



MEDIA ADVISORY

**As Climate Change Hits the Hungry, Agricultural Researchers
Galvanize Global Effort to Adapt to Impact**

***Intensified Research Effort to Focus on Producing Reliable Yields in
Harsher Climates and New Technologies to Reduce Greenhouse Gases in
Tropical Countries***

The economic shocks of climate change in poor, developing nations already struggling with hunger and poverty may be catastrophic—or, at a minimum, may lead to massive transformation of rural communities and agricultural production systems as we know them.

In the face of these threats, the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) (www.cgiar.org) will embark on a new effort to intensify and streamline the research of its 15 international centers to mitigate the impacts of climate change on agricultural production in the tropics and subtropics. New research will include:

- breeding crops to withstand heat, salt, flooding, and drought;
- improved farming techniques to help poor farmers use water, soil, and other natural resources more efficiently; and
- boosting agriculture's role in removing climate-altering greenhouse gases from the atmosphere.

WHEN: Monday, December 4, 2006, 9:00 am-6:00 pm

WHERE: CGIAR Annual General Meeting, Hilton Washington Hotel,
1919 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC

Editor's Note: Registration is required to attend the CGIAR meeting.
To register for meeting or for more information, contact:

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Online Press Room: <http://www.cgiar.org/meetings/agm06/media/>

Media Highlights:

Monday, December 4

9:00-11:10 am Plenary Panel Discussion: ***Climate Change and Agriculture: People at Risk and Promising Research and Policy Responses***

Martin Parry, William Makundi, and Cynthia Rosenzweig, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), and Robert Zeigler, Director General, International Rice Research Institute (IRRI)

12:30-2:00 pm Parallel Lunch Sessions

- **Oasis: System-wide Program to Combat Desertification** (Hemisphere Room)
- **High-Value Crops: Research, Policies, and Programs to help the Poor** (Military Room)
- **Collective Action to Sustain Biodiversity for Current and Future Generations** (Georgetown West Room)
- **Biofuels: Current CGIAR Research and Future Collaborations** (Georgetown East Room)
- **Responding to the Avian Influenza Emergency: The Role of the CGIAR** (Thoroughbred Room)
- **Toward a New European Union Strategy for ARD: Presentations from EC, DFID, Switzerland, Belgium** (Jefferson East Room)

3:00-4:30 pm Parallel Meetings with Groups of Centers and Members on Thematic Issues

- **Making Markets and Institutions Work for the Poor** (Military Room)
- **Tree Commodity Value Chains** (Hemisphere Room)
- **Collaborative Research Program for Sustainable Agriculture Development in Central Asia and the Caucasus** (Georgetown East Room)
- **Women in Agricultural Science** (Lincoln Room)
- **Multi-Center Initiatives in Distance Education** (Georgetown West Room)

5:00-6:30 pm **CGIAR Science Awards Ceremony**

The following awards will be presented: biennial King Baudouin Award; Promising Young Scientist, Outstanding Scientist, Outstanding Scientific Support Team, Outstanding Partnership, and Outstanding Scientific Article

Tuesday, December 5

6:00 pm **Gold Mercury Award Announcement**

The CGIAR has been chosen to receive the prestigious Gold Mercury Cooperation and Development Award 2006 (www.goldmercury.org). The Award is granted to individuals, companies and organizations that promote trade and invest in developing economies in order to provide better living standards to local people.

6:05-7:00 pm **Mme. Anne Marie Lizin**, President of the Belgian Senate

The Crawford Memorial Lecture: Food for All: A Challenge for the 21st Century
Mme. Lizin is President of the Belgian Senate and Chairperson of the Senate Foreign Relations and Defense Committee. She served as an Independent Expert on Human Rights and Extreme Poverty on the United Nations' Human Rights Commission from 1998 to 2004.

The Crawford Memorial Lecture is named in honor of Sir John Crawford, a passionate supporter of international agricultural research for development and a founding father of the CGIAR.

Further Background

The world's population is expected to increase by 3 billion people by 2050. In a world where 75 percent of poor people depend on agriculture, climate change will have a profound impact on their food security.

Higher temperatures in Latin America, Asia, and Africa will shorten growing seasons. Changes in rainfall patterns may lead to droughts in some areas and to floods in others. Researchers have estimated that a rise in temperature and change in rainfall could result in losses amounting to as much as \$2 billion a year through reduced yields of important food crops such as maize. In other regions of the South, farmers will face greater climate variability, including more frequent and sustained intense weather events such as droughts, floods, and typhoons.

CGIAR

For 35 years, CGIAR scientists in over 100 countries—supported by an alliance of international and regional institutions, multilateral and bilateral organizations, and private foundations—have studied every critical component of the agricultural sector in poor developing countries. This includes research on agroforestry; biodiversity; food, forage and tree crops; fisheries; livestock; and the food policies that underlie agriculture in developing nations.

The CGIAR mandate covers the world's most important food crops, including rice, wheat, and maize, which form the backbone of the global food supply. The majority of the world's poorest farmers, who are the main beneficiaries of CGIAR research, live in unfavorable environments, such as desert margins. In many developing countries, the resource base of agriculture is already in a fragile state due to overuse and unsustainable development. Global climate change adds yet another dimension to these pressing problems.

The CGIAR is a strategic agricultural research alliance dedicated to generating and applying the best available knowledge to stimulate agricultural growth, raise farmers' incomes, and protect the environment. It supports 15 research centers worldwide conducting groundbreaking work to nourish the future. For more information, please visit www.cgiar.org.

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