

CONSULTATIVE GROUP ON INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH

2nd MEETING OF THE SCIENCE COUNCIL

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END-OF-MEETING REPORT

SCIENCE COUNCIL SECRETARIAT

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

September 2004

ITEM 1: OPENING SESSION

Statement by the Science Council Chair and Welcome by FAO

The Science Council Chair, Per Pinstrup-Andersen declared the second meeting of the Science Council (SC) open and welcomed Council and Standing Panel (SP) members, CGIAR and FAO staff, donor representatives and other observers present. Regrets had been received from SC member Vir Chopra and SC Secretariat staff member Amir Kassam who were not able to attend the meeting due to health problems. The Chair invited John Monyo, Assistant Director General of FAO Sustainable Development Department to address the group. John Monyo welcomed everyone to FAO on behalf of the Director General. He highlighted FAO's commitment to facilitate the work of the Council by making available FAO's technical and scientific resources and by cooperating in fields of common interest, namely in governance, strategic planning and information exchange; in addition to housing the Secretariat. On behalf of the SC, the Chair expressed his appreciation to FAO for agreeing to host the meeting.

Introduction of new Standing Panel members and Executive Director

The Chair introduced the new SC Standing Panel members: Beatriz del Rosario and Leslie Cooksy (Standing Panel on Monitoring and Evaluation, SPME); Maggie Gill and Shabd S. Acharya (Standing Panel on Mobilizing Science, SPMS); Chris Barrett and Reynaldo Martorell (Standing Panel on Priorities and Strategies, SPPS); and Jim Ryan (unable to attend due to health reasons) and Hermann Waibel — a continuing member (Standing Panel of Impact Assessment, SPIA). The Chair warmly welcomed the new Executive Director of the SC, Ruben Echeverría. The Director thanked the Chair and others present for the opportunity to serve the CGIAR. He pledged to work towards strengthening the technical and administrative capacity of the SC Secretariat to provide critical support to the SC. He looked forward to help address key challenges facing the CGIAR, specifically reaching consensus on System Priorities as well as on issues related to monitoring and evaluation, impact assessment and mobilizing science.

Adoption of the Agenda

The provisional agenda was adopted with following additions: under Agenda Item 1d “Opening Session: Report from the CGIAR Chair...”, three papers from the OECD Working Group on Harmonisation of Regulatory Oversight for Biotechnology will be presented; and under Agenda Item 10 “Other Business”, the proposal “The CGIAR Initiative for a Global Open Agriculture and Food University (GO-AFU)” will be discussed by the Council.

Reports from the SC Chair and the CGIAR Chair and Director

Building on work done by the CDC/CBC in seeking stronger Centre alliances, focus and performance, as well as expressed donor interest for more cohesive programmes in the CGIAR, the SC Chair described five key elements of the Council's current agenda: (i) identify a small number of key CGIAR System Priorities that focus on problems for which the CGIAR is likely to have the greatest impact; (ii) implement new monitoring and evaluation processes that give more emphasis to self-evaluation and Board accountability; (iii) measure performance in terms of progress towards achieving the goals of the CGIAR, on the basis of Medium-Term Plans (MTPs) and logframes; (iv) improve the quality of Centre, SWP and CP

MTPs and logframes as a basis for better planning and performance appraisal (also linked to System Priorities); and (v) contribute to CGIAR programmatic alignment (linked to the current activities of the two Task Forces for SSA).

The SC needs more time to evaluate MTPs. The Chair has proposed rescheduling SC, ExCo and AGM meetings, and ExCo has considered this favourably. To allow sufficient time for the SC to properly evaluate MTPs received in early August, a late September meeting date for the SC is proposed. In order for SC to submit a written report to ExCo, a late October ExCo meeting date is proposed while a first week of December meeting date is proposed for AGM. The proposal maintains the annual schedule for Centres to prepare MTPs. A less desirable alternative would be to ask Centres to submit MTPs earlier (beginning of June) leaving meeting dates unchanged.

The Chair updated the Council on the IRRI-CIMMYT merger proposal, pointing out that there are no plans for the two Centres to become fully merged, but the possibility of a single Board and the merging of some key programmes are being discussed.

Kanayo Nwanze, Chair of the CDC reported briefly on a recent CDC meeting in Addis Ababa (first week of July). An Alliance Executive Office (directed by Meryl Williams) and Board have recently been established (CBC is the Alliance Board) as CDC is transformed into an executive body. The CDC/CBC discussed a number of potential reforms including: possible restructuring of Centres; agreement on common services and ways to harmonize standards, practices/ethics across the System; and efforts to foster greater programmatic alignment.

Keiji Kainuma summarized news emerging from the OECD Working Group on Harmonization of Regulatory Oversight for Biotechnology. In particular, two “Consensus Documents”, one on the Biology of Soybean and another on Compositional Considerations for New Varieties of Soybean, were tabled and briefly described.

