

Meeting Summary 5th System Management Board Meeting

Purpose:

After the issue of the Interim Chair's Summary dated 7 April 2017¹, this document presents the formal Meeting Summary of the 5th meeting of the System Management Board ("Board") held on 28-29 March 2017 at Bioversity Headquarters, Rome, Italy.

By way of overview:

- **Decisions and Actions:** The Board took 6 decisions during its meeting, a compendium of which are set out Annex 1 for ease of reference although they also appear in the text of the summary in order of decisions taken.
- **Participants:** Annex 2 sets out a list of meeting participants.

This Meeting Summary was approved by the System Management Board by electronic decision with effect from Monday 19 June 2017. (SMB/M6/EDP2)

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¹ At: http://www.cgiar.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/SMB6-05_InterimChairsSummary_25Apr2017.pdf

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Agenda Item 1 – Opening

1. The Interim Chair, Martin Kropff, opened the meeting. A quorum was present.
2. The Interim Chair tabled the Provisional Agenda and invited comments and additional matters for discussion. No additional business was raised.
3. **Decision SMB/M5/DP1:** The Board adopted the Agenda (Document SMB5-01, Revision 1).
4. The Interim Chair noted that declarations of interest from meeting attendees had been sought in advance of the meeting, with no specific additional interests relating to the agenda raised. It was advised that a register of interests declared is available via the Diligent Board tool.

Agenda Item 2 – Finalizing the Portfolio

Propose next steps for research from the former GLDC proposal

5. The Chair of the Board's Working Group on Research from the Former GLDC Proposal, Eugene Terry, introduced the report of the Expert Panel commissioned by the Board to reconsider the science included in the former GLDC and provide recommendations on the way forward. He noted that an informal briefing call for Funders, hosted by the Executive Director, was scheduled for 30 March (the day after this meeting). In introducing the report, he also asked that the Board reflect on what strategic inputs and messages they would like made available to the Expert Panel Chair ahead of that call.
6. The Board considered the nine key recommendations raised in the Expert Panel report, and heard from CGIAR's ISPC on key observations to date. The discussion that followed included the following points:
 - a. The importance for CGIAR – for a holistic research portfolio - to include the commodities and systems covered in the former GLDC proposal;
 - b. On timing considerations for submission – the goal should be to try to ensure alignment with other programs, recognizing that one motivation of the truncation of Phase 1 CRPs was to ensure a synchronized portfolio;
 - c. The need to ensure that the analysis behind prioritization decisions within the new proposal is clearly presented;
 - d. The importance of considering the resilience agenda as opposed to a yield-driven market approach;
 - e. The need for considerably stronger partnerships and linkages beyond CGIAR Centers;
 - f. The question of where the proposal fits in with the mission of CGIAR with regards to working in tough enabling environments and focusing on livelihoods;

- g. That the guidelines for proposal development followed by other CRPs and Platforms should be followed;
 - h. The importance of budgetary considerations within the overall W1-2 envelope and potential impact on other programs, and the consequent need to manage expectations regarding availability of funding and the implications of including more expensive elements of research in the proposal; and
 - i. Noting concerns raised that the same lead Center as for previous submissions is being asked to lead proposal development, it was confirmed that support for the proposal development will be provided by the System Management Office to assist those preparing the proposal in incorporating feedback previously provided by ISPC and funders.
7. Thanking the Working Group Chair and members for their efforts in stewarding the process, the Interim Chair noted the additional strategic and technical considerations raised and confirmed that these would be discussed with the Expert Panel Chair ahead of the 30 March ad hoc call.
8. **Decision SMB/M5/DP2:** Subject to further revision based upon inputs from the ad hoc call with System Council members on 30 March, the Board:
- 1) endorsed the overall recommendation that a single proposal to be developed to take up key, prioritized research that was included in the former GLDC proposal;
 - 2) adopted the recommendation that ICRISAT take the lead on developing that proposal, taking up the key considerations outlined by the expert panel, and according to the guidelines for full proposals and review criteria dated 19 December 2015, against which ISPC will undertake its review; and
 - 3) emphasized the need to ensure that there is a different and more innovative and prioritized process for program design, with the engagement of all the key stakeholders.

Way forward for other parts of the Portfolio

9. Recognizing the concerns raised regarding funding for an adjusted composition of the 2017-2022 Research Portfolio in 2018, the Board also considered the question of the five flagship programs determined by the System Council not to be eligible for 2017 Window 1/Window 2 funding. The ISPC Chair introduced some considerations on what strategic basis prioritization could be made between CRPs already started and resubmitted flagship programs, noting that the planned pre-meeting workshop ahead of the System Council's 4th meeting on 9 May 2017 would provide an opportunity for these to be discussed and to work towards consensus on how the System should move forward to make sure the portfolio achieves its potential and is also flexible in response to Funder priorities and science quality.
10. The case was put forward that all parts of the portfolio should have the opportunity to be considered for W1/2 funding, even when funding is not certain, recognizing that this indicates a 'certificate of quality' through independent assessment and recommendation, with it being commented that:

- a. It is in the interests of the System and therefore the Board that the entire portfolio should be judged to be of the highest standard and that such an endorsement would facilitate the mobilization of funding from other sources beyond Windows 1 & 2;
 - b. It was indicated that some had felt that programs with greater W3 and bilateral funding would be less threatened by non-allocation of W1-2, with others having the impression that the decision taken at the System Council's 2nd meeting in Mexico was based on a science quality ranking judged to be lower; and
 - c. It was proposed that discussions on science quality and on funding allocations be separated, without proposal development criteria being specific on what funding sources can or should be requested.
11. The Board reflected on inputs received from a number of stakeholders on the timetable for resubmission, taking into account the required review process, and the decision-making process of the System Council. It was proposed that a single timetable for resubmission for all 5 flagships rather than a staggered process, targeting a November 2017 System Council decision, be established². No formal dissenting view was raised.
12. **Action Point SMB/M5/AP3: (By 31 July 2017):** Any of the five flagship programs interested in resubmission for consideration for W1/2 funding in 2018 are invited to prepare an addendum to the original proposal that updates the affected flagship program (and not to resubmit a full proposal). The Board's proposal is for the addenda to include strategies to expand the available resource base to finance the flagship from W1-2 rather than further dividing funding for other CRPs. The timetable for the resubmission process is set out in Annex 3 of this Meeting Summary.

