAIGH organs.

**MEMBER STATES**

Only the states of the American continent can be members of the PAIGH. Other countries may be Permanent Observers. The 21 countries that are currently Member States of the PAIGH are:

Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, the United States of America, Uruguay and Venezuela.

The Permanent Observer countries are: France, Israel, Jamaica and Spain.
2009-2013 PAIGH Officers

From left to right: Bruce Presgraves, Vice President (United States of America); Héctor Peña, President (Argentina), in charge of the duties of the Commission on Geography; Santiago Barrero, Secretary General (Colombia); Alejandra Coll, Chairperson of the Commission on Cartography (Chile); Walter Fernández, Chairperson of the Commission on Geophysics (Costa Rica); Maria Cristina Mineiro, Chairperson of the Commission on History (Brazil)

2014-2017 PAIGH Officers

From left to right: Rigoberto Magaña, Acting President (El Salvador); Rodrigo Barriga-Vargas, Secretary General (Chile); Carlos López-Vázquez, Chair of the Commission on Cartography (Uruguay); Jean Parcher, Chair of the Commission on Geography (United States of America); Walter Fernández, Chair of the Commission on Geophysics (Costa Rica); Patricia Galeana, Chair of the Commission on History (Mexico)

1. Introduction

For the PAIGH, 2013 concluded with the 20th General Assembly (November 20-22) held in Montevideo, Uruguay and successfully organized by the National Section of the Institute in Uruguay, which was attended by representatives from 19 Member States, delegates from observer countries and international organizations. Thirty-one resolutions were approved by the plenary, of which those pertaining to the election of the new 2014-2017 Officers and the “Coordination of Regional Efforts to Develop Geospatial Information in the Americas” stand out.

This report highlights three core elements of PAIGH operations. First of all, the financial and administrative facets, pointing out that the Institute is current in its labor obligations, has no liabilities of importance and efficiently executes the resources required to back the Technical Assistance and Publications Programs. Second, the progress achieved in implementing the 2010-2020 Pan American Agenda. And in third place, the specific and relevant activities that took place during the period covered in the report.

2. 2013 Financial Situation

Revenue from 2013 quotas paid before the cut-off date of this report (December 31, 2013) represent 82.2% of the Regular Fund for the present year. Upon reading the 2013 consolidated financial results the conclusion can be reached that the behaviors observed from 2004-2012 are still in place and that the PAIGH has administrative and financial sustainability, characterized by the following:

- Normal 2013 Regular Fund revenues
- Sound Operational and Special Funds
- Stabilization of institutional patrimony
- Current labor-related obligations
- Effective execution of resources for Technical Assistance and Publications Programs
- Sustainability and control of operating expenses, within the same austerity parameters implemented for the past eight years
- Innovative attitude to make the Institute’s financial, administrative and technical matters even more sustainable and effective

Compared to last year, revenues fell 7.76% and expenses also dropped 11.92%. Results are nonetheless positive as the data is not significantly different from the averages of the previous six-year period.

Bearing this in mind, the Institute can guarantee there are sufficient funds for the normal execution of its budgetary commitments and adequate resources for operating and complying with the Institute’s 2014 Technical Assistance Program (TAP).
When analyzing the information of the past decade regarding fund availability at the close of the fiscal year there is evidence that, after undergoing marked decreases on an annual basis up until 2003, the finances of the PAIGH are currently sound. Given the limited revenue of the Institute’s Regular Fund, under current circumstances growth of the institutional budget is practically at its upper limit and it is therefore important the General Secretariat continue with measures to obtain additional administrative revenue since the maintenance quotas of the Institute have not increased since 1996, that is to say 18 years ago.

As the Institute has informed the OAS in the past, a process of recovery began in 2004 thanks to which it went from a deficit to a surplus, which has continued up until now. As a consequence of these financial results, the patrimonial funds of the Institute have increased. To maintain PAIGH operations it is essential that the current level of support and effort on the part of its Member States continue. In 2013, revenue from maintenance quotas fell 10.4% compared to 2012.

Another important point worthy of mention is that the distribution of budgetary allocations to operational and administrative expenses tends to be equal and proportional to budgetary allocations to scientific endeavors (Graph 1).

As of December 31, 2013, total quotas pending receipt from previous years added up to US$214,732, an increase compared to the previous year, largely explained by the sums owed by Nicaragua (14 quotas), Bolivia (4 quotas) and Brazil (3 quotas). Execution of the 2013 Regular
Fund has been normal at the PAIGH because the Operational Fund is at its regulatory limit and because 15 countries have punctually paid their annual maintenance quotas to the Institute.

