

GUIDELINES FOR A CGIAR PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIES FORMULATION PROCESS

Draft for discussion

INTRODUCTION

As indicated by the Group at AGM2002, there is urgency for the CGIAR to formulate new research Priorities and implementation Strategies to inform the individual Center, Systemwide and Challenge Program decisions on the aggregate CGIAR research portfolio. These priorities and strategies will move the System from the agreed CGIAR goals and the seven strategic planks of the Vision and Strategy adopted at AGM 2000 into an action plan for implementation in the short and medium term. Most important is to help define the strategic niche for Challenge Programs in the CGIAR's research and development agenda.

iSC proposes that the formulation and drafting of the CGIAR Priorities and Strategy framework be a broadly consultative, participatory process involving as many stakeholders as possible, as was successfully accomplished in the drafting of the new CGIAR Vision and Strategy. By involving stakeholders, the exercise will both benefit from their varied perspectives, wisdoms and experiences, and lead to broader ownership and accountability for outputs.

The exercise will proceed in two steps. Step One will involve the harvesting of stakeholders' views on the priority outputs/impacts/opportunities which they believe would best advance the goals of the CGIAR. The outputs from Step One will feed into Step Two which is designed to identify the priority research, policy, and capacity strengthening activities needed to achieve the priority outputs/impacts and in which CGIAR has comparative advantage and a chance of achieving success.

The CGIAR clients and research/training users will figure prominently as participants in Step One in identifying and expressing the outputs/impacts/opportunities that best will meet their needs in the future. On the other hand, in Step Two, more expert opinion from scientists, both from the CGIAR and the broader scientific community, will be needed. Their mandate will be to translate the Step One outputs into research, training, and capacity building projects and activities of an international public goods nature, where the CGIAR has comparative advantage, and which have the greatest chances of success.

The process will be managed initially by the iSC until June 2003. The output from Step 1 will then be turned over to the regular Science Council which will bring the process to a conclusion. SCOPAS, with Alain de Janvry and Amir Kassam in charge, will serve as the focal point for managing the exercise, with support from iSC as a whole and the iSC Secretariat.

The exercise will fully involve CDC, CBC, and GFAR. Not only do they have the necessary expertise, but they will be the most immediately involved in the future implementation of outcomes. Collaborative agreements have been secured with these three institutions. Accordingly, a person each from CDC, CBC, and GFAR will join SCOPAS/iSC to advise and assist in the design and implementation of the process.

PREPARATORY PHASE

The preparatory phase will consist in the following three activities:

(i) *Reminder of the starting assumptions framing the process*

The two starting points are:

- The CGIAR goal: to reduce poverty, hunger, and malnutrition by sustainably increasing the productivity of resources in agriculture, forestry, and fisheries.
- The seven planks of the AGM2000 Vision and Strategy provide the premises upon which the exercise will be based.

Documents expressing these two starting points will be posted on the iSC web page in support of the consultation.

(ii) *Assembly of data and preparation of expert statements to inform the process*

The following information will be posted on the iSC website prior to initiation of the consultation in order to assist participants to the consultative process:

- TAC/iSC P&S database, updated and expanded with help from FAO and the Centres.
- Summaries of the outcomes of the completed regional priority setting exercises from GFAR/ROs/SROs.
- Priorities established in intergovernmental consultations such as the Millenium Development Goals and the outputs from the Johannesburg Summit.
- Short summary papers prepared by experts on a range of key issues surrounding poverty, natural resources, the environment, and the changing policy environment.
- Selected literature of most immediate relevance.

The iSC web page in support of the consultation will provide links to these sources of information.

(iii) *Building of momentum and designing the process*

- Availability of a statement providing a clear articulation of the purpose of the exercise and its critical importance at this time in the implementation of the

Vision and Strategy, and in bringing greater guidance to future priority setting and resource allocation.

- Official endorsement and commitment to participate by key CGIAR leadership groups and GFAR.
- Consultations on the design of the process with CDDG, participants to the workshop on Research Priority Setting in CGIAR centers held at ICLARM in May 2002, and selected long time participants to CGIAR affairs.

STEP 1 : STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTATIONS

Step 1A: E-consultations by stakeholder panels

Stakeholders Panels: Five parallel panels will be appointed as follows:

Four regional panels: Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, CWANA.

