Meeting Summary
4th System Council Meeting,
10 and 11 May 2017

Purpose:

This document presents the Meeting Summary for the 4th meeting of the System Council held on 10 and 11 May 2017, following on from the Chair's Summary previously issued on 19 May 2017.

Prepared by: CGIAR System Management Office

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Introduction:

This document presents a summary of the 4th meeting of the System Council ("Council") held on 10 and 11 May 2017 in Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

By way of overview:

- **Agenda items**. The meeting considered the eleven (11) agenda items set out in the table of contents on the following page.

- **Decisions**** The Council took four (4) decisions during its meeting, described in the text, and set forth in Annex 1 as a compendium for ease of reference.

- The two (2) '**Action Points**' ** referenced in the meeting summary serve as a basis for tracking the Council's agreement on items for follow up. Progress on action points will be reported in advance of each in-person Council meeting.

- **Participants**. Annex 2 sets out a list of meeting participants.

  ***The Decisions and the Action Points noted in the text are a transcript of the Decisions and Action Points included in the Chair's Summary, as issued on 19 May 2017, available here:* http://www.cgiar.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/SC4-10_Chairs-Summary_19May2017.pdf

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Annexes

Item 1: Opening Session

1.   The Council Chair, Juergen Voegele, opened the 4th meeting extending the Council's appreciation to the Government of The Netherlands for their financial contributions and substantial efforts in hosting this meeting in such a high-quality facility as the Royal Tropical Institute in Amsterdam. A quorum was present.

2.   **Decision SC/M4/DP1**: The System Council **elected Melle Leenstra**, representative of The Netherlands, as the non-voting Co-Chair for the meeting pursuant to Article 5.2 of the CGIAR System Framework ("Framework").

3.   The Chair tabled the provisional Agenda, and agreed to take the following items into Agenda Item 11 Other Business:

    a.   Debrief on the upcoming FAO biotechnology regional consultations.
    b.   Terms of Reference and membership of the Council's Strategic Impact, Monitoring and Evaluation Committee.

4.   **Decision SC/M4/DP2:** The Council **adopted the Agenda** (meeting document SC4-01).

5.   There were no potential conflicts of interest declared by meeting participants with regards to the Agenda.

Item 2: Positioning our conversations for to be ready for the future

6.   The Chair introduced Dr. James Canton, CEO and Chairman of the Institute of Global Futures[1]. Not previously involved with CGIAR, and recognized as one of the world's leading experts on extreme futures and the urgent need for adaptability in the face of unprecedented technological change, Dr. Canton was invited to provide a keynote address to the Council to stimulate thinking on the rapidly changing world and what CGIAR can offer to the grand challenges and opportunities this may bring, challenging the Council to also maintain its focus at the most strategic of levels.

7.   With an innovative presentation titled '*Future Smart: Global Transforming the Future of Ag and Food*', Dr. Canton provided stimulus for thinking about the future in the following ways:

    a.   Challenging CGIAR to test its 'future readiness': The concept was presented as a challenge to the leadership of CGIAR in terms of how it could accelerate its future readiness to be able to make not just an impact but to change the fundamental dynamic and paradigm around food. Dr. Canton put forward the proposition that there are three possible futures for the world, and that should the world choose (most desirably) the latter, global players such as CGIAR could and should be making greater efforts to shape that future:

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[1] www.Globalfuturist.com

       i.   *Fortress Economies*: Characterized by sovereign walls and accepted global inequality management

      ii.   *GeoChaos World*: With resources restricted

    iii.   *Collaboration World*: Characterized by cooperative growth and social transformation

b.   <u>Strategic surprise:</u> It was proposed that productively managing strategic surprise is a way of ensuring that an organization is not missing something that's fundamental to their future.

c.   <u>New language:</u> The presentation suggested that CGIAR needs to find a new language around food security to be able to get it on the agenda of not just policymakers, but also on the agenda of other leaders and individuals around the world.

8.   Those taking the floor to comment on the presentation and bold questions posed emphasized that issues such as: intentional and unintentional barriers to capturing and accessing data to data; growing (or at least major pockets) of resistance to globalization; and the world's overall readiness – or lack thereof – to see the use of artificial intelligence as one part of the package of solving the complex issue of putting the right food on the right tables, as being some of the major barriers to full acceptance of the potential for the "Collaboration World" model to result.

9.   Dr. Canton acknowledged that security and border protection issues are currently dominating policy dialogue across the globe. However, through analogy to the health sector, he emphasized that solutions to meeting the enormous challenges confronting the world on climate change, nutrition and food security need the same broad vision that the health sector is taking. In health, artificial intelligence is empowering humans on the planet in ways never envisaged because of the broad acceptance of nanotechnology in fields traditionally reserved for people. He posed the rhetorical question – why be satisfied with finding out about a challenge when it is before you? Why not take up all the global technological advances to not only just discover the challenges, but to be able to process, analyze and finally forecast in an accurate way the future – paving the way for CGIAR can be at the forefront of the most appropriate response.

10.   Reflecting on the comments and questions posed, the Chair thanked Dr. Canton for a highly stimulating conversation. The Chair connected many of the messages arising from the discussion with those he heard in other global fora such as the World Economic Forum's Global Future Council on Food Security, which he Co-Chairs. These all point to a growing fear among the world's population now, not only about globalization but perhaps more about innovative technologies, especially the extremely rapid growth in technological development and pervasiveness throughout society. Another key takeaway is that information is key for people to be able to make decisions, so there needs to be greater transparency and sharing of information.

