



STATEMENT BY THE IARC STAFF ASSOCIATION

1. Every year the IARC Staff Association Committee (SAC) is given the opportunity to address the IARC Governing Council, thus expressing the expectations and satisfactions, but also the frustrations and concerns of IARC staff members.
2. As this is only an annual event, this opportunity is eagerly awaited by all those who work at IARC and we would therefore like to thank you for your attention.
3. Last year we announced that in 2011 we planned to conduct a work climate survey. This was carried out from 16 December 2010 to 28 January 2011, thus giving staff members six weeks to respond, instead of one week only as was the case for the 2009 survey.
4. The Committee collaborated with the Administration in order to ensure the total anonymity of this electronic survey and the joint analysis of the results.
5. In this survey, 149 questionnaires were validated, bringing the participation rate to 57% (versus 45% in 2009).
6. During the 2009 Governing Council meeting, more information was requested concerning cases of harassment. In order to respond to this concern, those who answered positively to the question on harassment were offered a specific complementary questionnaire.
7. However, those individuals who stated in the survey that they were harassed did not fill in and return the specific questionnaire. Seven persons stated they were or had been harassed over the last 12-month period (4.7%). In addition, the comments collected in the survey showed that one of these seven cases of harassment had been resolved before the survey.
8. The above rate shows that feelings of harassment have decreased considerably (for information, this was estimated at 10% in 2009 and 12% in 2007¹). This is extremely positive and encouraging although efforts must be maintained in order to completely eliminate this problem.
9. We also note the increase in the participation of "non-staff" in the survey, from 10% in 2009 to 22% this year, although this figure is still low. It is therefore important to ensure that these people feel they belong to IARC, and that they can also contribute to this Organization.

¹ The question concerning harassment was formulated differently in 2007 and 2009: "I haven't been harassed by my superior or other co-workers" and the possible answers were "Totally agree / quite agree/ neither agree nor disagree/ do not agree at all"; in 2011 the question was "I'm harassed or I have been harassed in the last 12 months by my supervisor or other co-workers" and the possible answers were "Yes/No".

10. Overall, the survey shows that the work climate at IARC is rather good and, in some respects, even better than in 2009.

11. As with any survey, this one also reveals points that could be improved.

- First, the lack of communication:

12. Even though the Director and senior management are seeking to solve this problem, there is still much room for improvement, despite efforts having been made.

13. The lack of information felt by staff members means that certain administrative decisions are either misunderstood or not understood at all, thus creating doubts and criticism about these decisions and sometimes even about the processes followed.

14. As a member of the various IARC committees such as selection and reclassification committees, the SAC is aware of these processes, and takes part in the recommendations made to the Director. However it feels that staff members should be more clearly informed about all these processes.

15. Furthermore, the lack of proactive communication by one of the Administrative services causes intense frustration among staff members and the Committee.

16. This observation also applies to the Committee since we are facing some criticism ourselves, from staff members, concerning lack of communication.

17. It is essential to ensure that information is shared in order to maintain a climate of mutual trust.

18. This year, IARC staff members are required to elect four Staff Committee members, and once again doubts are being raised on the commitment of new candidates. To have a Staff Committee is an opportunity; to be a member is a responsibility. It is always difficult to simultaneously defend our co-workers' interests and carry out our own work. It is however possible, as has been shown by the members of the Committee.

19. Some comments from staff members have made us realize that the role of the Committee is not fully understood. Consequently, we would like to try to remedy this situation and thus perhaps stimulate new candidates for staff representatives.

- The second point to be improved concerns career development:

20. The results of the survey, along with the requests that have been made to the Committee throughout the year, show a strong demand for opportunities to evolve professionally at IARC and receive training. In particular, the need to train supervisors in management techniques is often emphasized. The Administration considers that "career development" is important and, at the request of the Committee, has already begun to respond to these expectations, by organizing training on job classification and on the performance management and development system (PMDS). Despite these efforts, the survey shows that many people are not convinced that use of the PMDS is worthwhile.

21. Some Agency staff seem to believe that it is impossible to progress without leaving IARC. This would result in the loss of qualified and promising personnel, as well as in decreased motivation. The establishment of a real "career plan", called for by many staff members, could help to solve this problem.

- The third point highlighted by the survey is:

22. The tension that is felt between the administrative services and the scientific groups on the one hand, and the feeling that there is a difference in treatment between the managers and their staff on the other. For example, the General Service staff salary survey is a considerably longer process than that for Professional staff.

23. Finally, bureaucracy is still felt to be too cumbersome, regarding both financial and human resources, and the means to recognize and reward those who do excellent work have still not been found.

24. We are grateful to the Director for helping to maintain collaboration with the Committee, by inviting us to participate in the temporary staff members' selection committees and by organizing regular meetings with the Committee. The reports of these meetings are made available to IARC staff in order to share the information exchanged and any progress achieved.

25. Similarly, collaboration between the Administration and the Committee began well. We hope it will continue, especially on certain issues which have a real impact on the IARC budget:

- Last year, the SAC welcomed the completion of the Agency's carbon footprint report; we are still awaiting the subsequent actions.

26. The completion of the thermal insulation renovation work on certain Agency buildings requires financial flexibility that should be planned for as soon as possible.

27. The reduction of energy consumption for air transport (which represents three-quarters of the Agency's carbon footprint) is a real challenge: given that a return flight Europe-United States of America in economy class alone represents 25% of the annual paper consumption of the Agency (not including publications), and almost 60% in business class, it is obvious that the future is in holding videoconferences. We therefore congratulate the Director's initiative to set up a videoconference room. The Scientific Council also contributed to reducing the carbon footprint by planning the Section Reviews during the annual Scientific Council meeting.

- A recent change in French law on the payment of child care benefits highlighted the possible financial consequences on IARC staff income. This could also affect local recruitment by making the Agency a less attractive employer.
- The possible adoption by IARC of the UNESCO salary scale, the setting-up of which would result in an increased workload and for which the Committee expresses a strong desire to rapidly establish a joint working group with the Administration.

28. Finally, the survey shows above all that the majority of the replies tend to be positive. Staff members respect their co-workers and are proud to work for IARC.

29. Feelings of harassment have decreased and 75% of those who participated say they have little reason to leave IARC.

30. Social events are appreciated, and charitable activities are given considerable financial support.

31. The Committee would like to thank you for your attention. We hope that in the current economic crisis, the Committee will help the Director in carrying out his objectives of achieving yet more excellence and in participating in the well-being of his staff.