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Wikileaks cables suggest US blocked Iranian scientist from UN climate panel chair - December 06, 2010

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The latest stream of cables from the website [Wikileaks](#), which is publishing more than 250,000 confidential US embassy documents, shows science getting caught up in diplomatic tussles. One [message](#) reveals that a US delegation urged Rajendra Pachauri, chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), not to appoint Mostafa Jafari (right), an Iranian scientist, as co-chair of a major working group. The other nominated co-chair was a US scientist, Christopher Field of Stanford University in California.

"Having U.S. and Iranian co-chairs would be problematic and potentially at odds with overall U.S. policy towards Iran," says the cable, leaked on 6 December.

Shared co-chairmanship of [Working Group Two](#), which assesses the vulnerability of ecological systems and human health to climate change, would be problematic because "co-chair appointments are for a minimum of four years, and require close collaboration and often travel to or extended residencies in each others, countries {sic}," says the cable, dated 02 September 2008.

While citing climate change as "a key foreign policy issue," the document says that the situation could "significantly complicate" the US commitment to funding the working group. Field was eventually elected to the working group but an Argentinian candidate took Jafari's spot.

Pachauri denied colluding with the US over the nomination. A spokesperson for Pachauri [told](#) the Guardian that he, "neither influenced, nor agreed to influence, the election. Not only would such an agreement be outside his mandate as chairman of the IPCC, but it would also be impossible to achieve."

Information from two other cables suggests that Chinese authorities are spying on Icelandic companies involved in genealogy and medical research, [reports](#) Fréttablaðið, Iceland's largest circulation newspaper. Though few details have emerged, one cable reports that Chinese agents accessed the companies' confidential information by bugging telephone lines and breaking into online databases.

Image: International Institute for Sustainable Development



Posted by Adam Mann on December 06, 2010

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