Item 3: CGIAR's funding modalities

11.   The Chair opened this session noting that the System Council had expressed an interest in having a scoping paper to help with thinking through the efficiency and effectiveness of CGIAR's current funding modalities, and whether those modalities provide the right stimulus and incentives to bring new and/or additional funding into the System. The Chair framed the current challenge for the Council as remaining strategic to the maximum extent possible, while thinking through how more funding can be channeled to the System from new and innovative sources, whilst also maintaining existing funding in a meaningful way that works for individual funders.

12.   The Chair invited Elwyn Grainger-Jones to take the System Council through some of the thinking and ideas in the [Funding Modalities Scoping Paper](#) to frame the conversation. The first part of the presentation focused on the identification of the key issues and challenges around funding, while the second part focused on some ideas to consider on possible incremental adjustments to make, areas to clarify or tighten up and some parts to possibly be liberalized.

13.   Before inviting comments and questions from the Council members, the Chair encouraged thinking beyond the current terminology that is used, such as "CGIAR Research Programs" and "Flagships". Rather, he proposed that the Council remain open to looking at other options which would help to keep and grow system-level funding, whilst also leaving open the option of more innovative mechanisms to accommodate the needs of Funders who may bring very particular requirements to the table.

14.   In response to the presentation, Council members expressed support for progress made to date to explore ways to address the challenges and opportunities of funding modalities. Comments from Council members touched on the following:

   a.   Addressing the current funding situation: There was recognition that the current funding situation is causing some concern. It was proposed that an appropriate response strategy would require a range of sustainable solutions. Some solutions may come from adjustments in the existing funding modalities, while others may come from exploring and implementing some new and innovative options.

   b.   Accountability: There was support from many Council members for the direction of the ongoing work on the results-based management and reporting system, which would allow funders to better understand the System's achievements, so this could be in turn used in funders' own political systems to support their proposals for funding to CGIAR. It was stressed that clear deliverables, metrics, goals and targets need to be the basis for assessing achievement.

   c.   Communication: CGIAR should be doing a better job in communicating effectively a strong value proposition for what it is doing and what it is contributing as part of a bigger system. This should be targeted not only to the

current to a wide set actors including development banks, such as NGOs and governments of countries where CGIAR operates, among others, which may be influential in promoting CGIAR as a valued global mechanism.

    d.   <u>Portfolio flexibility</u>: The funders were happy that the question of whether there is a missing middle in terms of how funders can fund was addressed. There were positive responses to the possibility of exploring whether some flexibilities such as flagship level earmarking could be introduced.

    e.   <u>Programmatic improvement:</u> Considering the gains from the governance transition, there was some suggestion that further adjustments to the programmatic side of the system could also provide some positive outcomes, particularly with respect to prioritization.

    f.   <u>Genebanks:</u> There was some disappointment expressed that little progress had been made on the underfunding of the genebanks and a request that this be considered as an urgent matter by SIMEC.

15.   With appreciation to the Council members for a rich discussion on funding modalities, the Chair proposed an action point to take the process forward:

<u>SC/M4/AP1- Funding Modality Options</u>
In recognition of the important information provided by the System Management Office in the Funding Modalities Scoping paper on both identifying the issues and a range of solutions around funding modalities, SIMEC will undertake a process to refine the possible solutions that could be taken forward and provide a framing of these for the System Council's consideration in its 5ᵗʰ meeting in November 2017.

Item 4: Bringing prioritization into our resource allocation decisions

16.   Referring to the ISPC-led workshop on 'Supporting decision-making for prioritizing resource allocation to achieve a dynamic and effective CGIAR research portfolio' held on the day prior to the 4ᵗʰ Council meeting, the Co-Chair noted that there was a rich discussion on the complexity in funding decisions. He noted that the workshop offered an opportunity to reflect on previous efforts and to consider how to do it prioritization could be done better in the future.

17.   At the Co-Chair's invitation, the ISPC Chair, Maggie Gill, presented on the outcomes of the workshop, noting that the objective of the workshop was to start to build consensus on the way forward for resource allocation to support a dynamic and effective CGIAR research portfolio. The ISPC Chair pointed out the differences between long term prioritization and shorter-term resource allocation.

18.   The results from the panel discussion held during the pre-event workshop provided lessons around the consequences for funding strategies of a changing research environment and from partnerships.

19.   Reporting back on criteria for prioritization, the ISPC Chair explained that in leading an initiative to reach agreement on how to define science quality, given the many views

across the System, the ISPC had presented four elements which taken together constitute 'quality':

    a.   <u>Relevance</u> refers to the importance, significance and usefulness of the research objectives, processes and findings to the problem context and to society, and CGIAR's comparative advantage to address the problems. It incorporates strategic stakeholder engagement along the AR4D[2] continuum, explicit impact pathways, original and socially relevant research aligned to national and regional priorities, as well as the CGIAR SRF and SDGs. It also recognizes the importance of International Public Goods (IPGs).

    b.   <u>Scientific credibility</u> requires that research findings be robust and that sources of knowledge be dependable and sound. This includes a clear demonstration that data are accurate, that the methods used to procure the data are fit for purpose, and that findings are clearly presented and logically interpreted. It also recognizes the importance of good scientific practice, such as peer review.

    c.   <u>Legitimacy</u> means that the research process is fair and ethical and perceived as such. This encompasses the ethical and fair representation of all involved and consideration of interests and perspectives of intended users. It suggests transparency/lack of conflict of interest, recognition of responsibilities that go with public funding, genuine recognition of partners' contributions as well as partnerships built on trust.

    d.   <u>Effectiveness</u> signifies that research generates knowledge, products and services that stimulate actions that address the problem and contribute to solutions and innovations. It incorporates dynamic theories of change underpinned by assumptions for how change happens for effects to occur. It takes into consideration negative unintended consequences of research, appropriate implementation and effective communication. It also relates to leadership, capacity development and a supportive enabling environment for quality research.

