One CGIAR: System Reference Group Recommendations to the System Council

Purpose: This document presents the System Reference Group’s recommendations to the System Council. It presents these at a high level but with sufficient clarity in terms of detail so that they are actionable. The recommendations aim to create a rapid step-change in CGIAR so that it is fit for purpose to work with national and international partners to address the integrated challenges of the 21st century.

Action Requested: The System Reference Group requests that the System Council consider and endorse the recommendations set out in this paper in full as a package of interconnected and interdependent elements.

Prepared by: System Reference Group, submitted by the Co-Chairs Tony Cavalieri and Marco Ferroni
Document category: Working document of the System Council - There is no restriction on the circulation of this document.
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## SRG members

### Co-Chairs:
- Marco Ferroni, SMB Chair
- Tony Cavalieri, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

### Members from CGIAR System Council

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### Members from CGIAR System Management Board and Centers

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SRG process: high-level time line of events
SRG recommendations build on years of cumulative analysis of CGIAR, specifically commissioned studies on governance options and CRP modalities, and technical workshops of Science Leaders and on shared services.

The SRG has engaged in an unprecedented process of co-creation with Centers, Funders, and partners. The SRG itself brings together centuries of combined CGIAR experience.

Since September 2018, the SRG has met five times in person and 40+ virtual meetings have been held with the full SRG and its three working groups.

SRG Co-Chairs have systematically engaged a wide range of stakeholders, including hundreds of calls in 2019 (e.g. six broad-based group calls with Board Chairs and DGs only since 16 September). Draft versions of the recommendations have been circulated for comments on three occasions and 281 written comments have been logged and addressed.
SRG process: responding to comments in the final version

- **Recommendation 1 – Compelling mission for One CGIAR:** greater recognition of potential impact of food, land- and waterscapes transformation across multiple SDGs

- **Recommendation 2 – Unified governance:** handover period for Center Boards, with up to 1/3 of current, discretionary Center Board members continuing up to end-2021

- **Recommendation 3.a – Integrated operational structure:** initial Executive Management Team to work with Centers to revert with a proposed operational structure by end-2020

- **Risk:** input from a System Council AOC and SMB ARC workshop on potential strategic risks, as well as selected recommended high-level mitigation strategies

- **Adaptive management:** clarifying that dates are targets and that the One CGIAR Common Board/ SMB can to revert to the System Council with recommended course corrections
Recommendation 1: A Compelling Mission for One CGIAR

Develop, by end-2020, a 2030 Research Strategy anchored in the following mission statement and Impact Areas

5 IMPACT AREAS

- nutrition & food security
- poverty reduction, livelihoods & jobs
- gender equality, youth & social inclusion
- climate adaptation & greenhouse gas reduction
- environmental health & biodiversity

One CGIAR mission: ending hunger by 2030 – through science to transform food, land and water systems in a climate crisis
Recommendation 2: Unified Governance

Establish a **One CGIAR Common Board** to provide a unified governance system for all CGIAR’s legal entities and serve in effect as the single governance body for these legal entities. **Target date: by 1 July 2020** a two-thirds majority of discretionary members of each Center/Alliance Board consists of members of the reconstituted SMB.

### ENTITY-SPECIFIC APPROACH
- 150+ different board members
- 30+ in-person board meetings/ year
- Approval/ oversight of 1,800+ policies
- More than 300 board member flights/ year

### UNIFIED GOVERNANCE
- Discretionary roles on Center/Alliance boards and SMB filled by the same individuals
- As small as possible (i.e. 8—10 people)
- Up to 4 meetings/ year
- Non-discretionary members of Center Boards will continue and be engaged through annual forum
- Up to 18-month handover period
Recommendation 3.a: An Integrated Operational Structure

Form a **One CGIAR Executive Management Team (EMT)** composed of three Managing Directors to drive System-level leadership, coordination, and a transition towards an integrated operational structure. **Target date:** EMT in place by 30 April 2020, reverting to Common Board and SC with a proposed structure by end-2020.

