

7th System Council, 15-16 November 2018

Chair's Summary Meeting Highlights and Decisions

Dear System Council Members and Active Observers,

Almost five years to the day from when CGIAR last met at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to take decisions on CGIAR's research agenda and its strategic direction, we convened in Seattle as the System Council to reflect on progress being made on several fronts and take decisions that move other key topics further forward. I am struck by the remarkable progress that we have collectively made in the intervening years, with perhaps more progress in our System in the past year than we as Funders have seen before.

In a meeting that contained many examples of how CGIAR as a System is enhancing its performance and capacity to more fully deliver on its critical mandate, my initial observations focus on three significant new innovations that we supported in Seattle.

First, our approval of the inaugural [2019-2021 CGIAR Business Plan](#) represents a transformational moment – with CGIAR's stakeholders committing to working in an increasingly aligned and far more strategic manner. As so aptly captured by our Center Board of Trustees Chairs in the Business Plan Foreword, this is a moment rich with potential for CGIAR to rise to the challenge and build on the substantial System achievements and impact to date. Centers are increasingly aligned through the System Management Board – a commitment to self-governance that is working; and the System Council is generating a deep level of engagement by and with Funders to address the major strategic issues facing CGIAR.

A second historic moment came with the announcement delivered by Ann Tutwiler on behalf of Bioversity International and CIAT jointly, that they are very close to realizing their aspiration of operating as a formal Alliance, with one Board and one CEO. We heard that this is not the only conversation being had within the System on how CGIAR's Centers can more strategically align their operations, with an important update on AfricaRice and IRRI's strategic partnership discussions also being provided. Taking note of the inherent complexity of the conversations involved and commending these and other Centers for their commitment to these difficult conversations to date, we proposed that the System Management Board consider presenting a well-defined strategy on Center alliances, with cost-efficiency drivers being seen by many Funders as of equal importance to those of stronger strategic alignment and building critical mass in research programs. Particularly on how Centers operate with each other through shared services, we challenged the Centers to proceed with much greater ambition and accelerated commitment to better realize the potential that so many believe exists.

Third, we used the System Council meeting to officially launch the [CGIAR Performance Report 2017](#), representing a step change in how CGIAR as a System reports its achievements, and showcase an emerging CGIAR program performance dashboard that will provide high-quality data and real-time analysis to our Funders and partners. Even as development continues, there was strong interest for online access to the beta dashboard as soon as possible, in recognition of the powerful tool that this innovation presents.

Summarizing other important moments from our Seattle meeting:

We acted on stated commitments to implement and improve our current research portfolio, taking initial steps to define a direction toward 2030. Endorsing the System Management Board's [proposal](#) to elevate gender equality in research into a broader 'CGIAR Platform'¹ by January 2020, we emphasized the need for that Platform to be designed in a manner that demonstrably strengthens the quality, rigor and uptake of gender equality research by CGIAR programs, and provides robust monitoring, reporting and greater visibility of that research. Our caution was to ensure that as the System transforms the positioning and strategic objectives of the enhanced Platform, work is undertaken to integrate where possible the best of what is already underway. We also accepted the System Management Board's recommendation to include common bean research as an element of the CGIAR Research Portfolio on the basis of the decision set out in the following annex.

Other notable undertakings in portfolio enhancement that we recognized as ongoing efforts with more work to be done, were the "[Crops to End Hunger](#)" initiative, which is steadily advancing to modernize CGIAR plant breeding programs, and amplified attention to [strengthening global governance in the fight against anti-microbial resistance](#) – with the System Organization's signature of a memorandum of understanding to explore closer collaboration between CGIAR and the Government of Denmark constituting a highlight of the meeting. Supported by an [information note](#) circulated in advance, the Danish Minister of Health's remarks to the Council both confirmed Denmark's plans to establish a global center on anti-microbial resistance and work towards a stronger partnership with CGIAR, and served as an important reminder on why a global coordinated 'One Health' approach to this key topic is essential.

