

## **An Update on the Establishment of an Independent Science and Partnership Council (ISPC)<sup>1</sup>**

### **Background**

At its Annual General Meeting (AGM08) held in Maputo, Mozambique, the CGIAR approved the establishment of an Independent Science and Partnership Council (ISPC) as one of the key elements of the CGIAR System's new governance structure described in the change management document, *A Revitalized CGIAR—A New Way Forward: The Integrated Reform Proposal*. The ISPC will replace the Science Council (SC), the current scientific advisory body of the CGIAR System.

CGIAR members fully recognize the need for an independent body of high level experts that will provide advice to the Fund on science and partnerships. They agreed that the broad areas of focus for this body should include foresight studies, quality of science in CGIAR research, and impact assessment.

Apart from this broad outline, no further definition of the roles and responsibilities of the ISPC have yet been agreed. The CGIAR Transition Management Team (TMT), charged with the oversight of this task, is commissioning an independent task group (ITG) to address this issue.

### **ITG's Terms of Reference**

The ITG is expected to generate a proposal which includes the following:

1. A terms of reference which clearly define the role and specific areas of responsibility of the ISPC, in the light of the body's basic role broadly defined by the CGIAR at AGM08.
2. Recommendations on: (a) structure and organization (size and composition/ profile) and (b) criteria and process for the selection of ISPC Chair and members, recognizing the imperatives of scientific excellence and provision of knowledge on effective networking and partnerships with actors in the development and advanced research community.
3. Guidance on the operation of the ISPC and its working modalities.

### **Timeline and Process**

- The ITG is expected to complete its work and submit a 10- to 12-page report by July 31, 2009 for consideration by the TMT.
- The ITG would meet at least once as a group and conduct most of its work through virtual means. The CGIAR Secretariat will provide a Secretary to backstop the ITG, along with the necessary logistical support (arrangement of meetings, audio/video links, travel, etc).

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<sup>1</sup> An information note for the 16<sup>th</sup> meeting of the CGIAR Executive Council held at CIAT, Cali, Colombia on June 4-5, 2009

- A significant part of the ITG Chair's time would be devoted to this task. This would involve consultations with representatives of stakeholder groups (including the current SC, CGIAR Members/Donors, Centers and Partners) and a visit to CGIAR-related offices in Rome, Italy (FAO, Alliance Office, SC Secretariat, and GFAR Secretariat).

### **Task Group's Size and Composition**

The ITG consists of five (5) members including its Chair. It is composed of eminent individuals who have expertise and experience in scientific research for development, strategic research and partnership policy formulation, and aspects of inter-agency collaboration. At TMT's invitation, the following have agreed to serve on the ITG:

Chair: Kurt Peters (Germany) - Professor, Humboldt University (Berlin)

Members: Akin Adesina (Nigeria) - Vice President for Policy and Partnerships, Alliance for Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA)

Robert Bertram (US) – Acting Director, Office of Environment and Science Policy; Team Leader, International Research and Biotechnology, USAID, EGAT

Ruth Oniang'o (Kenya) - Former Professor of Food Science and Nutrition, Jomo Kenyatta University; former Member of Parliament and Shadow Minister for Education, Science and Technology

Eliseo Ponce (Philippines) – Former Director, Bureau of Agricultural Research, Department of Agriculture; Retired Professor, Leyte State University

The ITG is expected to begin its work in late June and submit its report to TMT by July 31, 2009.

### **Next Steps**

The TMT will discuss the ITG's report and draw up its recommendations for final action by ExCo. The search and selection process for the inaugural members of the ISPC would commence shortly after ExCo's endorsement of the recommendations. It is expected that the ISPC would be operational by January 2010.