20.   The ISPC Chair explained that to stimulate dialogue on the criteria presented, some voting exercises were undertaken anonymously through an electronic tool as part of the workshop. Participants were asked to indicate the level of importance to a series of questions. The results of the voting were summarized by the ISPC Chair who also provided some commentary on the results from this non-rigorous method may reflect, including:

    a.   The first question asked participants to consider whether the four elements described to constitute science quality are a useful basis for making decisions on resource allocation. The results showed a majority of participants chose to 'agree' compared to 'strongly agree' on this and the discussion following the vote provided guidance for further work to be undertaken to refine this approach based on the four elements.

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[2] Agricultural research for development

b.   The voting on the four criteria showed that relevance and effectiveness were considered as very important by more of the participants than scientific credibility and legitimacy, supported by comments on the need to ensure impact and the need for key targets in the Strategy and Results Framework (SRF).

c.   In fact, there were surprising results on the voting on legitimacy which saw more votes for somewhat important and not important than very important, and even voted by some as not important. The discussion following this vote clarified that this was not an indication that legitimacy was not important, but that it did not necessarily play a role in resource allocation.

d.   Some additional questions in the workshop voting showed that while comparative advantage was considered very important to resource allocation decisions, cohesion among flagships within a CRP was not.

21.   At the end of the session the Council members were invited to try out the electronic voting on the question of 'how important is it to you or your organization to maintain the system in addition to programmatic funding' which received a strong majority for 'very important/important'.

Item 5: Adequately addressing agricultural systems in fragile environments

22.   The session was initially framed by Martin Kropff, Interim Chair of the System Management Board, highlighting that in 2016 a tough decision was taken to not include a proposal for a CGIAR Research Program on Grain Legumes and Dryland Cereals (GLDC) among the CGIAR programs and platforms put forward to the System Council as part of the 2017-2022 CGIAR Portfolio. Several Council members reconfirmed their end-2016 appreciation of the complexity of the decision before the System Management Board on that earlier occasion, and the way the Board managed the competing issues.

23.   Regarding the process undertaken by the System Management Board respond to the Council's September 2016 invitation to re-think a proposal, proposals or other mechanism covering some or all of the topics from the form GLDC proposal, the Interim Chair of the Board recalled that an expert panel had been commissioned to develop some recommendations for the Board's consideration, which were documented in a report, often referred to as the [Matlon Report]. Before briefly recapping the recommendations, he noted that these had been shared earlier in an adhoc funders' call on 30 March 2017

24.   The Interim Board Chair informed the Council of the Board's plan to issue a call for a new proposal following the recommendations of the Matlon Report, with ICRISAT, one of CGIAR's 15 Centers being identified as lead Center. He confirmed that ICRISAT would be invited to take the lead on developing a proposal through a two-stage process. First, ICRISAT would be invited to respond during an initial two to three-week period suggesting how the recommendations of the Matlon Report will be met and the timetable ICRISAT proposes to follow. Thereafter, the actual timetable for proposal

development, submission, review and funder decision will be subject to confirmation of the System Management Board.

25.   Questions from the floor regarding the proposed new call for proposals brought forward the following as areas for continued focus as proposal development is undertaken:

a.   The justification, and the possible benefits, of work on grain legumes and dryland cereals being brought together.

b.   The short timing of the process of writing and review with respect to the ability to carry out much needed consultation with partners to deliver an innovative product of high quality.

c.   Given prioritized regions in this proposal, it is important to look at how the still important engagement with the West Asia and North Africa (WANA) region could be fulfilled. The Chair called for a separate conversation to explore what can be done in the region.

d.   Recognizing that beans are a critical crop for food security and nutrition, there would be to be a careful consideration of the most optimal way to continue to support work in this area.

e.   There may be some challenges in the review of this new proposal given that the other CRPs have already been operating during this year and it will be potentially difficult to give a rating to this newly proposed CRP on the same basis.

26.   The Interim Chair summarized the inputs and discussions during the session pointing to support for a call for a proposal for a strong, focused program of high quality based on the recommendations outlined in the Matlon Report.

27.   In wrapping up the discussion, the System Council Chair urged that the future proposal be considered on its own merit and any tough decisions to make with respect to trade-offs would be tackled at the appropriate time.

28.   With an invitation by the Chair, Rob Bertram, System Council member from USAID spoke to a paper outlining some possible options for supporting critical interim research which was not supported when the GLDC proposal did not go forward into the portfolio, particularly the work of two flagships on trait identification and breeding.

29.   By way of providing background to the options for funding, the presentation was framed by the concern that the research had no alternative source of supply and these are critical crops of the poor and insecure in vulnerable regions of the world often key to resilience and to gender empowerment. The System Council members were informed that the Chair had agreed to an approach in which an informal group of funders would come up with options for a shared approach.

30.   Given the mixed interests of the funders, the group asked for separate proposals for interim bridging work to be carried out during this year and received 4 proposals. With

the different funders' abilities to fund in certain ways, some consideration needed to be given to the funding modality that would be appropriate for funding this critical interim research, with 3 options presented with their pros and cons, including:

a.   Option one offers expanded interim proposals (4 proposals received) funded with a combination of targeted, additional Window 1 funding from interested funders, possibly in combination with other donors via Window 3 or bilateral (non-CGIAR Fund) arrangements. This would allow funding for the more realistic cost of crop breeding and trait identification as outlined in the proposals which would likely maximize additional funds and allow joint reporting. However, it would require bending of the rules for Window 1 which does not allow for earmarking and would mean no review of these larger proposals by ISPC, only by the funders themselves.

b.   The second option would allow potential contributions through additional, targeted Window 1 contributions limited to the scope and budgets associated with flagship 4 and 5 from GLDC, which were highly rated by the ISPC in the earlier proposal. This option would show that the system can nimbly respond and would contribute to growing of shared resources, while making use of joint reporting. However, this option would not allow all funders interested in supporting this to do so given restrictions on funding through Window 1.

c.   The third option proposes no targeting of additional, Window 1 funding and any action taken informally and solely among interested donors using bilateral arrangements (possibly including Window 3). While this option avoids any special provisions to be made it would potentially limit the ability of some funders who can only fund through Windows 1 or 2 and would not result in any addition to the common agenda or opportunities for shared reporting.

