3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TARGET COUNTRIES: Colombia, Ecuador, Peru & Chile

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STATEMENT OF WORK: The retreat of glaciers and decreased water availability in páramo environments, coupled with warmer temperatures and enhanced probabilities of drought occurrence, suggests the potential for a severe future water crisis in the region. As a response to these documented effects, and to increase the capacity in the Andean region to deal with this crisis in an anticipatory manner, we propose to create the Andean Climate Change Interamerican Observatory Network (ACCION) Program through this funding support provided by WHA. The approach envisioned in this proposal tackles capacity building at both the scientific and the communications levels in our target countries (Colombia, Ecuador, Perú and Chile) so as to catalyze networking and strengthen simultaneously local research institutions and policy making in these countries. The ACCION Program will result in a sustainable network of local scientists and stakeholders that can translate and implement the latest scientific results into on-the-ground adaptation measures in all four target countries. In this project, we aim to focus on three main activities: 1) train local scientists, educators, water managers and policy makers; 2) provide cutting-edge education for a group of young scientists from the region in climate change and glacier/páramos hydrologic modeling, and 3) outreach to affected population segments, industries, water managers and other decision makers relying on local networks maintained by our partner institutions in these countries in order to promote policy dialogue with local stakeholders, national governments and regional bodies, and to strengthen human and institutional capital. Having students from the region educated abroad and then bringing them back to their home countries as newly educated experts will leverage the BWHA resources for sustainability of this project beyond its lifetime and allows for continued training and mentoring in these countries. The data generated by the students can serve as a basis for national adaptation plans to climate change and glacier retreat and thereby will guarantee transfer of data and climate change expertise. Our well established contacts with local scientists, national and international entities such as CONDESAN, IADB, SDC and UNESCO-IHP will allow for a rapid and broad dissemination of our results, amount to significant cost-savings, and support immediate application of scientific results among all relevant national and regional entities. The impact of our project will be continuously monitored through self-assessment during planned annual retreats and through periodic reviews by our Strategy Team. Internal Independent Reviews will be tasked to an External Advisory Board, composed of representatives of constituencies served in the Americas. External Independent Reviews will be commissioned from outside institutions such as the AAAS and the US National Academies, with contributions from institutions in the Andean region.