Agenda Item 3 – Thinking about the way we work

General Assembly Key Messaging

13. The Interim Chair Board summarized key outcomes from the inaugural General Assembly of Centers, highlighting those with particular relevance for the System Management Board's ongoing reflection, including taking forward development of a risk management framework of the CGIAR system, fund raising efforts for pooled resources, cross-System engagement and performance, and financing modalities.
14. The General Assembly's decision to nominate Co-Chairs for 2017 was reported; Nicole Birrell, Chair of CIMMYT Board of Trustees, will serve as Convener of the Board of Trustees Chairs, and Matthew Morell, Director General of IRRI, will serve as Convener of the Directors General. It was noted that both Co-Chairs will also serve as Centers'

² The 5 flagships invited to resubmit are: Fish – Flagship 2; Forests, Trees and Agroforestry – Flagship 2; Livestock – Flagship 3 and Flagship 5; Water, Land and Ecosystems – Flagship 5. The two flagships not included in the 26 September 2016 resubmission (Fish – Flagship 3 and Maize – Flagship 5) will not be invited to resubmit.

two Active Observer representatives on the System Council, in addition to being standing invitees to System Management Board meetings as additional observers.

15. A clarification was sought on the General Assembly's view on the question of an amendment to the composition of the System Management Board. Noting that there had been no formal dissenting view expressed at SMB4 to a proposal to change the composition to include an additional independent member, the General Assembly had voted on the matter at its January 2017 meeting. The required two-thirds majority to endorse the proposal had not been obtained, with 9 of the 10 required affirmative votes being received.

ED observations on System Management Office operational changes

16. The Executive Director updated the Board on the work priorities for the System Management Office over the coming year, including both ongoing services and special tasks in support of the CGIAR System, highlighting the facilitating approach and the "lead from behind" mindset that is shaping all that the office is taking forward under the stewardship of the System Management Board.
17. Thanking the Executive Director, the Interim Chair invited feedback from Board members and observers, with a number of inputs provided, including:
 - a. Center representatives present noted broad appreciation for improved engagement and consultation across Center and CRP leadership, as well as with Board of Trustees Chairs; and
 - b. Chairs of the Board's working groups expressed appreciation for the support for these working groups particularly given the number of these with mandates in the Board's first year of operation.
18. The Executive Director welcomed the feedback provided, adding that it would be conveyed to System Management Office colleagues.

Strategic reflections on emerging challenges and opportunities and brainstorming on CGIAR culture

19. The Interim Chair noted that ahead of discussion on management issues, the suggestion had been made for the Board to think strategically on the challenges and opportunities for CGIAR in the coming weeks, months and years, and what questions and implications these raise. A summary of the Board's preliminary reflections is provided in [Annex 4](#).
20. **Action Point SMB/M5/AP4:** In Q2 2017: A group of 3-4 DGs and Board of Trustee members will be convened by the Interim Board Chair to review the list of potential strategic reflections on emerging challenges and opportunities highlighted during the Board's discussions, and consider the questions and implications for CGIAR, and invite

Funder representation on that group. The outputs of the group's reflections will inform future discussion on these by the System Management Board.

Discussing who represents the CGIAR System in high-level strategic roles

21. The Chair of the Board's Working Group on Rules of Governance introduced work by that group on a proposed 'Decision Tree' tool, produced in response to discussions at previous Board meeting regarding how selection of CGIAR System representation roles could be carried out to maximize the opportunity for CGIAR influence in the relevant fora. The tool had been developed keeping in mind considerations of highly relevant representation, but also addressing potential perceptions of the representative being 'too close' to the topic at hand.
22. Board members expressed appreciation for the clarity of the tool proposed, noting that it would be most effectively applied by considering also what representations currently exist or have done so in the recent past.
23. Annex 5 sets out the tool as a helpful reference source moving forward.
24. **Action Point SMB/M5/AP5: By end-April 2017:** A register of all CGIAR System representation roles carried out and who currently carries out each role will be compiled and shared across Centers and used to inform ongoing collaboration, and also facilitate future discussions on where CGIAR should be represented and by whom.

Agenda Item 4 – Funding our work

Funding modalities and allocations: Review of scoping exercise

25. Framing the session, the Interim Chair noted that considerations of funding modalities are integrally linked to strategic challenges and opportunities discussed earlier in this meeting, and therefore a priority for Board consideration.
26. The Executive Director introduced work on a scoping exercise on Funding Modalities, thanking contributors including Gordon MacNeil for the time and expertise contributed to its development. The questions and challenges that the exercise sought to consider were characterized as:
 - a. Whether the funding mechanics present a problem or create perverse incentives;
 - b. Whether the funding system is currently limiting funding opportunities and/or maximizing opportunities;
 - c. Whether it remains relevant in the donor world as it stands;
 - d. Whether it creates the right incentives and drives good management and research; and
 - e. Given that it is fairly permissive and does not limit the setting up of new initiatives, how challenges can be addressed without losing these positive attributes.