As has been the case since 2006 when this practice began, the basic 2012 financial documents of the PAIGH are available on the Institute’s website.

3. 2013 Technical Assistance Program

As part of the 2013 Regular Fund budget, at the 44th Meeting of the Directing Council (Argentina, 2012) a Technical Assistance Program consisting of 22 projects in the four Commissions valued at US$178,860, equal to 32% of the aforementioned Fund, was approved. The Program was executed without incident and in conditions similar to those of 2005-2012.

In order to have a complete picture of disbursements on scientific activities it would be pertinent to include the budget for publications.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>% executed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>57.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>81.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>78.64</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>91.75</td>
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<td>2008</td>
<td>86.57</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>77.74</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>89.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>92.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>80.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>87.89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When including the contributions of the entities participating in the TAP, totaling US$516,773, in 2013 the Institute executed a Program for a total of US$695,633 (Table 2).
Table 2

Technical Assistance Program: Resources Applied by the PAIGH and Participating Institutions, 2004-2013 (US$)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>PAIGH</th>
<th>Other Institutions</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>162,613</td>
<td>211,710</td>
<td>374,323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>170,745</td>
<td>516,323</td>
<td>687,068</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>163,580</td>
<td>444,853</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>184,560</td>
<td>528,160</td>
<td>712,720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>168,510</td>
<td>394,620</td>
<td>563,130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>186,860</td>
<td>281,360</td>
<td>468,220</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>164,000</td>
<td>470,580</td>
<td>634,580</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>182,760</td>
<td>229,655</td>
<td>412,415</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>174,580</td>
<td>511,661</td>
<td>686,241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>178,860</td>
<td>516,773</td>
<td>695,633</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1,737,068</td>
<td>4,105,695</td>
<td>5,842,763</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2013, the Technical Assistance Program was efficiently executed for the benefit of Member States. Among its achievements are the cooperation projects undertaken by the Commissions and the National Sections of the Institute, such as: the “2013 Geocentric Reference System for the Americas: Technical - Scientific Capacity - Building in Reference Systems” project which was successfully held in Panama (Commission on Cartography); the “Teaching and Learning Geography with New Communication and Information Technologies” project (Commission on Geography) and the seminar “The Cultural Heritage of the Americas: Preservation, Commerce and Social Uses” (Commission on History). Studies continue underway on the subject of climate change where one project stands out: “Contributions to the Study of Global Climate Change and Meteorological and Space Climate Forecasts”, as well as natural disasters: “Seminar on Measures to Prevent, Mitigate and Adapt to the Impact of Climate Change, Tropical Hurricanes and Tsunamis” (Commission on Geophysics).
The most recent General Assembly (Uruguay, 2013) approved a program consisting of 22 projects, worth US$137,340 six of which correspond to the Commission on Cartography, four to Geography, three to History and six to Geophysics. Two of the approved projects are of an interdisciplinary nature: Cartography/Geography and History/Geophysics and are committed to the priorities set in the PAIGH Pan American Agenda.

4. Program of Periodic and Occasional Publications

At the 18th Meeting of Consultation of Cartography, Valéria Araújo (Brazil) was elected editor of “Revista Cartográfica”. She was entrusted, among other activities, with submitting a proposal to update the journal, including the editorial committee, design, content and publication exclusively in digital format.

As to “Revista Geográfica”, the 19th Meeting of Consultation of Geography decided to elect Hermann Manríquez (Chile) as the journal editor. He was entrusted with working with an Editorial Committee and a couple of assessors to ensure the review and acceptance of articles that comply with international quality standards.

During this period there were twelve publications: “Revista Geográfica” issue 151 (January-June 2012), “Revista de Historia de América” issue 146 (January-June 2012), “Revista de Arqueología
Americana” issue 30 (2012) and “Boletín de Antropología Americana” issue 47 (2011). As to occasional publications, the Institute published and distributed the “2013-2015 Joint Action Plan to Accelerate the Development of the Spatial Data Infrastructure of the Americas” in Spanish, English and Portuguese, authored by Santiago Borrero (PAIGH), Claudio Brunini (SIRGAS), Luiz Paulo Souto Fortes (PC-IDEA) and Eric van Praag (GeoSUR).