31.   The Chair expressed appreciation for the indication that substantial funding could be available to support this critical research area under discussion. He noted that while there was interest shown by some funders in the first two options due to the collective nature and shared reporting elements they offered, there was some discomfort with the possibility that the current rules related to use of W1 funds would have to be adjusted to do such 'targeting', and the lack of a rigorous level of review posed by option 1. The Chair commented that rules have been established for each of the Windows for specific reasons, such as no specific targeting (or earmarking) in Window 1, as well as to offer certain benefits and incentives, including how voting rights are determined.

32.   In considering the options, he proposed that the funding for this critical interim research be explored through Window 3. Agreeing that further conversations will be needed to see how funding through this channel can be best supported and for future responses of this nature, the Chair suggested that the SIMEC consider this as they look at options for funding modalities more broadly.

33.   Linking also to the question of ensuring CGIAR remains dynamic and ready to respond to emerging challenges, a special update was given by Samy Gaiji (FAO) and Martin Kropff(CIMMYT) on the status of the Fall Armyworm. Confirming that

armyworm which has recently infected many parts of sub-Saharan Africa,[3] the joint presentation focused on efforts being put in place to address the significant challenges arising. An appeal was made to funders that would be interested in supporting the coordinated actions being put in place.

34.   In summarizing, the Chair highlighted the importance and urgency in responding to this situation, where in a few months Africa is losing billions of dollars of crops, through investing in research programs that can solve the problem in the long-term rather than trying to fix it case by case.

Item 6: Managing risk in the CGIAR System

35.   The Co-Chair opened the session recalling the agreement that the System Council would be asked to approve a risk management framework of the CGIAR System by end-2017. The Co-Chair indicated that the session would provide an update on the process and progress towards this and an opportunity to give inputs at this stage.

36.   Karmen Bennett, Head of Board and Council Relations for the CGIAR System Organization, gave a [presentation] on the main principles being applied to the development of the risk management framework, emphasizing that the intent is not to have a rules-based approach to risk management, but rather to build on sound risk management practices already taking place at Center-level and thus operate according to a principles-based framework that incorporates the following elements:

a.   **Significant risks should be identified and monitored**, enabling management within the respective entities (and across them for system-wide risks) to take informed decisions and take timely action.

b.   **Strategic opportunities should be maximized** (not avoided), based on policies, guidelines and practices that give confidence that risks will be managed/mitigated as required.

c.   **Objectives should be achieved**: In the CGIAR context, this means delivering on 3 strategic goals in the 2016–2030 Strategy and Results Framework.

37.   The Council was informed that the process has involved working closely with the audit committee chairs of the Centers to start to think about: having an agreed set of System-level risk categories; being clearer about the differences between risk tolerance (or what is technically and strategically possible) and risk appetite (what is desirable within the broader concept of what is possible) and what is the System-level guidance that could be given for System-level risks and opportunities; and to understand where ownership of risks appropriately sits. It was noted that a Q1-2017 anonymous exercise to take stock of where Centers currently perceive themselves to be in terms of risk management based on a risk maturity model may provide a helpful platform for discussing what standard all Centers could be aiming to meet over a given timeline, as well as being used as a mechanism to strengthen the sharing of good

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[3] https://www.cgiar.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/FAWinAfricaMap_.jpg

practices and Center-based learning.

38.   Providing a few examples from Centers and the UK public sector as an early tool, the presentation suggested the adoption of a common language across CGIAR's federated system for describing levels of risk tolerance and risk appetite, even if there were different underlying practices at Center level due to the differing operations and risks.

39.   Based on the presentation, the System Council observations included:

   a.   From the perspective of funders, an aggregate risk analysis of the system would support the development of Funders' internal proposals for CGIAR financing, and reporting through on contributions.
   b.   It widely recognized that Centers have their own Boards and own fiduciary responsibility, and that existing systems should be built upon these, not replace them, all the while demonstrating how, when taken as a whole, there is adequate cost-effective assurance.
   c.   There was a question of whether it is realistic or necessary to have a standard for all Centers to work towards, as the ability to reach and maintain a standard may be very different in various locations and in the type of work being undertaken at various times.
   d.   The time required to make any necessary improvements in Centers' risk maturity to reach a common agreed standard needs to be understood.

40.   As part of the next steps, the presentation outlined several proposed key activities including: identifying a selected number of "top" System-level risks; identifying an appropriate categorization of risks that resonates for most; mapping out where assurance can already be found across the CGIAR system for these risks; and finding ways to demonstrate risk maturity and risk awareness over time. Interested members of the System Council were invited to participate in the activities moving forward with the System Council member from Norway volunteering himself and encouraging other members to join as well.

41.   The Co-Chair concluded the session with appreciation for the work being undertaken by the System Organization on what is recognizably a complex task, but one that is essential to maintain the confidence of funders in the system.

Item 7: Getting the best possible independent advice

42.   The Chair opened this agenda item with a statement on the importance for a system such as CGIAR, of getting independent science and evaluation advice. He framed the session by noting that there is an ongoing need to calibrate such advisory services, and that the time appeared right for CGIAR to review the experiences over the last few years and to reflect on what is currently in place and how to take that to the next appropriate level.