The CGIAR Chair Ian Johnson and CGIAR Director Francisco Reifschneider held a video-conference with the SC at the end of the first day of the meeting. Ian Johnson updated the Council on progress in the CGIAR reform process. He encouraged the SC to keep focused on the strategic issues facing the CGIAR and to avoid any tendency for diversion. The SC’s objectivity — actual and perceived — must be safeguarded. He highlighted the key role of the SC, through the SPMS, in networking and mobilizing the global scientific community around the CGIAR. He mentioned that within the UN’s Millennium Business Plan tripling of funding of the CGIAR is possible. In such a situation, stakeholders would be looking for an even stronger SC to identify priorities for resource allocation. Lastly, he mentioned donor demand for impact, and the need to make a strong case for agricultural research impacting on the poor.

The SC Chair briefed the CGIAR Chair and Director on the first day of the Council meeting discussions, including the five key elements on the SC’s agenda, the SSA Challenge Programme (CP) and System Priorities. SC members commented on the need for the CGIAR to maintain a sound NARS capacity development dimension, and for stronger linkages between Research Councils and donors within countries.

ITEM 2: CHALLENGE PROGRAMME – IMPROVING LIVELIHOODS AND NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA (SSA): SECURING THE FUTURE FOR AFRICA’S CHILDREN

Dick Harwood, Chair of the SC Task Force on the SSA CP, explained that this proposal was a re-submission following the recommendation by the interim SC in 2003.¹ Harwood pointed out that the extreme significance of this initiative as it is clearly in the hands of the regional institutions. Subsequently their reputation depends on its success. The CP strengths include: (i) potential for strong alignment of priorities with those of NEPAD and sub-regional organizations (SROs); (ii) African coordination and leadership and investment in human resources; and (iii) potential for productive linkages with market systems and local food systems. Three concerns were highlighted: (i) the extent of scientific activities proposed and the potential for generating results of an IPG nature; (ii) the large upfront funding before priorities are known; and (iii) uncertainties about the process, i.e., whether there can be broad impacts at a reasonable cost after the relevant institutions and modalities have been created.

Monty Jones, Executive Secretary of FARA emphasized that this CP is linked to several key initiatives on agricultural development in Africa and has strong buy-in from political leaders. FARA is the technical arm of NEPAD and this CP would implement the work drawing on FARA’s extensive constituencies across the sub-regions. The CP involves strong research entities including CGIAR Centres and other institutions, and cutting-edge science is reflected in the position papers provided in the proposal. The CP introduces a new paradigm, IAR4D, conducting agrobiophysical and social science research aimed at institutional change. The CP mode is needed to build a common agenda for the region. Responding to the SC Task Force critique, FARA suggests moving forward in three Pilot Learning Sites (PLS) to build the partnerships and formulate the research priorities, after which the SC can assess progress and recommend follow-up. Three sites are needed in order to manage risk of failure, and gain experience from very different circumstances in partnership and research agenda development.

The SC debated on whether the SSA-CP proposal is a development initiative or a step towards developing a new paradigm for research for development. In the general discussion the following points were made:

- The model is similar to the African Highlands Initiative (AHI) in being participatory, holistic and highly integrated. However, the AHI has not delivered as expected and has suffered from lack of donor interest. The question was raised as to whether this initiative would be different and could actually lead to impact?
- The IAR4D paradigm is very attractive in terms of involving others outside the research community. ‘Constructing territories’ is needed including municipalities and local authorities; but this and the necessary complementarity are not explicit in the proposal.
- Currently there is no specific research or research institutions defined in the proposal. This CP can be seen as the first step towards developing a new paradigm, but it needs monitoring.
- This CP can be seen to address a major road-block in Africa: the way research is done. Its time-bound product is to create an environment where research is likely to be successful.

¹ The SC had engaged two external reviewers in addition to the Task Force consisting of four SC members, to review the proposal. The Task Force compiled a summary critique which was shared with the CP proponents; and they prepared a response to the SC.

The diagnostic phase can be seen as a large experiment within the partnership building and priority identification process.

- The broad FARA coalition involving CGIAR Centres can make results applicable to end-users and thereby complement the CGIAR Centres. However, the suggested US\$70 million should not be used to disseminate IPGs, but to develop them. Yet, capitalizing on the delivery system to get feedback to science to better fit the needs of the region is a key issue.
- Further implementation of the CP should be compatible with the results coming from the work of the two CGIAR Task Forces on Africa and with other international initiatives on African development.
- This CP should not set a precedent for the future. Each CP must be judged in the light of the problem it addresses. Part of the challenge is to look at the means of financing for possible continuation of the activities beyond the diagnostic phase.
- FARA was urged to carefully consider the locations of the three proposed sites.