Soon, the following will be ready for distribution: “Cultural Heritage in the Americas, Volume II, Preservation and Social Uses”, coordinated by Arturo Soberón, Mario A. Rivera and Maria Cristina Mineiro; “Latin American Migration: Regional Experiences (Twenty-First Century)”, coordinated by Adalberto Santana, Ricardo Domínguez and Teodoro Aguilar. Both of these publications are the result of Technical Assistance Program projects financed by the Institute. Other works are: “The Americas: The Consolidation of Nations”, edited by Maria Cristina Mineiro and Francisco Enríquez, which was printed with the backing of the National Geographic Institute of Spain. Coincidentally it was published on the same year the PAIGH commemorated its 85th anniversary and is thus considered a commemorative work. The Institute will also distribute the work that won the 2013 “Wallace W. Atwood” Award (granted by the Institute) entitled “Art and Literature: Creating the Social Imaginary of the Porfiriatrato Elite, 1904-1912” by Imelda Paola Ugalde, in addition to the publication which compiles the history of the Institute over the past ten years entitled: “Challenges and Accomplishments of a Decade: A Pan American Memoir” by Santiago Borrero.

As to the “GSDI, SDI-LAC Newsletter”, which the PAIGH has edited for the Global Spatial Data Infrastructure Association (GSDI) since 2005, to date 225 newsletters have been published in Spanish and English and 48 in Portuguese.

Nine publications are in the process of being published, eight of which are periodic in nature:

- “Revista Cartográfica” issue 89 (2013)
- “Revista Geográfica” issues 152, 153 and 154, corresponding to July-December 2012, January-June and July-December 2013
- “Revista de Historia de América” issue 147 (July - December 2012)
- “Revista Geofísica” issue 64 (2012)
- “Boletín de Antropología Americana” issue 48 (2013)
- “Revista de Arqueología Americana” issue 31 (2013)

As to the exchange, the process continues to be carried out through the National School of Anthropology and History (ENAH, in Spanish). The General Secretariat routinely receives new titles in this regard. As of this report’s publication date the PAIGH’s “José Toribio Medina” Bibliographic Fund had 231,078 titles.

5. Fourth Year of Implementation of the PAIGH 2010-2020 Pan American Agenda

In compliance with resolution 5 of the 40th Directing Council of the PAIGH (Colombia, 2007), in 2008 the Institute began preparing the Agenda by establishing a pro tempore committee and at the 41st Meeting of the Directing Council (El Salvador, 2008) resolution 3 approved its bases, principals and purposes. Lastly, at the 19th General Assembly (Ecuador, 2009) resolution 4
“Decalogue for the Implementation of the PAIGH 2010-2020 Pan American Agenda” was approved and is now in its fourth year of implementation.

It is worth remembering that the PAIGH Pan American Agenda is an exercise for the future which prioritizes institutional actions on climate change, natural disasters and territorial planning and will guide the relationship the PAIGH has with the Inter-American system, coordinated by the OAS. At the same time, the execution of the Pan American Agenda is instrumental to the institutional development of the PAIGH because it fosters:

- The modernization of National Sections and creates a heightened sense of co-responsibility with the Institute
- Contributions to the institutional development of organizations connected to the production of continental geographic information
- The renewal and projection of a new form of regional leadership
- Increased regional participation from a multi-disciplinary perspective
- Expanded membership as well as active specialists
- More effective connections between the PAIGH and similar international organizations
- The consolidation of a network which will integrate the Pan American community in a streamlined manner, especially the younger generations of the Member States

Although the General Secretariat is aware the Pan American Agenda is an ongoing process and is happy to see the progress achieved in the projects submitted in 2013, it believes the following should be handled more effectively:

- Start up all the Commissions’ Work Committees and Groups and harmonize their work with the requirements of the Agenda
- Technical Assistance projects should continue to be prepared based on the modifications introduced in resolution 2 “Actions Aimed at Improving the Quality of the Projects That Make Up the PAIGH Technical Assistance Program”, 42nd Meeting of the Directing Council (Peru, 2010). To that end it is essential to have the backing of the National Sections of the PAIGH, which is increasing and positive
- It is especially important to ensure subjects broached by the projects of the TAP are aligned in an ever more consistent manner with the purposes of the Pan American Agenda

To achieve these results, a sustained effort must be made to improve project quality; the Institute therefore believes it would be relevant to establish more networks of specialists to create authentically Pan American projects. This is the case of the decision reached at the 44th Meeting of the Directing Council (Argentina, 2012) “Assistance to the 2013-2015 PAIGH/SIRGAS/PC-IDEA/GeoSUR Joint Action Plan to Accelerate the Development of the Spatial Data Infrastructure of the Americas” which will translate into a larger support network for the Commission on Cartography and the preparation of projects more in keeping with the priorities of the PAIGH Pan American Agenda.