43.   The ISPC Chair provided some comments on the evolution of the role of ISPC and some

reflections on the revised terms of reference, including the perspective that:

a. The role of ISPC is and should be broader than reviewing of proposals, expressing the view that ISPC should also include a clear role in setting strategy as well as being a broker of important knowledge into the system; and

b. With the governance transition that took place on 1 July 2016, there has been a lack of clarity on ISPC's role with respect to and interaction with the System Management Board which would be beneficial for ISPC to have articulated.

44. Rachel Bedouin, Head of CGIAR's IEA, shared that the statement on the role of IEA as a function is well described and defined in the CGIAR System Framework, and expressed support for the proposed revised IEA terms of reference (ToR) before the Council for consideration at the meeting. She expressed a positive improvement to the ToR was the addition of a systematic mechanism to review the implementation of recommendations, which she felt would enhance the effectiveness of evaluation and its contribution to accountability, learning, decision-making and the overall goal of the organization. It was highlighted that the task ahead would be to operationalize the terms of reference, revisit the evaluation policy and look at the relationships with the various parts of the system involved in evaluation to be able to work towards a cost-effective evaluation system.

45. The Chair, on behalf of the System Council members, commended the two advisory bodies for providing thoughtful advice aligned to the existing terms of reference as defined by the former Fund Council, and recognized that this was an opportune time to reflect on, and possibly alter roles in line with forward-looking needs and a much-revised overall operating context.

46. Several Council members proposed that rather than doing editorial work on the terms of reference of the System Council's advisory bodies, that a higher-level more strategic discussion be held on what the appropriate set of functions that are needed and the appropriate architecture to support how these would be delivered.

47. For follow up by the newly established SIMEC, observations shared during the session included:

a. Mixed views regarding ISPC's role of 'advising on effective partnerships along the research for development continuum' (from the CGIAR System Framework definition also), with some noting this was an integral role in providing the necessary advice to the Council, and others suggesting that to mandate the ISPC effectively in such a specialist area would require specific additional capacity to be built up within ISPC. Interventions noted that there was a clear need to distinguish the assessment of partnership quality of proposals from formulating partnerships for CGIAR. Other members felt that the Council should look to the System Management Board for information and insights on partnerships across the System given the growing confidence expressed by Council members in the Centers and their overall management of CGIAR

research programs and platforms, and the engagement of a multitude of diverse partners.

b. There was still a gap in terms of future scanning of what big issues are likely to come up that should be known about as investment is being decided. Overall, there was a strongly expressed need by Council members for more support to be provided to make key funding allocation decisions, and being able to look at options and trade-offs for investment in various parts of the portfolio, possibly through a dashboard approach.

c. Looking to the future, the observation was made that ISPC should focus more of its analysis on upstream work to help funders to prioritize and make funding allocation decisions using a robust evidence base.

d. There was a positive recognition of the changes over the last few years which has resulted in the Centers and the System Management Board managing the system themselves in a productive way, creating the environment for most of the responsibility of managing research decisions to be taken by the Board. Centers should be making sure that quality is an important part of the research agenda, and that the Board manages that across the Centers.

e. On discussing IEA and given a concern expressed by some across the system that the entire CGIAR evaluation culture has become too excessive, there was a call for evaluations to become more targeted and aimed at looking at the outputs, outcomes and impacts that the System is trying to achieve, and moving away from process orientated reviews. It was also requested that evaluations try to result in less paperwork at all stages, with reports being lengthy and thus potentially diluting otherwise clear messages and lessons learned.

f. There was the suggestion that with the development of a new integrated results-based management system, this offers an opportunity to identify where evaluations are needed and to embed these into the body of information that will be available through this framework.

g. A statement on behalf of the Centers with respect to ISPC and IEA pointed to the collective view of CGIAR's 15 Centers that the budget, scope and performance of ISPC and IEA should be subjected to the rigor applied to all system entities, with the request that the System Council take steps to ensure that this is so given the reporting lines of the ISPC and IEA. In an era of pressure on system financing, the Centers expressed their concern on the value for money equation in terms of evaluations vis-à-vis level of effort. Further, that the proportionality of the cost of evaluations to the available system funding for core research is continuously re-examined to find an optimal balance.

48. In summarizing the discussion, the Chair highlighted that the context and the needs have now changed for the independent advisory functions, in large part due to the growing level of confidence among the Council members that the science is now being applied within the system in the Centers to a higher level. With a stronger system, the observation is that there is now perhaps less need for external hand-holding and a lot can now be done in-house.

49.   The Chair noted that the conversation just held amongst the wider Council provides good inputs to SIMEC to be able to develop some options for how the independent advisory functions can best serve the system in the future and the following Action Point was recorded:

SC/M4/AP2- Framing the future of independent advice

SIMEC will provide a concept note, seeking inputs from across the Council, on the way forward for both independent science and research advice as well as for independent evaluation services to be initially discussed in the coming months, in a virtual meeting, in advance of the 5th System Council meeting in November 2017.

Item 8: How can we further strengthen CGIAR's Gender Strategy?

50.   This session was framed by Martin Kropff, Interim Board Chair, noting that although the System Management Board's management response remained under preparation in response to the extensive, two-part gender evaluation final reports delivered by the IEA after 9 months of thorough work, the System Management Board considered that the Council's May 2017 meeting provided a good opportunity to take early reflections from Council members' on where the system is and should be going in terms of gender.

