

Summary of ExCo 9 Discussion and Recommendations to the CGIAR on CGIAR Priorities and Strategies: 2005-2015¹

Science Council Chair Per Pinstруп-Andersen briefed ExCo on the Revised Priorities and Strategies document. The paper was further amended, taking into account ExCo's and CGIAR Members' comments following ExCo 8, and further discussion at the Science Council meeting in Penang (September 2005). He noted that comments received were mostly on items either at the beginning or at the end of the document, but not on the priorities *per se*. Therefore the final version (September 2005) maintains the original 20 priorities and provides additional clarification in response to the comments received from stakeholders.

He noted that the CGIAR agenda is a research-for-development agenda, not development *per se*, with a mandate to produce international (not local) public goods (IPG). SC considers emphasis should be on spillovers from research—to benefit other locations and countries. Furthermore, it is critical to demonstrate plausible pathways through which research conducted in one site will have usefulness elsewhere.

Beyond immediate humanitarian emergency relief, Centers should only engage in disaster relief where there is a research component to the work. In general, there are other agencies with a mandate for greater competency in disaster preparedness and relief.

It is important to determine where the CGIAR should be on the research to development continuum. SC believes it is important to have strong links both to NARS in the North and South as well as to agricultural and rural development organizations. In this context, the CGIAR's role in product delivery systems (e.g. for seeds) would be to undertake research on such systems, but not enter into the actual delivery side.

SC proposes that 80 percent of all funds should be directed to the 20 identified priorities and the remaining 20 percent be spent at the discretion of Centers. The SC suggests that perhaps one-half of the 20 percent could be spent on new research ideas and the other one-half might be spent on specific capacity building as a free standing activity. However, capacity building, where it is linked to research would be considered within the 80 percent.

Once the priorities are approved by the CGIAR, SC will ask Centers to organize their MTPs in accordance with the priorities.

He suggested an implementation strategy, described in the revised paper.

Discussion:

¹ Excerpt from Ninth Meeting of the CGIAR Executive Council (October 19-20, 2005) Summary Record of Proceedings, October 31, 2005.

- There was widespread recognition and appreciation of the lengthy but inclusive process which was used to develop the priorities. Some members stressed that employing such a transparent process was as important as the outcome.
- ExCo was pleased with the clarification of SC's on capacity building and the placement of capacity building linked with research clearly within the priorities. The Centers, however, noted that the position on capacity building was still somewhat disappointing but looked forward to continuing to work with SC on implementation. Some members shared this observation.
- There was agreement on the importance of production of *international* public goods. But there is a need to clarify the concept of "internationality."
- There is also a need to define the CGIAR position on the research-to-development continuum. The Centers expressed that their work is not moving towards development, instead they are doing more research targeted to development. Given the ambiguities in definition, the SC should be liberal and flexible when distinguishing between research *per se* and research for development.
- There was a strong feeling within ExCo that it was time to endorse the priorities and move forward towards their implementation, in particular the mechanisms needed to ensure alignment of the priorities and the MTPs.
- Nevertheless, some members called attention to the need for a long-term strategy and vision of the CGIAR that reflects its research for development mission.

P. Pinstrup-Andersen clarified that, regarding IPGs, it is the *intent* when an activity is planned that often defines whether it should be classified as an IPG. If it is intended as an IPG, both the output target and the pathways towards that target should be made clear.

Conclusions and ExCo Recommendations to the CGIAR:

- *ExCo commends the SC for the advice it is providing on CGIAR priorities.*
- *ExCo recommends approval of the proposed CGIAR System priorities 2005-2015 by CGIAR Members.*
- *Implementation of the priorities is a crucial matter and will require further discussion.*
- *To ensure clear understanding of the priorities and their rationale by those stakeholders who have not actively followed the process, a major communications exercise is necessary. A short document should be developed for circulation at AGM05. A summary of the critical concepts and boundary issues (such as between research for development and research on development and between research and delivery systems) should be included in the summary document.*
- *The Chairman suggested that the Science Council should consider how in future it could react to shifts in the environment of agriculture and agricultural research (such as the recent avian flu crisis) by developing a quick review of the research available and recommending what, if any, the CGIAR should do to address the emerging issues.*