It is worth mentioning that in 2013 certain cooperation projects were suspended as a result of the situation that is affecting the technical cooperation efforts of Spain with the region, including the PAIGH, because of the country’s well – known economic circumstances. The direct consequence was that in 2013 funds for a total of 17,340€, which were a direct economic contribution of the Spanish National Geographic Institute (NGI), were not available. It is nonetheless worthwhile noting the fruits achieved thanks to the decisive support of the Spanish NGI, among others, for the
publication of the work entitled “The Americas: The Consolidation of Nations” and to mention efforts are currently being made to continue with the activities that were already underway, as much as possible, particularly as concerns the education and training of technicians, to which end several alternatives are being considered.

The statistics of the past eleven years indicate a total of 526 projects have been submitted to the Officers and participation is concentrated in 14 countries.

6. Relevant Activities

Pan American Laboratory for the Observation of Natural Disasters

The PAIGH and the National Meteorological Service of Mexico (SMN, in Spanish) continued preparations to start up the Laboratory but significant delays were experienced due to the budgetary situation of the Mexican SMN. The PAIGH prepared a draft agreement to implement the Laboratory and training center, which is currently under the consideration of the Mexican SMN.

Integrated Map of Mesoamerica

Within the framework of the agreements signed between the PAIGH and the CAF-Development Bank of Latin America, the geographic institutes of the member countries of the PAIGH in the Mesoamerican region decided to adopt a practical work plan to harmonize national information at the regional level by organizing a series of regional workshops in El Salvador and Costa Rica in 2011, 2012 and 2013 at which the geographers of each country corrected border information and harmonized map-related information. They were thus able to produce the first integrated map of Mesoamerica. The project has had the backing and financing of three institutions: the CAF - Development Bank of Latin America, the Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH) and the United States Geological Survey (USGS).

The Geographic Institute of El Salvador launches its first “cloud” map service

In April 2013, the National Geographic Institute of El Salvador (NGI) became the first geographic institute in the region to develop a map service. The new service, which is very fast and stable since it is available on the cloud, enables users to consult a significant portion of the Institute’s geographic data which is freely available. The idea is to increase the number of maps available over the next few years. The service was developed with the assistance of the Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH), the GeoSUR Program and ESRI in an innovative cooperation plan in which the Salvadoran NGI is the first beneficiary. The GeoSUR Program and PAIGH will cover the expenses of the second year and the Salvadoran NGI will cover expenses as of the third year.

85th Anniversary of the PAIGH

On June 12, 2013, at the headquarters of the General Secretariat of the PAIGH in Mexico City, a commemorative ceremony was held to celebrate the 85th anniversary of the founding of the Institute. The event was attended by representatives of the government of Mexico, members of the diplomatic corps, PAIGH Officers, researchers from universities and research centers and specialists connected to the Institute.
On the occasion of the commemorative ceremony the Institute handed out its 2013 Awards and Recognitions as follows:

“Silvio Zavala” Colonial History of the Americas Award
Winning work: “Images to Fight Obscurity: Colonial Peru in the Illustrations of Brother Pedro de Ocaña”. Author: Beatriz C. Peña (Venezuela)

“Leopoldo Zea” Thought of the Americas Award
Winning work: “Introduction to Uruguayan Thought”. Authors: Lía Berisso and Horacio Bernardo (Uruguay)

Honorable Mention “Leopoldo Zea” Thought of the Americas Award
Work: “Against the Empire: The History of the Anti-Imperialist League of the Americas”. Author: Daniel Kersffeld (Argentine residing in Ecuador)

“Wallace W. Atwood” Award
Winner: Imelda P. Ugalde (Mexico) for her unpublished work: “Art and Literature: Creating the Social Imaginary of the Porfiriato Elite, 1904-1912”

Recognition for 25 years of Continuous Service to the PAIGH
Francisco García, Head of Accounting and Finance at the General Secretariat of the PAIGH

PAIGH Awards ceremony, Mexico
“José Joaquín Hungría Morell” 23rd Course on Geographical Names

The 23rd “José Joaquín Hungría Morell” Course on Geographical Names was held from July 15-19, 2013 in Panama City at the “Tommy Guardia” National Geographic Institute and was attended by students from the Member States. The course was given by instructors from the United States of America, Mexico and Honduras.