51.   In support of framing the conversation, the Executive Director recapped some of the steps and achievements in the work on gender over the past years, highlighting a series of briefs now available that capture many of the lessons from the gender mainstreaming work. Additionally, he indicated two areas where guidance from the Council would be valuable in charting the way forward. One area proposed for discussion was the periodicity and format of the reporting on gender and the other was the optimal level of separation of gender in the workplace and gender in research.

52.   Joining virtually, Karen Brooks (Director of the Policies, Institutions and Markets CRP which houses the CGIAR Collaborative Platform for Gender Research), reiterated the accomplishments during the first phase which provides a solid foundation on which to build. In the presentation, it was proposed that a priority for the 2017 – 2022 CGIAR Portfolio should be to improve the quality of gender research and to strengthen the strategic alignment of the gender research across the CRPs to make sure the individual achievements are adding up into big messages.

53.   On invitation of the Co-Chair, the Head of IEA presented some reflections on the findings and recommendations of the evaluations carried out by IEA on gender in research and gender in the workplace, supported also by a short video that spoke to internal summary reports helpfully prepared for Council members.

54.   The Co-Chair, noting that an important dialogue is still to take place on the evaluations by the System Management Board before the Council would see the final reports and the management responses, opened the floor to Council members to provide perspectives on how to ensure that gender remains at the forefront of CGIAR's discussions. Some principles emerging from the discussion included:

a. The promotion of gender equality should be a high priority, and while achievements have been made, it is necessary to intensify efforts in prioritized areas to make the needed improvements.

b. The commitment to gender can be demonstrated through a thoughtful renewal of the strategies and policies, which can provide strengthened direction for moving forward, rather than developing a whole new strategy.

c. While it is important to strive for integration of gender into all aspects of work, this cannot be achieved by simply adding layers on top of current structures but rather by striving for real buy-in to the importance of gender at all levels so that it becomes an integral part of the way work is done.

d. A consistent level of capacity and effort across the system should be aimed for, and opportunities for this can be found in the development or revision of the strategies in these areas.

e. The new CGIAR results-based management system offers an opportunity for addressing gender as part of monitoring progress against set targets. The measuring of impact and effectiveness of gender research particularly focusing on gender outcomes is key.

f. The strategy reflecting gender in the workplace should only be changed where appropriate and targets should continue to be aspirational while being realistic.

g. The CGIAR collaborative platform and the gender network are essential elements for strengthening the advancement of gender research within the CGIAR, providing an important foundation for knowledge sharing and increasing visibility of CGIAR gender research.

h. An evolution in gender research will be when it starts to shape the research agenda rather than just being a component of it.

i. The challenge in terms of staffing requires a proactive approach to change the dynamic at all levels of all entities across the system. It will require strong leadership, particularly from the Centers, to make it more systematic.

55. Invited to respond to the comments, the Interim Chair of the System Management Board welcomed the many useful inputs on this prominent issue, noting that they will be useful in supporting deliberations within the System Management Board towards developing an appropriate final management response. The Interim Chair expressed the importance of prioritization and monitoring of both gender in research and gender in the workplace but felt that while some of the system-level recommendations were relevant and understandable inclusions, it is important that the key drivers are owned at Center-level, and supported and adopted by CRPs and Platforms. The Interim Chair also pointed to the strong commitment of the System Management Board to the gender in research through a recent decision that the Gender Collaborative platform would be protected, as far as possible, from budget cuts that may need to be made in the Portfolio as part of the FinPlan 2017.

Item 9: Looking at Results-based Management for the Portfolio

56.   In framing the session, the Chair reminded the Council that the Charter of the System Organization lays out a function for the CGIAR System Management Office '*to lead a consultative process with the ISPC and other CGIAR system entities for the development of an integrated framework for performance management system for CGIAR research, that provides feedback on progress and results and contributes to decision on the allocation of resources*' (Article 11 hh).

57.   Philippe Ellul (Senior Officer, Program Performance within the CGIAR System Organization), spoke to a [presentation] to update the Council on the work to date on establishing a robust results based management system, but also highlighted the [pre-read] which had been made available which contains more detailed information.

58.   With recognition of the detailed engagement that several Council members have had in the process to date, the Chair encouraged a conversation amongst the whole Council on this topic, from which several principles emerged:

   a.   Monitoring should be highly prioritized as it is important to be able to, at all levels, hold ourselves accountable for results.
   b.   The approach taken to developing the results based management system in a collaborative way with the many parts of the System, is a good way of breaking down barriers and promoting good learning, and shows the maturity of the System to be able to work in this way.
   c.   The implementation of common planning and reporting through the online system (known as 'MARLO'), which has currently been adopted by eight CRPs and one platform, is positive but measures need to be put in place to ensure interoperability with other systems being used by those using other systems.
   d.   It is important to find an appropriate way to look at both the quality of science as well as the development outcome goals, and the use of an indicator framework can be useful in helping to understand where or not the science has maximized its chances of influencing development. In addition to academic performance the framework needs to be able to integrate information from evaluations, appraisal and impact assessment.
   e.   The framework needs to be able to define expected results, monitor and evaluate progress towards achievement of the results and integrate lessons learned into management decisions and reporting.
   f.   There is an urgency to getting the parts of the system up and running so that high-quality data can be collected to support the story which can be told from the System, including on 2017 research actions.

59.   In noting the need for increased urgency in this area, the Executive Director highlighted the need for additional capacity to drive it forward and invited Council members to consider potential secondment arrangements of staff in their organizations with the right skills sets or to help circulate the relevant vacancy announcement.

60.   In wrapping up the session, the Chair voiced the satisfaction of the members of the Council that progress has been made, as well as on the collaborative approach that has been taken through the community of practice which allows the system to own it rather than having it imposed. The Chair also echoed the call for increased timeliness in moving this forward to the extent possible, through a prioritization on elements to be developed, such as the baselines, so as not to miss out on a whole season of CRPs.