27. The Interim Chair invited reflections from the Board on the analysis presented, with the following paragraphs collating those inputs into various themes.
28. **On possible financing strategies and initiatives:**
 - a. The importance of considering in-kind contributions and the leveraging of these via partnerships;
 - b. The variation in modalities preferred by emerging economies and for South/South collaboration;
 - c. The need for a clearer storyline what Window 1 is used for, and the level of risk that should be taken regarding research funded by that money; and
 - d. Several members also reflected on the need for a stabilization fund or similar non-grant mechanism that would protect against shocks and enable pre-financing and facilitate infrastructure renewal.
29. **On funding the CGIAR's Genebanks:**
 - a. The Board heard reflections from the recent Executive Board meeting of the Global Crop Diversity Trust, as an input into discussions.
 - b. There was recognition that the issue of the 3% has been discussed on previous occasions, and that previous discussions had recognized the difficulties inherent in trying to arrive at a model whereby the costs would be borne only by Centers for whom one or more elements of their work directly relate to the Genebanks, given their importance to CGIAR as a whole.
30. **On Cost Sharing Percentage**
 - a. Consideration was given to the idea that the percentage contribution could be modulated based on a Center's size, and to better assessing and streamlining costs such that contributions only represented actual overhead cost and could ideally be reduced over time or directed to other areas if a surplus existed.
 - b. The importance of recognizing this contribution as a system cost, rather than a tax or levy, that forms part of actual overheads, was highlighted by a System Council representative.
 - c. There was recognition, after discussion, that no preferable alternative to the CSP mechanism had been identified, therefore should remain in operation at this time.
31. **On Flagship-level targeting**
 - a. It was highlighted that this had been included following a Funder approach to ask whether a Flagship could be added to an existing CRP, recognizing that the existing funding windows structure does not easily permit this.
 - b. The implications for reporting at flagship level were raised, with it being noted however that CRPs are often able to discuss reporting requirements with Funders to discuss implications of additional reporting requests.
32. Thanking the Board for their inputs, and recognizing that none of the options represent a proposal at this stage, but rather ideas for exploration and discussion, the Interim Chair asked Board colleagues to continue to share ideas and intelligence on

possible strategies for this to enable further development of the Financing Modalities work before presentation to the System Council at its 4th meeting in May 2017.

Status of signed contribution agreements

33. In response to a question on the Contribution Agreements for the CGIAR Trust Fund, the Executive Director advised that these had been sent out at the time of the meeting, and that he expected that progress on the status of signatures would be reported to the Board at their 6th meeting (virtual) on 18 April 2017.

Policy issues for 2017 CGIAR Research Financing Plan ('FinPlan')

34. The Executive Director outlined the approach taken in the draft 2017 FinPlan presented, outlining four key policy questions on which the Board's guidance was sought. He acknowledged the efforts of the Head of Finance and Program Performance, and the Center's CSE network in developing this work. Taking the Board through each in turn, the following key points were raised in the ensuing discussion.
35. **On question 1: whether to maintain existing CRP/platform financial targets, and if not, what measures should be taken:**
- a. Several Board members thought it sound advice that Centers/CRP leadership 'under-program' by 10% in 2017, pending improved funding intelligence, noting that it represented existing practice for many Centers over recent years.
 - b. The prevailing view was that the projection of how bilateral funding can aid in effective financial management was best done at Center/CRP level rather than at System level.
36. **On question 2: how best to use W1 in support of achieving the strategic funding objectives of the System Council for 2017:**
- a. The Board held a rich discussion on the four options set out in the funding options paper, also drawing upon previous discussions held on this subject (and historically by the former joint Consortium Board and Fund Council working group in 2016). The lessons learned from that former group included low appetite for the same amount being cut from each program; a call from Funders to have solid performance metrics to inform financial allocation decisions; and low appetite also for counteracting Funder-preferences expressed through W2 allocations in any end of year budget adjustments.
 - b. However, there was recognition of the complexity of using performance metrics in 2017 to inform forward-looking 2018 budget allocations, by reason that several programs and platforms are new, with end-2016 information also not being able to be readily relied upon for the same reason. That said, there was awareness that robust performance data needed to be available in future years based upon the concerted effort being made across the System to design and put in place a Performance Management Framework by end 2017.
 - c. It was raised that there is a need to consider the effect of any decisions around the allocation of W1 resources on those Centers that have been more effective than others in raising bilateral funding.

- d. Recognizing the inherent potential conflict of interest of Directors General of Lead Centers present, the Interim Chair reiterated the importance of Board Members ensuring that any position taken must be in the best interests of the CGIAR System, and ensuring its stability to the greatest extent possible. He noted also that any decision taken must be on principles and not on known outcomes at this time.
 - e. Recognizing the importance of working in the interests of the System as a whole, the Board took the majority view that for 2017, Window 1 should be allocated as described in decision SMB/M5/DP3 (paragraph 38 below).
37. **On question 3: how to treat the Platforms in the face of possible cuts:**
- a. The Board considered the differing roles and circumstances of the Genebanks, Big Data and Excellence in Breeding platforms, and the Gender platform within PIM.
 - b. The view of CRP Directors was conveyed that while cognizant of the difficulties in absorbing cuts, it was also recognized that the effects would not be any different for Platforms than CRPs therefore comparable treatment would be an understandable recommendation.
 - c. While recognizing the specific circumstances of each, it was also reiterated by a Board Member that the concept of applying principles, rather than adjudicating on individual cases, should be borne in mind.
 - d. The need to ensure that the physical assets of the Genebanks are maintained was conveyed by more than one participant, however it was noted that this did not necessarily mean that elements of the platform other than conservation should be exempted from cuts.
 - e. The Board sought a clarification on what the effects of the approach agreed for CRPs would have on Genebanks platform funding to inform further discussions. It was advised that as platforms don't, in most cases, have access to Window 3 or bilateral funding, they would face a disproportionately large cut if they were treated the same as other CRPs.
 - f. The Board therefore took the majority view that the approach agreed for CRPs in the event of cuts would not apply to platforms.
38. **Decision SMB/M5/DP3:** The Board;
- 1) endorsed the approach that W1 would be allocated across all funding gaps between W2 and System Council indicative W1/2 allocations such that these are reduced by the same percentage amount until W1 funding is exhausted. This would aim to offer a middle ground between full and zero coverage of the gap with W1, thus creating some incentive for W2 fund-raising while partially helping reduce gaps for all CRPs (just at different rates); and
 - 2) approved the 2017 CGIAR Research Financing Plan (2017 FinPlan), as amended to take into account the Board's endorsed position.

Resource Mobilization work plan

39. The Chair of the Board's adhoc working group on resource mobilization introduced the report of the group's outcomes and recommendations. He advised the Board that their endorsement and additional ideas were sought on the strategy presented.

