

Meeting Summary
18th System Council Meeting
11-12 May 2023

Purpose:

This document presents the formal meeting summary for the System Council's 18th meeting, as approved by the System Council on a no objection basis with effect from Friday 28 July 2023 (Decision Reference SC/M18/EDP2).

It supplements the [SC18 Chair's Summary](#) (issued 25 May 2023) that confirmed decisions taken and actions agreed during the meeting.

Distribution notice: This document may be distributed without restriction.

Prepared by: System Council Secretariat

Introduction

This document presents a summary of the 18th meeting of the System Council (“Council”) held on 11-12 May 2023 in Washington, DC., USA. It follows the release of the SC18 Chair’s Summary (25 May 2023).

By way of overview:

Format: The meeting was held as an in-person meeting, with some virtual participation over two consecutive working days: Thursday 11 May and Friday 12 May 2023.

Agenda items: The meeting covered agenda items within fifteen (15) sessions set out in the table of contents on the following page.

Decisions: The Council took eight (8) decisions and agreed on five (5) action points during its meeting, as initially recorded in the SC18 Chair’s Summary and reproduced in sequence in this summary.

Participants: [Annex 1](#) sets out a list of meeting participants.

Basis of preparation: Pursuant to Article 9.2(a) of the [System Council Rules of Procedure](#), the Secretariat shall not produce a verbatim record of proceedings. The following document therefore neither attributes interventions, nor reproduces direct quotes of an individual System Council member, Active Observer, or other invited guest.

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Agenda Item 1: Meeting Opening

1. The Council's non-voting Chair, Juergen Voegele, opened the meeting. A quorum was present.
2. The Chair announced the rotation in the Latin America and Caribbean ('LAC') Constituency and welcomed Jorge Mario Diaz (Columbia) as the voting member¹, representing LAC (online).
3. The Chair extended a special welcome including to first-time participants, including:
 - a. Representing Japan at this meeting from the Embassy of Japan in the USA: Toshiyuki Kubota
 - b. Representing China at this meeting: Jin Ke
 - c. From the Africa Development Bank ('AfDB'): Innocent Musabyimana
 - d. Invited guest of the Global Crop Diversity Trust: Hannes Dempewolf
 - e. Representatives from the European Initiative for Agricultural Research for Development ('EIARD'):
 - i. EIARD Secretary: Nienke Beintema
 - ii. Denmark: Hanne Carus
 - iii. Italy: Anna Beatrice Ciorba
 - f. Incoming Secretary to the System Council: Sylvia Oyinlola
4. The Chair also welcomed additional representatives of the System Board ('Board') and Center/Alliance Boards, and external experts from CGIAR's Independent Science for Development Council ('ISDC'), Standing Panel on Impact Assessment ('SPIA'), Assurance Oversight Committee ('AOC'), and Independent Advisory and Evaluation Service ('IAES').
5. **Decision SC/M18/DP1: Appointment of Meeting Co-Chair**
The Council **appointed** Martin Fregene, Council member representing the African Development Bank ('AfDB'), as the non-voting Co-Chair for the 18th System Council meeting, pursuant to Article 5.2 of the CGIAR System Framework.
6. The Co-Chair expressed appreciation for the opportunity to serve in the role and noted that Innocent Musabyimana would serve as the Voting Member for the AfDB constituency during the meeting's proceedings.
7. The Chair offered several framing remarks for the meeting, highlighting significant advancements, including the establishment of a comprehensive Performance Results Management System ('results dashboard') that provides unprecedented visibility into CGIAR's outcomes and impact. He emphasized CGIAR's unified voice in international fora like the G20 and G7, engaging with major stakeholders on behalf of One CGIAR. The Chair expressed optimism about approaching COP28 with a unified narrative, specific funding requests, and a compelling value proposition, heralding a transformative departure from constraints of the past. Recognizing the urgency of

¹ Composition : <https://www.cgiar.org/how-we-work/governance/system-council/sc-composition/>

climate concerns and the need for accelerated research endeavors, he urged renewed commitment and increased investment to US\$2 billion to strengthen CGIAR, modernize its infrastructure, and expand its research capabilities. Expressing confidence in CGIAR's capacity to drive substantial change, the Chair called for collective focus on essential actions to propel CGIAR's mission forward.

8. Formally tabling the provisional agenda, the Chair made note of the request to add extra time to several agenda items and be flexible if additional timing adjustments were needed. No declarations of interest were made on the agenda, and no items of other business were requested.
9. **Decision SC/M18/DP2: Adoption of the Agenda**
The System Council adopted the Agenda, as re-issued on 27 April 2023, with revised timings.

Agenda Item 2: Reflections from Prof. Lindiwe Majele Sibanda, System Board Chair

10. In her role as a non-voting member of the Council, the Board Chair provided framing remarks for the meeting. She expressed gratitude to Johan (Jo) Swinnen, Director General ('DG') of the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), and his team for hosting the Council meeting. Acknowledging IFPRI's significant contributions to addressing the global food crisis through [CGIAR's Research and Innovation Strategy](#) and [Portfolio of Research Initiatives](#), she emphasized the importance of collaborative endeavors in delivering CGIAR science and innovation.
11. The Board Chair expressed gratitude to CGIAR Centers working in Sudan for ensuring staff safety. She highlighted the crucial role of CGIAR in addressing the underlying causes of conflict and promoting resilience in food, land, and water systems.
12. Emphasizing the profound significance of CGIAR's integrated partnership, the Board Chair announced the signing of CGIAR's Integration Framework Agreement ('IFA') by 12 Centers and the System Organization, highlighting the collective resolve to transforming agriculture, and ensuring food security in the face of the climate crisis, and promoting shared ways of working across institutional boundaries.
13. Recognizing Centers/Alliance as the essential building blocks of the CGIAR partnership, the Board Chair affirmed the commitment to honoring Centers' governing instruments and host country agreements. She stressed the importance of respecting the autonomy and agreements of individual Centers/Alliance in this collaborative effort.
14. Lastly, the Board Chair reiterated the importance of securing more funding and working to ensure that all CGIAR Centers sign the IFA. She closed by expressing appreciation to departing colleagues for their significant contributions to CGIAR's mission.

Key Discussion Areas

15. Reflections from Council participants included:
 - a. Appreciation for the Board Chair's exemplary leadership in promoting transparency, inclusivity, and collaboration, and building trust within the CGIAR, ensuring resilience and future food security;
 - b. Recognition of the Board Chair's inspiring vision, unwavering commitment, and positive role in advancing unified governance and fostering relationships, with a particular focus on the upcoming governance review, reinforcing the CGIAR's essential values;
 - c. Appreciation for ICRISAT's significant role in dryland crops and food systems research and noting the intention of the ICRISAT Board to sign the IFA and integrate into One CGIAR;
 - d. Strong affirmation that the IFA signifies a substantial leap for the System, characterized by shared priorities, collaboration, and an inclusive approach;
 - e. Acknowledgement of the difficulties that accompany change management processes and appreciation for the work done to overcome these
 - f. Recognition of the importance of filling executive positions to ensure reliability and predictability, while anticipating recommendations from the unified governance review;
 - g. Suggestions to explore more efficient ways of organizing the top structure of the matrix model and strengthening capacities at the Center level to enhance organizational effectiveness, while also addressing the top management talent;
 - h. Recognition of the importance of further actions, including evaluating the gender platform to enhance gender integration in the research, and the value of balanced [recommendations from the High-Level Advisory Panel \('HLAP'\)](#), promoting improved research co-design, co-implementation, and innovation scaling with key partners"; and
 - i. Acknowledgement of CGIAR's regional and country collaborations on climate change and nutrition, highlighting the importance of partnerships with National Agricultural Research Systems ('NARS') to effectively address global challenges.

Session Outcome

16. The Chair thanked the Board Chair for her first hundred days in office, commending her clarity of vision and commitment for the journey ahead. These factors play a crucial role in cultivating trust, rebuilding relationships, and addressing overlooked aspects, to some extent, in refining CGIAR's structure. The Council demonstrated openness by welcoming all Centers to sign the IFA, recognizing their significance to the broader CGIAR agenda. The Co-Chair echoed these sentiments, underscoring CGIAR's role as a reliable partner in fostering resilience and ensuring future food security.

Agenda Item 3: Spotlight Session — CGIAR's Scientists

17. Drawing inspiration from the 'lightning talk' sessions at past Council meetings, the CGIAR Executive Managing Director ('EMD') introduced the first of three 'Spotlight' sessions. During the first spotlight session, two Initiatives were showcased from the 'Environmental Health and Biodiversity' and 'Climate Adaptation and Mitigation'

Impact Areas through highly appreciated videos:

- a. **Environmental Health and Biodiversity (NEXUS Gains Initiative):** Patience Mukuyu, an IWMI researcher residing and working in South Africa for the Nexus Gains Initiative, discussed her work on data-sharing in transboundary water basins. Patience focuses on reshaping data-sharing to be more demand-driven, aiming for improved collaboration and better outcomes.
- b. **Climate Adaptation and Mitigation (Climate Resilience Initiative):** Carlos Navarro, a researcher with the Alliance of Bioversity and CIAT based in Guatemala, discussed CGIAR's efforts to address climate-related challenges faced by smallholder farmers in Central America, particularly their limited access to climate forecasting information. Carlos is actively engaged in developing, testing, and scaling climate services to provide readily accessible and useful climate information to smallholder farmers.

Key Discussion Areas

18. Commentary from Council participants underscored the urgent need for CGIAR to address the challenges at hand. Key reflections included:
 - a. Recognition of the importance of effective stakeholder engagement in finding solutions for climate-related challenges;
 - b. Affirmation of the need for urgent research, reevaluation of water security assumptions, and substantial investments to tackle changing rainfall patterns, water storage capabilities, and global drought impacts;
 - c. Recognition of the adverse effects of climate change, such as droughts and floods, and the importance of addressing these challenges in agriculture, health, and nutrition. Appreciation for the work of CGIAR Centers like IWMI and the Alliance in this area;
 - d. Acknowledgment of the increasing impact of drought on farmers in sub-Saharan Africa and the importance of linking water, land and agriculture.
 - e. Recognition of the urgent need to address water-related challenges, including changing rainfall patterns, floods, and hydrological changes within the food system to effectively tackle the impacts of climate change. For example, acknowledging the influence of shifting Pacific weather patterns on Southern Africa and emphasizing the criticality of enhancing rainfed water management for staple crop production in sub-Saharan Africa;
 - f. Emphasis on regional collaboration and innovative solutions to address water challenges in agriculture and optimize water use;
 - g. Highlighting the growing challenges of both water scarcity and floods, particularly in livestock production, and the need to address flood-related losses;
 - h. Support for One CGIAR Initiatives, appreciating the positive impact of the results dashboard and inviting Centers to celebrate these achievements;
 - i. Recognition of the urgency of addressing water issues, including the melting glaciers in the Himalayas and their potential impact on major rivers in Asia. Emphasis on partnerships, multidisciplinary approaches, and high-quality science for effective management of the hydrologic cycle;
 - j. Recognition of the complexity of the current climate crisis and the importance of integrated systems thinking to tackle issues relating to water, policy, gender,

soil, carbon, and agronomy.