The Council decided to recommend that the proposal be given funding for an 18 month diagnostic and learning phase to: a) establish well-defined research partnerships and priorities, b) identify researchable topics and research hypotheses, and c) prepare a logframe with outputs, outcomes, expected impacts, targets and milestones, and plan of resource use.

ITEM 3: REPORT FROM THE STANDING PANEL ON PRIORITIES & STRATEGIES (SPPS)

Mike Gale (Chair of the SPPS) reported on the outcomes of the meeting of the Standing Panel. The Panel had been pleased to welcome new panel members Chris Barrett and Reynaldo Martorell whose presence had broadened the scope of the panel's expertise and discussions. The major item of business had been the work towards the development of System Priorities (SP).

Progress on the CGIAR System Priorities Work

The Council confirmed the need to rationalize the current System priorities areas and discussed a draft developed by a SC task force on the basis of decisions made at SC1.² The Council suggested the following preliminary list of 10 priority areas: conservation and characterization of genetic resources; genetic improvement of specific traits; improved water management in agriculture; better management of forests and forest landscapes; better soil and land management; improved production and processing systems for high-value commodities; improved management and development of livestock systems; improved management of aquatic resources; policy and institutional innovations to reduce poverty and hunger and to enhance competitiveness of smallholders; strengthen national and regional capacities for agricultural research. In addition, cross-cutting themes and regional programs might be designed on the basis of research components from each of the ten priority areas.

Donor observers to the meeting were supportive of the efforts. They were interested in the way integrated and cross cutting themes would be handled, and what the implications there

² This draft was presented in the Appendix to the Summary Report on Priorities and Strategies 2005-2010, prepared as a discussion document for this meeting of the SC

would be for future funding modalities against SP. They further suggested that the major outcomes of the consultation process should be published once the SP have been defined (post SC3), in order to clearly record the process for donors and other stakeholders. The SC Chair invited senior members of FAO staff present in the meeting to prepare inputs towards developing SP (particularly, for example, for livestock, to further develop and improve the rationales and weighting of sub-priorities).

The Council decided to: (i) send to Centres by the end of September a revised draft of the summary document and Appendix to allow them to have an opportunity to comment including suggestions for deletion of any sub-priority area and addition of new ones with the necessary justification back to the SC no later than 15 November;³ (ii) participate actively in discussing SP with stakeholders (particularly at AGM04 stakeholder meeting, breakout session, business meeting, and SC meeting); (iii) organize a series of workshops to further improve System Priorities (one per priority area) to be held consecutively in Rome in January-February 2005 (the SC Chair offered to chair these meetings in order to ensure uniformity); and (iv) make a final decision on SP at the Spring 2005 meeting of the Council.

Ethics and Science in the CGIAR

Professor Peter Sandoe presented the report “How should the CGIAR Handle Ethical Challenges? – Issues and Proposal for a Strategic Study”, which he had prepared with Karsten Klint Jensen. The Council thanked Professor Sandoe for providing an enlightening study on ethics as they affect the CGIAR. The proposed recommendations for two future reports, one on Research Ethics and the CGIAR and the second on Ethics and the CGIAR Mission were welcomed.⁴ The Panel felt that the studies, particularly the first, were extremely important for the CGIAR by providing guidelines for ethical behavior, building on the existing Centre code of conduct. The SC believed that there was not only a need to highlight and unify approaches across Centres around common codes of conduct, but to bring codes in line with those used by other partner ARIs whose collaboration could well be prohibited should such codes not exist.

The Council decided to ask SPPS to: (i) prepare terms of reference for the proposed study to be undertaken as soon as feasible, and identify a suitable chairperson for the panel (SC Members were given a list of names of potential panel members and were asked to respond to the SPPS Chair with comments or additions); and (ii) consider convening the second panel preferably before 2006 so as not to delay important outcomes for the CGIAR.

Other ongoing and proposed activities

Food Safety Consideration in CGIAR Research. Onesmo ole-MoiYoi reported that he had visited IFPRI (in June) and that a SC meeting to define the scope and terms of reference for the Food Safety study was being planned. Together with the SC Chair, he will attend the workshop that is likely to take place in late November.

³ This would give the Council an opportunity to further refine the draft document on SP, particularly sub-priority areas, before continuing with further consultations and revisions as outlined in the Summary Report.

⁴ Situations where ethical consideration is needed include experimentation on human subjects (e.g. the randomization of subjects in nutritional trials – as might apply to the Harvest Plus CP), prior informed consent for interviews, questionnaires, and the need for Independent Review Boards

Biosafety Study Report. The Panel Chair reported that a revised draft SC commentary on the Report had been approved by the SC Chair and Members of the working group on this study. The revised SC commentary would be circulated to the SC for confirmation on a no-objection basis.