40. It was advised that one of the starting points for the group's work had been the recommendations made in the Lion's Head 2014 report on Innovative Finance for Agriculture R&D. Recognizing the good capabilities in Centers and the Resource Mobilization community of practice, the Executive Director highlighted that a key challenge in implementing a number of the report's recommendations has been the capacity to work with those wider CGIAR resources due to a lack of System Management Office capability and staffing in this area since the closure of the Fund Office in Summer 2016. Reminding the Board of the recruitment plan already underway to address what are key staffing shortfalls, the Executive Director noted that work on a stronger 'CGIAR narrative' has already begun under his direction. He also highlighted relationship building and funder contact work that had been a key focus for his role since taking office.
41. The Board echoed the importance of a compelling CGIAR narrative as a high priority given its role in underpinning other resource mobilization work. Regarding ambassadors and representation, a System Council representative highlighted the need for top leadership to play a highly visible role for CGIAR, and others emphasized that providing key talking points and compelling materials to high-profile supporters on agricultural research more widely, to best benefit from their platforms, could be an effective strategy. The need to consider not only the message being sent but to whom and what groups it is delivered was also raised.
42. **Action Point SMB/M5/AP6: By end-April 2017:** Noting the ongoing work of the Resource Mobilization Working Group and subject to their revised Terms of Reference being developed, the System Management Office will support the development of Resource Mobilization tools and strategic activities, specifically the development of a revised CGIAR narrative (programmatic story) and of a short slide series showcasing CGIAR that can be provided to all Centers to use, to Funders and any other key stakeholders to ensure that they have the tools to talk about CGIAR. The potential use of a Dashboard tool to monitor activity and progress in this area will also be explored for consideration by the working group.

Agenda Item 5 – Monitoring and Reporting on Performance

43. The Board were apprised of planned arrangements for 2016 program performance reporting for the last year of the 2010-2016 portfolio. It was confirmed that the template used for previous years would remain unchanged for 2016 (by reason that this was the last year for the concluding portfolio), and that the System Management Office would undertake a high-level evaluative and collation role to produce the 2016 CRP Portfolio Report, with a focus on impact and impact assessment stories.
44. In response to a request for the views of System Council representatives on whether the proposed reports aligned with their requirements, it was commented that:
 - a. final reporting that covered the full first phase of CRPs would be welcomed;

- b. high priority should be given to ensuring that elements of performance monitoring for the 2017-2022 portfolio, such as baselines, are in place; and
 - c. that reports should be tailored based on their intended audience, and focus on accomplishments, ensuring that they are simplified to the best extent possible.
45. Noting views expressed previously by Funders on reporting requirements and the reports received, the Head of Board and Council Relations commented on some early thinking around whether for the 2017-2022 portfolio reporting, there was an opportunity to revisit the methods and formats of system-wide reporting in order to better meet Funders' needs, ensure that work is not done on reports that may not add value, and to further strengthen the narrative of what has been achieved. It was noted that no position or decision was expected in this meeting, but that later in the year Funders would be asked to provide their views on how a more streamlined reporting setup might be arrived at over time.

Agenda Item 6 – Evaluation

46. The Head of IEA introduced a presentation designed to initiate a conversation among the Board on evaluation effectiveness and efficiencies, and roles and responsibilities in that regard in the System. Several key points were raised, including:
- a. IEA's ongoing efforts to think on how to improve evaluations in current work and in the forthcoming work plan, noting the increased focus on the use of evaluation, and on costs effectiveness;
 - b. The need for strong links with not only the Council and its yet-to-be-formed Strategic Impact, Monitoring & Evaluation Committee ('SIMEC') but collaboration also with other System Entities;
 - c. Changes to requirements under the new governance structure since 1 July 2016, including that evaluations can now be commissioned by the Board in consultation with IEA, and the role of the System Management Office in monitoring implementation of decisions arising from evaluations of CGIAR Research;
 - d. The need to support decision making and share evaluation findings at critical milestones, and the need for good communication and dissemination, including tailoring evaluation outputs to various audiences, to get the buy-in of those who will eventually implement recommendations; and
 - e. Lessons drawn from the first cycle of evaluations including refining the scope of evaluations, revising guidance and approach/methodology and optimizing use of experts, feeding in to coordination with other system entities to develop a multi-year evaluation plan for CGIAR.
47. The Interim Chair recognized the value of evaluation to CGIAR, noting appreciation for the thorough CRP evaluations previously conducted and their use in assessing the proposals for the 2017-2022 Portfolio.
48. Noting feedback received that Center leadership has felt 'over-evaluated' by the breadth of evaluation and other assurance providers, the potential move to a

‘a combined assurance’ model was highlighted as one possible means of the System having better visibility on what exactly is being assessed or evaluated by which entity/funder, and thus, providing a basis for a more informed conversation on whether the right body is undertaking the most relevant work for the System. In response to a question on the different roles of independent advisory bodies, it was also clarified that care is taken by both ISPC and IEA to ensure that the boundaries between program evaluation impact assessment and ex-ante evaluation are clear.

49. In response to a question on ensuring that evaluation is demand- rather than supply-side driven, the utility of evaluation reports to certain Funders, notably government agencies who often have evaluation requirements, was highlighted. Feedback was also received that for evaluation reports to be highly effective tools, recommendations should be clearly prioritized, actionable in the financial and operational context in which they are made, and then implemented (and tracked) so that positive change is thus effected.

Agenda Item 7 – Platform and CRP Governance matters

Next steps in taking stock of CRP and platform governance arrangements

50. The Head of Board and Council Relations introduced a possible timeline to take forward the Board’s request that 2017 include a taking-stock of CRP and platform governance arrangements, in the context that the 2016 reforms were heavily focused on Board and Council interrelationships, and time had not therefore been available to review whether there were refinements now needed for the CRP and platform internal oversight arrangements. It was noted that one of the questions the Board had asked to be considered in that work was whether a ‘one size fits all’ approach is appropriate for the new portfolio, building upon what has been learned to date.
51. In the discussion that followed, the following points were raised:
- a. The importance of also taking into account the views of Flagship leaders as the ‘taking stock’ exercise progresses;
 - b. The need for clarity on the difference between roles of Independent Steering Committees (and whether these should be renamed to better reflect the roles that they undertake), Center-level Management Committees, and Center Boards, including where respective accountabilities lie; and
 - c. The need for balance and restraint in the number of meetings to ensure that transaction costs are proactively managed.
52. **Action Point SMB/M5/AP7: In Q2 2017:** Centers will be requested to provide the Terms of Reference for each of the Independent Steering Committees/Advisory Committees of each CRP and Platform to feed into the System Management Board’s taking stock of of CRP and Platform governance arrangements.