Session Outcome

19. The Chair expressed gratitude for the Council's support of CGIAR scientists and their contributions to addressing environmental challenges, safeguarding biodiversity, and inspiring public engagement. He emphasized the need for improved visibility and communication, urging Council members to share success stories to attract funding and support. He called for a proactive approach in showcasing impactful work, highlighting the importance of visibility, storytelling, and securing necessary resources.

Agenda Item 4: Standing Panel on Impact Assessment (SPIA)

20. The Co-Chair invited the SPIA Chair to provide an update on the collaboration between SPIA and SIMEC, as requested by the Council in November (SC17), for a revised workplan and new operational model. The SPIA Chair presented the proposal, incorporating inputs from the Council's previous day's 'brown bag' gathering.
21. The proposed workplan consisted of two scenarios for the Council's consideration. Scenario 1, recommended by SPIA, suggested conducting full model country studies in eight countries (Ethiopia, Uganda, Vietnam, and Bangladesh, plus an additional four countries) to ensure broader coverage of agroecologies and regions relevant to CGIAR's operations. In addition, stocktaking exercises were planned in 12 countries to assess the reach and dynamics of scaled innovations. The proposed approach for country studies involves assessing the scaling and impact of CGIAR-related innovations and policy influences in priority countries by collecting primary data through national representative panel surveys and tracking changes over time utilizing remote sensing measures. The fallback scenario 2 involved four full model studies and 16 stocktaking exercises.
22. The operational model highlighted the need for flexibility to address emerging demands and necessitated revisions to the terms of reference ('TOR'). The workplan aimed to generate comprehensive evidence on the reach and impact of innovations across the CGIAR research portfolio, facilitating decision-making and fostering learning within the system.

Key Discussion Areas

23. Council participants expressed appreciation to the SPIA Chair for her informative presentation and effective leadership. Key reflections included:
 - a. Recognition of the importance of demonstrating return on investment through results tracking, particularly for bilateral donors, development banks, and beneficiary countries;
 - b. Strong support for SPIA's proposed Scenario 1 workplan with the expansion of its scope to include additional comprehensive impact assessments, emphasizing CGIAR's role as a 'science for impact organization';
 - c. Support for a more inclusive approach to impact assessment by involving experts

- from the Global South, including representatives from national institutions, universities, and civil society, to expand their participation within the One CGIAR framework;
- d. Calls for improved methodologies, increased investment in storytelling and remote sensing tools, and closer integration between SPIA and the results dashboard to enhance impact assessment and showcase CGIAR's relevance;
 - e. Strong support for SPIA's proposed operational model and personnel structure;
 - f. Request to include fragility as a country selection criterion;
 - g. Request to specifically examine under-represented semi-arid hot tropical agroecological zones;
 - h. Support for scaling up SPIA's country-level work to inform the global agenda and address challenges faced by farmers;
 - i. A concern raised regarding the effectiveness of expanding the full model assessment to more countries using the same methodology for generic evidence, suggesting instead a priority on a learning agenda to understand technology scaling, identify barriers, and target efforts based on insights from large-scale studies;
 - j. Highlighting the need for right-sizing methods, updating the funding model, implementing a light-touch approach for stocktaking, and exploring a broader light-touch assessment of CGIAR's global impact within budget constraints;
 - k. Recommendation to enhance collaboration between SPIA and CGIAR's communications and outreach group to effectively disseminate impact assessment findings, including integrating SPIA's results with the results dashboard and creating impactful storytelling narratives and concise briefings about CGIAR's success stories and achievements to engage donors;
 - l. Recognition of the significance of addressing challenges such as disciplinary research, trust-building, and understanding local and regional cultural and contextual aspects for achieving impact at scale through comprehensive analysis of research, communication, coordination, and funding;
 - m. Highlighting significant contributions of Chinese scientists, including collaborations with the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) and Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT), showcasing CGIAR's global footprint; and
 - n. Acknowledgment of the significant contributions of CGIAR Centers, citing examples from India, and emphasizing the need to strengthen work and communication efforts in South Asia and worldwide.

Session Outcomes

24. In summary, the Co-Chair acknowledged unanimous agreement among Council members on the importance of SPIA's independent impact assessments. He emphasized the need to prioritize effective communication that showcases CGIAR's research success, impact, and relevance.
25. **Decision SC/M18/DP3: SPIA TOR, New Operational Model, and Workplan**
The System Council took the following actions, as set out in document SC18-04:
 - a. **Approved** Scenario 1 of the new operational model, workplan, and committed multi-year budget (2023 – 2030) of the Standing Panel on Impact Assessment

- (SPIA), pursuant to paragraph 6.6 of the SPIA terms of reference (TOR);
- b. **Authorized** SPIA to receive additional budget allocations through a flexible funding mechanism to supplement the pooled funding for the committed multi-year budgets; and
 - c. **Endorsed** the revised SPIA TOR, pursuant to Articles 6.1 e) of the CGIAR System Framework.

Agenda Item 5: Assurance and Oversight Committee (AOC)

26. At the invitation of the Co-Chair, the interim AOC Chair presented the AOC's reflections and conclusions on the comprehensive review of the TOR, conducted in response to the Council's request in November (SC17).
27. The presentation outlined the rationale for establishing the AOC as a standing committee of the Council and emphasized the committee's confidence in its ability to provide strategic System-wide oversight and assurance, considering CGIAR's governance and structural changes since 2019 and the operationalization of the IFA.
28. The interim AOC Chair highlighted the AOC's thorough assessment of its relationship with the CGIAR Audit, Finance, and Risk Committee² ('AFRC'), emphasizing the distinct yet complementary perspectives of both committees. She clarified that the AOC focuses on independent, System-level strategic oversight, while the AFRC concentrates on oversight of day-to-day operations. The significance of collaboration and information sharing between the two committees was emphasized, underscoring their common areas of interest. The AOC recognizes the value it brings in offering independent assurance and providing advice to the Council.
29. The AOC recommended maintaining its TOR unchanged and delivering a performance report and assessment of its ongoing relevance to the Council by May 2025. The proposal included presenting an AOC workplan focused on independent System-level oversight and strategic guidance at the next Council meeting. Furthermore, a request was made to extend the terms of committee members until June 2025, considering the recent attainment of quorum following a year-long period of being inquorate, while ensuring a good balance of knowledge and expertise within the committee.

Key Discussion Areas

30. Council participants expressed appreciation for the presentation. Discussion centered on the AOC's role and composition, with the following key reflections:

On Role of AOC:

- a. Recognition of the restored stability in the five-member AOC;
- b. Support for the AOC's focus on providing independent assurance on System-level risks related to One CGIAR reforms;

² The AFRC is a common Committee of the System Board and of the Boards of the CGIAR Centers and Alliances who have adopted unified governance arrangements as part of One CGIAR. Its Terms of Reference are available at https://storage.googleapis.com/cgiarorg/2021/07/CGIAR-AFRC-ToR_v10June2021.pdf

- c. Acknowledgment of the AOC's development of a workplan for presentation at the next Council meeting;
- d. Appreciation for the distinct roles of the AOC (System-level strategic assurance) and AFRC (day-to-day operational assurance) and the importance of consistent information exchange and communication with the AFRC and risk managers;
- e. Interest in AOC's involvement in the unified governance review process to address potential risks; and
- f. Support for updating the risk appetite statement to incorporate recent changes, including the IFA, additional CGIAR Centers joining One CGIAR, and the unified governance review.

On Composition of AOC:

- g. Recognition of the importance of term limits and phased rotation as essential governance practices;
- h. Suggestions to implement three-year or four-year membership term limits, explore staggered timing of rotations (such as rotating one-third of the committee annually) and developing a clear succession plan;
- i. Commitment to exploring staggered timing of rotations and developing a clear succession plan; and
- j. Appreciation for the diverse expertise and perspectives of new independent AOC members in enhancing due diligence and advising the Council.

Session Outcomes

- 31. The Co-Chair expressed appreciation for the AOC's current and ongoing mandate and emphasized Council members' comments regarding the importance of member rotation and succession planning.
- 32. **Decision SC/M18/DP4: AOC TOR, Membership, and Focus**
Pursuant to Article 8 of the CGIAR System Framework and paragraph 7 of the TOR of the Assurance Oversight Committee (AOC), the Council:
 - a. **Agreed** to maintain the current TOR of the AOC; the AOC will review its performance and relevance and report to the Council by May 2025;
 - b. **Extended** the terms of all AOC members until June 2025 or until such time as a successor is appointed, with the understanding that a clear succession plan will be instated; and
 - c. **Endorsed** the AOC's focus on strategic risk management associated with the system-wide governance changes to be operationalized under the terms of the IFA over the next 1.5 years.

Agenda Item 6: Strategic Impact Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (SIMEC)

- 33. The interim SIMEC Chair presented recommendations stemming from the committee's comprehensive review of the SIMEC TOR, as requested by the Council in November (SC17).

34. The interim SIMEC Chair acknowledged that SIMEC determined its TOR was outdated within the One CGIAR framework. In response, a refined SIMEC mandate was proposed, which included three key objectives: advising on gaps, challenges, and synergies among independent impact, monitoring, and advisory bodies (SPIA, ISDC, and IAES); facilitating cooperation between the advisory bodies and CGIAR's Project Portfolio Unit ('PPU') and Project Coordination Unit ('PCU') to enhance communication, transparency, and effectiveness within CGIAR; and providing guidance and recommendations on CGIAR policies related to strategic impact, monitoring, and evaluation in order to uphold the reputation of the CGIAR System.
35. The interim SIMEC Chair reviewed the committee's current composition, consisting of Council members and monitoring and evaluation experts from within Funder constituencies. He noted the need to expand the base of the Committee and proposed removing "agricultural" from the required expertise of "experience in evidence-based strategic planning in research and evidence development organizations," as this adjective is considered to be limiting in light of the research reach of the CGIAR. The interim SIMEC Chair requested the Council to extend the terms of current members and outlined SIMEC's plan to develop a succession strategy, noting that his stewardship as chair has been on an interim basis for the past three years.