Item 10: Inspiring the way forward

61.   The Chair welcomed Professor Louise Fresco, with great appreciation for her taking the time to round out the Council's conversations with some different thinking and ideas about the future of the food system and the role of agricultural research.

62.   In her remarks, Professor Fresco highlighted some of what makes today so exciting for offering answers to the question of how to get adequate, healthy, and nutritious food to all the urban and rural poor in a way that is sustainable and can guarantee the future of food production, including:

    a.   The coalescence of a lot of new technological developments is going to have an enormous impact on agriculture, particularly the whole area of big data and digitalization and the technology that supports that.
    b.   The rapid changes in the areas of genetics, genomics and 'nomics' in general, are unlocking a whole series of precision breeding which makes it possible to fine tune certain aspects in the genome without having to resort to either genetic modification or to other kinds of steps not yet acceptable to some of the public.
    c.   The changing shifts in agriculture require different skills sets, which may offer opportunities to entice young people into the broader agricultural sector.
    d.   As trends towards a bio-based economy continue, the reality is that food and agriculture are central to that, with the older concept of a food chain being replaced by the vision of a food cycle where everything produced from a biological point of view will be an input into the next step of the system.

63.   The Chair thanked Professor Fresco for starting up this valuable conversation, with a visit to Wageningen organized for Council members the next day offering an additional opportunity to explore further some of the areas presented.

Item 11 - Other Business (taken earlier during day 2)

64.   The Chair outlined that this session would focus on three items for discussion as identified by System Council members as follows:

    a.   Discussion on options for engagement of CGIAR in the West Asia and North Africa ("WANA") region.

b.   Terms of Reference and membership of the Council's Strategic Impact, Monitoring and Evaluation Committee.

c.   Update on the FAO Regional Biotechnology consultations.

65.   <u>Engagement of CGIAR in the WANA region</u>: The representative from Turkey, serving as the Council's member for the WANA region, provided a brief statement in which he highlighted the importance of the region and the crops grown there as well as the malnutrition and food insecurity that still exists in the region which still relies heavily on dryland cropping. In his statement, he highlighted the importance for the region in engaging with CGIAR and the possible interest of regional donors which could be explored. He expressed a hope that some tangible solution could be found to having a program of work in the region.

66.   In discussing feasible options for CGIAR engagement in the WANA region, some key principles included:

a.   <u>Impact</u>: While the WANA region does not have the same level of extreme poverty and stunting as other regions, there are other issues that make this region important to support, such as the underlying issues of migration and conflict which affect the region. Technical assistance in the region particularly in the areas of water use efficiency, intensification of crop and livestock systems in sustainable ways, and capacity enhancing technology would provide great benefit.

b.   <u>Partnership</u>: The strength of the NARS in the region offer great opportunities for partnership in research and delivery. ICARDA is a recognized, valuable partner in the region with capacities in many of the technical areas identified as well as the ability to play an important convening role.

c.   <u>Funding</u>: Funding for engagement will most likely need to come from new money from existing donors to the CGIAR as well as from regional donors that offer exciting potential for funding and partnership in supporting any key programs to be developed in the region.

67.   The representative from the European Commission shared with the Council that a major initiative has been launched by the European Commission for the Mediterranean called PRIMA which has an endowment of 400 million euros for research in agriculture and water use. This ten-year program specifically targets NARS in the region to be in the forefront of the programs but with the explicit ability to involve CGIAR entities to bring value to activities planned.

68.   The Interim Chair of the Board welcomed the inputs provided which the System Management Board could use in looking for ways to play a role in this region. While recognizing that ICARDA is a prominent actor in the region, the Interim Chair felt it would be beneficial to also look at what other Centers can play a key role to be able to coordinate and offer contributions from CGIAR as a whole. He indicated that the

Board would engage with regional partners to help think through the right approach.

69.   In summarizing the discussion, the Chair appealed for some creative approaches to what can be done as a system to support this region, building in an initial effort to reach out to the regional partners.

70.   With respect to the discussion on the previous day and the need to identify a way forward for the research on beans which had previously been part of the GLDC proposal, the Chair supported the suggestion by the Interim Chair that he coordinate some further thinking on the possibilities for a shared research opportunity in this area and an appropriate home for it.

71.   Forming the Council's Strategic Impact, Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (SIMEC): The Executive Director framed the conversation by noting the significant amount of work coming to the SIMEC based on the drafting of the CGIAR System Framework and the committees stated role. He reiterated the support from the System Management Office to help the group achieve success in its deliberations.

72.   Karmen Bennett, Head of Board and Council Relations, presented on the recent processes and outcomes for establishing the SIMEC. With appreciation for the engagement of Council members over the past few months, she highlighted some final minor drafting from the paper circulated in advance of the meeting.

73.   Before asking for decisions on the SIMEC ToR and membership as put before the Council, the Chair took note of the concerns that the SIMEC not be overloaded with tasks and that its mandate be carefully followed.

74.   **SC/M3/DP3:** The System Council **approved**, the Terms of Reference for its Strategic

No	System Council voting constituency	Nominated member
1	African Development Bank	Dougou Keita
2	Australia	Mellissa Wood
3	European Commission	Bernard Rey
4	Germany and Belgium	Michel Bernhardt
5	South Asia	Rajendra Singh Paroda
6	Sweden	Philip Chiverton
7	United Kingdom	Alan Tollervey
8	United States	Eric Witte

Impact, Monitoring and Evaluation Committee, as set out in Appendix 1 to document SC4-AOB-Revised TOR-System Council-SIMEC_10May2017

75.   **SC/M3/DP4:** The System Council **appointed** the following 8 persons to serve as the inaugural SIMEC members for the period until 30 June 2019 or such time as a successor is appointed:

76.   <u>Latest developments in the biotechnology work of FAO</u>: Samy Gaiji updated the Council on an international symposium recently organized on the role of agriculture biotechnologies in a sustainable food system, and exploring applications of biotechnology for the benefit of family farmers in developing sustainable food systems and improving nutrition. Based on the success of this symposium, four regional meetings are being organized in 2017 and 2018.