UN-GGIM: Americas (previously known as PC-IDEA)

The Tenth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas was held in New York from August 19 - 23 (UNRCC-A), as well as the Tenth Plenary Meeting of the PC-IDEA. Several presentations were made on the results of the 2009-2013 term. Since that date, the name of PC-IDEA changed to UN-GGIM: Americas (UN Regional Committee on Global Geospatial Information Management for the Americas). The new 2013-2016 chair is Rolando Ocampo from the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI - Mexico). In addition to Santiago Borrero, the conference was attended by the directors of the geographic institutes of the following Member States: Argentina, Costa Rica, Panama, Peru and Uruguay.

Twentieth Anniversary of the Geocentric Reference System for the Americas (SIRGAS)

The meeting that was held in 2013 was the scene of the celebration of the first twenty years of SIRGAS. Commemorative lectures highlighted the milestones that marked the development of this initiative which arose during the “Conference to Define a Geocentric Datum for South America” held in Asuncion, Paraguay in October 1993 under the auspices of the International Association of Geodesy (IAG), the PAIGH and the United States of America’s Defense Mapping Agency (DMA). At least one representative of most of the processing centers of the atmospheric and Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS) of SIRGAS were present and reported on the activities carried out during the year and those in the process of development. Representatives from the following Member States were present: Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, Uruguay and Venezuela.

Within the framework of the 2013 SIRGAS Meeting, the Directing Council also met and discussed subjects such as: the performance of Member States and national representatives in reaching their objectives, the need to regulate the holding of events (such as meetings, courses, workshops, etc.) with the backing of SIRGAS and the decisions to henceforth call the annual meetings “SIRGAS Symposiums”.

The 2013 SIRGAS Meeting was held from October 24-26 at the facilities of the Tommy Guardia National Geographic Institute, which houses the National Section of the PAIGH in Panama City, Panama.

20th General Assembly and Meetings of Consultation of the Commissions

Among the resolutions approved at the recent General Assembly it is worth highlighting numbers 1 “Election of the Secretary General of the Institute”, 4 “Election of the President of the Institute” and 31 “Recognition to Santiago Borrero for his work as Secretary General of the PAIGH during the decade spanning 2003-2013”.
As per the abovementioned resolution number 1, on February 7, 2014, the day of the 86th anniversary of the PAIGH, Rodrigo Barriga-Vargas (Chile) took office as Secretary General of the PAIGH for the 2014-2017 term. The event was held at the headquarters of the Institute in Mexico City and was attended by representatives of the diplomatic corps, directors and representatives from international organizations and agencies of the Mexican government, members of academia and professionals linked to the Institute.

Bearing in mind the importance of focusing on the best interests of the Institute and the benefits of having a solid consensus on the decisions that play an influential role on the development of the institution, a conclusion was reached to postpone the election of the President of the PAIGH for the 2014-2017 term. To that end the Secretary General Elect, Rodrigo Barriga-Vargas, was instructed to, as per the Statutes and Rules of Procedure of the PAIGH, call for a new election so the filling of the vacancy can take place before the 81st Meeting of Officers, which will be held in July 2014 in Mexico City. In the meanwhile, the duties of Acting President will be performed by the recently elected Vice President of the Institute, Rigoberto Magaña (El Salvador).

A fine ceremony to acknowledge the outgoing Secretary General, Santiago Borrero, was held at which he was thanked for his commitment and dedication to the work he carried out between 2003-2013.

Prior to the 20th General Assembly of the PAIGH, on November 18 and 19 the Meetings of Consultation of the four Commissions were held, at which there were 195 specialists from the Member States. They discussed topics of interest for each Commission regarding the main objectives of the PAIGH 2010-2020 Pan American Agenda. New Officers were also elected, as indicated below. They also evaluated and approved the scientific policy, work plan and operational structure of the Commissions for the next four years.