Genebanks Platform oversight and engagement: Recap of outcomes of actions since SMB4

53. The Board heard a report from the meeting of the Executive Board of the Global Crop Diversity Trust ('GCDT'), noting the following highlights:
- a. The active and engaged nature of that GCDT Board, with a strong focus on fundraising;
 - b. A perception that there may not have been uniform familiarity amongst Board members with the Genebanks Platform proposal, and how implementation arrangements are planned to be managed; and
 - c. On Genebanks policy module governance matters, that there is an opportunity to engage further with the Crop Trust in respect of:
 - i. Ensuring a shared view on reputational risk and liability issues around the management of genetic resources and the preparation and communication of policy positions;
 - ii. Clarifying the membership of the independent advisory committee for the Platform; and
 - iii. The relevant lines of reporting both for information and oversight purposes, as part of the GCDT's role as a 'Lead Center' of a CGIAR Research Platform.
54. **Action Point SMB/M5/AP8: By September 2017:** The Global Crop Diversity Trust Executive Board members will be invited to the 2017 Board Orientation Program to facilitate improved understanding of the CGIAR System and their governance responsibilities as Board Members of a Lead Center. Communication between the Interim Chair of the Board and the Chair of the GCDT Executive Board will also be facilitated.
55. **Action Point SMB/M5/AP9: By end-April 2017:** The System Management Office will ensure that the downstream agreement to be signed between the Global Crop Diversity Trust and the CGIAR System Organization includes a clause that addresses the assurance requirements typically required of a CGIAR Center in respect of risk management and internal audit matters.

[Agenda Item 8 – Progress of the Board's Committees and Working Groups](#)

Strategic Impact, Monitoring & Evaluation Committee – Timeline for framing the role

56. The Head of Board and Council Relations apprised the Board of the progress to date and planned timeline for the formation of the Strategic Impact, Monitoring and Evaluation Committee ('SIMEC') of the System Council and its counterpart of the System Management Board, noting that the Charter and Framework mandate that such a committee is formed by each.
57. It was advised that the staggered approach to their formation is intentional to ensure that duplication in their Terms of Reference is avoided and that their work can be complementarity rather than competing, although recognizing that a principle of

effective communication and collaboration between the two committees would be important to their good functioning. With that in mind, and noting that a revised Board membership is anticipated from 1 July 2017, the timeline proposes that the Board's SIMEC be formed by August/September 2017.

58. The Interim Chair invited inputs from the Board on the proposed approach, with the following points being raised in the discussion that followed:
- a. The need for a clearly-defined nominations process for membership of the Board's SIMEC, and consideration of how to bring in the relevant monitoring and evaluation experience, including whether it may be appropriate to bring one or two independent members into that committee's work;
 - b. The need to ensure clear delineation of the Board's SIMEC's responsibilities as advisory to the Board;
 - c. The recommendation to choose a different name for the Board's 'SIMEC' to avoid confusion with the Council's SIMEC and perceived duplication even if the Terms of Reference define different roles; and
 - d. The opportunity for collaboration between the Board and Council's SIMECs on topics such as CGIAR's Strategy.
59. **Decision SMB/M5/DP4:** The Board authorized the Interim Chair of the System Management Board to form an adhoc nominations committee to identify the initial members of the Board's second Standing Committee taking into consideration the outcomes of the Centers' decisions on the voting members of the System Management Board from 1 July 2017.

Discussion on CGIAR Country Collaboration

60. The Chair of the Board's working group on CGIAR Country Collaboration updated the Board on the evolution of the group's thinking, noting that the group had moved away from the restrictive notion of 'site integration' towards emphasizing collaboration between CGIAR institutes and between CGIAR and countries in which it operates, and aiming for a higher-level collective view of roles and impact opportunities within different countries, aligning to host governments and addressing higher-level indicators.
61. The working group identified the need to resurvey and reclassify countries and opportunities to work within them, and sought an ongoing Community of Practice, supported by the System Management Office.
62. In the ensuing discussion, Board colleagues voiced support for the higher-profile role CGIAR could achieve and the potential for increased impact in countries through such a coordinated approach.

Decisions and way forward for adhoc Working Groups

63. The Interim Chair, acknowledging the proactive engagement of Board members and other stakeholders in progressing deliverables of the Board's ad-hoc working groups since July 2016, highlighted the importance of taking stock to ensure that the work of each group could be reviewed and either brought to a close, their mandate extended, or handed over to one of the Board's Standing Committees as appropriate.
64. The Head of Board and Council Relations introduced a summary of the suggested way forward for the Board's additional six ad-hoc working groups as outlined in meeting document SMB5-08C, noting that monthly updates on the progress of the work of each group had been shared with Centers since their formation. In the discussion that followed, it was confirmed that Directors General would be consulted through the Board's Audit and Risk Committee as the Committee addresses the topic of System Entity costs. Appreciation was expressed by those present for the work of the System Management Office in providing support to the working groups.
65. **Decision SMB/M5/DP5:** In respect of the Board's ad hoc working groups, the Board:
- 1) Approved an extension of the term of the Resource Mobilization Working Group, subject to the adoption of a revised Terms of Reference;
 - 2) Approved an extension of the term of the Rules of Governance Working Group until 1 July 2017;
 - 3) Endorsed the addition of Shenggen Fan as an additional member of the Rules of Governance Working Group;
 - 4) Approved an extension of the term of the Working Group on CGIAR Country Collaboration until 30 June 2017; and
 - 5) Endorsed the nature and direction of the new design and plan for CGIAR Country Collaboration.
66. **Action Point SMB/M5/AP10: By end-April 2017:** Concise 'end of term' notes will be prepared for each of the Working Groups whose activity will no longer continue to ensure effective handover of their mandates where applicable and to ensure that the outcomes and outputs are communicated to all Centers.

