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Bogota Manifesto

Towards an Open, Democratic and Socially Relevant Science in Latin America and the Caribbean

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The contemporary debate on the transformation of scientific and academic policies in Latin America and the Caribbean draws on a regional and global trajectory of struggles over the belief of knowledge as a common good. In 2015, the XXV General Assembly of CLACSO proclaimed the Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge Managed as a Common Good, asserting that research funded with public resources must be openly and freely accessible. That declaration promoted a process of international expansion and convergence which, over the last decade, has crystallised in multiple manifestos, agreements and recommendations – among them DORA, the Leiden Manifesto, the Manifesto for Socioterritorial Metrics of Science, Technology and Innovation by Latmétricas, the Panama Declaration on Open Science, the UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science, and the CoARA Agreement on the Reform of Research Assessment – all aimed at democratising scientific production, reforming systems of research assessment, and promoting a fairer and more participatory model.

In this context, our region has played a leading role in a movement that conceives open science not only as access to publications but as a structural change in the way knowledge is produced, communicated and assessed. This paradigm promotes openness at all stages of the scientific process — from data generation to assessment — fosters collaborative and non-commercial infrastructures, encourages the use of open software and licences, and upholds multilingualism and epistemic diversity as conditions for cognitive justice. It constitutes a response to the historical inequalities in access to knowledge, to the commodification imposed by corporate publishers, and to the dependence on metrics that devalue local and socially relevant scientific practices.

At the same time, a wide body of critical work – comprising manifestos, essays, research publications and reports – diagnosed the global crisis of the academic system: the precarisation of scientific labour, the subordination of research to productivist criteria, and the weakening of its public function. Against this backdrop, proposals have emerged that call for a politicised and mobile science: one committed to the social and environmental problems of territories, in dialogue with communities and non-academic actors, and capable of contributing to the transformation of material conditions of life.

Within this process, the **Latin American Forum on Research Assessment** (FOLEC-CLACSO) has played a central role. The Declaration of Principles: A New Academic and Scientific Assessment for a Socially Relevant Science in Latin America and the Caribbean (2022) constitutes a regional reference that promotes responsible, participatory and situated assessment, oriented towards social relevance, linguistic diversity and the recognition of multiple trajectories.

Building upon these precedents, the present Bogota Manifesto emerges from the joint work of the **CLACSO Working Group "Open Science as a Common Good"**, the **CLACSO Working Group "Mobile and Politicised Social Science"**, and **FOLEC.** This declaration reaffirms a shared horizon: to build open, democratic, just and inclusive sciences, understood as

public and common goods, and as tools for cognitive sovereignty and collective well-being. Inspired by the critical and emancipatory traditions of the Global South, the manifesto calls for the reconfiguration of science, technology and higher education systems in the region upon new ethical and political foundations, oriented towards social justice, epistemic equity, and the happiness of the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Pillars of the Transformative Proposal

Latin America and the Caribbean urgently require a structural and radically democratic transformation of their scientific and technological complexes. This transformation cannot be reduced to technical adjustments or the incorporation of new tools: it entails a profound redefinition of the ends, means and meanings that orient the production of scientific and technological knowledge in the region. Ultimately, it involves contesting the hegemonic model of production, circulation, assessment, use and appropriation of scientific knowledge, in order to move towards a paradigm that places science at the service of peoples, communities, territories, and the deepening of democratic life. Within this transformative horizon, it is indispensable to situate the discussion within a normative framework that recognises the right to science as a human right and science as a universal common good.

The normative framework guiding this transformation is based on the conception of **science as a human right**, as affirmed by UNESCO and the United Nations in documents such as The Right to Science: A Human Rights-Based Approach (UNESCO, 2020) and The Right to Science and Systems of Knowledge (UNESCO, 2022). This approach recognises that all individuals and communities have the right to access, participate in, and contribute to the production and use of scientific knowledge, as well as to benefit from its results. Science, understood as a common good and as an essential component of democratic life, must be developed under principles of freedom, equity, inclusion, and respect for cultural and epistemic diversity. From this perspective, guaranteeing the right to science entails promoting policies that eliminate structural barriers — economic, technological, linguistic or institutional — that limit its exercise, and strengthening social participation in defining its aims and priorities. In Latin America and the Caribbean, embracing science as a human right means orienting its development towards cognitive justice, sovereignty, and the collective well-being of the region's peoples. On this basis, three pillars underpin the transformative proposal outlined here.