**One CGIAR Common Board**
- high-level strategy, oversight, MD appointments

**One CGIAR Executive Management Team**
- coordinated leadership, drive transition to integrated structure with small no. of operational units by end-2020

**Managing Director**

**Managing Director**

**Managing Director**

**Center Directors General**
- lead Centers in transition, ensure continued delivery against existing commitments, report to EMT

“Centers will transition from self-standing institutions to the foundation and building blocks of a broader, dynamic, and more integrated One CGIAR that maintains and enhances their key assets such as human capacities, legal status, brand values and partnerships”
Recommendation 3.b: One CGIAR Policies and Services

Harmonize CGIAR’s policies and internal business services in HR, IT, Finance, Procurement, Communications and Resource Mobilization, and Research Performance and Results Management. **Target date for priority action areas:** business case development **2019/2020,** build and implement **2021/2022**
Recommendation 3.c: One CGIAR at the Country and Regional Level

Organize CGIAR’s presence and engagement at the national and regional levels under a new **One CGIAR engagement model** based on a **country strategy**, **coordination function**, and clear **partnership management** with key **regional partners**. **Target date:** EMT to develop implementation plan with commencement from **end-2020**

- **country coordination function**
- **partnership management with key regional partners**
- **CGIAR country strategies**
- **geographically targeted CGIAR Projects**
Recommendation 4: A New Research Modality

Implement a **phased approach to research delivery** that aligns structure and accountabilities with imperative of seeking **multiple benefits across CGIAR’s Impact Areas**, anchored in **large integrative CGIAR Projects**, co-creation with partners, and enhanced performance and results management. **Target date:** New arrangement ready for implementation from **1 January 2022**

4–5 ‘big lifts’ in major areas of comparative advantage, designed to deliver across multiple Impact Areas

2030 Research Strategy

**3-year Investment Plan**

Prioritized CGIAR Project concepts to be commissioned and awarded – subject to confirmed availability of funding

CGIAR Projects

Measurable objectives, end-to-end design for delivery, target geographies and farming systems based on regional/country priority-setting, and common Performance & Results Management System

**co-creation** through time-bound and topic-bound Research Advisory Groups
Recommendation 5: More, and Pooled, Funding

Alongside increased investment into CGIAR Projects, implement a major change in the way CGIAR is funded – most importantly an increase in overall investment and a shift to greater pooled funding (at least 50%).

**Target date:** 50% pooled funding achieved by end-2022, 70% by the end of the 2022-2024 business plan period, with Funder commitments made at the November 2019 System Council meeting.

- **pooled funding**
  - 50% by -2022,
  - 70% by end-2024

- **W1: unearmarked contributions** – System Council allocates towards CGIAR Projects

- **W2: contributions earmarked to major projects**

- **W3 and bilateral projects**

- **full economic cost recovery** through the application of a One CGIAR institutional rate

**FOR CONSIDERATION:** To increase momentum in view of targets set out in Recommendation 5, an option is to work towards a ‘One CGIAR’ launch in 2021 – coinciding with CGIAR @50 – as the culmination of a coordinated resource mobilization campaign.
Recommended Initial Actions Towards One CGIAR

- **Implementation led by the One CGIAR Common Board and EMT** who revert to the System Council with any recommended course corrections.

- **Until the above are in place, SMB will provide overall stewardship and leadership** in close collaboration with Center Boards and leadership.

- **The SRG will transform into a “Transition Reference Group (TRG)”** with a mandate to end-2020, to support EMT when necessary as a consultation, communication, and reference point on the transition process.

- The **System Organization** will play a supporting role in the change process with enhanced capacity, including through Centers and external experts.

- **Key institutional decisions** should be consistent with the direction and destination of One CGIAR, e.g. appointments of new Board Members, initiating new Alliances, or appointing senior leaders.

**NB:** further thinking on the transition process will be presented separately as part of the background resource ‘Initial Steps and Transition Support to One CGIAR’