Agenda Item 9 – Risk and Assurance

67. The Chair of the Board's Audit and Risk Committee ('ARC') briefed the Board on the work of the Committee since the Board's 4th meeting in December 2016. Hilary Wild, Audit Committee Chair of ICARDA, and Co-Chair of the Center Audit Committee Chairs' January 2017 meeting, was also present for this agenda item to contribute to the Board's conversation on the continuing development of a risk management framework of the CGIAR System, as mandated by the Framework and Charter.
68. **On the ARC's workplan:** A three-year rolling draft work plan has been drafted and refined, designed to ensure that all elements of responsibility as defined in the ARC's

Terms of Reference can be covered in an appropriate manner, recognizing that the plan would be a living document and further refined by the ARC as required.

69. **On the ARC's responsibility to review the financial position of the System Organization and Centers, and recommend to the Board corrective action to be taken as required:** The ARC acknowledged that at the time of this meeting, sufficient financial information had not been available to fully discharge their responsibilities in this regard, and therefore proposed to include this item in the Board's 6th virtual meeting scheduled for 18 April 2017. The importance of having this information available early in the year, even if not fully finalized, was emphasized.
70. **On the development of a Risk Management Framework for the CGIAR System:** The ARC Chair invited the Head of Board and Council Relations to update the Board on progress in developing an approach and draft principles, with the following key highlights noted:
- a. A very productive first conversation on risk at the inaugural General Assembly of the Centers at which there was an initial brainstorming of risks relevant to the System, followed by the inaugural meeting of Center Audit Committee Chairs on 31 January 2017, at which this early thinking had been supported;
 - b. An emphasis on ensuring that whatever is established is designed from principles, coming from the Centers up, and building upon what is already works;
 - c. The principle that "everyone is a risk manager" is central to an effective risk management framework, highlighting the role that all staff must play, rather than the responsibility being on one or a few roles;
 - d. The results of an anonymous survey on self-assessment of risk maturity levels, highlighting the variation in perceptions, and proposing that a 'repeatable' level might be a constructive aspiration as the framework is established, aiming for movement towards a 'managed' level over time;
 - e. The follow-up work proposed includes a more detailed look at what are the right System-wide/System-level risks that the System Council should focus on, noting that most risks are probably most appropriately managed by a Center Board, or the System Management Board, with a certain subset of risks perhaps requiring oversight at all levels of the System;
 - f. The importance of considering communication and escalation/de-escalation processes and being strategic in how information is shared and reported; and
 - g. In terms of proposed next steps, taking some proposed principles and key questions on risk appetite, tolerance and preferences on categorization and terminology to the System Council at its forthcoming meeting in May 2017, for high-level input, before then moving to a broad consultative phase across the Centers.
71. **On internal audit matters:**
- a. The ARC Chair reported that in the context of work being undertaken to transition to the new Internal Audit Function arrangements – anticipated to be approved in

- Q4 2017 – it remained relevant for the Board to utilize the services of the CGIAR IAU to discharge certain of the Board’s responsibilities.
- b. That said, it was noted that this was according to a modified mandate – being one largely focused on advisory engagements to support the System Management Board’s ARC in the discharge of their responsibilities, and very few assurance engagements. In this regard, it was noted that several Centers had requested specific work to be undertaken by the CGIAR IAU in 2017, being a matter that the Center had negotiated direct with CGIAR IAU so that the Center Board (and typically its Audit Committee) had full control on that work and its deliverables. Thus, the only Center-focused assurance engagements were Center-requested, and all other work was focused on what was considered relevant and appropriate by the System Management Board’s ARC (3 of the 4 members of which are Center Audit Committee Chairs).
 - c. In that context, work has been undertaken with the CGIAR IAU Director to refine the 2017 IAU Workplan to move to a mainly advisory engagement model; better reflect the adoption of a risk-based approach for the audit engagements that would be undertaken in regard to the CGIAR System Organization’s own internal audit plan; better articulate the rationale for each exercise that is proposed; and that up to date budget information on confirmed commitments is included.
 - d. In response to questions raised, it was clarified that the workplan did not propose to duplicate any work already taking place at Center-level. Whilst accepting that explanation, the Board nevertheless requested that in discussions with the ARC, the CGIAR IAU 2017 workplan be more explicit in that regard. It was also proposed that a document clarifying the role of CGIAR IAU as it compares to other audit and evaluation arrangements in the system could be a useful tool for many stakeholders.
 - e. A proposed Interim Charter for CGIAR IAU was recommended to the Board for approval, recognizing that the existing IAU Charter did not reflect the revised governance arrangements, something which had been identified as a risk and a non-conformance to IIA standards.
 - f. The topic of the Performance Assessment of the CGIAR IAU Director would be discussed in the Board’s closed session.
72. **Decision SMB/M5/DP6:** The Board approved the Interim Charter of the CGIAR IAU (dated 22 March 2017), for use in the period until the Internal Audit Function arrangements for the provision of assurance and advisory services to the System Council and the CGIAR System Organization are agreed between the System Council and the System Management Board, and then formally approved by the System Management Board.
73. **Action Point SMB/M5/AP11: By mid-April 2017:** The Board to receive a report on the financial position of each Center at 31 December 2016 (and annually thereafter, by early April, recognizing that some reports may not be fully finalized, but key headline information should be available). For 2017, the Board will consider this information at their 6th meeting (virtual) on 18 April 2017.

74. **Action Point SMB/M5/AP12: By early-April 2017:** The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee will facilitate consultation with Centers on the CGIAR IAU Audit Plan for 2017 to ensure that the intended focus on non-duplication of Center assurance work is made clearer. In addition, an explanatory document on audit and other independent review will be prepared to ensure that the purposes and responsibilities of each type of review or audit are clearly delineated.