Key Discussion Areas

36. Council participants expressed appreciation for the presentation and recognized the significance of SIMEC's work. Key reflections included:
 - a. Strong support for the proposed revisions and updated TOR for SIMEC, acknowledging the importance of enhanced interactions with the Council and diverse perspectives within the committee by removing the requirement for expertise specifically relating to agricultural research and development;
 - b. Recognition of SIMEC's crucial role in facilitating effective delivery on the Council's expectations and providing a constructive interface between ISDC and the Council; and
 - c. Support for the appointment of a permanent Chair for SIMEC to ensure continuity and leadership stability.
37. Recognizing the concern regarding gender balance within SIMEC, discussions explored the inclusion of a gender balance mandate. However, the voluntary membership model and past challenges in achieving full membership and gender balance given the System Council's own composition were acknowledged. The focus shifted towards highlighting the importance of incentives and commitments from funders to address gender and geographical balance. While open to gender balance conditions, SIMEC continues to encourage the participation of more individuals, particularly women, in the committee.

Session Outcomes

38. The Co-Chair expressed gratitude for the interim SIMEC Chair's three-year tenure and underscored the importance of appointing a permanent Chair.

39. **Decision SC/M18/DP5: SIMEC TOR and Membership Renewal**

Pursuant to Article 8 of the CGIAR System Framework and paragraph 7 of the terms of reference (TOR) of the Strategic Impact, Monitoring & Evaluation Committee (SIMEC), the System Council:

- a. **Adopted** the revised TOR for SIMEC as set out in meeting document SC18-05a;
- b. **Renewed** the terms of all SIMEC members for three years until June 2026 or until such time as a successor is appointed; and
- c. **Recommended** that a permanent Chair be appointed to SIMEC.

Agenda Item 7: Spotlight Session — CGIAR's Scientists

40. The Chair passed the floor to the EMD, who introduced the second spotlight session focused on the remaining three CGIAR Impact Areas: Poverty Reduction, Livelihoods, and Jobs; Gender Equality, Youth and Social Inclusion; and Nutrition, Health, and Food Security. These three, impactful videos showcased the contributions of CGIAR scientists:

- a. **Poverty Reduction, Livelihoods, and Jobs (Breeding Resources Initiative):** Eng Hwa Ng, an International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT) Senior Scientist hosted by IRRI in the Philippines, highlighted work on enhancing shared services for the wider CGIAR and national agricultural research system network. These shared services provide robust, adaptive, and cost-effective lab genotyping and analytic solutions for more than 20 crop and animal species. This research can be used to enhance climate resilience, improve crop yields, and expedite delivery for market-preferred varieties.
- b. **Gender Equality, Youth, and Social Inclusion (GENDER Impact Platform and Gender Equality Initiative):** Esther Achandi, a Postdoctoral Fellow at ILRI, discussed her work on participatory research to address food security, poverty, and inequality, focusing on women's empowerment through livestock species in countries such as Ethiopia, Tanzania, Uganda, and Vietnam.
- c. **Nutrition, Health, and Food Security (National Policies & Strategies Initiative):** Lensa Omune, a Research Officer with IFPRI, shared her expertise in economywide analysis, policy interactions, and agri-food systems using computational models, highlighting her work on bridging the gap between science and policy by responding to policy demands and crises, building policy coherence, and integrating policy tools for global nutrition and food security.

Session Outcome

41. The Chair and Co-Chair commended the impactful presentations and applauded the CGIAR staff and leaders for their collective efforts in promoting gender, diversity, and inclusion ('GDI') in CGIAR research. Special recognition was given to emerging leaders who are looking at global challenges, while providing local solutions to these challenges in their immediate environments. The Chair requested that future meetings include further short presentations to enable members to gain more insight into CGIAR'S innovative research.

Agenda Item 8: Independent Science for Development Council (ISDC)

42. At the Co-Chair's invitation, the ISDC Chair provided an update on the ISDC workplan, expressing gratitude to the ISDC members who were present and to Council members who participated in the ISDC-sponsored drop-in calls, highlighting CGIAR's science, since the last Council meeting.
43. The presentation offered an overview of ISDC's 2023 workplan, emphasizing commissioned research on megatrends and the importance of e.g., climate and green water in shaping the research agenda. Challenges regarding Science Forum scheduling were addressed, and the successful special issue on inclusive innovation in agricultural systems was mentioned. The promotional efforts of ISDC through videos and podcasts on comparative advantage were also highlighted.
44. The ISDC Chair noted the importance of revisiting unanswered questions, utilizing available data, and conducting evaluations to assess the quality of science in CGIAR's future research portfolio. Aligning prioritization decisions with ISDC's advisory purpose was emphasized, despite challenges in ranking individual Initiatives. To address this, a rigorous evidence-based process was recommended to assess the portfolio as a whole, clarifying funding decision priorities while maintaining scientific quality. The Chair assured the Council of ISDC's commitment to providing support and guidance throughout this process.

Key Discussion Areas

45. Council participants expressed appreciation for the ISDC Chair's comprehensive presentation and thoughtful guidance. Several key themes emerged from the discussion:

Science Forum:

- a. Support for the Science Forum on Innovation for Impact, with a specific focus on gender equality in research and CGIAR's Gender, Youth, and Social Inclusion Impact Area; and
- b. Agreement on the importance of thorough preparation for the Science Forum to enhance CGIAR's visibility, including the need for timely planning of the next Council meeting to allow sufficient time for organizing the Science Forum.

Portfolio Assessment and Design (and ISDC's Role):

- c. Call for ISDC to play a significant role in both the 2025-2027 portfolio design process and the assessment of the portfolio's scientific quality and alignment with CGIAR's [2030 Research and Innovation Strategy](#) goals;
- d. Concerns regarding portfolio prioritization and emphasis on the necessity of establishing clear decision-making responsibilities and authorities;
- e. Highlighting the importance of ISDC's scientific assessments, which help donors make informed prioritization decisions based on the quality of the Initiatives and their alignment with CGIAR's strategic goals;
- f. Several views expressed on the depth of the portfolio assessment conducted by

the ISDC, with most proponents supporting the comprehensive, global assessment advocated by the ISDC, and a few arguing for greater independent evaluation of individual Initiatives, which is a responsibility the ISDC believes should rest with Council members, considering their own political priorities, funding limitations, budget constraints, and necessary trade-offs for maximum impact;

- g. Call for a fully funded portfolio that considers budget limitations;
- h. A suggestion to consider a minimum funding threshold for Initiatives to qualify for continued financing, while considering the challenge of prioritization; and
- i. A strong request for a responsive funding and resource allocation mechanism that can address unforeseen but critical priorities that may arise within the portfolio cycle, ensuring CGIAR's ability to timely and effectively respond to emerging needs and crises.

Workplan and Budget:

- j. Support for increasing ISDC's influence and expanding its strategic advice to the Council, acknowledging the vital role of ISDC's scientific assessments in assisting capacity-limited funders and improving decision-making processes within the Council;
 - k. Strong support for the new ISDC project on megatrends and its integral role in the three-year portfolio process;
 - l. Recognition of the necessity for further discussion on comparative advantage, with a request for clearer guidance on understanding the concepts of inclusive innovation and comparative advantage;
 - m. Emphasis on the prioritization of funding and project design, with a focus on analytics and evidence;
 - n. Acknowledgment of the importance of longer-term programs and program evolution efficiency; and
 - o. A recommendation for alignment with the Communications and Outreach Group's workstream and goals, ensuring coherence and synergy throughout CGIAR's activities.
46. The ISDC Chair acknowledged the reflections and concerns raised, emphasizing the importance of enhancing the portfolio development process, prioritizing funding, project design, analytics, evidence, and impact. Timely stakeholder feedback during the advisory process was deemed crucial, with a recommendation to establish feedback mechanisms involving the SIMEC Interim Chair. He noted that ISDC is willing to review and provide scientific insights to support the detailed development of the next portfolio.

Session Outcome

47. The Co-Chair highlighted the importance of ISDC's role in the new portfolio development, the involvement of key stakeholders, alignment with funding models and global priorities, and the aim for maximum impact on sustainability. He acknowledged the potential tensions arising from funders' political processes and specific priorities, while emphasizing the focus on achieving high impact and

addressing pressing needs through a learning agenda. Lastly, he emphasized the need for collaboration, time, and deliberate efforts to tackle critical challenges.

Agenda Item 9: Gender in CGIAR's Research

48. The Chair acknowledged the Council's commitment to having a permanent space for discussion on aspects of gender in the CGIAR system and introduced the Director of CGIAR's GENDER Impact Platform, to deliver a comprehensive presentation on gender in CGIAR research.
49. The GENDER Impact Platform Director provided an overview of CGIAR's achievements and future directions in gender research. Key highlights included:
 - a. CGIAR has a dedicated group of gender researchers who meet regularly and organize a global conference every two years;
 - b. CGIAR has established a strong reputation in gender research and has built a valuable network of stakeholders;
 - c. Gender research in the CGIAR is implemented research through various workstreams, including initiatives, bilateral projects, the Gender Equality research Initiative and the GENDER Impact Platform;
 - d. The results dashboard provides valuable insights into gender contributions, with notable outputs observed in resilient agricultural food systems and genetic innovations;
 - e. CGIAR work on gender innovations and outputs is primarily concentrated in East Africa and South Asia, but there is potential for investment in the Central and West Asia and North Africa region ('CWANA');
 - f. Highlights from specific initiatives within CGIAR include gender transformative approaches, addressing social equity in climate change, developing gender and energy policy briefs, and women's empowerment in energy;
 - g. The Gender Equality Initiative addresses research on gender dimensions in climate change research and aims to provide strategic inputs to feed into CGIAR research in the future; and
 - h. The GENDER Impact Platform provides an overall function across the CGIAR and works according to the four roles laid out in the 2030 CGIAR research and innovation strategy of serves multiple functions, including critical thinking, capacity building, advice to management and engaging at a global level within CGIAR.
50. The Managing Director, Resilient Agri-Food Systems ('RAFS'), highlighted CGIAR's commitment to fostering gender balance in the workplace, particularly through achievement of a 50% gender balance among research Initiative leads and co-leads. He praised CGIAR's strong support for the Gender Equality Initiative. Other notable examples mentioned included CGIAR's Excellence in Agronomy Initiative, which conducts both gender-integrated and gender-strategic research, and CGIAR's Sustainable Animal Productivity for Livelihoods, Nutrition and Gender Inclusion ('SAPLING') Initiative, which works to transform livestock productivity, nutrition, and gender inclusion in northwest Vietnam. The Managing Director emphasized the importance of data-driven decision-making, interdisciplinary collaboration, enhanced

reporting, and strengthening specialist gender teams. While recognizing progress, he underscored the ongoing need to drive enduring change.