**Commission on Cartography (Uruguay)**
Chairperson: Carlos López-Vázquez  
Vice Chairperson: Yuri Resnichenko

**Commission on Geography (United States of America)**
Chairperson: Jean Parcher  
Vice Chairperson: Patricia Solís

**Commission on History (Mexico)**
Chairperson: Patricia Galeana  
Vice Chairperson: Adalberto Santana

**Commission on Geophysics (Costa Rica) – extension of mandate**
Chairperson: Walter Fernández  
Vice Chairperson: Walter Montero

The Meetings of Consultation concluded with presentations on the scientific work carried out between 2009-2013.
Status of Cooperation with Haiti

Within the framework of resolution 4 “Cooperation of the PAIGH with Haiti” (Peru, 2010), the Institute continued assisting with the recovery of the National Section of the PAIGH in Haiti. Specifically, in November the Institute provided economic assistance to three participants from Haiti so they could travel to Montevideo, Uruguay and participate at the Meetings of Consultation of the PAIGH.

2013-2015 Joint Action Plan to Accelerate the Development of the SDI of the Americas

In the framework of the 44th Meeting of the Directing Council of the PAIGH, held in Argentina (2012) the PAIGH, SIRGAS, PC-IDEA and GeoSUR signed a document which has the purpose of strengthening, harmonizing and accelerating the development of spatial data infrastructure of the Americas in a coordinated and effective manner. The most recent development being that the regional agencies submitted a document to the specialized community with the core aim of harmonizing their efforts and work plans, fostering their specialization, avoiding duplications and preparing relevant institutions for the continuous technological changes and innovations that take place in this field.

Behind this effort is the consensus among the leaders of the four participating agencies in the sense that SDI of the Americas will not become a tangible and sustainable reality due to individual efforts but rather thanks to the united work and coordinated efforts of all, as its members have requested. It is also an exercise that bears in mind the global links of each agency, as is the case of the PAIGH and its role as liaison with several international organizations; SIRGAS with the IAG;
UN-GGIM: Americas and its close relationship with the United Nations (UN), especially with the regional system of cartographic conferences and the UN Regional Committee on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) and GeoSUR with the Conference and the Eye on Earth Network.

On November 17, 2013 in Montevideo, Uruguay, the Second PAIGH/SIRGAS/UNGGIM-A/GeoSUR Joint Meeting took place. It recommended the PAIGH act as facilitator of cooperation processes so as to improve coordination and collaboration to develop spatial information at the global level, especially in the developing countries that require technical cooperation. It also recommended UN-GGIM and its group of experts contribute to the execution of the four-year plan of the Commission on Cartography, the consolidation of SIRGAS as the Sole Geospatial Reference System in the Region and the CAF-PAIGH GeoSUR Program as an instrument to develop applications and the fortifying of a geospatial information network that fosters the integration of North, Central and South America and the Caribbean. It also recommended it facilitate and foster the review of the Joint Action Plan, extending it to 2013-2016 in order to harmonize and unify work periods in subsequent annual reviews.

CAF-PAIGH GeoSUR Program – The Geospatial Network of Latin America and the Caribbean

In 2013 we executed the third cooperation agreement signed with the CAF-Development Bank of Latin America, which points to the significance the Bank places on the GeoSUR initiative. The Program has set up an innovative Geoportal which provides access to the national maps published on the Internet by more than eighty institutions in the Americas and the Caribbean. Each of these have implemented an interactive map service, a mechanism to provide access to maps and other geographic data.

The 2013 GeoSUR Award, granted by CAF and PAIGH, was given to the project submitted by the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (Colombia) entitled “Terra-I, The First System to Monitor the Loss of Habitat in Latin America and the Caribbean”. Honorable mention was given to two important projects: “Computer Platform to Develop Monitoring, Analysis and Warning Systems for Environmental Extremes”, submitted by the National Institute for Space Research (INPE) in Brazil and “System to Register Geographic Items” submitted by the Special Data Infrastructure for the Capital District (IDECA) of Colombia. The awards were handed out at the Sixth GeoSUR Program Meeting held in Montevideo, Uruguay on November 22.


At the 22nd Meeting of Consultation of the Commission on Cartography held in Montevideo, Uruguay, the second edition of the ISO/TC 211 Standards Guide in Spanish was submitted, published in collaboration with the invaluable assistance of the NGI of Spain. The online version will soon be available on the PAIGH website.

National Sections of the PAIGH

There have been changes in the leadership of the National Sections of Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, United States of America, Mexico, Paraguay and Peru.
7. Compliance with the Resolutions of the 44th Meeting of the Directing Council (Argentina, 2012)

At the 44th Meeting of the PAIGH Directing Council (Argentina, 2012) 12 resolutions were approved. The General Secretariat has made sure they have all been strictly complied with and fully executed.