One global panel.

Panel membership: Each panel will have a maximum of 17 members. Members will be selected through consultations with GFAR, the Centres, and other stakeholder organizations. Panel members will be expected to have reasonable understanding of the CGIAR by the time the process is initiated.

Proposed membership of the regional panels is as follows:

| Institution | Number of members |
|--|-------------------|
| NARI | 2 |
| Ministries of Agriculture or the Environment | 1 |
| Universities: South | 1 |
| Universities, ARI: North | 1 |
| CGIAR Centers | 2 |
| International NGO | 1 |
| National NGO | 1 |
| Farmers Organization | 1 |
| National private sector | 1 |
| Multinational private sector | 1 |
| Regional/Sub-Regional Organization | 1 |
| Regional Development Bank | 1 |
| International Foundation | 1 |
| International Development Organization | 1 |
| Bilateral donor | 1 |

Membership for the global panel will be determined by expertise with global agricultural issues

Languages: Preliminary documents and data will be posted in English. All participants will be required to have English reading ability. English will be the medium for three of

the panels: Global, Asia, and CWANA. The Latin America panel will be conducted in Spanish, with English contributions by those who prefer that language. Weekly summaries will be available in both Spanish and English. English with French translation as needed (perhaps in summary form) will be used for Africa. Every effort will be made to have Francophone stakeholders fully and actively involved. Weekly summaries will be available in both English and French. (Note that, if language is considered to be an insurmountable barrier, the Africa group may have to be split into two sub-panels, one in each language.)

Recommended steps for each panel

The process will last over three weeks, with each week considering one of the following issues:

Week 1. Identify emerging /critical/unattended issues to meet CGIAR goals; ongoing and new problems/challenges/threats based on:

- Changes in poverty: nature, causes, and dynamics.
- New constraints on productivity: agriculture, forestry, and fisheries.
- New threats to sustainability of agroecosystems and their NR context.

Note: Each panel will start with a short suggestive list of selected questions related to each of these issue areas derived from the expert statements. Lists will be panel specific to reflect regional/global considerations. This list would be elaborated by iSC, the process manager (see below), and the group coordinator(s).

Outcome: Prioritized list of issues that need to be addressed in meeting the CGIAR's goals and the seven planks of the Vision and Strategy.

Week 2. Identify emerging opportunities and threats to deal with these issues:

- In new developments in science.
- In new markets, new products, new institutions.
- In changes in the political economy.
- In new partnerships.
- In new initiatives by donors.

Outcome: Prioritized list of opportunities.

Week 3. Identify the priority issues and knowledge gaps that can need to be addressed via research (by CGIAR or partners), capitalizing on emerging opportunities.

Outcome: Prioritized list of issues and knowledge gaps for research. Items on this list should be as precisely specified as possible to serve as concrete guidelines for priority setting in Step 2.

Process

- All panel members must agree to contribute in all three weeks at least once each week.
- The group coordinators are suggested by iSC but their roles are confirmed by the panel members in their first virtual encounter. Coordinators may work together or take turns in assuming leadership.
- The electronic work of each panel will be managed and guided by RIMISP, the Chile-based Latin American NGO that successfully conducted at the request of TAC the electronic consultation for the Vision and Strategy exercise. RIMISP professionals will have access to the ongoing work of all five groups, in particular to make suggestions by comparing procedures across groups. They will be in charge of use of the internet for communications and postings.
- Coordinators follow up daily (if possible) on submissions, summarizing and guiding the discussion as seen fit. They manage a Delphi process of dialogue among panel members to seek to arrive as close as possible to a consensus at the end of each week. They send to panel members a summary following the last working day of each week and guide the ranking process in each week. At the end of the process, they are responsible to report the prioritized list of issues for research.
- All coordinators will get copies of weekly outcomes from the other groups so they are informed of overall progress. RIMISP will provide counsel across groups.

Step 1B: Open consultation

The objective of this open consultation is to garner additional suggestions, obtain a broader sense of priorities among stakeholders, and achieve very broad ownership of the process and its outcome.

The consultation will consist in summarizing the lists of priority issues for research established by the regional and global panels. These lists will be posted on a web site with broad advertisement to elicit participation. This will be done over a 2-3 weeks period. Participants will be asked to identify their regional and institutional backgrounds. They will be asked:

- To rank what they consider to be the five most urgent short run issues in the global panel list and in one regional list of their choice.
- To rank what they consider to be the five most important long term issues in the global panel list and in one regional list of their choice.
- To add up to two themes on each of the two lists they have voted on, as seen fit.