- **Open Science as a Public and Common Good:** This notion transcends the restricted view of open access to publications, proposing a comprehensive approach encompassing all dimensions of the scientific process: from data generation to assessment, governance, social participation, digital infrastructures and ethical frameworks. Open science promotes equitable access to knowledge, collaboration among diverse social actors, the recognition of plural knowledges, and the elimination of economic, linguistic and technological barriers that limit the right to conduct research and to take part in knowledge production.

- **A New Model of Research Assessment with Social Relevance:** As proposed by FOLEC-CLACSO, this model rejects the uncritical dependence on commercial metrics and rankings, and promotes assessment criteria that recognise the diversity of research trajectories, multiple contributions to human and environmental development, commitment to local contexts, and the capacity to transform social realities — for example, through parti-

cipatory action research or public policies based on scientific evidence. The objective is not merely to measure better, but to transform what is considered valuable in scientific work.

- **Epistemic and Technological Sovereignty:** This pillar demands the recovery of public, democratic and regional control over the infrastructures, platforms and processes that make science possible. It entails strengthening institutional repositories, developing open and accessible tools, ensuring multilingualism, and guaranteeing that digital technologies – including artificial intelligence – are designed and used under ethical principles, with active participation of the scientific community and without subordination to market logics.

Together, these pillars constitute a transformative architecture that transcends sectoral and institutional boundaries. They can only be fully realised through robust public policies, sufficient financial resources, sustained political will, and institutional leadership and dialogue that foster cultural change. Only then will it be possible to achieve a genuinely democratic science oriented towards the collective well-being of our peoples. These pillars are also the result of a historical process of struggle, reflection and collective creation by the region's scientific and educational communities, now expressed in multiple initiatives, networks and declarations aimed at democratising knowledge.

In sum, transforming science in Latin America and the Caribbean is not merely an institutional challenge: it is a political, cultural and ethical task that must be undertaken with urgency and strategic vision. The future of scientific knowledge in our region depends on our ability to reconfigure its foundations based on a commitment to scientific sovereignty, technological independence, cognitive justice, well-being and the happiness of the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Guiding Principles

The transformation of the scientific and technological ecosystem in Latin America and the Caribbean must rest upon a set of ethical, political and operational principles that guide both public policies and institutional practices, as well as everyday decisions within scientific and academic fields. These principles are not merely technical or regulatory; they are value-driven commitments that enable the reconfiguration of relationships between science, technology, society and power, establishing a coherent and shared framework oriented towards the aspirations of justice, inclusion and sovereignty that traverse the region.

I. Fundamental Principles: Towards an Ethical, Democratic and Committed Science

1. Social Justice, Knowledge Ethics and Broadened Impact

Orient processes of production, circulation and validation of scientific and technological knowledge towards principles of social justice, ethical relevance and commitment to human rights and collective well-being. This involves recognizing and valuing the impact of knowledge within territories and communities, in public policy, and in processes of social transformation. It proposes broadening the notion of "impact" beyond citation or productivity indicators, incorporating social, cultural, productive, environmental, pedagogical

and community dimensions, with particular attention to public problems and the production of common goods.

2. Linguistic and Cultural Diversity as a Condition for Epistemic Inclusion

Actively promote multilingualism and cultural diversity in the processes of production, circulation and validation of scientific and technological knowledge. Public science policies must foster the use of national and regional languages of the Global South, including indigenous languages, through strategies of publication, translation and academic recognition. This requires valuing the diversity of formats, knowledge(s) and modes of knowledge circulation, and recognizing the importance of regional, local and ancestral expressions as integral components of the scientific and cultural ecosystem.

3. Recognition of Co-production of Knowledge and Collective Work

Revalue the collaborative nature of scientific and technological production, adequately recognizing teamwork, inter-institutional networks and interdisciplinary trajectories. Likewise, processes of co-production of knowledge with social actors, local communities, indigenous peoples, social movements, productive sectors and public policy actors must be made visible and valued. The dialogue of knowledge(s) and collective construction must be regarded as central elements of scientific and technological work and incorporated into research assessment and academic recognition criteria.

4. The Right to Participate in Scientific Progress and its Benefits

Recognizing participation in science as a fundamental human right implies ensuring that all individuals and communities can actively engage in the production, circulation and use of scientific and technological knowledge and benefit from its results. This requires public policies that guarantee accessibility, inclusion and effective participation at all stages of the scientific process – from the definition of agendas and priorities to assessment and the social mobilisation and appropriation of results. This principle is grounded in international frameworks promoted by UNESCO and the United Nations system, which affirm the obligation of States to create favourable environments for research freedom, open cooperation and equitable access to knowledge. In the Latin American and Caribbean context, exercising this right entails democratising science, strengthening epistemic and technological sovereignty, and promoting a just distribution of the benefits of knowledge and innovation for the common good and the development of the peoples.