Agenda Item 10 – Input of System Council advisory bodies and mechanisms

ISPC Matters

75. The ISPC Executive Director presented an overview of the role and work of ISPC, highlighting the benefit of receiving inputs from the Board on ISPC's theory of change in the context of the System Council considering a new Terms of Reference for the ISPC.
76. Feedback during the session touched upon:
- a. The composition and specialisms of each ISPC member, with a comment being raised that given the changing research profile, having capacity more closely related to development work, breeding and communications could be beneficial;
 - b. An opportunity for there to be a more considered focus on the outputs and outcomes of ISPC's work including how ISPC's advice bridges upscale discovery research and the development continuum, as well as the potential pitfalls if this is not effective; and
 - c. The opportunity for the ISPC to focus specifically upon:
 - i. Providing independent advice and assurance to the System Council on science quality and relevance, to capture system-wide synergies and to recommend actions and priorities for funding to the System Council;
 - ii. Providing an overview of potential strategies for effective partnerships along the research for development continuum, but not driving the development of those partnerships; and
 - iii. Impact assessment (strengthening impact assessment capacity, leading system-level impact assessments, and supporting ex ante impact assessment across the CGIAR System).
77. In response to a question raised regarding foresight activities, it was noted that this represented a relatively new area for ISPC, and work was underway to set up this capacity, although not finalized at this time. Clarifications were also provided on ISPC's decision-making process on selecting strategic studies, confirming that the focus is on ensuring these are demanded by the Council and well-used. A suggestion received for a study on trade-offs in the SRF was noted.
78. It was commented that there was need for increased clarity on the role of ISPC vis-à-vis its different stakeholders (e.g. what is the ISPC's role in giving advice to the System Management Board, if any?). Further, that it would be beneficial for the ISPC to offer

advice at a more strategic level, and thus moving away from the very detailed nature of past proposal review processes, given the growing maturity of the work be undertaken at Centers on theories of change and impact pathways. A question was also raised for the ISPC to consider over the coming period – whether it was the best use of CGIAR resources to prepare a number of the studies that it leads on the development of, or whether it is the time for the Centers to undertake this work and the ISPC’s role should be more on the provision of assurance to the System Council itself.

IEA Matters

79. The Head of IEA advised that an evaluation of ISPC is scheduled to take place in 2017 in such a way as to inform the process of revising the ISPC’s TOR through preliminary findings being available by September 2017. It was noted that in preparing the Terms of Reference for this evaluation, the IEA team had been undertaking preparatory work and preliminary analysis to avoid overuse of consultants and experts. The Board were invited to share any inputs on the draft Terms of Reference for this evaluation.
80. It was also confirmed that an independent evaluation of IEA is scheduled for 2017, approved by the System Council as part of the IEA’s workplan and with a budget of \$150,000. A draft Terms of Reference for this evaluation has been prepared by IEA, and the work formally handed over to the System Management Office, to be taken to the System Council for input before being handed over to the Council’s SIMEC to oversee the work. The Head of Board and Council Relations confirmed that the System Management Office would provide secretariat support for that evaluation, including the management of the work of independent consultants to carry the out the evaluation work, to demonstrate the IEA’s full commitment to the evaluation being independent of their team.
81. **Action Point SMB/M5/AP1: By 12 April 2017:** The System Management Board members will provide any additional written inputs on the draft ISPC and IEA Terms of Reference to the System Management Office to contribute to ongoing System Council deliberations.
82. **Action Point SMB/M5/AP12: By November 2017:** SPIA be invited to make a presentation at an appropriate forthcoming System Management Board Meeting, to ensure that the work of this panel is better communicated to the Board.

Agenda Item 11 – Closed Session

83. The Board met in closed session with no Active Observers or staff members present.

Agenda Item 12 – Any Other Business

84. **Action Point SMB/M5/AP13: By end-May 2017:** At the request of the Board, the Board and Council Relations Unit of the System Management Office will facilitate a Board self-assessment.
85. No other business being raised, the Interim Chair again thanked Bioversity for their hosting of the meeting and the informative presentation on Bioversity's work given to the Board during one of their meeting breaks. He thanked meeting participants and closed the meeting.

Annex 1: Compendium - Decisions at 5th System Management Board meeting

SMB/M5/DP1: Meeting Agenda – 5th Meeting, 28-29 March 2017

The Board **adopted** the Agenda (Document SMB5-01, Revision 1)

SMB/M5/DP2: Finalizing the Portfolio

Subject to further revision based upon inputs from the ad hoc call with System Council members on 30 March, the Board:

- 1) **endorsed** the overall recommendation that a single proposal to be developed to take up key, prioritized research that was included in the former GLDC proposal;
- 2) **adopted** the recommendation that ICRISAT take the lead on developing that proposal, taking up the key considerations outlined by the expert panel, and according to the guidelines for full proposals and review criteria dated 19 December 2015, against which ISPC will undertake its review; and
- 3) **emphasized** the need to ensure that there is a different and more innovative and prioritized process for program design, with the engagement of all the key stakeholders.

SMB/M5/DP3: Funding our work

The Board;

- 1) **endorsed** the approach that W1 would be allocated across all funding gaps between W2 and System Council indicative W1/2 allocations such that these are reduced by the same percentage amount until W1 funding is exhausted. This would aim to offer a middle ground between full and zero coverage of the gap with W1, thus creating some incentive for W2 fund-raising while partially helping reduce gaps for all CRPs (just at different rates); and
- 2) **approved** the 2017 CGIAR Research Financing Plan (2017 FinPlan), as amended to take into account the Board's endorsed position.

SMB/M5/DP4: Forming the Board's second Standing Committee on strategic/program topics

The Board **authorized** the Interim Chair of the System Management Board to form a nominations committee to identify the initial members of the Board's second Standing Committee taking into consideration the outcomes of the Centers' decisions on the voting members of the System Management Board from 1 July 2017.

SMB/M5/DP5: Adhoc System Management Board Working Groups

In respect of the Board's ad hoc working groups, the Board:

- 1) **Approved** an extension of the term of the Resource Mobilization Working Group, subject to the adoption of a revised Terms of Reference;
- 2) **Approved** an extension of the term of the Rules of Governance Working Group until 1 July 2017;
- 3) **Endorsed** the addition of Shenggen Fan as an additional member of the Rules of Governance Working Group;

- 4) **Approved** an extension of the term of the Working Group on CGIAR Country Collaboration until 30 June 2017; and
- 5) **Endorsed** the nature and direction of the new design and plan for CGIAR Country Collaboration.