Information gathered by this process will be processed by RIMISP. RIMISP will also read across the documents from the Panels, analyze the Panel priorities, and compare them with the results of the open consultation. The outcomes of both the focus group and the open consultation processes will be synthesized by RIMISP and the information serve as input to Step 2.

STEP 2: SCIENTIFIC CONSULTATIONS

The purpose of Step 2 is to translate the critical issues from Step 1 into a list of prioritized research programs, related supportive research topics, and implementation strategies. Research recommendations will take into consideration both the likelihood of success in research and the probability that results will be delivered and adopted.

This work should be done by Panels composed principally by scientists knowledgeable about how science-based development can be implemented to meet CGIAR goals. This will include both CGIAR Centre scientists and scientists from outside the system familiar with CGIAR research. Five panels will again be organized, one for each region and a global panel. Each panel will include scientists representing the five disciplines in the CGIAR Logframe Outputs, namely

- Germplasm Collection, Characterization, and Conservation (Logframe Output 1).
- Germplasm Improvement (Logframe Output 2).
- Sustainable Production Systems through INRM (Logframe Output 3).
- Socio-economics and Policy (Logframe Output 4).
- Enhancing Institutions (Logframe Output 5).

In a last phase of the process, the five panels will work jointly to prioritize research programs across regions and globally.

The following sequence would be followed in the development of Step 2. The detailed procedure may be modified by the Science Council as appropriate, but it is important that stakeholders participating in Step 1 anticipate how their contributions to the priority setting exercise will be used in shaping the final outcome.

1. *Receipt of the outputs of Step 1*

The emphasis placed on the various issues and themes by the different panels participating in Step 1 and the outcome of the open consultation will give the Step 2-panels a qualitative indication of the relative priorities of the different themes and sub-themes.

2. *Identification of those issues where research and research related activities could make a significant contribution*

The lists of critical issues will be evaluated and those susceptible of being tackled via research and related activities, based on the nature of the problem and on the alternative solutions, will be identified by the panels.

3. *Identifying the research, training and capacity building activities where the CGIAR has a comparative advantage*

This will be done by evaluating if potential outputs would lead to international public goods, if there is demand from NARS, if there is lack of attention by the private sector, etc. There should be a set of criteria to evaluate each topic individually. The final output should be a list of topics, global and by region, for both

CGIAR research and its research partners, and for roles and responsibilities devolved to others.

4. *Prioritizing the research and research related topics (in iteration with 5)*

The panels will devise a quantitative system of assessment of the various topics within each major theme. All topics will be assessed and quantified based on giving weights to individual features of each topic. No attempt will be made to quantify across themes. The output would be a list of priority topics with recommendations on types of programs best suited to address each topic.

5. *The five panels work together in identifying research programs for each region and globally, and defining the organizational arrangement and structures best suited to carry out the research (in iteration with 4)*

Research topics selected above need to be analyzed jointly in terms of developing guidelines on how best to carry out the interdisciplinary research on each topic within the CGIAR as well as the complementary activities related to training and capacity building. The five panels will work jointly to agree on the integrated package of priority research needs to meet priority output/impact/opportunity needs. The panels will also propose what type of programs and organizational structure will likely fit best each major research area in the CGIAR System. The output should be a recommendation on strategies of research team structure/s for each priority topic, both globally and for each region.

OVERALL TIME FRAME AND EVENTS

Step 1 to start in March, 2003, with completion by mid-June

- Organizing the database and requesting short papers from experts – March.
- Organizing stakeholder panels – March.
- Running Stakeholder Consultations – April 7 to April 25.
- Open consultation – early-May to mid-May.
- Interaction with stakeholders at GFAR meeting in Dakar – May 22-24.
- Consideration of outcomes by iSC and stakeholders at the iSC meeting in Rome – June 9-13.

Step 2 from July to October, 2003 (To be elaborated by the regular Science Council)

- Organizing scientific panels.
- Running scientific consultations.
- Preliminary presentation to ExCo in September.
- Consideration of emerging priorities and strategies by the Group at AGM 2003.