II. Democratisation of Knowledge and Digital Sovereignty

5. Open, Free and Non-commercial Access to Publicly Funded Scientific Knowledge

Promote unrestricted open access to all research outputs funded with public resources, eliminating paywalls or subscription barriers. Such access should be guaranteed through interoperable open-access repositories (green route) and by strengthening scientific journals operating under the diamond model – that is, without charges for either readers or authors. The use of non-commercial infrastructures, sustained by universities, public networks or cooperative open science systems, should be prioritised to ensure the

sovereignty of scientific and technological knowledge and to prevent its privatisation and commodification.

6. Development and Sustainability of Open, Interoperable and Cooperative Infrastructures

Strengthen public and open digital infrastructures that enable the production, circulation, visibility, preservation and reuse of scientific and technological knowledge. This includes open-access repositories, non-commercial journal platforms, book portals, institutional archives and digital libraries. Such infrastructures must operate under open standards, guarantee regional and international interoperability, and ensure the long-term preservation of content. They should also facilitate the development and dissemination of Open Educational Resources (OER), promoting free, reusable access to knowledge for pedagogical purposes.

7. Construction of Inclusive and Representative Academic Information Systems

Design and maintain public, open, federated and up-to-date systems of scientific, technological and academic information capable of representing the institutional, disciplinary and territorial diversity of scientific and educational systems. These systems must make visible research agendas, actors involved, and modes of knowledge production, circulation, usability and appropriation. It is essential that such systems align with open science principles and digital rights, and be democratically governed by public and community actors.

III. Transformation of Research Assessment Models

8. Open, Participatory and Contextualised Assessment Systems

Promote systems for assessing scientific, technological and academic activity based on open, public and cooperative platforms that enable transparency, traceability and democratic control of the assessment process. These systems must adapt to institutional, disciplinary, linguistic and territorial diversity, recognizing different trajectories and modes of knowledge production. Assessment processes should be open, evolutionary, participatory and cooperative, actively involving academic communities and relevant social actors, rather than reproducing opaque, hierarchical, competitive, closed and standardised models.

9. Use of Qualitative and Contextualised Indicators and Overcoming Commercial Metrics and International Rankings

Replace the hegemonic use of commercial metrics such as impact factors or the H-index, as well as rankings, with assessment models based on qualified expert judgement, qualitative criteria and alternative metrics developed in regional and non-commercial contexts. It is essential to promote the use of systems such as Latindex, SciELO, RedALyC, AmeliCA, LA Referencia and other regional repositories for publication assessment. Locally developed, contextualised and relevant indicators must be established for the institutional, territorial and disciplinary realities of the Global South, overcoming dependence on international citation indicators and dominant languages.

10. Assessment with Gender Equity, Inclusion of Diversities and Support for Emerging Trajectories

Actively incorporate gender and diversity perspectives into assessment processes, promoting the visibility, recognition and valorisation of contributions made by women, gender-diverse individuals, and historically underrepresented groups in science and technology. Likewise, specific support must be provided for early-career trajectories, including young researchers and fellows, through systems that consider their specificities, training timelines and initial contributions, promoting mentoring, accompaniment and differentiated recognition.

IV. Education and Culture of Open Science as a Public and Common Good

11. Critical Training and Pedagogical Strategies to Embed Open Science as a Public and Common Good Based on Socially Relevant Research Assessment

Promote educational spaces and pedagogical strategies that foster a critical and collective understanding of research assessment and open science as tools for institutional and social transformation. The socialisation of knowledge is a prerequisite for building communities of practice committed to epistemic justice, equity in the production and circulation of scientific and technological knowledge, and the questioning of hegemonic and corporate models. To embed a culture of openness, training programmes must be accompanied by institutional guidelines and spaces for dialogue that equip all academic actors with the principles, tools and values of open science, facilitating its adoption in teaching, research, university outreach and engagement.

Taken as a whole, these principles enable the construction of a new social contract for scientific knowledge in Latin America and the Caribbean, where science ceases to be a privilege and becomes a tool for social transformation, equity, and the sovereign development of our Latin American and Caribbean peoples.