International Public Goods in an era of IPR. The Panel Chair reported that the first of three studies (plus a round-up workshop) planned on IPR was underway. This includes a survey of intellectual property (IP) and IP issues at the CGIAR Centres. The Central Advisory Service (CAS) on Intellectual Property for the CGIAR had been commissioned to develop a questionnaire, which had been shared with SPPS, and conduct the study. CAS would make the final outcomes and report available to the GRPC and the SC for their first meetings in 2005.

Two other IP related studies to be led by Onesmo ole-MoiYoi were pending on concurrence from the Rockefeller Foundation (RF) and the International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications (ISAAA). Terms of reference would be developed jointly with these organizations.⁵

Genomics Research in the CGIAR. The SPPS Chair reported that progress with this item involved developments within the Generation CP and BECA at ILRI. TORs would be developed for a study to establish current best practice and likely near future developments in the application of genome technology in crop, livestock and fish improvement.

Animal and Fish Genetic Resources Collection and Conservation. The SPPS has commissioned two papers, one on animal and one on fish genetic resources. Consultants will prepare a common summary and recommendations for a single document for submission to SC3 in April 2005. The SPPS Chair noted the increased international attention to these fields since initiation of the SC study. The ICARDA DG welcomed the study and noted that four CGIAR Centres were dealing with the area, namely ILRI, ICARDA, IPGRI and WorldFish.

Poverty mapping (in support of priority setting). Alain de Janvry briefed the SC on international efforts to develop poverty mapping. Although much new data was available, and much had been promised from these initiatives, they were just beginning to yield information which could be used in priority setting. He believed that the SC had a role to play in bringing together this information through a scoping study. He highlighted the importance of conducting a limited set of country case studies (from a range of diverse countries) which would allow identification of the poor and the evolution of poverty in relation to different actual and potential agro-ecological capacities. The SC also welcomed the opportunity to interact with Dr. Ergin Ataman from FAO. Dr. Ataman gave a presentation on poverty mapping, outlining possibilities for collaboration and highlighting some difficulties in this work, such as matching global and national scales, and using data collected by censuses.

⁵ In discussion it was noted that substantial work had gone into drafting the humanitarian aspects of IP policy and that pending the outcomes of the RF study, the SC could consider using this work to facilitate the relationship between the CGIAR and the private sector.

ITEM 4: REPORT FROM THE STANDING PANEL ON MONITORING AND EVALUATION (SPME)

Ken Fischer, Chair of the SPME, introduced the following topics:

Review of the CGIAR Research Agenda

The Council discussed the draft assessments of Medium Term Plans (MTPs) prepared for the meeting. The MTPs 2005-2007 reflect improvement with respect to logframe clarity and clearly defined annual targets. This year a logframe had also been requested for each Systemwide and Ecoregional programme but there was still a lot of variability across these submissions.

The Council decided to: (i) finalise its comments within a week following the meeting; (ii) ask Centres to respond with comments, corrections as well as their plans to address the points made by the SC, in a response of two pages (maximum); and (iii) attach Centre responses to the SC commentary for submission to the Group at AGM04.

Challenge Programme Review

The Council had three tasks regarding CPs: (i) to review the CP MTPs and provide a commentary; (ii) to make a recommendation to ExCo on the continuation of the Generation CP; and (iii) to prepare a paper on the lessons learnt from the CP process so far in collaboration with the CGIAR Secretariat.

In relation to Challenge Programmes MTPs the Council decided to follow the same procedure as with Centre MTPs. Regarding the Generation CP, the Council decided to recommend to ExCo to continue its implementation as a full programme.⁶

A preliminary draft on lessons learnt from the programmatic aspects of CPs was presented in the meeting. The main drivers for a successful CP included a need to have a clear definition of the problem to be solved, “comparative paradigm” across partners and purpose-oriented partnerships. During the discussion the following points were made:

- It was questioned whether the main goals of CPs could be consolidated or would they be mutually conflicting; i.e. CP as a mechanism to conduct research and deliver outcomes and CP for building partnerships.
- Partnerships alone were not a sufficient goal of CPs, but a means to an end.
- CPs could not be discussed without providing a counterfactual to compare this mode of research with alternative modes, such as Systemwide programmes and Centre programmes.
- With the defining of System Priorities, consideration of suitable modes for organization would come after priority identification.
- The CP documents give an impression of relatively modest transaction costs. Clarification is required as to whether these will be over and above the regular overhead costs.
- High transaction costs could be justified in the beginning of a CP because of the need to build partnerships as an important step towards effective research in the CPs.