51. The Managing Director, Systems Transformation ('ST'), highlighted the positive response to the previous day's Council side events, including 'Friends of Gender', which focused on advancing gender research and measuring progress, as well as the IFPRI session on nutrition, which looked at the interconnection between gender and nutrition. While acknowledging CGIAR's achievements, he noted the challenge of aligning gender research with necessary investments for stronger Initiatives. He emphasized the significant research being funded through bilateral sources, noting the limited understanding and quantification of outcomes for these compared to the results dashboard for Window 1 ('W1') (pooled) funded Initiatives. Lastly, he reported that the evaluation of the first phase of the GENDER Platform had recently been completed, providing invaluable lessons for empowering other early-stage Platforms and fostering continuous growth and advancement.

Key Discussion Areas

52. The Chair initiated an open discussion, inviting those who had attended the previous day's 'Friends of Gender' side event to provide summaries of the key takeaways and suggestions on accelerating progress on gender considerations.
53. The discussion highlighted gender equality research as a priority for CGIAR funders, recognizing the range of approaches from gender-aware to gender-sensitive, gender-responsive, and gender-transformative.
54. The Council endorsed CGIAR's gender research and commended the valuable work of the CGIAR GENDER Impact Platform. They expressed support for the Gender Equality Initiative's contributions to climate resilience and efforts to strengthen gender equality and social inclusion, as well as CGIAR's other gender-efforts, and stressed the importance of monitoring progress.
55. Noting that it relates more to Gender Diversity in CGIAR's workplaces (rather than in research), the Council expressed appreciation for the milestone achieved in co-leadership within CGIAR Initiatives, with women now holding 50% of leadership positions (and 60% of Impact Platform Directorships).
56. Participants expressed great appreciation for the inspiring leadership and presentation from CGIAR's GENDER Impact Platform Director. Additional key reflections fell under the following main themes:

CGIAR Staffing and Policy Matters related to gender research

- a. Acknowledgement of the critical role of CGIAR in research, capacity building and skill development in gender research within the agricultural sector, recognizing its substantial contribution to development;
- b. Emphasis on the importance of mandatory gender research training to systematically integrate gender research within the research portfolio to enable

- c. the CGIAR to have an impact on gender equality in agri-food systems;
- c. Support for additional training for CGIAR gender researchers to enhance their understanding and application of gender-related knowledge and methods;
- d. Recommendation to increase the number of gender researchers both at the Center level and in the upcoming portfolio;
- e. Support for a CGIAR policy to address the gender gap in food security, leveraging its expertise and efforts on gender transformative approaches to make substantial progress internationally in addressing gender and food insecurity;
- f. Acknowledgement of the interconnectedness of gender in research and gender in the workplace; and
- g. Support for seeking out the best global talent and collaborating with diverse partners to drive progress.

Appointing an Executive Management Team ('EMT') Gender Champion

- h. Acknowledging that progress on gender research has not been as successful as expected despite intentional efforts, emphasizing the need for improvement;
- i. Recognizing evolving challenges and the demand for more ambitious and accelerated actions on gender research from management;
- j. Highlighting the importance of having champions, including male champions, within institutions to drive gender equality research initiatives; and
- k. Acknowledging that there could exist potential pushback against the gender equality agenda; and
- l. Highlighting the significant contribution of the EMD, in promoting gender balance in CGIAR leadership functions.

Engaging Male Advocates and Gender Researchers

- m. Highlighting the crucial role of men in actively participating, supporting, and advocating for gender equality;
- n. Requesting the inclusion of more male representation within CGIAR's GENDER Platform and promoting increased engagement of male advocates to empower women as agents of change.

Research Initiatives and Results Reporting

- o. Urging accelerated progress towards gender equality in agricultural food systems through the integration of gender expertise and research with agricultural knowledge;
- p. Urging the systematic integration of gender considerations into CGIAR Initiatives, emphasizing its significance as a fundamental requirement in the new portfolio design strategy — highlighting the crucial need for prioritization of this objective and requirement;
- q. Emphasizing the importance of aligning gender efforts with crosscutting issues, including addressing carbon emissions reductions, to ensure comprehensive and sustainable outcomes;
- r. Emphasizing collaboration between CGIAR researchers and national social scientists for national ownership and effective project outcomes;
- s. Anticipating GENDER Impact Platform results, supporting gender-related work, and promoting the use of Platform tools for agricultural innovation;

- t. Ensuring comprehensive feedback and recognition for gender-related efforts in CGIAR projects, addressing broader gender equality objectives, not only technical aspects; and
 - u. Adopting transformative gender approaches and implementing effective indicators to track progress towards gender equality in agricultural systems.
57. In addition, there was a commitment to address the broader issue of inclusion (beyond gender) in a future Council discussion. It was acknowledged that approximately one in three people worldwide face exclusion based on various factors. There is a call for CGIAR to become more inclusive in its research to effectively tackle the complex challenges faced by food-insecure individuals, who often encounter additional obstacles.
58. The Chair emphasized the critical role of gender integration, expertise, collaboration, evaluation, and data analysis in promoting gender equality within CGIAR research. The Council's commitment to embedding gender equality, enhancing accountability, and considering gender perspectives reinforces CGIAR's dedication to fostering inclusive and impactful Initiatives.

Session Outcomes

59. **Action Point: SC/M18/AP1 – Gender in CGIAR's Research**
The System Council Secretary is requested to include as standing agenda items: i) gender in CGIAR's research; and ii) gender, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace, to facilitate the monitoring and advancement of CGIAR's efforts to foster an inclusive research environment.
60. **Action Point: SC/M18/AP2 – Gender in CGIAR's Research**
The System Council requested that CGIAR's Senior Leadership Team appoint a gender champion from among its members.

Agenda Item 10: Governance Discussion

Update on Unified Governance Review

61. The Co-Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Governance was invited to present an update on the unified governance review, as commissioned by the Parties to the IFA.
62. The Co-Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Governance acknowledged the review's aim to strengthen the governance and management model within the One CGIAR integrated partnership, emphasizing the committee's commitment to an efficient process with regular updates and stakeholder input. The committee's diverse membership represents various regions and stakeholders. Operating on principles of transparency and open communication, the process of cocreation aims to ensure a stronger than ever governance linked to a more effective management operating model.

63. It was advised that the request for proposals for the unified governance review provided unbiased context for potential bidders. Its scope includes examining the relationship between the System Board and System Council, while excluding issues related to the System Council's composition or member selection. The Ad Hoc Committee will continue operating consultatively with support from the System Board Secretariat, noting that Andrew Campbell is designated as the Council representative for channeling inputs.

Key Discussion Areas

64. The Chair invited reflections from Andrew Campbell, the Council's Representative on the Ad Hoc Committee on Governance. He highlighted the clearly-defined scope of the unified governance review, focusing on post-IFA governance improvements within a tight and timely framework. He emphasized the need for convergence between the Council and System Board, encouraging active engagement from Council members to maximize impact. He also stressed the importance of consistent messaging and proposed appointing another Council representative to the committee for continued representation, in light of his forthcoming retirement from the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) on 31 July 2023, thereby ending his term on the System Council.
65. Key reflections fell under the following main themes:

IFA Implementation

- a. Recognition of the need to ensure effective implementation of IFA while upholding agreed principles, particularly in governing relationships between the System Board, Center Boards, and Senior Leadership Team ('SLT');
- b. Emphasis on the importance of avoiding revisiting closed issues and seeking streamlined solutions to fine-tune and optimize the governance structure;
- c. Affirmation of the urgency to minimize disruption and avoid further delays in the reform process;
- d. Expression of concern over timeline flexibility and advocating for a clear finish line;
- e. Consideration of red lines and principles pertaining to Host Country Agreements and Center Charters/Constitutions;
- f. Acknowledgement of diverse perspectives among Host Countries and the need for balanced representation in the committee's discussions; and
- g. Affirmation of strong Council support for the current direction of One CGIAR; and support for all parties to unite under One CGIAR and leverage the opportunity for adjustments.

Council–System Board Relationship

- h. Reiteration of the Council's previous request (SC17) for the System Board to provide more information on key challenges and enhanced communication between the Council and System Board;
- i. Support for the examination of the Council-System Board relationship and the

- establishment of clear roles and accountabilities;
- j. The need to clearly define the tasks and accountabilities between the two governing bodies, with the aim of addressing some open questions that still exist following the change management process; and
- k. The need for the Council to be involved in important topics such as the renaming of CGIAR and the process of appointing System Board members.

Input into the Process

- l. Insistence on keeping the Council fully engaged and consulted on key milestones and outputs and recommendations from the unified governance review;
- m. Advocacy for transparency and inclusivity, involving relevant stakeholders;
- n. The need for clarity on post-report next steps and their integration into decision-making;
- o. Advocacy for inclusion of client countries' perspectives alongside Host Countries' perspectives and representation of their views;
- p. Advocacy for an open evaluation of governance that involves co-creation and involvement of all stakeholders within CGIAR; and
- q. The importance of the Committee getting a balanced representation from those who are concerned about the legacy, history, and legality of the host country agreements.

Consultant's TOR

- r. The need for specificity in the consultants' TOR for each area under review;
 - s. Recommendation for a clear definition of "effectiveness" in the TOR, considering criteria such as application of IFA principles, checks and balances, cost efficiency, expertise, and diversity;
 - t. Support for the consultants to take a holistic view, aiming for unified governance and identifying consolidation opportunities, including overhead costs;
 - u. Request for clarity on the consultant's perspective of the current structure and time commitment of System Board members;
 - v. Recognition of the ambitious timeline while emphasizing the need for a balanced approach between timely completion and maintaining quality;
 - w. Recognition of the need for a substantive report that delivers decision-relevant information on key matters, while avoiding unnecessary detail; and
 - x. Request to explore the possibility of expanding One CGIAR to include additional Centers.
66. The Co-Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Governance acknowledged the inputs and assured the Council that the concerns and viewpoints would be fully considered by the ad hoc committee. He recognized the tension between urgency and thoroughness in the review and emphasized the focus on governance efficiencies and effectiveness under One CGIAR. He reassured the Council of the ad hoc committee's commitment to a timely conclusion, while avoiding scope creep. He also acknowledged the importance of role clarity, transparency, and stakeholder input.

Approach with respect to CGIAR Centers not parties to the CGIAR Integration Framework Agreement (IFA)

67. The Chair extended an invitation to the CGIAR Global General Counsel to present the available options for addressing the non-signatories to the IFA. The Chair highlighted the importance of determining the approach towards CGIAR Centers, specifically CIFOR-ICRAF and ICRISAT, that are currently not signatories to the IFA.
68. To mitigate any legal risks, three options were presented: Option 1 involved continuing the ongoing System Framework and Charter amendment process, with any changes requiring approval from the Board, the Council, and a two-thirds majority of the General Assembly of Centers, and with the disadvantage of potentially forcing a decision before a Center is ready; Option 2 suggested waiting for the unified governance review to be completed before revisiting the topic, with the disadvantage of persisting ambiguities that could impact the development of the 2025-2027 portfolio; Option 3 proposed seeking a voluntary withdrawal by the Centers from the Framework, which would eliminate the need to terminate the Framework or make changes to definitions.
69. The Global General Counsel conveyed the Board's preference for a diplomatic resolution, while acknowledging that the pursuit of CIFOR-ICRAF and ICRISAT's participation as signatories to the IFA could potentially cause a delay in determining their status and rights.

