

INTERIM CHAIR'S SUMMARY
6th System Management Board Meeting
Virtual, 18 April 2017 15:00-17:00 Paris time

Dear Board colleagues,

Dear Center Board of Trustee Chairs, Directors General and other colleagues,

As preparations continue for the System Council's forthcoming 4th meeting and related events, to be held on 9-12 May 2017 in Amsterdam, the Netherlands ('SC4'), the Board held a short virtual meeting which focused on framing key strategic inputs into the Council's deliberations on several matters. To ensure that outputs of our discussions are shared at the earliest opportunity, this Interim Chair's Summary provides a brief overview of the main meeting discussions. Appendices to this summary list the formal decisions taken and actions agreed.

On decisions we took:

As part of the Board's financial oversight responsibilities, the CGIAR System Organization Audited Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2016 were approved. This information will now be included in the 2016 CGIAR Financial Report, together with the Center-Board approved 2016 Financial Statements for each of the Centers.

On other discussions and inputs:

Financial reporting: Informed by the Board's Audit and Risk Committee ('ARC') deliberations, we discussed a short summary report of Center financial positions, and considered how we as a Board might best inform ourselves of overall financial health of Centers, perhaps using a dashboard tool of the key indicators, in order that any concerns can come to light at the earliest possible juncture. The Board agreed that this should be something to return to later in the year. I would like to thank the Chair, Bushra Malik, and the members of the ARC for their diligent work since July 2016 to bring thoughtful proposals and recommendations to the Board, and for their work in driving forward key System-wide projects such as the Risk Management Framework, on which we will all hear more in the coming months.

Funding: The Board heard that Elwyn's conversations with Center colleagues and our Funder have continued since our last meeting, so that at SC4, the System Council will have before it a funding options paper that outlines potential ways to strengthen CGIAR's funding. The Board supported the broad approach of putting forward a range of options to be further developed based on System Council strategic inputs. We agreed on the strategy of presenting the full scope of potential options – including possible short-term actions; areas which could be worked on in the medium-term; and those worth the investment of considerable effort to bring positive longer-term change. The Board agreed that it is important for the paper to include some introductory remarks on the impact of current funding patterns on the overall financial performance of the System. There will be multiple opportunities for Center colleagues to have inputs into this work as it goes forward this year, with one of the first being at the at the CRP Leaders' planned 12-16 June 2017 meeting in Montpellier.

Taking forward the expert panel's work on the former GLDC proposal: As foreshadowed in my Interim Chair's summary of our SMB5 meeting in Rome on 28-29 March 2017, the Board also took the time to consider the additional observations made during the 30 March 2017 adhoc call with CGIAR's Funders on the Expert Panel's recommendations. One of the key questions raised during that call was whether we as a system have the timetable right to facilitate a strong proposal being developed. Others emphasized the need to ensure that the final program reflects an integrated partner approach and the sharing of effort and resources.

The Board requested that the office prepare a revised draft call for a new proposal, and in considering the feedback from the adhoc call that the draft call provide increased clarity on the overall strategic approach and the consultation process involved in the CRP design. To ensure that the proposal best balances the requirements of optimal proposal design and program activities, prior to the formal call being made, ICRISAT will be requested to consider the substantial design and prioritization work identified in the Expert Panel report and propose a consultative timetable for the development of a new high quality proposal. The Board will then confirm the proposal development and review the schedule, and issue the formal call. To help cement Funder support for the approach, these perspectives will be discussed at SC4, with any additional feedback from that session helping to inform the final text of the call for proposal.

Finalizing the IEA evaluations on Genebanks and Gender: The Board also discussed the process of preparing Management Responses to the two final reports delivered by CGIAR's Independent Evaluation Arrangement on the Evaluation of Gender in CGIAR (10 April 2017) and the Evaluation of the Genebanks CRP (14 April 2017), taking note that a thoughtful response will require considerable cross-System consultation given the cross-cutting nature of the two evaluations. Board colleagues agreed that in the context of making sure that maximum value was being obtained from the evaluations process, the IEA's proposed date for delivery of management responses by, respectively, 3 May and 5 May was too accelerated in the context of the length of the reports and the consultations required. The Office was asked to convey to the IEA the Board's aim to have the relevant responses available by 5 June 2017.