With the longer-term goal of the System adopting a CGIAR '2030 plan' by end-2020, we benefited from the ISPC Chair's summary of outcomes from 2018 Science Forum held in October 2018. Amongst the key messages was the importance of considering trade-offs between the Sustainable Development Goals ('SDGs'), with an overall conclusion that CGIAR should systematically incorporate the measurement of positive/negative interactions that can arise between the SDGs in agricultural food systems in the development of the CGIAR 2030 Plan and use the analysis to prioritize and focus CGIAR research in areas in which the System's comparative advantage in research can make a significant contribution to achieving the SDGs.

¹ As for Big Data in Agriculture, Excellence in Breeding and the Genebank Platform

We demonstrated greater accountability and oversight to investors and partners through measures we are taking to enhance our assurance systems. We were briefed on several important initiatives, including Center-led investments to benchmark their internal audit services against best international practice and implement improvements where identified. We continue to be encouraged by the increasing level of transparency and professionalism in how reported events are being brought to the System Council in line with our expectations under the CGIAR System Risk Management Framework that we adopted in November 2017. Whilst there is always more to be done to demonstrate best practice in such complex areas, the take-away message from our meeting is that the efforts being made by CGIAR's Centers and the System Organization on this front are all heading in right direction and are to be encouraged.

We took further steps towards creating more efficiency and interconnectivity in System-wide actions and functions. Expressing our thanks and appreciation for the counsel provided by the Council's ISPC, SPIA as a sub-group of the ISPC, and our Independent Evaluation Arrangement over this and past years, we took the opportunity to provide direction on strategic priorities as we enter the business plan phase. In the 2019 transition year that is before them, we called for: more alignment in their underlying workplans to deliver the efficiencies expected from a Shared Secretariat; some additional prioritization in the work of ISDC; and a revision of the priorities and approach to our external independent evaluation and review efforts in this first business plan period. We also recognized the value of the System Council's Intellectual Property Group ('SCIP') and agreed to ensure that we spend time considering their report and any recommendations on an annual basis. Noting that the SCIP Group's Terms of Reference ('TOR') pre-date the 2016 governance reforms, it was agreed that modest adjustments to the TOR would be brought back to the Council in due course.

We took stock of four recent past external independent evaluations commissioned by the System Council and delivered under the oversight and stewardship of CGIAR's Independent Evaluation Arrangement.² Building on the findings and conclusions from the 2017 Evaluation of Gender at the workplace, the System Council called on the Centers to formally adopt and individually strive to reach a target of 35 percent representation of women across all professional roles by end-2020 as a pathway to increased gender diversity over time. With several Funders sharing that they already operate with equal numbers of men and women in their senior teams, the strongly expressed view from Seattle is that real progress within the respective Centers will only be made if targeted efforts are proactively championed by each Center's Board of Trustees Chair and Director General. Drawing on earlier discussions of the Council's Strategic Impact, Monitoring and Evaluation Committee ('SIMEC'), and noting good progress against many of the recommendations, we also agreed to return to certain elements from the partnerships, capacity development, and results-based management evaluations in due course. Specifically, we took note of the critical need to sharpen our focus on how we work with national partners through country collaboration activities; the ensuing discussion indicating members' high level of interest in the topic, and we will take this issue forward in our forthcoming May 2019 System Council meeting.

² The Gender evaluation was undertaken in two parts: Gender in the workplace (discussed here), and Gender in research, with the recommendations from the gender in research part being well responded to in the discussion on elevating CGIAR's research to a formal CGIAR Platform.

We affirmed the need for stability and predictability in System financing by supporting an inaugural multi-year research funding plan. Echoing the words of Mr. Bill Gates, who in remarks delivered in an informal session on the second day forcefully advocated for a doubling of financing for CGIAR if the solutions that we provide are right, we recognized that the concerted effort of the Centers and the System Organization over recent years to increase System coherence, efficiency and the delivery of impact - have resulted in important program and institutional gains. In response to these endeavors, Funders are showing growing confidence in CGIAR, as evidenced by early indications of increased efforts to providing multi-year System-level financial support wherever possible, and the Foundation itself considering contributing to System funding at an appropriate time.