Statutory Meetings

In 2013 the planned Statutory Meetings were held, to wit:

- 79th Meeting of Officers (Mexico City, June 13-14)
- 80th Meeting of Officers (Montevideo, Uruguay, November 17)
- 20th General Assembly and Meetings of Consultation of the Commissions (Montevideo, Uruguay, November 18 - 22)

8. 2014 Outlook

In 2014 the following meetings will be held in which the Secretary General and/or delegates from the PAIGH will participate:

- Annual meeting of the Association of American Geographers (AAG) (Tampa, Florida, USA; April 8 - 12)
• 44th General Assembly of the OAS (Asuncion, Paraguay, June 3 - 5)
• 81st Meeting of Officers of the PAIGH (Mexico City, July)
• 4th Session of the UN-GGIM: Americas (New York, USA, August 6 - 8)
• Fifth International Hydrographic Conference (Monaco, October 6 - 10)
• 82nd Meeting of Officers and 45th Meeting of the Directing Council of the PAIGH (Santiago, Chile, November)

As to the management of the technical cooperation projects, the General Secretariat will conduct a study so as to optimize the evaluation system used by the Chairs of the Commissions.

Efforts will continue with the OAS to work in a coordinated manner to reach common goals, using the PAIGH Pan American Agenda as the cornerstone. This especially as pertains to setting up regional technical cooperation projects in the fields of climate change, natural disasters and territorial planning so as to strengthen the ties that bind the Institute with the measures taken by the OAS and other organs of the inter-American system to reinforce the principals of comprehensive development and increased safety, thus reinforcing regional integration.

The “2013-2015 Joint Action Plan to Accelerate the Development of the Spatial Data Infrastructure of the Americas” will continue and to that end several virtual and face-to – face meetings will take place so as to arrange for the coordinated implementation of this plan among the four participating institutions: PAIGH, SIRGAS, UN-GGIM: Americas and GeoSUR.

The General Secretariat of the PAIGH will duly follow – up on the implementation of the “PAIGH 2010-2020 Pan American Agenda” proposing, in a timely manner, measures to be taken to carry out the envisioned initiatives and provide for their funding. It will also propose to the Member States that it be extended to project the Institute to 2028 when it will celebrate its 100th anniversary. The Institute will continue with its process of consolidating the PAIGH as a specialized geography, history, geophysics and cartography technical agency at the service of the Pan American community, which aims to contribute to heightened specialized knowledge for the benefit of the Member States.

The proposed work plan of the Commission on Cartography highlights it will foster the development of knowledge and cooperation among the Member States, prioritizing work aimed at improving conditions to produce, access and apply fundamental and thematic data. Additional measures will be taken to facilitate and improve the training of local human resources. Increased participation of the community will be encouraged and technical assistance and innovation measures will be promoted to strengthen the National Sections, especially activities which foster and back the development of SDI at the national, sub regional and regional level.

The work plan of the Commission on Geography emphasizes the aim of championing geographic research at the Pan American level, spurring the educational community towards collaborative production of scientific and geographic knowledge, backing the goals of the PAIGH 2010-2020 Pan American Agenda in interdisciplinary coordination with the other Commissions.

The Commission on History points out its four-year work plan includes the publication of four works: “A Chronology of the Americas”, “Historical Atlas of the Americas”, “A Comparative History of the Americas, Volume Four” and “General Atlas of the Americas”.
The work plan of the **Commission on Geophysics** mentions it will go on training human resources and obtaining the necessary resources for post graduate studies. It will also continue publishing “Revista Geofísica”, encouraging its digital presentation; push for carrying out multinational interdisciplinary projects, promoting the integration of the Commission Committees; actively participate in the implementation of the PAIGH 2010-2020 Pan American Agenda and in the consolidation and future activities of the Pan American Laboratory for the Observation of Natural Disasters.

Studies will be conducted to include the periodic publications of the PAIGH in the main regional indexes. In 2014, the principal objective will be to bring all journals up to date, complying with the requirements of Latindex, which is an information system on the scientific and technical-professional research, as well as science-related and cultural journals edited in Latin America, the Caribbean, Spain and Portugal. It is headquartered in Mexico City at the facilities of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM, in Spanish). Editors will also be asked to collaborate so as to include their magazines in the appropriate indexes.