

## CGIAR System Board convenes to chart course for impactful 2024

With momentum from COP28 climate negotiations, the System Board held its final retreat of 2023 in Dubai on 12 December to build on commitments to transform food, land, and water systems for climate resilience and environmental and nutritional health.

The System Board reflected on progress and learnings from a challenging but inspiring 2023 and discussed priorities for 2024 which include overseeing a comprehensive review by the incoming executive leadership of the budget, the related workplans and targets for delivery by the end of the first quarter in 2024 with a view of empowering the executive leadership to deliver the [CGIAR 2030 Research and Innovation Strategy](#).

Recognizing the urgency of CGIAR's mission amidst compounding global crises, discussions also centered on other key priorities, focused on operationalizing CGIAR's Integrated Partnership, building the 2025-2027 portfolio, and generating greater investment for an ambitious, cutting-edge set of CGIAR Initiatives and Research Programs.

With an eye towards the future, the System Board explored an implementation plan to realize the benefits of the new integrated governance design. The System Board stands united in its commitment to consolidate progress made to date while exploring the best ways to incentivize the growth of the Centers as the foundation of science delivery by CGIAR, while capitalizing on their combined assets for integrated action. In light of the newly adopted memorandum on governance implementation, it will be possible to strategically align Center specific interests with CGIAR's global mission.

Ensuring such alignment across all levels of leadership and governance will be essential to unleash the potential of our Integrated Partnership to deliver for our numerous stakeholders around the world. CGIAR's shared values and culture, and prudent financial stewardship, are fundamental to deliver benefits, working closely together with our many regional and global partners. Together with incoming Executive Managing Director Dr. Ismahane Elouafi, the System Board will steward enhanced cooperation towards common goals, and an environment where executive leadership can effectively drive change in service of the 2030 Research and Innovation Strategy.

The System Board has unified in advancing CGIAR's mission through key decisions that bolster the implementation of the new Integrated Partnership. These transitional measures will facilitate a smooth shift towards the new Integrated Partnership Board while maintaining continuity during the transition. To that end, the System Board:

- Endorsed the "CGIAR memorandum on governance recommendations" and approved the package of proposals set out therein.
- Committed to working in good faith to implement these proposals to achieve the Integrated Partnership on the timelines in the memorandum.

- Extended membership terms of Alice Ruhweza, Alyssa-Jade McDonald-Bärtl, Hilary Wild, Neal Gutterson, Patrick Caron, and Shenggen Fan on the System Board until the earlier of June 2024 or their successors are appointed.
- Approved extending the terms of Hilary Wild, Esteban Chong, and Nancy Andrews on the AFRC until the earlier of June 2024 or successor appointments.

Additionally, the System Board recognized the exemplary service of three of its members— Alyssa-Jade McDonald-Bärtl, Neal Gutterson, and Hilary Wild — who have decided for personal reasons not to seek reappointment after June 2024, which will make way for a staggered succession of new appointees to the Integrated Partnership Board.

Finally, the System Board expressed its gratitude to Prof. Andrew Campbell for his skillful leadership of CGIAR as interim Executive Managing Director until 1 December 2023.

The System Board looks forward to 2024, with its newly designed role as the Integrated Partnership Board. The System Board is committed to assuring that CGIAR realizes its full potential as an integrated partnership. CGIAR is, more than ever before, uniquely positioned to convene diverse partners worldwide to deliver science and innovation for humanity’s greatest food system challenges. 2024 promises much work ahead, but also great potential for progress with collaboration and co-creation as guiding principles that guide us as we lead the way forward.

On behalf of the System Board,  
Prof. Lindiwe Majele Sibanda  
Chair