

JOINT STATEMENT ON THE 1<sup>st</sup> MEETING OF THE BRICS WORKING GROUP ON  
OCEAN AND POLAR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

BRASÍLIA, 26-27 JULY, 2018

We, the representatives from Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (annex I), gathered in Brasilia, Brazil, from 26-27 July, 2018, to participate in the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the BRICS Working Group on Ocean and Polar Science and Technology (WG);

Considering that the five BRICS countries cover every ocean in the world and are very much engaged in developing ocean and polar science and technology;

Noting the outcomes of previous cooperation activities established between Brazil, India and South Africa in the IBSA initiative;

Taking into consideration the pathway for collaboration within BRICS set forth during the 1<sup>st</sup> BRICS Workshop on Operational Oceanography held in China, in 2016;

Having discussed previous and current research programmes and activities in the field of ocean and polar sciences carried out by each BRICS country as well as bilateral cooperation initiatives between BRICS countries; and

Considering the potential for cooperation on ocean and polar science and technology as underlined by the Ministers of Science, Technology and Innovation during the 6<sup>th</sup> BRICS Ministerial meeting held in Durban, South Africa, on 3 July, 2018,

HAVE AGREED ON THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS:

- (i) To define priority cooperation areas between the BRICS countries;
- (ii) To formulate recommendations on the method of work as well as on the next steps to be worked on;
- (iii) To identify priority areas on ocean and polar science and technology for subsequent BRICS STI Framework Programme calls for proposals; and
- (iv) To make relevant recommendations for other BRICS groups.

Also, in order to achieve the purposes above, WE HAVE OUTLINED THE FOLLOWING INITIATIVES OF COMMON INTEREST:

- (i) To encourage and establish joint research and development activities by informing the content of the calls for competitive proposals to the BRICS STI Framework Programme;
- (ii) To encourage and establish joint research and development activities by formulating strategic flagship programmes to be supported through mechanisms other than the BRICS STI Framework Programme;
- (iii) To define cross-cutting activities such as the training of technologists; development of human capital; rational infrastructure utilization;

- improved inter-operability of data; development of methodological approaches; and integration of observing systems;
- (iv) To induce the establishment of a policy discourse that takes into consideration implications of initiatives carried out by the WG beyond scientific research, and builds on science diplomacy values with the potential to project the BRICS countries as an important geopolitical initiative;
  - (v) To combine the WG meetings with relevant technical meetings such as summer schools or scientific seminars;
  - (vi) To commit on a long-term basis to the planning of joint cruises focused on areas of common interest and reserving space for scientists, students or technical staff and equipment from BRICS countries as jointly agreed; and
  - (vii) To identify the need for new infrastructure for ocean and polar science and technology, and to make recommendations to the relevant BRICS structures on how to improve existing infrastructure.

As for the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the WG on Ocean and Polar Science and Technology, WE HAVE TAKEN THE FOLLOWING DECISIONS ON THE MATTERS DESCRIBED HEREIN:

#### **Research priorities and flagship project**

- (i) The following themes were identified as priorities for the partnership: deep sea research; climate variability and predictability, including air-sea-ice exchanges; and coastal processes and ocean-land interactions, including marine pollutants and plastics;
- (ii) The following cross cutting topics were identified as enabling priorities for the partnership: technology development; observing systems; data management and sharing; modeling; and data assimilation;
- (iii) The WG will prioritize a theme for the purpose of a flagship project; and
- (iv) Brazil will invite each country to submit a motivation in support of the overarching theme, and will table a report to the next WG meeting.

#### **Focal point**

Each country shall designate a member of the WG who is responsible for liaison between that country and the Brazilian secretariat.

#### **Joint BRICS cruises**

- (i) Brazil will coordinate the discussions regarding the planning of joint BRICS cruises, which, in principle, will be based on a five-year calendar to be initiated possibly in 2020;
- (ii) Each country will designate a focal point, who will be responsible for informing on the calendar and proposed scope of designated BRICS cruises; and
- (iii) Joint BRICS cruises shall aim to optimize scientific outcomes of the fieldwork by combining the expertise and equipment from BRICS countries.

### Coordination of national cruises

- (i) Brazil will coordinate the exchange of information regarding planned national cruises;
- (ii) Each country will designate a focal point, who will be responsible for informing on the calendar and scope of national cruises;
- (iii) Countries will map planned cruises for the next years, providing detailed information regarding the destination of the ship, the scope of the research cruise and the number of available berths for BRICS countries; and
- (iv) A report on this will be discussed at the next meeting of the WG.

BRICS countries took note of China's offer to join a deep-sea dive cruise to be held from November 2018 to February 2019 to explore hydrothermal vents at the Southwest Indian Ridge, and will provide more information to the Secretariat.

### Ocean and Polar science infrastructure

- (i) South Africa agreed to compile a database of existing infrastructure that would be suitable for collaborative research, scientists exchange and innovation activities, and to formulate recommendations on how to improve joint utilization of such infrastructure;
- (ii) Each country will designate a focal point, who will be responsible for providing the required input, and will inform South Africa in this regard; and
- (iii) A report on this will be discussed at the next meeting of the WG.

### Terms of reference

- (i) Russia will coordinate the establishment of a Terms of Reference (ToR) for the WG, which will be finalised at the next meeting of the WG; and
- (ii) South Africa will provide the ToR for the Astronomy Working Group as input for this purpose.

The WG is open to engage with other STI Working Groups.

Finally, the WG gratefully accepted the offer by the Russian Government to host the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Working Group in 2019, on dates and at a venue to be defined in due course.

Brasilia, 27 July, 2018

Brazil

Russia

India

China

South Africa