77.   With appreciation to funders who have contributed to these, there was an invitation to funders, CGIAR Centers and relevant regional organizations to participate in these meetings which offer great opportunities for hearing the needs of countries in the field of biotechnologies.

<u>Meeting closure</u>

78.   The Chair took the opportunity to note this Council meeting was the last for Martin Kropff as Interim Chair of the System Management Board, and to recognize his tremendous efforts in bringing the system closer together during a time of transition.

79.   In reflecting on the past two days, the Chair expressed his appreciation of what he considered to be a very stimulating meeting where time was productively used to try to tackle some critical issues as well as to have some thoughtful and forward-looking conversations.

80.   The Chair thanked the participants and closed the meeting.

Annex 1: Compendium of Decisions taken – 4th System Council meeting

SC/M4/DP1: Meeting Co-Chair

The System Council elected Melle Leenstra, representative of The Netherlands, as the non-voting Co-Chair for the meeting pursuant to Article 5.2 of the CGIAR System Framework.

SC/M4/DP2: Adoption of the Agenda

The System Council adopted the Agenda, with the addition of three other business items: (i) forming the Council's Strategic Impact, Monitoring and Evaluation Committee; (ii) discussion on ways to work in West Asia and North Africa (WANA); and (iii) a briefing on the forthcoming FAO regional biotech consultation meetings.

SC/M4/DP3: Terms of Reference for the System Council's Strategic Impact, Monitoring and Evaluation Committee ("SIMEC")

The System Council approved the Terms of Reference for its Strategic Impact, Monitoring and Evaluation Committee ("SIMEC"), as set out in Appendix 1 to meeting document *SC4-AOB-Revised TOR-System Council-SIMEC 10May2017*.

SC/M4/DP4: Inaugural membership of the SIMEC

The System Council appointed the following 8 persons to serve as the inaugural SIMEC members for the period until 30 June 2019 or such time as a successor is appointed:

No	System Council voting constituency	Nominated member
1	African Development Bank	Dougou Keita
2	Australia	Mellissa Wood
3	European Commission	Bernard Rey
4	Germany and Belgium	Michel Bernhardt
5	South Asia	Rajendra Singh Paroda
6	Sweden	Philip Chiverton
7	United Kingdom	Alan Tollervey
8	United States	Eric Witte

Annex 2: List of meeting participants

Meeting Leadership
Juergen Voegele (System Council Chair)
Melle Leenstra, The Netherlands (Co-Chair)

System Council Voting Members	System Council Member Representatives	System Council Member Alternates & Other Delegation Members
IFAD, representing AFDB	Malu Ndavi*	Wafaa El Khoury
Australia	Andrew Campbell	Mellissa Wood
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	Tony Cavalieri	
Canada	Christophe Kadji*	Robert Hofstede
East Asia & Pacific (China)	Jin Ke*	
European Commission	Bernard Rey	
Germany and Belgium	Stefan Schmitz	Michel Bernhardt; Juergen Anthofer
Japan	Masashi Takizawa*	Norihito Kanamori; Shuhei Toriumi
Netherlands	Daniela Schoorl*	Jeroen Steeghs
Norway	Daniel van Gilst	
South Asia (India)	R.K. Mittal*	
Sweden	Philip Chiverton	
Switzerland	Michel Evéquoz	
United Kingdom	Alan Tollervey	Howard Standen; Katalin Visnyei
USA	Rob Bertram	Eric Witte
West Asia & North Africa (Turkey and Iran)	Nevsat Birişik (Turkey)	Javad Mozafari Hashjin; Eskandar Zand (Iran); Merve Altan (Turkey)
World Bank	Mark Cackler	

Non-voting Ex-officio members	Member	Alternate
Interim Chair, System Management Board	Martin Kropff	
Executive Director, CGIAR System Organization	Elwyn Grainger-Jones	
Center Representative (Convener of the Chairs of Center Board of Trustees)	Nicole Birrell	
Center Representative (Convener of Center Directors General)	Matthew Morell	
FAO	Samy Gaiji*	Abdoulaye Saley Moussa
IFAD	*Representing partnership with AfDB at this meeting*	

Active Observers		
GFAR	Mark Holderness*	
IEA	Rachel Sauvinet-Bedouin	Sirkka Immonen
ISPC	Maggie Gill	Leslie Lipper

Indicates that the Member/Active Observer is being represented at the meeting by the alternate or a delegated representative.

Invited attendees		
France - Host Country	Frederic Lapeyrie	
Trustee	Darius Stangu	Beniamin Carcani

Additional participants	
World Bank	Jonathan Wadsworth
Global Futurist	James Canton
Wageningen University and Research	Louise O. Fresco
CRP Director, PIM	Karen Brooks
CGIAR System Organization	Karmen Bennett, Head, Board and Council Relations
	Olwen Cussen, Board and Council Relations Associate
	Philippe Ellul, Senior Officer, Program Performance
	Peter Gardiner, Senior Manager, Program Performance
	Albin Hubscher, Head, Finance and Program Performance
	Nadia Manning-Thomas, Board and Council Relations Manager
	Victoria Pezzi, Meetings and Events Associate

Apologies - System Council Voting Members
Latin America & Caribbean
Mexico
Sub-Saharan Africa