We extended our appreciation: As host of this 7th System Council meeting, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation welcomed us and put at our disposal its excellent facilities. In addition to being one of CGIAR's important Funders, we recognized the Foundation's highly strategic engagement in improving CGIAR's work and impact in many ways. For these tremendous and ongoing contributions, the Council expressed its gratitude to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

We warmly acknowledged Tony Cavalieri, System Council member for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, for his co-chairing of the meeting; and the invaluable Center perspectives provided over the 2017-2018 calendar years by Nicole Birrell, Convener of the Centers' Board of Trustees Chairs and Matthew Morrell, Convener of the Directors-General. The tireless work of the members of SIMEC to help ensure progress on several fronts, particularly in revising the mandate of our advisory services, was similarly recognized. We also conveyed our strong appreciation to FAO for hosting the advisory services for many years, with this arrangement concluding at the end of March 2019.

Lastly, we expressed appreciation to the Centers, science leaders, and especially the System Management Office, whose inputs and hard work in the past months has enabled us to have a constructive conversation in Seattle.

Looking ahead to 2019, the System Council is scheduled to hold its 8th meeting on 15 and 16 May in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. We are eagerly awaiting confirmation of the dates of 13 and 14 November 2019 and the location of Chengdu, China for the 9th System Council meeting and will advise accordingly.

In closing, I once again thank all Council members for the candor and collegiality with which we discussed issues of varying sensitivity. With certainty that the same spirit will be carried over to future interactions and optimism in the course we have begun to chart for CGIAR toward 2030 and beyond, I look forward to our next gathering.

Yours sincerely,

Juergen Voegelé, Ph.D.
Chair, System Council

Annex 1 – Decisions taken

SC/M7/DP1: Meeting Co-Chair

The System Council **appointed** Tony Cavaliere, representative of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, as the non-voting Co-Chair for the meeting pursuant to Article 5.2 of the CGIAR System Framework.

SC/M7/DP2: Adoption of the Agenda

The System Council **adopted** the Agenda issued on 11 November 2018 (meeting document SC7-01).

SC/M7/DP3: A Common Bean Flagship

The System Council **approved** the proposal for a flagship on common bean, “Strategic and applied research to meet the demand for beans in Africa and Latin America” for inclusion in the CGIAR Portfolio from 1 January 2019 on the proviso that the 2019-2021 Financing Plan has a ‘US\$ 0’ indicative allocation for Window 1 and Window 2.

SC/M7/DP4: Extend reconciliation of Funder seating

The System Council **agreed** to align the reconciliation of the 15 Funder seats of the System Council with the business plan concept, such that the reconciliation should take place at the start of the third year of each business cycle based on contributions made during the three prior calendar years; and accordingly **agreed** to extend the reconciliation period to end 2020 for this first cycle, such that the reconciliation calculations will be undertaken in Q1 2021 (to cover the period 1 January 2016 – 31 December 2020), and the revised System Council 15 Funder seats will operate with effect from 1 July 2021.

SC/M7/DP5: Consequential decision of Funder seat reconciliation

As a consequence of the approach set out in the approved CGIAR 3-Year Business Plan 2019-2021 to extend reconciliation of System Council Funder seating to end-2020, the membership terms of SIMEC members are **extended** until 31 December 2020 to align with this period as follows:

- 1 - African Development Bank - Dougou Keita
- 2 - Australia - Mellissa Wood
- 3 - Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation – Tony Cavaliere
- 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
- 9 - Vacant (*interested voting member constituencies are invited to submit nominations*)

SC/M7/DP6: 2019-2021 Program Performance Management Standards

The System Council:

- i. **Approved** the proposed 2019-2021 CGIAR Program Performance Standards as set out in document SC7-H, taking note that the System Management Board is expected to approve the assessment levels for each of the Standards at the System Management Board 12th meeting on 13 December 2018; and
- ii. **Agreed**, based on the recommendation of SIMEC, that the evaluation senior specialist in the new CGIAR Advisory Services Shared Secretariat is the responsible officer for undertaking the periodic independent assessment of whether programs met the standards, working across other advisory bodies as required to obtain expert data.