SMB/M4/DP6: Internal Audit Unit Interim Charter

The Board **approved** the Interim Charter of the CGIAR IAU (dated 22 March 2017), for use in the period until the Internal Audit Function arrangements for the provision of assurance and advisory services to the System Council and the CGIAR System Organization are agreed between the System Council and the System Management Board, and then formally approved by the System Management Board.

Annex 2: List of Meeting Participants

System Management Board Members	Capacity
Martin Kropff (Interim System Management Board Chair)	
Eugene Terry	Independent Member
Shenggen Fan	Voting Center Member
Gordon MacNeil	Voting Center Member
Bushra Malik	Voting Center Member
Jimmy Smith	Voting Center Member
Margret Thalwitz	Voting Center Member
Ann Tutwiler	Voting Center Member
Elwyn Grainger-Jones	Ex-officio Non-Voting Member
System Management Board Active Observers	Capacity
Eric Witte	Active Observer, System Council Member, USA
Tony Cavaliere	Active Observer, System Council Member, BMGF
Rachel Sauvinet-Bedouin	Active Observer, Head, IEA
Sirkka Immonen	Active Observer, Senior Evaluation Manager, IEA (<i>Participating Remotely, Agenda Items 7 & 10 only</i>)
Maggie Gill	Active Observer, ISPC Chair (<i>Participating Remotely, Agenda Item 2 only</i>)
Leslie Lipper	Active Observer, ISPC Executive Director
Karen Brooks	Active Observer, CRP Leaders' Representative
Apologies	
Catherine Bertini	Independent Member

Additional Observers and Invited Guests	Capacity
Matthew Morrell	Convener of the Directors General
Hilary Wild	Co-Chair, CGIAR Center Audit Committee Chairs meeting (<i>Participating Remotely, Agenda Item 9 only</i>)
Karmen Bennett	Head of Board and Council Relations (System Management Board Secretary)
Olwen Cussen	Board and Council Relations Associate
Nadia Manning-Thomas	Board and Council Relations Manager (<i>Participating Remotely</i>)
Albin Hubscher	Head of Financial and Program Performance
Elise Perset	Head of Legal and Office Services (<i>Participating Remotely</i>)
Peter Gardiner	Senior Manager, Program Performance (<i>Participating Remotely, Agenda Items 2 & 5 only</i>)
Philippe Ellul	Senior Office, Program Performance, Co-Chair of MELCOP (<i>Participating Remotely, Agenda Item 5 only</i>)
Michelle Guertin	CIMMYT Senior Manager, Co-Chair of MELCOP (<i>Participating Remotely, Agenda Item 5 only</i>)
Pierre Pradal	CGIAR IAU Director (<i>Participating Remotely, Agenda Item 9 only</i>)

Annex 3: Timetable for resubmission of flagships

Date Range	Description	Responsible party
January-July 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CRPs accustoming themselves to new CRP working • Prepare revised proposal 	CRP management
31 July 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission of revised CRPs/FPs 	CRP management
August 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer review of revised CRP/FP proposals 	ISPC
September 2017 (at ISPC meeting)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CRP Leaders or FP Leaders present updated FPs to ISPC 	CRPs with FP Leaders for ISPC review
October 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written recommendations on FPs provided 	ISPC
November 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision on funding for the whole portfolio 2018 	SC

Annex 4: Strategic reflections on emerging challenges and opportunities

Context	Challenges and opportunities	Questions and implications for CGIAR to consider
Changes in the world	Globalization, automation, and mechanization, combined with biological advancements, are replacing traditional work including the food system. A reduced need for people/labor will be a big trend over the next 20-30 years with the question of what to do with the additional labor that is no longer required.	Are there ways to provide other options for those people such as to provide other services, income transfer and food transfer that can be considered?
	The world has become divided with increasing inequality creating implications also for the food system.	How can food systems help to reduce such increasing inequality, rather than trying to adapt the food system to these inequalities?
	This is the fifth year of declining prices in the world. People pay attention when prices are going up.	A challenge for CGIAR is how to position itself during times of declining prices and to consider how long such a level of price decline will remain and when a spike may happen in terms of planning how to position itself and its work.
Changes in funding	As plans for increasing investment, particularly in Africa, are made (e.g new Marshall Plan), the source of the funding as well as modality for the funding will be different, increasingly including the private sector and emerging economies, and a move away from traditional aid towards venture capital and other private sector modalities.	How can research and the food system help to make the investment reach the last mile?
	There is currently reducing levels of Window 1 and 2, with uncertainty about levels for the future.	What is the threshold of Window 1 and Window 2 funding available before the CRPs are no longer viable? Is \$150 million or \$100 million the point at which it is no longer worth it to embark on the CRPs and to consider doing something different, keeping in mind that CRPs are not the only element that makes CGIAR a system.
	Changes in funding continued... Current funding trends include reducing levels of ODA which creates lower levels of funding and greater unpredictability and sustainability of funding.	How can CGIAR face up to this funding context? Can it take advantage of increasing trends towards leveraging and tied funding? Can it model things like stabilization funds to determine how best to adopt it?

Context	Challenges and opportunities	Questions and implications for CGIAR to consider
Changes in CGIAR role and comparative advantage	The CGIAR was formed at a time of weak NARS and the University community not undertaking much research in developing countries. CGIAR was based on some key concepts based on that context. The world in which the CGIAR was formed has changed and some of the concepts on which CGIAR was based are no longer relevant.	It is time to consider where CGIAR sees itself, what is its value-add, and how does it interact with other players ; all of which should contribute to a new narrative. A different model may be required, including the need to embrace engagement with the Private sector more widely.
	The CGIAR has been, and still is, publicly funded because it is often filling a vital gap that no one else is filling or likely to fill.	The question is how can CGIAR make use of its important global public goods such as its seeds and the knowledge generated across its high-performing institutions in a more collective manner considering new challenges.
	There has been donor frustration with backward looking approaches to development and agriculture. It would be exciting and productive to move forward in these areas with key innovation coming from the system itself.	Can CGIAR shift energy to a few innovative items which may interest the donors and link this to functions and resource mobilization? Can CGIAR prioritize and put a spotlight on key strategic issues in the SRF?

Annex 5: System Management Board adopted 'Decision Tool' for strategic System-level representation roles