⁶ An issue was raised on the proper consideration of biosafety and regulatory issues in the development of transgenic lines for use. The SC concluded that GMO products were not a particular target of this CP which had a main focus on comparative genomics and creating molecular technologies and marker systems for use in breeding. The GMO issue applies both to this CP and the HarvestPlus CP and to Centre research in general.

- Each CP means a transfer of core funds from Centres to the new programmes. This is a serious issue in the climate of declining unrestricted funds.
- The SC should also evaluate progress made by Systemwide programmes.

The Council decided to finalize the lessons learnt document together with the CGIAR Secretariat and a consultant who is conducting the assessment for governance, management and finance lessons from the CPs.

CGIAR Performance Measurement Process

Leslie Cooksy of SPME reported to the Council on the recent meeting of the Technical Experts and Resource Persons group (TERP). This is a sub-group of the CGIAR's Working Group on Performance Measurement (WGPM). The SC, together with the CDC, had been asked to prepare indicators for five performance elements in the CGIAR process to develop a performance measurement system. These elements were quality and relevance of staff, quality and relevance of programmes, outputs, outcomes and impacts. The TERP had developed a new list of indicators using the SC/CDC document as input, as well as other similar inputs for the remaining three performance elements.

The Council decided that: (i) the SC/CDC document outlined appropriate principles for moving forward in developing performance indicators for research performance; (ii) before it was possible to endorse indicators for research performance, the decisions on System Priorities would have to be concluded (by Spring of 2005); (iii) the MTP and logframe process had to be revised to cater for monitoring of planning and achievement towards agreed targets and priority goals; and (iv) that the SC Chair would represent the Council in a CGIAR meeting of performance measurement scheduled for September 12 in Rome.

Changing Monitoring and Evaluation in the CGIAR System

The Council considered a final revised draft document *Changing Monitoring and Evaluation in the CGIAR System*. This document represents completion of a lengthy process to streamline the Centre review process. It describes a process which would establish a continuum of evaluations starting from Centre self-assessment and end in an external review of Centre programmes and management, i.e., a modified EPMP. The performance measurement system would be an input to the new M&E process. The different parts of the system will be complementary to each other. In the proposal, the Boards would assume the main responsibility for oversight, and the external programme and management reviews would focus on auditing the internal evaluation processes, the Board's governance function and the Centre's strategic directions.

In the discussion the following points were made:

- The CGIAR Secretariat is involved in organising the management component of the reviews. This should be adequately reflected in the document. The CGIAR Secretariat should also participate fully in preparing the commentary on the management and governance component of the reviews.
- Development of a complementary monitoring system may require capacity building so that the self-assessment mechanisms adopted follow best practices and satisfy the needs of an effective system.

- The implementation of the new system, following the Group's approval, would involve the SC, the CGIAR Secretariat, the Centres and the CBC. It would encompass among other, development of new Terms of Reference for the modified EPMRs.

The Council decided to submit this report to the Group (AGM04) with minor modifications.

External Reviews of Centres and SWPs

Progress is being made in implementing the 4th EPMR of IFPRI, the 5th EPMR of CIMMYT, and the review of the Systemwide Programme on Alternatives for Slash and Burn. Correspondence with CIFOR, ICRAF and the WorldFish Centre had been initiated in order to plan their forthcoming EPMRs. The SC had commissioned the 3rd EPMR of IWMI (2006) in its 1st meeting and following recommendation of SPME decided to commission the 5th EPMR of ICARDA and the 2nd EPMR of ILRI to be started in 2006.

ITEM 5: REPORT FROM THE STANDING PANEL ON IMPACT ASSESSMENT (SPIA)

Hans Gregersen, Chair of SPIA updated the Council on the following initiatives:

Ex-post NRM Research Impacts. SPIA member Hermann Waibel hosted a NRM research IA workshop in Hannover in June. All seven case study leaders, SPIA members, consultants and an IA expert from FAO attended. Progress within the case studies was reviewed and ideas were exchanged on how to improve these case studies. Emphasis was on the methodology of data analysis under the given data constraints. A presentation on concepts and methods was given by David Zilberman. There will be a final workshop (mid 2005), inviting a wider range of expertise on impact assessment to disseminate results, summarize, conclude and compare methods and findings and agree on strategic guidelines for future NRM IA in the CGIAR based on Zilberman's paper and input from the Centre case study experiences.

Development of the CGIAR Impact Website. SPIA, in collaboration with all the centres, is currently developing a website for ex-post impact assessment in the CGIAR. All centres have affirmed a strong need for a System level website to disseminate the products of their impact assessment efforts to broader audiences, and to help build an IA 'community of practice' in the System. The CGIAR Impact Website (<http://impact.cgiar.org>) is now deployed and is publicly available. A brief demonstration was given by SPIA consultant, David Raitzer. The present version of the site includes a searchable dynamic bibliography of ex-post impact assessment and adoption studies, a dynamic link manager (to individual CGIAR Centre and other organisations' impact sites), a dynamic calendar of events, an 'impacts brief' window and a methods section. Development of the site has been the result of effective collaboration between CGIAR Centres, the Science Council Secretariat and the FAO Information Services Division.