SC/M7/DP7: 2019-2021 Advisory Bodies Work Plans and Budgets

The System Council, pursuant to article 6.1(u) of the CGIAR System Framework:

- i. **Agreed** that for 2019 a certain degree of flexibility is needed for the operations of the Advisory Services and the Shared Secretariat and that workplans and budgets for 2020 and 2021 will be re-assessed in 2019 by the System Council supported by SIMEC.
- ii. **Endorsed** the workplan of the ISDC for 2019, and asks the ISDC to largely focus on foresight activities and developing a protocol on horizon scanning;
- iii. **Endorsed** the workplan and high budget scenario of SPIA, with the understanding that SIMEC will work with the Assurance Oversight Committee for a value-for-money review of the budget; and SIMEC will work with the System Management Office on the means of funding of the budget, with that proposal to be presented by not later than 3 December 2018 for approval by the System Council by electronic means;
- iv. **Requested** further refinement of the workplan and budget of the evaluations work stream of the Shared Secretariat, with an updated workplan to be developed that takes into account the feedback provided during the System Council meeting session; and
- v. **Endorsed** the budget envelope for staffing of the Advisory Services Shared Secretariat based on 3-year employment contracts for staff.

SC/M7/DP8: Amending the CGIAR System Framework and Charter of the System Organization

The System Council **approved** the amendments to the following documents as set out in the Annexes of meeting document SC7-06:

- CGIAR System Framework
- Charter of the CGIAR System Organization
- Policy on CGIAR System Cost Financing

[SC/M7/DP9: Membership of the Independent Science and Development Council](#)

As a transitional arrangement to move from CGIAR's Independent Science and Partnership Council ('ISPC') to CGIAR's new Independent Science for Development Council ('ISDC'), and pursuant to paragraph 4.3 of the IDSC terms of reference approved by the System Council on 4 October 2018, the System Council **appointed**, for the respective terms and roles set out below, the following persons as members of the CGIAR System's ISDC:

Person	Role	Appointment end date
Maggie Gill (F)	Interim Chair	30 June 2019
Jennifer Thomson (F)	Transition Member	20 March 2019
Patrick Webb (M)	Transition Member	30 September 2019
Rodomiro Ortiz (M)	Transition Member	30 September 2019
Holger Meinz (M)	Member	8 May 2020
Nighisty Ghezae (F)	Member	7 August 2020
Prabhu Pingali (M)	Member	7 August 2020

[SC/M7/DP10: Advisory Services Transition Arrangements](#)

As a transitional arrangement to move from CGIAR's Independent Evaluation Arrangement to CGIAR's new Advisory Services Shared Secretariat arrangements for external independent evaluations commissioned by the System Council, and pursuant to paragraph 44 of the CGIAR Policy for Independent External Evaluation, the System Council **renewed** with retroactive effect from 1 October 2018 the appointment of the Head of CGIAR's Independent Evaluation Arrangement ("IEA") to 31 March 2019 on the same contractual terms and conditions as current, provided that:

- a. For the period to 31 December 2018, the mandate, work planning and other arrangements for evaluations apply as set out in Chapters 5 and 6 of the CGIAR Policy for Independent External Evaluation; and
- b. For the period 1 January 2019 to 31 March 2019, the mandate, work planning, and other arrangements for evaluations apply as set out in paragraph 3.4 of the Terms of Reference of the CGIAR Advisory Services Shared Secretariat.

[SC/M7/DP11: Honorarium Framework for external Independent Members of the System Council's Standing Committees and advisory groups](#)

Subject to the Terms of Reference of the relevant committee or group expressly providing for the possibility of payment of an honorarium, the System Council **approved**:

- i. The payment of a gross annual honorarium of \$USD 8,000 (pro-rated for the period served in any calendar year) to external specialist-skilled independent members of a System Council Standing Committee/Group. Such honorarium covers all duties in respect of membership of the Committee/Group, which may be above time estimates communicated, including any requested attendance at in-person meetings; or

- ii. The payment of a gross annual honorarium of \$USD 12,000 (pro-rated for the period served in any calendar year) where an external independent member of a System Council Standing Committee/Group serves in the role of Chair. Such honorarium covers all duties in respect of membership and chairing of the Committee, which may be above time estimates communicated, including attendance at in-person meetings of the Committee and the System Council.