The Board met in Executive Session at the end of the meeting without Funder representatives present; the detail of this discussion will not be recorded in the minutes but the focus of these discussions was on how the Board can best gather intelligence on funding trends and predictions and, most crucially, ensure that the right information reaches the Centers at the right time to best enable planning and protect against future shocks. We will communicate again on this with Centers in the coming weeks and months.

I offer my thanks to all those across the System who have worked on preparing for our deliberations on these matters; they are complex topics for which many people have searched for solutions for many years. I am confident that with the ongoing excellent collaboration and open communication, creative solutions to these challenges will be within our reach.

Martin Kropff
Interim System Management Board Chair

[Appendix 1 - Decisions we took](#)

SMB/M6/DP1: Meeting Agenda – 6th Meeting, 18 April 2017

The Board **adopted** the Agenda (Document SMB6-01, Revision 1)

SMB/M6/DP2: Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2016

The Board **approved** the CGIAR System Organization Audited Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2016.

[Appendix 2 - Actions we agreed](#)

SMB/M6/AP1 – Center Financial Positions

By late 2017: The System Management Board will reflect on whether there is a need to revise the current financial indicators to assess Center financial health, and whether a dashboard tool could be developed to facilitate oversight of potential emerging issues.

SMB/M6/AP2 – Finalizing the Portfolio

By end-May 2017: Prior to a formal call for proposal being made, the System Management Board will invite ICRISAT to consider how the substantial design and prioritization work identified in the Expert Panel report will be carried out and on the balance between proposal design and activities of the program, and then present a timetable for the development of a new high quality proposal, to be reviewed and confirmed by the Board.

SMB/M6/AP3 – Taking stock of CRP and Platform governance arrangements

By end-Q3 2017: The System Management Office was requested to move forward with the proposed activities for taking stock of CRP and Platform governance arrangements in consultation with the key stakeholders identified in the proposed plan (document SMB6-04).

SMB/M6/AP4 – Independent Evaluations on Genebanks and Gender

By end-April 2017: The System Management Board requested that the System Management Office liaise with the Independent Evaluation Arrangement including on timings to ensure that the evaluation reports and materials can be fully reviewed and that a consultative drafting and approval process of the required Management Responses can take place.

[Appendix 3 – Meeting Participants](#)

Members and Observers	
Name	Role
Martin Kropff	Interim Chair
Catherine Bertini	Voting Member
Shenggen Fan	Voting Member
Gordon MacNeil	Voting Member
Bushra Malik	Voting Member (Agenda items 1 and 2)
Jimmy Smith	Voting Member
Eugene Terry	Voting Member
Margret Thalwitz	Voting Member
Elwyn Grainger-Jones	Ex-officio non-voting Member
Tony Cavalieri	Active Observer (System Council representative, BMGF)
Eric Witte	Active Observer (System Council representative, USA)
Victor Kommerell	Active Observer (CRP Leaders' representative)
Invited Guests and Meeting Support	
Name	Role
Nicole Birrell	Convener of the Center Board Chairs
Karmen Bennett	Head, Board and Council Relations (System Management Office)
Albin Hubscher	Head, Financial and Program Performance (System Management Office)
Elise Perset	Head, Legal and Office Services (System Management Office)
Peter Gardiner	Senior Manager, Program Performance (System Management Office)
Nadia Manning-Thomas	Board and Council Relations Manager (System Management Office)
Olwen Cussen	Board and Council Relations Associate (System Management Office)

Apologies	
Name	Role
Ann Tutwiler	Voting Member
Rachel Sauvinet-Bedouin	Active Observer (Head, IEA)
Maggie Gill	Active Observer (ISPC Chair)