Training Evaluation and Impact Assessment. After a field visit to Kenya in May/June to meet with directors and scientists in the CGIAR Centres, the Panel redesigned its workplan, methods and questionnaires for the study. A detailed study update is available.

Donor Demands and Uses for Evidence of Research Impact: The Case of the CGIAR: The draft report of results from last year's email survey of CGIAR members, now completed,

draws preliminary conclusions regarding the comparative utility of information on different impact indicators and how IA results are applied. To go beyond the preliminary findings, the results obtained will be explored in greater detail through telephone interviews. Klaus Winkel (formerly of DANIDA) has agreed to work with SPIA and will conduct the interviews. At AGM '04, preliminary conclusions will be presented.

CGIAR and NARS Research in Africa: Evidence of Impact to date: After substantive discussions at the last SPIA meeting, a revised plan for implementing this study was developed. Candidates have been identified to undertake the first phase of the study.

Towards a Demand-Led Ex-Post Evaluation Strategy for Meeting Internal Learning Needs in the CGIAR: SPIA is still in the process of refining the intended approach for this study. A draft proposal has been revised by the SPIA Chair and Consultant but has not yet been finalised.

Impact Assessment of Participatory Research Approaches: SPIA has informed CIAT of plans for the study and has requested pertinent information, e.g., completed ex-post impact assessments of PR. CIAT's response has been very positive and the Centre has provided a long list of IA studies of PR. SPIA members are currently reading through these to assess the feasibility of the Panel successfully undertaking such a study — and the added value it could bring to what already exists.

Following the Chair's summary, several comments were made. One was a plea for SPIA to promote the generation of good quality panel-level data from the field. Earlier examples of this included the ICRISAT Village Level Studies and the World Bank's Pakistan data. A major use of this could be impact analysis (hence a role for SPIA), in addition to allow for assessments of changes in adoption, poverty levels, vulnerability, over time at specific sites. Another comment was related to the need for assessing impacts using indicators reflecting the Millennium Development Goals, i.e., examining how the CGIAR is contributing to the MDG.

ITEM 6: REPORT FROM THE STANDING PANEL ON MOBILIZING SCIENCE (SPMS)

Drs. Lisa Sennerby-Forsse and Keiji Kainuma, Co-Chairs of the SPMS, introduced a report on the SP's activities and a revised workplan for discussion. The plan outlined a strategy and proposed activities for achieving the Panel's goal which is to facilitate the SC's role in enhancing and promoting the quality, relevance and impact of science in the CGIAR by catalyzing and mobilizing the research activities of the Centres in order to increase global scientific capacity. The proposed strategy includes: (i) establishing a focal point for interaction with national research bodies throughout the world; (ii) identifying opportunities for enhancing the value of collaboration across the system; and (iii) promoting recognition of the quality, relevance and impact of science in the CGIAR.⁷

⁷ Specific activities were enumerated under each of these three strategy areas. Research funding bodies at the national level, e.g., national research councils, Academy of Sciences and Ministries of Science, Environment, Agriculture and Foreign Affairs are the target client group for the SPMS. Cooperation between scientists in the CGIAR and outside the System appears to be extensive (based on 2005-07 MTPs), and the SC would like to further encourage that type of cooperation. However, prior to initiating contact with these bodies, a clearer sense is needed of the status of the System Priorities.

Besides the activities presented by the SPMS, a number of issues related to the strategy and workplan were raised during the discussion:

- The need to better identify strategic issues in the SPMS workplan was highlighted.
- This effort could play a key role in helping assess the ‘other 96%’ of global agricultural research, and in determining where the CGIAR’s comparative advantage lies. However, the plan does not spell out clearly enough how the ‘other 96%’ would be mobilized.
- More attention needs to be given to enhancing collaboration with the private sector (and the Private Sector Committee), looking for win-win situations between the private sector and CGIAR research activities which identify those areas of collaboration with good potential.
- Ways and means for the SC to reach out to the ‘crème of the crop’ in S&T (fellows of societies, Academies of Science).⁸

The Council decided to support the proposal from SPMS to proceed preparing a summary overview of the present collaboration going on at the Centres in order to have relevant information before continuing developing a SPMS strategic plan. This plan will be presented at SC3.

Finally, the Chair indicated that there had been insufficient time to produce a State of the Global Agriculture Research paper.

The Council decided to prepare the paper for AGM2005 and annually thereafter; and that SPMS should initiate the establishment of a task force to help with the preparation of the paper as well as explore collaboration with the CGIAR Agricultural S&T Indicators (ASTI) initiative as soon as possible.

