



## Independent Science for Development Council's 2023 Progress Update and Interim Report on Responding to Evolving Megatrends

### Purpose

The background reading provides the Independent Science for Development Council's (ISDC's) 2023 progress update and supplies an interim report of the ISDC-commissioned project on megatrends. The project is studying implications for the CGIAR research portfolio of recent evolution of key megatrends. More specifically, the purpose of the megatrends interim report is to advise System Council's early deliberations on the 2025-2027 portfolio. The report summarizes preliminary implications specific to the *Gender Equality, Youth and Social Inclusion* Impact Area.

### Action Requested

The System Council is requested to read and reflect on ISDC 2023 progress update for discussion during ISDC chair's intervention at SC19.

Additionally, System Council is invited to read the Interim Report on Responding to Evolving Megatrends and share reflections both during relevant sessions at SC19 and/or via email at [isdc@cgiar.org](mailto:isdc@cgiar.org) through 23 October 2023.

#### **Distribution notice:**

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Prepared by: ISDC with the support of CGIAR Independent Advisory and Evaluation Service

## ISDC October 2023 Progress Update

This Progress Update documents key outputs and achievements of the Independent Science for Development Council (ISDC) from June through October 2023.

### Portfolio Evolution

The ISDC Chair and Secretariat are involved in consultations with the Action Areas Managing Directors and the Portfolio Evolution Task Force. These ongoing discussions provide an opportunity for reflective interactions to improve the 2024 portfolio evolution and to identify strategic engagement opportunities for ISDC.

### Three Workstreams of ISDC Workplan 2023

ISDC has three workstreams in its [2023 workplan](#), consisting of (a) *Agricultural Systems* special issue on inclusive innovation, (b) Science Forum, and (c) Megatrends.

#### *Agricultural Systems Special Issue*

Extending the 2022 workstream on Inclusive Innovation and TropAg symposium on the margins of 17<sup>th</sup> meeting of System Council (SC17), ISDC is supporting a special issue on inclusive innovation in *Agricultural Systems* (Impact Factor 6.765). The special issue will bring together world class thinking on the topic of inclusive innovation from outside and within CGIAR. The special issue is in the peer review phase with 28 submissions with the expected start to publish in January 2024. Read the [blog](#) authored by the guest editors to learn more.

#### *2023 Science Forum*

##### *Innovation for Impact: Growing Gender Equality, Youth, and Social Inclusion*

The 2023 Science Forum will be held on Thursday, 19 October, in Rabat, Morocco in conjunction with the 19<sup>th</sup> meeting of the System Council (SC19). The four-hour Forum will include three scientific presentations (with two early career presenters), an ISDC presentation on megatrends for that Impact Area, and three lively panel discussions. The agenda can be found [here](#).

#### *Megatrends*

The commissioned analysis of megatrend recent evolution will have a pre-read at SC19 with the Note focused on the Impact Areas of Gender Equality, Youth, and Social Inclusion. The goal of this analysis is to answer the following (the final report is expected in Q4-2023):

- What megatrend dynamics have changed since the CGIAR Strategy was prepared?
- How and if these megatrends affect the CGIAR Strategy and associated collective global targets?
  - Specifically, how—if at all—should the targets and the five Impact Areas alter to meet the needs of the possible future(s) these megatrends may affect?

### Meetings and Communication

The ISDC Secretariat semiannual meeting will occur during SC19 in Rabat, Morocco. The chair also attended the following governance meetings:

- Strategic Impact Monitoring and Evaluation Committee in August to present the ISDC 2024 workplan
- The Independent Review of CGIAR's Unified Governance webinar and the System Board meeting as an observer in September
- Meetings in Montpellier: (i) SB Vice Chair, Patrick Caron, to discuss progress on the establishment of the Science and Partnership Committee of the SB; (ii) Science Directors to progress the establishment of a workable process to assess proposed research portfolio adjustment and (iii) participation at the "Pooling Collective Intelligence" meeting, hosted by CGIAR and University of Montpellier.
- A visit to Rome to meet with the Independent Advisory and Evaluation Service staff and CGIAR leadership based at The Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT and incoming CGIAR Managing Executive Director and to prepare for Science Forum and other matters associated with SC19.