Key Discussion Areas

70. Council members expressed the desire for CIFOR-ICRAF and ICRISAT to join One CGIAR, recognizing their valuable expertise. It was recommended to strengthen the scientific narrative on the significance of forestry Centers, particularly the role of trees in agricultural systems, landscapes, and addressing water and carbon issues. Emphasis was placed on inclusivity, comprehensiveness, showcasing benefits and losses, acknowledging global interconnectedness, fostering collaboration, expressing optimism, and maintaining an optimistic outlook.
71. The Council acknowledged manageable legal risks and supported ongoing diplomatic efforts to reintegrate these Centers into One CGIAR. Consensus was reached on the need for a timely determination regarding the status of non-signatory Centers to ensure consistency and clarity for the Centers that have committed to the IFA. Members agreed that Centers that have not signed the IFA should not participate in the next portfolio, with research and resource allocation focused on Centers within One CGIAR.

Session Outcomes

72. The Chair reiterated the need to address the remaining governance issues and differences in a timely manner, emphasizing the importance of inclusive discussions and clear recommendations to overcome the key pain points. It was expressed that

the process should move quickly with full engagement from all parties, aiming to bring clear recommendations for discussion by the next Council meeting.

73. The Chair acknowledged the urgent need to address the approach regarding CGIAR Centers not party to the IFA. Emphasizing the importance of agroforestry for the future of agriculture and the climate change agenda, the Council strongly urged CIFOR-ICRAF and ICRISAT to become part of One CGIAR. The Chair emphasized that this matter will be revisited in the next Council meeting, considering the progress made in the ongoing negotiations.
74. **Action Point: SC/M18/AP3 – Independent Expert Review of the Unified Governance arrangements of CGIAR**
The System Council proposed that a joint meeting between the System Council and System Board be arranged in advance of the next formal System Council meeting to consider recommendations arising from the unified governance review process.
75. **Action Point: SC/M18/AP4 – Approach to CGIAR Centers not Parties to the IFA**
The System Council requested that the System Board Chair actively facilitate the formal and inclusive integration of Centers not party to the Integrated Framework Agreement (IFA) into One CGIAR.

Day 2 Opening

76. The Chair welcomed participants to the second day of the meeting, highlighting the focus on science and innovation. He invited Innocent Musabyimana to serve as the meeting Co-Chair for the day, in addition to recognizing his role as the representative for the AfDB.
77. Before proceeding to the planned agenda, the Chair addressed two administrative matters. These included appointing a second Council representative to the Ad Hoc Committee on Governance and emphasizing the importance of assessing the current status and ensuring inclusive representation of the Council.

Composition of the System Council going forwards

78. **Decision SC/M18/DP6: System Council Representation on Ad Hoc Committee on Governance**
The System Council **appointed** Sebastian Lesch (Germany) as a second representative from the System Council on the Ad Hoc Committee on Governance to provide continuity, noting that Andrew Campbell's term on the System Council is anticipated to conclude at end-July 2023.
79. **Action Point: SC/M18/AP5 – System Council Membership**
Pursuant to Articles 4 and 8 of the System Framework, the System Council requested the Secretary to schedule two ad hoc meetings for the two categories of System Council voting members (funders and developing countries hosting a Center or countries with significant agricultural systems) for the purpose of consulting and

agreeing upon their constituencies.

Agenda Item 11: CGIAR's Science and Innovation

CGIAR's Science and Innovation - 2022 Results and Performance – Part 1

80. At the Chair's invitation, the EMD framed the session, focusing on the theme of "Implementation and Shaping the Future." She expressed gratitude to the Council for its support in finalizing the IFA and emphasized the importance of continuous learning, adaptation, and refinement through the unified governance review and the development of common Internal Rules Framework ('IFR'), aligned with IFA commitments.
81. The EMD described the range of ongoing efforts and emphasized that the focus is now shifting from reform to implementation through the integrated matrix operational structure. She highlighted how the matrix is already enabling greater integration of CGIAR science to deliver more system-focused, challenge-responsive research, as well as greater integration of professional services to enhance efficiency and assurances.
82. She also highlighted the establishment of regions and partnership functions geared towards fostering unified engagement, enhancing CGIAR's capacity as a responsive and valuable partner; collaborative efforts among communications professionals that play a vital role in amplifying CGIAR's scientific voice in national, regional, and global dialogues; and noteworthy gains made in the area of gender, diversity, and inclusion with the current leadership cohort being 52% female workforce, 47% from the global south, and 52% working in the global south – in recognition of which, CGIAR was awarded first prize in the diversity and inclusion category at the prestigious 2022 Career Development Roundtable Awards .
83. Looking ahead, the EMD focused on two key work streams to enhance CGIAR's future impact and effectiveness. The first focuses on an intentional and inclusive portfolio design process for 2025-2027, and the second on reviewing CGIAR's financial model for greater effectiveness and fit for purpose, emphasizing that the two dialogues were interconnected and iterative.
84. Finally, the EMD spoke to her upcoming transition in August, making this her final Council meeting. She expressed her profound gratitude to the Council for being tireless champions of CGIAR and its mission, and in particular to the System Council Chair, Juergen Voegele, for his clear vision and steady guidance toward what CGIAR can and must become. She recognized and thanked colleagues Andrew Campbell, Elwyn Grainger-Jones, and Martin Kropff, who will also be transitioning, , and expressed her confidence and optimism that the organization will continue to evolve and thrive.

Report on research and innovation in 2022

85. At the invitation of the EMD, the RAFS and ST Managing Directors provided an update

on CGIAR's Initiatives and results dashboard.

86. The RAFS Managing Director emphasized CGIAR's integration of fundamental and applied research for real-world impact, highlighting key achievements and partnerships. Key points included:
- a. Results Dashboard: The creation of the results dashboard provides up-to-date information and access to detailed reports, publications, and CGIAR innovations, showcasing impact and progress.
 - b. Science for Impact: CGIAR's unique positioning enables the integration of scientific research with practical implementation, emphasizing tangible impacts through collaborative partnerships and rapid dissemination of ideas to countries requiring research solutions.
 - c. Coherent Portfolio: CGIAR's 33 Initiatives form a coherent portfolio, managed through a unified approach by Science Group Directors.
 - d. Funding and Implementation: Approved funding supports diverse teams, including thousands of scientists and staff, with notable progress made during implementation.
 - e. Results and Impacts: CGIAR's Initiatives have demonstrated significant results and impacts, with outputs spanning genetics, resilient agrifood, regional integration, and systems transformation, as showcased in the results dashboard. These efforts have yielded improved crop varieties, increased yields, breakthroughs in disease resistance, and fostered strong collaborations with public and private sectors, ultimately delivering innovative solutions and real-world benefits to farmers in multiple countries.
 - f. Genetic Innovations: The Genetic Innovations Action Area showcases progress in breeding programs, releasing improved crop varieties, and fostering collaboration and integration across Centers.
 - g. Collaborative Ways of Working: CGIAR's collaborative approach, both internally and with partners, utilizes novel tools and technologies. in breeding programs.
87. The ST Managing Director highlighted the well-designed portfolio of System Transformation Initiatives that target the five impact areas outlined in the 2030 Research and Innovation Strategy. This research is driving transformative change, informing decision-making, and providing sustainable solutions to global challenges. Key points included:
- a. Crosscutting Initiatives: Central to the portfolio are two crosscutting Initiatives (National Policies and Strategies; and Foresight) that play a vital role in driving transformative change across diverse sectors. Collaboration between these two Initiatives supports countries' sustainable development strategies, exemplified by CGIAR's work in Kenya.
 - b. Impact on Global Policy: The team's research has had a significant impact on global policy discussions, with active involvement in COP27 and in shaping international agendas.
 - c. Understanding of Global Challenges: The research has deepened understanding of critical global challenges, such as COVID-19, the Ukraine war, and other ongoing conflicts, aiding effective solutions.
 - d. Impactful Outcomes: The team's work has led to impactful outcomes, such as

Chinese adoption of their emissions standards research and Vietnam's adoption of their nutrition initiatives.

- e. Poverty and Nutrition Analysis: CGIAR's collaborative work with The World Bank focuses on repurposing and analyzing the impact on farmers' incomes, nutrition, and global warming through subsidy system restructuring.
88. The collaborative approach of the Regional Integrated Initiatives in addressing food system issues was highlighted, underscoring cross-portfolio synergies and accountability, and CGIAR's evolving role as a research partner. Emphasis was placed on collaboration with governments, research organizations, and the private sector, as well as the transition to systems work and collaboration among CGIAR Centers and Alliances.

Key Discussion Areas

89. In discussions that followed, Council members:
- a. Applauded the ambitious vision of the CGIAR Research portfolio and the development of a monitoring and reporting framework that collects data on agreed indicators for long-term project outcomes and enables portfolio-level reporting in the results dashboard;
 - b. Highlighted the need to be more strategic and more systematic about the fragmentation of funding resources and avoid duplication;
 - c. Raised concerns and highlighted the importance of managing of germplasm exchange for global food security, proposing solutions such as a streamlined "green pass" system and international standards, and emphasizing collaboration with organizations like the World Trade Organization, World Bank, and Food Agriculture Organization ('FAO');
 - d. Highlighted the need for CGIAR to also look at One Health as another potential area of research;
 - e. Recommended capacity sharing, outward collaboration, knowledge leadership, and strategic integration of plant health and livestock Initiatives – and acknowledged the aim to make capacity sharing more visible and approachable with the help of investments and pooled funding;
 - f. Raised a question on tracking the commercial value of innovations and exploring income streams from intellectual property, with management highlighting ongoing efforts in this area;
 - g. Affirmed support for collaboration to implement the Internal Rules Framework, ensuring transparent decision flows, responsibilities, and accountabilities in each business stream, ultimately leading to a more definitive staffing structure that encompasses rightsizing and talent balance across the System;
 - h. Expressed appreciation for CGIAR's progress in evidence-based policymaking and crisis response;
 - i. Appreciated the drop-in calls with scientists and Initiative leads with Council members;
 - j. Commended successful integration of program areas in the field, observed during a field trip to Malawi, Tanzania and Zambia;
 - k. Cautioned against prioritizing quantity of outputs over quality, emphasizing the

- need to triple-check reports and set a strong precedent, with assurance from management about the internal quality review process; and
- I. Acknowledged the availability of narrative technical reports and encouraged Council member feedback on the results dashboard.