SC/M7/DP12: CGIAR System 3-Year Business Plan (2019-2021)

The System Council **approved** the CGIAR System 3-Year Business Plan (2019-2021), as set forth in meeting document SC7-02.

Annex 2 – Agreed positions and actions

[SC/M7/AP1: A Gender Equality in Food Systems Research Platform](#)

Agreed Position:

The System Council **endorsed** the System Management Board recommended timeline and process to call for an elevated 'Gender Equality in Food Systems Research Platform', to commence from 1 January 2020.

Related Action:

The System Council **requested** that, in developing the call for proposals, the 2015 agreed criteria for assessment of a CGIAR Platform be revisited, and if required, that the System Council be requested to approve revised proposal assessment criteria before the call is issued.

[SC/M7/AP2: The 'Crops to End Hunger' Initiative implementation plan](#)

System Council members are requested to provide inputs on the proposed implementation plan to the System Management Office by close of business Paris time on Friday 30 November 2018, to facilitate deliberations on the implementation plan by the System Management Board at its 13 December 2018 meeting.

[SC/M7/AP3: 2019-2021 Program Performance Management Standards](#)

Taking note that it is the System Management Board that is the approval body for the 'rubrics' (assessment levels) for each of the approved program performance standards, **System Council members are requested** to provide inputs on the draft rubrics by not later than close of business Paris time on Friday 30 November 2018.

[SC/M7/AP4: Gender equality in the workplace](#)

The System Council:

- i. **Strongly recommended** that CGIAR Centers adopt and strive to reach the overall goal of a minimum of 35% representation of women across all professional roles by end 2020, building on the findings and conclusions from the 2017 Evaluation of Gender at the workplace; and
- ii. **Requested** that an update be provided at the Council's 8th meeting on progress against this target based on end-2018 data, disaggregated by Center.

[SC/M7/AP5: Forming CGIAR's Independent Science for Development Council](#)

To inform development of the terms of reference for the ISDC Chair and its members, and an advertising strategy for the ISDC Chair role, **System Council members are requested** to provide an initial round of inputs on the materials set out in meeting document [SC7-07B](#) by not later than 30 November 2018, to inform SIMEC discussions and the presentation of the final documents for electronic approval by the System Council by end-December 2018.

SC/M7/AP6: System Council's Intellectual Property ('SCIP') Group

The System Council **requested** that a revised Terms of Reference for the System Council's Intellectual Property ('SCIP') Group, and a formal decision regarding continuing membership for the initial 2019-2021 Business Plan, be presented to the System Council for electronic approval by end 2018.

SC/M7/AP7: CGIAR System 3-Year Business Plan (2019-2021)

The System Council **requested** that a report against progress markers on all 10 actions in the 2019-2021 Business Plan be provided annually as a means of understanding progress and identifying any areas where implementation support that may be required.

Annex 3 - Meeting Participants

Meeting Leadership (non-voting)
Chair: Juergen Voegele
Co-Chair: Tony Cavalieri

Note: The symbols '' and '**' shown against a name below indicates that voting member/ active observer is being represented at the meeting by the alternate ('*') or another delegated representative (**).*

