

Joint Commentary from Alliance Board and the CGIAR Secretariat on the Report of the Stripe Review of Corporate Governance of CGIAR Centers

On the occasion of its joint Alliance Board/Alliance Executives meeting held in Cali, Colombia, on 26-27 April 2006, the Alliance reviewed and discussed the Report of the Panel on Stripe Review of Corporate Governance of CGIAR Centers.

As an initial response, the Alliance welcomes the Report as an important contribution to adapt and improve the quality and efficiency of Center governance in a rapidly changing internal and external governance environment. The Alliance broadly accepts the recommendations put forward by the Panel and notes that considerable progress has already been made over recent years as a result of reviews of governance through Center Commissioned External Reviews (CCERs) and External Program and Management Reviews (EPMRs).

The Report provides valuable advice and guidance on basic governance housekeeping issues as well as on good practice recommendations for a number of governance tools and processes. Finally, the Report helps to initiate more in-depth thinking and discussion on some broader and more strategic governance issues.

In terms of next steps, individual Centers are committed to review and adapt their governance principles, structures and processes and to provide updates on the implementation of the Stripe Review recommendations (as: implemented/ will be implemented/ will not be implemented). A comprehensive and detailed response from all centers will be compiled, including decisions to implement or not implement (with reasons for the latter) on all recommendations. This detailed update on center responses will be shared with CGIAR membership.

Collectively, Centers will address a number of broader governance issues going beyond the Stripe Review recommendations with a focus on:

- Accountability and mechanisms for achieving accountability,
- Evolving nature of Center Boards,
- Effective availability of Center Board competencies, and
- Models and standards of best practices.

Brief Comment from CGIAR Secretariat

We agree with the observations/comments of the Alliance Board/CBC and welcome the contribution of the Stripe Review report on some key governance issues. We think that the report has flagged a number of concerns about center governance and has made some valuable suggestions on the way forward. We do feel however that the report could have contributed a lot more if it had included an assessment and evaluation of current Board performance of the centers, as specified in its TORs. A more specific description of some best practices already existing in many centers would also have been useful. We welcome the Alliance Board /CBC decision to spell out next steps at the level of individual centers.