ITEM 7: TASK FORCES ON SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

In response to a question about the role of the SC in this initiative, the Chair indicated that this activity involves all the SC, not just the Chair (and Onesmo ole-MoiYoi—also a member of the TF). Preliminary drafts of the TFs will be shared with SC members for reactions and input, and the final integrated report from the TFs would be circulated to the SC for endorsement or to raise queries/concerns about the report in the context of a SC commentary.

Concern was raised about the potential conflict in the relationship between the two TFs and the CP on SSA. Since the CP on SSA has approval for only 18 months at this stage, the problem is not so great.

A question was asked about the role of NEPAD and the UN Inter-Academy Council (IAC) study on SSA, and the usefulness of their documents. The NEPAD documents are being considered by the TF. Despite past efforts, including the UN IAC study, the TF has not been able to find a list of priorities for research in SSA developed by SSA. Priorities exist at the national and sub-regional level, but not at the regional or SSA level. GFAR priorities for SSA

⁸ It was suggested that the establishment of a network of eminent scientists working in areas similar to CGIAR Centres. Also, IFPRI is starting to develop a database of key focal points and sees mutual benefits from collaboration with SPMS in this area.

are not specific enough. As documented in the IAC study, this is because of the inherent heterogeneity and diversity of the large region defined as SSA.

ITEM 8: FAO AND SC COLLABORATION

The SC Chair moderated a discussion on exploring opportunities to enhance FAO - SC interaction. He emphasized the need to explore ways to enhance that particular collaboration rather than addressing FAO and CGIAR ongoing or potential centre collaboration which is a much broader topic.

The FAO Assistant Director General for Sustainable Development (ADG-SD), John Monyo invited selected FAO staff members to the meeting. The ADG-SD explained that given the independence of the SC, FAO's role has been purposely reactive rather than proactive, in responding to the needs of TAC/SC as an honest broker. Nevertheless, he felt that there was a need to explore opportunities for more synergies and to strengthen collaboration between the two. He was pleased to note this topic in the agenda.

In considering ways to enhance FAO-SC collaboration, the ADG-SD mentioned the following aspects:

- the need for the SC to circulate the draft CGIAR System Priority list among FAO staff to increase participation in the forthcoming priority discussions;
- FAO's substantive potential capacity to respond to those priorities and needs, based on a number of examples of ongoing collaboration between FAO and the SC; and
- the institutional arrangements for facilitating future interaction could continue as in the past, i.e., on an ad hoc demand-driven basis, or, alternatively, more formal arrangements could be considered if that would provide a more effective channel for accessing FAO's technical and scientific resources.

The SC Chair thanked the ADG-SD. Before opening up the discussion, he acknowledged the potential value of FAO staff helping the SC sharpen its priorities. As an example, he recalled the previous day's discussion on livestock issues. He emphasized that the SC would need to work with individuals in their personal capacities (and not as a FAO representatives), as indeed all SC and SP members function in their personal capacities when serving on the SC.

Some of the key points emerging from the discussion were:

- Considerable collaboration already exists between FAO and the SC.
- There does not appear to be a compelling reason to formalize this relationship, with the exception of situations where a significant amount of time would be required, e.g., as a member or chair of a review or study panel, in which case a formal agreement with the DG of FAO or top management is required.
- All (formal or informal) collaboration needs to be cleared with the relevant ADG.
- There is considerable knowledge of FAO activities and expertise within the Centres; SC members could tap into that knowledge base.

The Council decided to: organize a one-day FAO orientation for SC members at a date to be defined; and prepare a brief summary of existing collaboration between FAO and the SC, as a base from which new proposals to strengthen such collaboration could be developed.

ITEM 9: GRPC MINI-WORKSHOP REPORT

Mike Gale briefed the SC on the joint GRPC and SC mini-workshop on “Technical issues associated with the development of CGIAR policies to address the possibility of unintentional presence of transgenes in CGIAR *ex situ* collections”. The participant represented Centre genebanks and laboratories, the GRPC, national genebanks, multinational seed companies, a farmer organization and expertise on biosafety and legal matters. Other NGO representatives had declined the invitation.

The Workshop comprised presentations from all sectors followed by break-out groups to formulate consensus thinking on the current status of GM research and breeding in crop plants, current best practice in germplasm management, and technical aspects and cost of testing and sampling for specific genes. The products of the three groups were discussed and amended by the whole Workshop and these documents were used by GRPC to formulate Guidelines for CGIAR genebank management to ensure maximum accession integrity.