Demonstration of CGIAR Results Dashboard

90. The Chair invited the Global Head, PPU, to give a demonstration of the CGIAR results dashboard. The Global Head, PPU, showcased its primary features, including accessing key results stories and filtering results by gender, climate, action areas, result levels, and U.N. Sustainable Development Goals. He demonstrated how users can explore Initiative results, filter by country, result type, and crop/commodity. The dashboard also profiles innovations, with detailed information, readiness scores, and contact details. Partner typologies vary based on the result type, and technical reports are now available with a flipbook viewer for an enhanced reading experience.
91. The SIMEC Interim Chair highlighted the ongoing evaluation of the Performance and Results Management Framework and the underlying architecture that supports the results dashboard. The SIMEC Interim Chair emphasized the significant advancements achieved with the dashboard, enabling comprehensive analysis of CGIAR's results. He also assured the Council that addressing concerns regarding non-peer reviewed knowledge products, mitigating potential gaming of the system, and ensuring quality assurance remain priorities for SIMEC's ongoing work.
92. Council members were encouraged to actively engage with the dashboard and provide constructive feedback to enhance its functionality and facilitate continuous improvement. Council members were invited to directly contact the interim SIMEC Chair to share feedback for SIMEC's review and advisory role in the ongoing development and enhancement of the results dashboard.

CGIAR's Science and Innovation - Shaping the Future Portfolio – Part 2

93. In framing remarks, the EMD emphasized the importance of a reflective, inclusive process for developing the 2025-2027 portfolio of Initiatives and the need for a related dialogue on CGIAR's financial model. She called for active engagement from the Council in both processes.
94. The RAFS and ST Managing Directors presented the pathway for the proposed portfolio development:
 - a. A science technical committee has been set up with representation from each Science Group to steer the process;
 - b. Regional Directors, country conveners, and Impact Area Platforms in place and will also be engaged in the process;
 - c. Science leadership will look at various aspects of the portfolio i.e., prioritization, implementation, aggregation, and other questions raised in relation to the current portfolio; and
 - d. Inputs from Council members are important and valued.

95. The Managing Director, Institutional Strategy and Systems ('IS&S'), put forth the idea of establishing a multistakeholder reference group to address financial challenges and develop a funding model for the next business cycle. This group would engage in discussions related to innovative funding approaches, cost-sharing, efficiency gains, and infrastructure funding. CGIAR stakeholders at global and regional levels would be involved, as well as an external person to bring a challenge function. Expressions of interest will be promptly gathered to initiate the group, aiming to present emerging proposals at the next Council meeting.

Key Discussion Areas

96. The Chair expressed gratitude for the presentation and encouraged high-level strategic suggestions and interventions for productive discussions and creative solutions. He noted the 18-month timeframe to accomplish the two workstream, and the importance of putting on the table issues that were not considered earlier, specifically, infrastructure funding in light of ageing CGIAR infrastructure. Participants made following reflections:

2025-2027 Portfolio Design

- a. Acknowledgment of the importance of balancing continuity and change in the portfolio, with emphasis on the effectiveness and synergy of research teams;
- b. Support for the early planning of the portfolio evolution for the 2025-2027 business cycle, with a request for more detailed information on the proposed processes, including evaluation of research integration and the role of ISDC in assessing quality of science and overall alignment of the portfolio;
- c. Support for a structured process and clear mechanisms for portfolio evolution;
- d. Endorsement of an evolutionary approach to portfolio development, ensuring continuity alongside adaptation;
- e. Recognition of the transparency in the discussion and the importance of gender integration in research throughout the portfolio development process;
- f. Highlighting the importance of diverse stakeholder groups, including the HLAP report recommendations and ongoing gender evaluation;
- g. Appreciation for IFPRI's impact on changing perceptions of CGIAR as an international partner and recommendation to prioritize evidence and analysis for impactful research Initiatives;
- h. Recognition of the need to learn from past portfolios and address emerging issues, particularly related to the SDGs, leveraging CGIAR's modeling capabilities;
- i. Recommendation to balance core capacity and seize opportunities, advocating for empowering Science Managing Directors with authority over program and budget areas and research leads to have control over budgets and staff within their Initiatives;
- j. Highlighting the need to align with W3 funding, leverage comparative advantage, incorporate existing evaluations, involve the ISDC, and address capacity constraints in portfolio design;
- k. Clear definition of roles of the Council, System Board, and System Organization;
and

- I. Acknowledgment of diverse priorities and change in government policies in countries of operation specifically Sub-Saharan Africa. ‘

Financial Model Reference Group (‘FMRG’)³

- m. Support for establishing the FMRG, rethinking the current funding system with creativity and openness, and addressing existing challenges;
- n. Nominations made for Manfred Kaufmann (Switzerland) and Ruben Echeverria (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation) as System Council representatives on the FMRG;
- o. Support for developing a clear funding model to support deep policy capabilities and data-driven work on food security, emphasizing its strategic importance in addressing ongoing crises;
- p. Acknowledgment of the positive step in aligning portfolio design with funding modalities, previously disconnected;
- q. Emphasis on a realistic funding process, early clear designations from funders, and adaptation to funders’ legal environments;
- r. Importance of addressing long-standing funding issues and infrastructure in the upcoming period ahead of the next business cycle;
- s. Highlighting the need for flexible and aligned funding mechanisms connected to the business plan, addressing challenges such as transparency and tracking funds;
- t. Support for engaging colleagues in financial model discussions, ensuring flexibility to address emerging needs;
- u. Recommendation for the FMRG to address costing structure, effective burden sharing, internal cost-sharing, efficiency gains, and the costing of dual-hatting, including clarifying decision-making authority, processes, and accountability for members with dual roles
- v. Acknowledgment of the need for resilience, agility, and flexibility in funding mechanisms to address urgent issues and repurpose resources, with certainty and stability in funding rules;
- w. Questioning the three-year planning frame and suggesting longer-term planning or a rolling financing framework, considering a rolling five-year plan for flexibility and avoiding frequent resets;
- x. Emphasis on incorporating evaluations and remaining open to other forms of funding, considering time constraints faced by governments; and
- y. Consideration of regional challenges, capabilities, and aspirations, aligning financing mechanisms with need and capability, collaborating with national partners and CGIAR Centers/Alliances, and considering national government and funding agency priorities.

97. The EMD highlighted ongoing efforts to align authorities and consultative processes with the new portfolio approach to pooled-funded research and the new integrated operating structure. She urged the Council to explore a portfolio financing model that could include designated budget lines for assets and infrastructure improvements to rationalize and modernize CGIAR campuses and facilities.

³ Subsequent to the meeting, the group’s title has evolved to the “CGIAR Finance and Funding Model Reference Group” however the terminology from the meeting paper is retained in this summary.

98. The Board Chair emphasized the active involvement of the Board in portfolio development and funding model discussions. The establishment of Board Committees with Center/Alliance Board Chairs and members was highlighted to promote collaboration and address challenges, aiming for the best outcomes for CGIAR and global impact.
99. The MD, IS&S expressed appreciation for the Council's support and nominations to the FMRG. He emphasized the aim to balancing simplicity and adaptability in the funding model, considering the complexity of the funding environment, and highlighted tailoring management approaches and exploring diverse funding methods for different aspects of CGIAR's work. The concept of a rolling investment approach for Initiatives, enabling a continuous flow of projects, was also discussed.

Session Outcomes

100. The Chair urged Council members to share impactful experiences and observations of CGIAR's work through op-eds, blogs, and social media for wider reach. Collective engagement on the germplasm issue was emphasized. The Council's positive response to the results dashboard was acknowledged; participants were encouraged to explore it further and provide direct feedback to the interim SIMEC Chair for further improvements.
101. The Chair expressed gratitude for participants' valuable input, thoughtful reflections, and recommendations regarding the 2025-2027 portfolio design and support for the FMRG. He emphasized the positive energy and enthusiasm and conveyed the Council's unwavering confidence in CGIAR's progress and the promising path that lies ahead.
102. **Action Point: SC/M18/AP6 – Financial Model Reference Group**
The System Council expressed support for the proposed Finance Model Reference Group (FMRG) and requested that management take forward nominations for Manfred Kaufmann (Switzerland) and Ruben Echeverria (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation) as System Council representatives on the Group.

Agenda Item 12a: CGIAR's Regions and Partnership

Developing and Deepening our Engagement

103. The Co-Chair invited the Managing Director, Regions and Partnerships, supported by CGIAR's Regional Director for South Asia, to present an update.
104. The Regional Director for South Asia presented initial plans for developing and strengthening engagement in the 2025-2027 portfolio, outlining a coordinated approach involving analysis, dialogues, stakeholder identification, and consistent branded engagements. Alignment with national agendas, research priorities, and implementation of HLAP report recommendations were emphasized. The team expressed readiness to contribute to the science portfolio, showcasing their work with

stakeholders and ensuring alignment with agricultural policy priorities at the country and regional level.

Key Discussion

105. Due to time constraints in the agenda, The Chair asked members to hold further reflections until after the 'Spotlight' on Regions and Partnerships.

Agenda Item 12b: Spotlight — CGIAR's Regions and Partnerships

106. In the final spotlight session, the EMD introduced three videos showcasing CGIAR's work in Regions and Partnerships, featuring testimonials from CGIAR's field partners:
- a. **Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC):** Jorge Ganoza, Head of the National Institute of Agricultural Innovation (INIA) in Peru, highlighted INIA's efforts in food security and climate adaptation, their partnership with the International Potato Center (CIP) and CGIAR, and their involvement in the portfolio unveiling event with diverse stakeholders.
 - b. **Southeast Asia and the Pacific (SEA):** Highlighting CGIAR's active strengthening of partnerships and regional development in South Asia, including collaborations with the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), the National Planning Commission in Nepal, and the Ministry of Agriculture in Bangladesh.
 - c. **Central and West Asia and North Africa (CWANA):** Testimonials from a diverse range of partners, including the Government of the United Arab Emirates, Sudan's Agricultural Research Corporation, the Lebanese Agricultural Research Organization, the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development, FAO, Morocco's National Institute of Agronomic Research, the Gulf Cooperation Council, and others, showcasing the various Initiatives and launch events held in the region.