System Council Voting Members (listed alphabetically)	Member representative	Member Alternates & Other Delegation Members
AfDB	Martin Fregene	
Australia	Andrew Campbell	Alternate Member - Mellissa Wood
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	Michelle Quibell**	Other delegate - Neil Watkins
Canada	Christophe Kadji*	Other delegate - Santiago Alba Corral
East Asia & Pacific (voting member China)	Weiping Hao**	Alternate Member - Syaiful Anwar (Indonesia) Other delegate - Lijun Zhao (China)
European Commission	Christophe Larose**	
Germany and Belgium	Michel Bernhardt** (Germany)	Other delegates - Juergen Anthofer (Germany)
Japan	Satomi Okagaki	Alternate Member - Motoaki Komiya Other delegates - Masa Iwanaga; Satoru Muranaka; Naoko Oka
Latin America and Caribbean (voting member Peru)	José Alberto Barrón López** (Peru)	Alternate Member - Pedro Machado (Brazil)
The Netherlands	Melle Leenstra	
Norway	Daniel van Gilst	
South Asia (voting member India)	Shri Chhabilendra Roul	
Sub-Saharan Africa (voting member Nigeria)	Yarama D. Ndirpaya	Alternate Member - Adil Abdelrahim (Sudan)
Sweden	Eva Ohlsson	Alternate Member - Philip Chiverton Other delegate: Anu Kekki Svensson
Switzerland	Michel Evéquo	
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Alan Tollervey	
United States of America	Rob Bertram	Alternate Member - Eric Witte
West Asia & North Africa (voting member Turkey)	Fatih Özdemir** (Turkey)	
The World Bank	Mark Cackler	Alternate Member - Michael Morris

Non-voting Ex-officio members		
Member	Other Delegation Members	
Chair, System Management Board	Marco Ferroni	
Executive Director, CGIAR System Organization	Elwyn Grainger-Jones	
Center Representative 1: Convener of the Chairs of Center Boards of Trustees	Nicole Birrell	
Center Representative 2: Convener of the Center Directors General	Matthew Morell	
Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO)	Chikelu Mba**	
International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)	Donal Brown	Malu Ndavi
Active Observers		
Representative	Alternate Member & Other Delegation Members	
GFAR	Mark Holderness*	
CGIAR Independent Evaluation Arrangement	Rachel Sauvinet-Bedouin	Other delegate - Jenin Assaf
CGIAR Independent Science and Partnership Council	Maggie Gill (ISPC Chair)	Other delegate - Leslie Lipper; Karen Macours (SPIA)
Invited attendees		
Representative		
France - Host Country of the CGIAR System Organization	Bernard Hubert (National Institute for Agricultural Research)	
Trustee of the CGIAR Trust Fund	Darius Stangu (The World Bank)	
Additional participants		
The World Bank	Jonathan Wadsworth, Lead Agricultural Specialist	
CGIAR System Organization <i>(Technical inputs for sessions; meeting management; logistics support)</i>	Karmen Bennett, System Council Secretary and Director, Board and Council Relations	
	Jamie Craig, Director, Finance	
	Olwen Cussen, Senior Associate, Board and Council Relations	
	Peter Gardiner, Senior Adviser, Program Performance	
	Rosa Lugos, Funder and External Engagement Officer	
	Victoria Pezzi, Meetings and Events Associate	
	Valérie Poiré, Senior Manager, Communications	
	André Zandstra, Director, Funder and External Engagement	
Agenda item 5 - Recognizing the new Denmark-CGIAR antimicrobial resistance partnership	Ms. Ellen Trane Nørby , Minister of Health, Denmark and others from Denmark Delegation (Per Vestergaard Okkels; Dorthe Eberhardt Søndergaard; Sine Mutanu Jungersted; Paolo Drostby; Troels Mandel Vensild)	
Apologies		
Constituency	Status	Name
Canada	Voting Member	Michel Gagnon
East Asia and Pacific	Voting Member (China)	Gong Xifeng
Germany & Belgium	Voting Member	Stefan Schmitz
Germany & Belgium	Alternate Member	Hans Joppen
Mexico	Voting Member	Jorge Rueda Sousa
UK	Alternate Member	Howard Standen
South Asia (Sri Lanka)	Alternate Member	N.A. Sisira Kumara
West Asia & North Africa (Iran)	Voting Member	Rasoul Zare
FAO	Non-voting ex-officio member	Samy Gaiji
GFAR	Active Observer	Bongiwe Njobe