These draft Guidelines will be available for consultation before presentation at AGM. It will be made clear that gene flow biology makes it impossible to ensure complete purity of all accessions. Moreover any test based on sampling can never provide 100% assurance that any accession is free of accidental presence of any specific gene. The Guidelines will describe best practice for germplasm management and associated data acquisition and the decision processes to be followed prior to testing for transgenes in existing accession and in newly received or collected accessions. These provisions should result in publishable accidental presence levels and associated confidence levels for specific crops in specific genebanks. It will be made clear that any request for seed lots with higher levels of purity than ensured by the CGIAR genebank will only be met if the cost is borne by the requester. Another recommendation is for the establishment of a publicly accessible database on the current GM status of crops in the world to be maintained by the Systemwide Genetic Resources Programme.

SC welcomed this proactive initiative by the Systemwide Programme. In the following discussion it was noted that the Workshop and the ensuing Guidelines referred only to plants and that SC should maintain a watching brief of similar issues relating to livestock and fish as they arise.

ITEM 10: OTHER BUSINESS

SC communications strategy proposal

Fionna Douglas presented a note prepared as a follow up to the Communications Strategy proposal discussed at SC1. The note includes proposals for the SC to make better use of existing CGIAR communications mechanisms (CG News, CGIAR Annual Report, CGIAR AGM and Science Briefs) and a revised SC Communications Strategy.

The Council decided to approve the document as presented and move ahead with its implementation.

Conflict of interest declaration by SC members

In response to a decision taken at the last SC meeting to consider instituting conflict-of-interest statements for all SC and SP members, a SC declaration of interest form was tabled for consideration. There was consensus that the proposed two-page form should be adopted with minor modifications.

The Council decided that members should complete the Declaration of Interest form and send it to the SC Secretariat where they would be held in confidence.

International Assessment of Agricultural Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD)

An overview of the outcomes of the First Plenary Meeting of the IAASTD held in Nairobi at the end of August 2004 was provided by SC Member Onesmo Ole-MoiYoi. The range of stakeholders from NGOs to consumer and producer groups, international organizations, the private sector, research centres, and governments was emphasized. In addition, the assessment process was described, and the potential importance of the study was portrayed. SPIA Consultant David Raitzer added details to illustrate the scale of the assessment process, as it includes over 400 authors, with 20 authors per chapter, a design team of 300, and \$10.76 million in meeting costs.

The SC Chair subsequently questioned whether the assessment merits the opportunity cost of the total resources required. The representative of Canada argued that the assessment may help to highlight the role of agricultural research as an important means to development objectives, and thereby may help mobilize resources for the CGIAR. David Raitzer queried whether the Council or Members would wish to be involved in the Bureau, Bureau Subcommittees, the design teams, as authors, or as sources of expert nominations. No member indicated a desire for direct involvement in the study. The SC Executive Director expressed support for sending an observer to assessment meetings, so as to keep abreast of developments (especially on the methodological front) without directly participating in the assessment conduct. The issue of whether the Bureau seat reserved for the CGIAR should be filled by the SC was subsequently discussed, and it was decided that the CGIAR ExCo should designate a body to participate in the bureau, and could determine if a separate second seat for the SC should be requested.

ITEM 11: FUTURE MEETINGS, AND SC CHAIR'S CLOSING REMARKS

A mini-SC meeting will be held in Mexico during AGM '04 on Sunday 24 October from 17:00 to 19:30 (venue and agenda will be communicated soon).

The SC reconfirmed the following meetings:

- (i) IWMI will host the Spring meeting (**SC3**) from 4-9 April 2005 in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Standing Panel meetings will be held 4-5 April, a field day is planned for 6 April; and
- (ii) the WorldFish Centre will host the Autumn 2005 meeting (**SC4**) (from 3-7 October 2005 subject to change depending on the decision of the timing of the AGM) in Penang, Malaysia.

At the invitation of the Africa Rice Centre, the SC will hold its Spring 2006 meeting at WARDA Headquarters in Bouake, Cote d'Ivoire at a date to be defined.

The SC Chair made his closing remarks and summarized the key decisions taken on the following agenda items:

- approval of an initial phase of SSA Challenge Program;
- continue the System Priorities identification process;
- finalise the review of Centre and CP MTPs;
- recommend to continue with Generation CP;
- finalise the Lessons Learnt from CPs document;
- recommend approval of new M&E proposal of Centres;
- continue with proposed itinerary for EPMRs;
- continue with SPMS workplan and strengthen its strategic vision;
- continue FAO-SC collaboration by preparing a summary of key collaboration possibilities and organize an FAO workshop for SC members; proceed with SC Communications Strategy;
- approval of SC Declaration of Conflict of Interest;
- endorsement of Open University initiative; and
- SC participation at IAASTD.

The SC Chair brought the open session of the 2nd Meeting to a close. The SC then proceeded in closed session.

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ROME 6-10 September 2004**

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