Key Discussion Areas

107. Council members praised CGIAR for its efforts in developing and deepening regional, country, and local engagements and partnerships. Additional reflections included:
- a. Requesting a management response on integrating the HLAP report recommendation into CGIAR's revised Engagement Framework for Partnerships & Advocacy;
 - b. Highlighting the importance of capacity sharing and strengthening, with a focus on clear funding, objectives, and tailored approaches for partners;
 - c. Appreciating CGIAR's role in strengthening engagement with NARES complementing national research and funding, and fostering collective action and partnership;
 - d. Recognizing CGIAR's regional cooperation and urging enhanced collaboration, capacity building, and closer relationships among NARES partners for greater effectiveness and impact;
 - e. Advocating for enhanced collaboration with the Global Forum on Agricultural Research ('GFAR'), involving regional fora in agenda setting, portfolio development, and revising CGIAR's Engagement Framework;

- f. Emphasizing the importance of addressing forgotten foods through partnership with the global NARES consortium;
 - g. Recommending a transparent and inclusive agenda-setting process involving FAO, GFAR, and stakeholders, prioritizing regional and sub-regional initiatives led by national systems for alignment and relevance, and avoiding exclusive focus on downstream activities;
 - h. Recognizing the need to align with government priorities and collaborate with national research institutes for impactful change and suggesting the exploration of eco-regional programs;
 - i. Appreciating CGIAR's efforts in establishing partnerships and engagement at the country and regional levels, particularly highlighting cooperation with China and the strategic study conducted for formulating a partnership between One CGIAR and China;
 - j. Commending CGIAR's impactful, regionally focused research, such as in the Asia monsoon region, which addresses common characteristics and applies relevant technologies, tailored measures, and fosters cooperation;
 - k. Advocating for enhancing CGIAR's impact by strengthening NARES through long-term bilateral cooperation, specifically in countries facing research infrastructure and capacity challenges but possessing valuable local knowledge and expertise, such as Burkina Faso, Mozambique, Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Liberia; and
 - l. Encouraging engagement with regional and national entities, integrating national commitments to multilateral mechanisms and research priorities, such as climate change adaptation and mitigation, into the research portfolio to minimize duplication and align with CGIAR's five Impact Areas.
108. The MD, Regions and Partnerships, expressed gratitude for the valuable insights and recommendations provided. Emphasis was placed on revising CGIAR's Engagement Framework and implementing action plans based on the HLAP recommendations. A bidirectional capacity sharing approach was highlighted, focusing on strengthening partners' capacity within CGIAR and establishing external partnerships. The criticality of securing funding for building a robust model was underscored. Ongoing collaboration with the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), the African Union, and the AfDB was also highlighted.
109. In addition, the CGIAR Regional Director, South Asia, expressed appreciation for GFAR's interventions and valuable input on the Engagement Framework. She acknowledged the uneven engagement across regions but welcomed the suggestion of working more closely together.

Session Outcome

110. The Co-Chair expressed gratitude to the Regions and Partnerships Directors for their valuable work with stakeholders worldwide and their efforts in engaging with country partners, especially National Agricultural Research and Extension Systems ('NARES'), while addressing concerns raised in the HLAP report. The Co-Chair acknowledged the team's collaboration with Science Managing Directors to shape CGIAR's future

portfolio, ensuring alignment with agricultural policy priorities at the country and regional levels. He proposed further discussion on this topic in the next Council meeting.

111. The Co-Chair acknowledged the valuable recommendations, inspiring examples of partnerships, and the significance of regional collaboration. He acknowledged the recommendations would be duly considered, particularly during the portfolio design process.

Agenda Item 13: One CGIAR Progress and Delivery

Operationalizing the CGIAR Integration Framework Agreement: updated 2022—24 Integration Plan

112. At the invitation of the Chair, the EMD framed the session by emphasizing the significance of the 2022-2024 Integration Plan, which consolidates ongoing workstreams in a coordinated and concise manner.
113. The Senior Advisor, EMD's Office, presented the updated 2022-2024 integration plan, highlighting its strategic and high-level focus on integrating across CGIAR and supporting the delivery of the 2030 strategy. Developed in collaboration with the SLT, the plan encompasses nine key workstreams and around 30 key results, aiming to operationalize the IFA and achieve collective ambitions.
114. The presentation emphasized the plan's three-year timeline, with a focus on delivering the current portfolio, designing the next one, integrating regions and partnerships, and enhancing professional services and systems. The matrix structure plays a crucial role, requiring close collaboration between Centers and global/regional groups while progressively clarifying roles and responsibilities. Adaptive management and regular updates to the Council and Board will ensure ongoing adjustments.

Key Discussion Areas

115. Council members praised the clear presentation and fully endorsed the integration plan. The current plan elicited optimism and confidence regarding its potential to establish a solid foundation for further progress towards the aspirations of One CGIAR.
116. Key reflection themes included:
 - a. Transitioning Process: Request for further clarification on transitioning out of the 'transition concept' to ensure a smooth and successful evolution.
 - b. Roles, Responsibilities, and Accountability: Seeking clarification on the roles, responsibilities, and accountability of each entity involved to enhance efficient and transparent decision-making within the matrix structure.
 - c. Empowering Managing Directors: A recommendation to empower Science Group Managing Directors to drive innovation, collaboration, and scientific excellence through increased authority and resources.
 - d. Strengthening Corporate Services: Endorsement of efforts to strengthen

- corporate services, recognizing their vital role in providing administrative, financial, and operational support to enable scientists and researchers to focus on their core work.
- e. Efficiency Gains and Organizational Restructuring: Recommendation to discuss potential efficiency gains and restructuring options for the organizational structure to improve overall effectiveness in response to the evolving landscape.
 - f. Efficiency and Talent Optimization: Support for efforts to address efficiency and optimize talent utilization within the One CGIAR system, maximizing impact and delivering sustainable solutions.
 - g. Involvement of the AOC: Recommendation to involve the AOC in the review process to shape the transition and ensure alignment with the Council's priorities.
 - h. Matrix Governance and Integration: Recognizing the significance of the matrix governance structure and its integration with management, there is support for bottom-up research initiatives, inclusive involvement of Center Board Chairs, and enhanced collaboration, transparency, and funding.
 - i. Positive Direction and Improvements: Acknowledgement of the positive direction and improvements in the transition process, building upon the laid foundation to drive further positive change.
 - j. Communication Support: Request for nuanced talking points from the Communications team to assist Council members in resource mobilization and effectively communicate the goals, achievements, and potential impact of the transition process to stakeholders and partners.
117. The EMD, in response to interventions regarding communications, expressed appreciation for the notable accomplishments of the Communications team including internal and external newsletters, blogs, crisis management, events coordination, and social media engagement. Despite limited resources, the team has delivered critical, timely and high-quality communication throughout the reform process. The EMD emphasized the need for additional support and welcomed new ideas to enhance their efforts. Council members expressed their support and commitment to actively engage as partners and ambassadors, leveraging the Communications team's efforts to promote and amplify the innovations and impacts of CGIAR across various platforms.
118. **Decision SC/M18/DP7: Operationalizing the CGIAR IFA**
The System Council endorsed the updated 2022-2024 Integration Plan as a basis for the continued, adaptive management of CGIAR's integration process through 2024.

CGIAR 2023 Window 1 ('W1') budget

119. The Global Director, Business Operations and Finance, provided an overview of the W1 designations and the budgeting process. She expressed gratitude for the support received, highlighting positive revenue levels, but noted that some designations still need to be finalized, which may impact the overall budget. The importance of reaching an agreed position soon was emphasized, to provide stability for the Initiatives and enable effective research planning. She also stressed the need for earlier information and discussions regarding designations in future budgeting processes and expressed

hope for collaboration among Council members and funders to improve the process for scientific progress.

120. During the discussion, members expressed appreciation for the presentation and efforts of the Business Operations and Finance Group. Additional reflections included:
- a. Encouragement for flexibility and transparency in handling oversubscription of funding for research Initiatives and the need for funding mechanisms to reflect market demand and allow budgets to increase accordingly;
 - b. Interest in involving the World Bank trust fund in discussions on finance mechanisms;
 - c. Challenges for some funders, including USAID, in providing early designations due to constraints in the funding process, and calls for funders to provide indicative designations as early in the year as possible;
 - d. Request for clarification on the process of rebalancing funding across the portfolio and a request for information on when the finance plan will be shared with Council members;
 - e. Concern expressed about the undersubscription of Initiatives and requests for information on related risks;
 - f. Highlighting the importance of well-funded genebanks as a public good that benefits other Initiatives and suggestion for special attention to genebanks;
 - g. Recognizing the System's dependence on timely funder designations and funding, a suggestion for the System to better understand different funders' circumstances and have risk management strategies in place.
121. In response, the Global Director of Business Operations and Finance explained that receiving designations earlier in the year facilitated early conversations with funders and increased certainty. She underscored the significance of transparency and adjustments driven by demand, proposing that such adjustments be incorporated through the proposal process for the next business cycle, rather than during the year, particularly mid-way. She emphasized the necessity of timely and comprehensive designations to initiate the funding rebalancing process and expressed gratitude for the suggestion of providing provisional figures for immediate successes. She concluded by emphasizing the importance of obtaining a complete overview to align funding, finalize the paper, and implement designated options.

EMD recruitment update

122. Recalling that the EMD had announced last year that she would be retiring from CGIAR on 31 July 2023, the System Board Chair introduced the EMD Search Committee Chair to provide an update on the recruitment process.
123. Despite facing challenges due to a late start, the EMD Search Committee Chair emphasized the committee's commitment to identifying a preferred candidate by 4 August 2023. He highlighted the inclusive and transparent approach of the committee, which includes representation from Board members, Center Board Chairs, the Council, and an independent member from the UN.

124. The EMD Search Committee Chair reported that the committee had engaged the services of the preferred search firm Spencer Stuart. Their primary focus is to identify a candidate with an inspiring vision, strong managerial skills, and the ability to navigate the integrated matrix structure of CGIAR. The recruitment process is progressing through key stages, including longlisting, shortlisting, probing, and final interviews. Additionally, the committee is actively considering strategies to ensure a smooth transition and maintain continuity in CGIAR operations, aiming to have a transition plan in place by 1 July 2023.

Session Outcomes

125. The Chair expressed concern about the availability of suitable EMD candidates by 4 August and acknowledged the challenging nature of the position. The Board Chair highlighted that the search committee welcomes candidate recommendations to ensure the pipeline is filled with high-caliber candidates and emphasized the importance of having a strong pool of options to choose from.

Agenda Item 14: Next System Council Meeting Location and Dates

126. The Council Secretary provided an overview of the proposed dates, timeframes, and locations for the upcoming Council meetings until 2024, considering factors such as scientific gatherings, partnerships with host countries, and regional representation. She expressed gratitude for participants' understanding and stressed the importance of their input and engagement in finalizing meeting arrangements.
127. Participants from Colombia and Mexico expressed their interest in being considered as potential hosts for the Latin America meeting, alongside Brazil and Peru.
128. Some members raised concerns about scheduling conflicts with other development events, such as the FAO Science and Innovation Forum, World Food Forum, and International Rice Congress. The Chair acknowledged the challenges of accommodating a busy global calendar and commitments.

