

ICH Special Bulletin on the Pact for the Future – Chapter 3: Science, Technology, Innovation, and Digital Cooperation, September 2024

Background:

The [Zero Draft](#) of the Pact for the Future was released on January 26, 2024. After consultations with member states, [Rev.1](#) was published on May 14, 2024, followed by [Rev.2](#), on July 17, 2024. [Rev.3](#) was released on August 27, 2024, with [Rev.4](#) quickly following on September 13, 2024. The next revision, Rev. 5, was issued on September 19, 2024, and shortly after, the latest draft version circulated by the President of the General Assembly (PGA) on September 20, 2024. This special bulletin will focus on the key topics in Chapter 3: Science, Technology, Innovation, (STI) and Digital Cooperation, summarizing the key content that has been added, modified, or removed throughout the consultation process from the Zero Draft to the PGA's draft version.

Executive Summary:

Pact for the Future has undergone multiple revisions, from the Zero Draft to the latest draft by the PGA, with significant updates in key areas of science, technology, and innovation. The current version of draft is a more comprehensive, inclusive, and adaptable strategy for leveraging science, technology, and innovation in addressing global challenges. Early versions introduced interdisciplinary collaboration, integrating social sciences, arts, and humanities to address global challenges, which evolved into a focus on "interdisciplinary collaboration" from Rev.4 onward. Key elements such as independent scientific advice and responsible research that upholds human rights have remained consistent throughout revisions, with a strong emphasis on the safety and autonomy of scientific researchers. New additions include integrating human rights into technology norm-setting and broadening the effort to retain talent mobility through including education and workforce opportunities. Climate action and global collaboration on innovation has been enhanced since Rev.3, and Stakeholder engagement has been expanded throughout the Pact including marginalized groups. However, intellectual property rights to support developing countries have been dropped in the later versions.

Highlights:

- Special focus on the protection, autonomy, freedom, and safety of **scientific researchers**.
- Clarified terms for **favourable technology transfer** to developing countries.
- Respect for **Indigenous Peoples** and Focus on Vulnerabilities of **Women Migrant Workers**.
- References to **Beijing Declaration** was dropped from all revisions.
- Promoting **responsible research** with a focus on human rights has been a consistent theme.
- The introduction of "new and emerging technologies" and the addition of assistive technologies for **persons with disabilities**.
- Enhancing Opportunities for Women in **STEM Education** and **Leadership**.
- The emphasis is on addressing gender-related risks and challenges emerging from the use of technologies, **including all forms of violence**, such as **sexual and gender-based violence**.
- Support for technology-sharing to address challenges on **health, hunger, food security, and education**.
- Action related to **Intellectual property rights** was dropped in recent revisions.
- Stakeholder engagement has been expanded throughout the Pact.
- Local communities, **traditional Afro-descendant populations**, and marginalized groups are recognized.
- **Climate action**, STI, and innovation ecosystems are emphasized.
- Introduction of "**global collaboration on innovation**," simplifying terminology and focusing on support for developing countries, including **policy exchanges and knowledge sharing**.

Significant Drops or Additions:

- Rev.1 introduces novel elements, such as integrating social sciences, arts, and humanities to address complex global challenges. However, the language has changed throughout each revision, and starting from Rev.4, it became 'interdisciplinary collaboration,' which continued in Rev.5 and the latest draft by the PGA.
- Based on suggestions from some member states in Rev.1, the term 'independent scientific advice' was introduced to provide guidance to the Secretary-General's Scientific Advisory Board and remained until the latest draft by the PGA.
- The reference to paragraph 95 in the zero draft of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was dropped in all subsequent revision documents.
- The promotion of responsible research that upholding human rights has been highlighted since Rev.1, action 28(a), and remained in Rev.5, action 30(a), as well as in the latest draft by the PGA, with a special focus on the protection, autonomy, freedom, and safety of scientific researchers.
- Integrating human rights perspectives into technology norm-setting was introduced in Rev.1, action 28(b). Further, a call was added for the private sector to respect human rights and uphold ethical principles in the development and use of new technologies in Rev.2 and Rev.3, action 33(b), and in Rev.5, action 30(b) as well as in the latest draft by the PGA.
- Talent mobility and brain drain prevention were added in Rev.1, action 25(c). Further revisions of the Pact, Rev.2, Rev.3 (action 30(c)), and Rev.5 (action 28(c)), as well as in the latest draft by the PGA broadened the focus to include education, working conditions, and opportunities for the workforce.
- Support for calls to share technologies and skills to address basic health issues has been broadened since Rev.1 to include hunger, food security, education, and social protection, with no changes in Rev.5, action 29(a) and in the latest draft by the PGA.
- Stakeholder engagement was broadened to include technical, academic, and civil society groups, promoting a more inclusive approach since Rev.2, with some language changes in the latest draft by the PGA.
- Rev.2 expanded the scope by including local communities and traditional Afro-descendant populations, acknowledging other marginalized or culturally distinct groups. Additionally, the principle of free, prior, and informed consent was included in Rev.5, action 32, point 56 and in the latest draft by the PGA.
- The inclusion of climate action to emphasize the role of science, technology, and innovation (STI) in climate initiatives, peaceful technology use, and the development of local innovation ecosystems was added in Rev.3 and continued into the Rev.5, as well as in the latest draft by the PGA, reflecting a more inclusive and context-specific approach.
- Rev.3 introduced "global collaboration on innovation," simplified collaboration terminology, and expanded support for developing countries by detailing various methods, such as policy exchanges, knowledge sharing, and technical assistance. It also emphasized respect for Indigenous Peoples and highlighted the vulnerabilities of women migrant workers. These additions have been maintained in the latest draft by the PGA.
- Action 27 in Rev.1, related to intellectual property rights to support developing countries in achieving sustainable development, was introduced and maintained with some language changes until Rev.3, and then this action 32 was completely dropped in Rev.4 and Rev.5 as well as in the latest draft by the PGA.

RESOURCES:

1. [Summit of the Future](#)
2. [ICH Bulletins - Pact for the Future](#)