Session Outcome

129. **Action Point: SC/M18/AP7 – System Council Meeting Dates Through 2024**
The System Council requested that the Secretariat make arrangements for the next three regular meetings on the following proposed dates and locations:
- SC19: week of 16-20 October 2023, Morocco (hosted by ICARDA)
 - SC20: Q2 2024 (early June), Latin America
 - SC21: Q4 2024, Africa

Agenda Item 15: Other Business and Meeting Close

Consent Agenda

130. The Council Secretary introduced the **Consent Agenda**, recalling that it consists of

items that are procedural in nature or have been through extensive prior consultation or Committee processes and require formal Council decision. The Secretary confirmed that no requests to remove any item from the consent agenda had been received by the relevant period, and thus the consent agenda was being put up for approval. The Council approved the consent agenda.

131. **Decision SC/M18/DP8: Terms of Reference for the SPIA Chair Nominations Panel**

The System Council **approved** the terms of reference (TOR) for the Nominations Panel for the appointment process of the SPIA Chair.

Update on Global Campaign and request for Funder focal points/Champions in respective Funder constituencies

132. The Managing Director, Communications and Outreach, introduced CGIAR's global replenishment campaign, which aims to promote scientific work, secure funding, and drive transformation in food, land, and water systems. The campaign seeks to position CGIAR within the global climate agenda, attract larger funding pools, and highlight its unique selling points.
133. The Global Director, Innovative Finance and Resource Mobilization, emphasized the importance of raising CGIAR's profile, improving communications, and generating financial support through the campaign. Collaboration with funders, partners, and stakeholders will play a crucial role in mobilizing resources for CGIAR's work.
134. The UAE COP28 Presidency Head of Food Systems Partnerships was invited to provide an overview of the planned activities at COP28, with a focus on "protecting global food systems." He shared the vision for COP28 to achieve a "Paris moment for food" by placing food systems at the center of the climate discussion.
135. The MD, Communications and Outreach, highlighted the alignment of the global replenishment campaign with communications activities and the need to secure funding for CGIAR's science. Council members were encouraged to join the campaign as champions, emphasizing the importance of a secure future through science and effective communication.

Key Discussion Areas

136. The Chair stressed the importance of aligning the food agenda with COP28 and developing a shared vision for transforming the food sector. Participants expressed their eagerness to support CGIAR and engage in the campaign for COP28, emphasizing collaboration for food sovereignty and resilience. They requested clear narratives and statements to effectively communicate the transformation of global agriculture and CGIAR to policymakers and secure funding. Furthermore, transparency and inclusivity were urged in the rebranding process of CGIAR.

Meeting Wrap-up and Close

137. The Chair expressed sincere gratitude to several individuals. The IFPRI hosts were recognized for their role in organizing and hosting the meeting. The Secretariat team were appreciated for their hard work and contributions to the meeting's success. The System Organization management was acknowledged for their valuable contributions to the meeting and their overall efforts.
138. The Chair also took the opportunity to express gratitude to individuals who are transitioning out of CGIAR. Andrew Campbell was recognized for his significant role in sustainable agriculture and natural resources management throughout his seven years on the Council. Martin Kropff, a long-standing member of the CGIAR who is transitioning, received praise for his invaluable contributions and inspiring leadership during the reform process. Elwyn Grainger-Jones was commended for his creative and innovative approach, which brought clarity to a complex system. Lastly, Claudia Sadoff was highly praised for her exceptional leadership and determination in advancing the CGIAR strategy and reforms.
139. The meeting concluded with appreciation extended to all participants for their collaborative and forward-looking contributions.
140. The meeting was closed.

Annex 1: Participant List

18 th CGIAR System Council Meeting (SC18) Final participants list	
Meeting Leadership	Key: (* [*]) indicates that voting member/active observer is being represented at the meeting by the alternate (* ^{**}) indicated that voting member/active observer is being represented at the meeting by another delegated representative (v) shows virtual participation of a participant
Chair: Juergen Voegelé Co-Chair: Martin Fregene (Day 1); Innocent Musabyimana (Day 2) - AfDB Note: the SC Chair invited Innocent Musabyimana to take the Co-Chair seat, on day 2, on behalf of Martin Fregene. He also held the AfDB seat on this day, as indicated below.	

System Council Voting Members (listed alphabetically)	Member representative	Member Alternates & Other Delegation Members
African Development Bank	Martin Fregene	Alternate: Innocent Musabyimana (*on Day 2)
Australia	Andrew Campbell	Alternate: Julianne Biddle
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	Ruben Echeverria	Alternate: Renee Lafitte Other delegates: Rinn Self
Canada	Flora Mak*	Other delegates: François Cloutier (V)
East Asia & Pacific	Ke Jin** (China)	
Germany & Belgium	Sebastian Lesch (Germany)	Other delegates: Sarah Schmidt, Felicitas Röhrig (V - Day 1 only), Stefan Kachelreiss (V)
Japan	Toshiyuki Kubota**	Other delegate: Masa Iwanaga
Latin America and Caribbean	Jorge Mario Diaz Luengas (Colombia) (V)	Alternate: Noemi Marmanillo (Peru) (V) Other delegates: Janette Pacheco Santos (Peru) (V)
Mexico	Adriana Herrera-Moreno (V)	
The Netherlands	Timmo Gaasbeek	
Norway/EIARD Rep	Daniel van Gilst*	
South Asia	Himanshu Pathak (India)	Alternate: S.M.Bokhtiar (Bangladesh)
Sub-Saharan Africa	Garba Sharubutu (Nigeria)	Alternate: Eliud Kireger (Kenya) Other delegate: Carolyne Minayo (Kenya)
Sweden	AnnaKarin Norling	Alternate: Madeleine Jönsson
Switzerland	Manfred Kaufmann	
United Kingdom	Alan Tollervey	Other delegate: James Thomson
United States of America	Rob Bertram	Alternate: Jerry Glover Other delegate: Gary Jahn, Meredith Soule
West Asia & North Africa	Metin Türker (Türkiye)	

Meeting Summary: 18th System Council Meeting

System Council Voting Members (listed alphabetically)	Member representative	Member Alternates & Other Delegation Members
The World Bank	Martien Van Nieuwkoop	Alternate: Julian Lampietti (Day 2) Other delegate: Sarah Simons
Ireland	Patrick McManus	Other delegate: Isabella Rae

Non-voting Ex-officio members	Member	Alternate & Other Delegates
CGIAR System Board	Lindiwe Majele Sibanda (Chair)	Other delegate: Patrick Caron (Vice-Chair)
Executive Director of the System Organization	Khuloud Odeh	
Center/Alliance Representative 1: Convener of the Chairs of Center Boards of Trustees	Elsa Murano	
Center/Alliance Representative 2: Convener of the Center Directors General	Mark Smith	
Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO)	Ismahane Elouafi	Alternate: Selvaraju Ramasamy

Active Observers	Representative	Alternate & Other Delegates
Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR)	Ravi Khetarpal	Hildegard Lingnau
CGIAR Independent Science for Development Council (ISDC)	Holger Meinke (Chair)	Other delegates: Nompumelelo (Mpumi) Obokoh (Vice-Chair), David Just (Member)

SC Secretary

Sylvia Oyinlola, Global Head, CGIAR System Council Support

CGIAR's Executive Managing Director

Claudia Sadoff

Invited Guests	Representative
Trustee of the CGIAR Trust Fund (World Bank)	Jane Mwebi (Trustee) Additional guests: Vijayalakshmi Srinivasan (Day 2 only), Gabriela Grinsteins (V), Vivian Nwachukwu (V)
CGIAR System Council's Assurance Oversight Committee	Muriel Uzan (Interim Chair)
France	Bernard Hubert & Jean Albergel
CGIAR Standing Panel on Impact Assessment (SPIA)	Karen Macours (Chair) (Day 1 only)

Meeting Summary: 18th System Council Meeting

Other invitees	Representative
EIARD Secretary	Nienke Beintema
Denmark	Hanne Carus
Italy	Anna Beatrice Ciorba
Crop Trust	Hannes Dempewolf

Session specific invitees	
Kyle Emerick, SPIA member	Agenda item 4 (Day 1)
James Stevenson, SPIA Staff	Agenda item 4 (Day 1)
Ricardo Labarta, Program Leader, SPIA (V)	Agenda item 4 (Day 1)
Amy Beaudreault, Secretariat Lead, ISDC, Independent Advisory and Evaluation Service (V)	Agenda item 8 (Day 1)
Neal Gutterson, CGIAR System Board Member (V)	Agenda item 10 (Day 1)
Kristofer Hamel, Head, Food Systems Partnerships Mohamed Farrae, Specialist, COP28 Presidency	Agenda item 15 c (Day 2)

Technical resources	Name/Role/Organization
SC Chair adviser	Jonathan Wadsworth, Lead Agriculture Specialist, Agriculture and Food Global Practice, World Bank
	Rutger de Witt Wijnen, CGIAR General Counsel
CGIAR	Elwyn Grainger-Jones, Managing Director, Institutional Strategy and Systems
	Harold Roy-Macauley, Managing Director of Regions and Partnerships (V) (Day 2 only)
	Lotte Pang, Managing Director, Communications and Outreach
	Johan Swinnen, Managing Director, Systems Transformation
	Martin Kropff, Managing Director, Resilient Agri-Food Systems
	Sonja Vermeulen, Managing Director, Genetic Innovation (V) (Day 1 only)
	Andre Zandstra, Global Director of Innovative Finance and Resource Mobilization
	Marion Barriskell, Global Director of Business Operations and Finance
	Temina Lalani-Shariff, One CGIAR Regional Director, South Asia (V) (Day 2 only)
	Michiel Roovers, Senior Director, Governance and Institutional Risk
	Nicoline de Haan, Director, GENDER Impact Platform
	Julie Van der Blik, Director Multilateral & Bilateral IFRM
	Jules Colomer, Global Head, Portfolio Performance Unit (Agenda item 9 and Day 2 only)
	Roland Sundstrom, EMD Senior Advisor
	Lori Dagdag, Funding and Special projects Business partner (Agenda item 13 a,b only)
Krishna Ravinthiren, Governance and Institutional Risk Associate (V) (Day 1 only)	

Meeting Summary: 18th System Council Meeting

Technical resources	Name/Role/Organization
CGIAR System Council Secretariat	Emma Quilligan, Senior Manager, System Council Support
	Vanesa Goss, Senior Advisor, AOC and SIMEC Support (V) (Day 1 only)
	Olwen Cussen, Governance Officer (V)
	Stacy De La O, Governance Officer
CGIAR assurance function providers (as invited guests)	<u>CGIAR Independent Advisory and Evaluation Service</u> : Allison Grove Smith, Director
	<u>CGIAR Internal Audit</u> : Madina Bazarova & Jamila Ntege (Co-Heads) (V)
Event and Technical Support on Site	
Vashna Singh, Meetings and Events, Consultant, CGIAR	
Victoria Pezzi, Meeting and Events Coordinator, CGIAR	