

## **Organization of a New CGIAR Genetic Resources Policy Committee (GRPC)**

### **Background**

The recommendations of the GRPC review panel were endorsed in broad terms by the ExCo during its September 2002 meeting and by the full CGIAR membership at AGM02. However, there were a number of important issues arising from some of the panel's recommendations, mainly in regard to the role and organization of a new GRPC.

In addressing the issues, the System Office sought the advice of a working group composed of M.S. Swaminathan, Carl-Gustaf Thornstrom, and Geoffrey Hawtin. The group's involvement in the current GRPC (as Chair and members) and their knowledge of policy questions that the new Committee are likely to face, put them in a unique position to provide the ExCo/CGIAR with practical advice on those issues.

### **Key Issues and Recommendations from the Working Group**

The issues raised could be summarized into 5 key areas. They are given below along with the comments and recommendations of the working group.

- **Role of GRPC as a resource for CGIAR Centers and NARS**

GRPC can be a resource for individual Centers as well as the CGIAR as a whole. Centers should be invited to raise issues for the consideration of the committee. The GRPC shall report to CGIAR plenary and ExCo as appropriate.

The GRPC is not seen as a resource for NARS. To take on such a role would be an enormous task. But Centers may bring relevant national issues to the GRPC when this has a direct bearing on the ways in which the Centers work with NARS. The GRPC can also play a useful monitoring role.

Care should be taken not to raise expectations among NARS that the GRPC is a resource for them. Other mechanisms for providing advice to NARS exist within the CGIAR, e.g. through ISNAR, IFPRI, IPGRI and, the SGRP. The GRPC could, however, take on a monitoring/oversight role to help make sure the overall policy advice and support provided to NARS by the Centers is coherent and coordinated.

- **Mechanisms for linkages with SC and FAO**

SC-representative in the GRPC shall be responsible for briefing the full SC about issues dealt with by the GRPC. Furthermore GRPC representatives may be invited to present specific issues in the SC as a standing agenda item.

The working group recommended a standing observer from FAO to provide links specifically with Interim Governing Body for the International Treaty on PGRFA and the Ethics committee of FAO.

- **Size and composition of the Committee**

Three options presented:

- A nine-member committee comprising: Chair, CDC (2, one of which would be the DG of IPGRI acting as the Committee's secretary), CBC, SC, PSC, NGOC, farmers' representative, legal expert. It is also suggested that there be standing observers from FAO and from the CGIAR System Office (SO). WTO/CBD/WIPO etc representatives can be invited as observers when required. This option leaves out donor representation.
- First option but replacing the SO with one from national genetic resources institutions of developing countries
- Second option above plus a CGIAR member representative and an observer from SO.

Expertise in genetic resources science, management, and policy issues should be considered as key criteria in identifying potential members.

- **Location of the Secretariat**

The GRPC secretariat being at IPGRI is considered important to maintain close links with the SGRP and Inter-Centre Working Group on genetic Resources, IPGRI's own policy work and leadership role within the CGIAR on PGR, and FAO processes

- **Funding of GRPC**

Estimated cost of GRPC operation is about \$40,000, covering two meetings per year. The World Bank has agreed to continue to fund the GRPC; other members/investors are to be encouraged to contribute.

### **Decision requested from ExCo**

Endorsement of the working group's recommendations is requested. On size and composition the following is recommended:

- **Size and composition of the GRPC:** Total of 10 – composed of the Chair + two Center Directors (one of whom is IPGRI's Director who will also serve as the Committee's Secretary), a representative each from the Science Council, private sector, NGO community, farmers' organizations, national genetic resources institutions, donors/investors, and an observer from FAO.

For comparison, the current GRPC has the following composition (see Attachment 1): Chair, three CGIAR members (US, Sweden, and Switzerland), three Center Directors

(CIMMYT, IRRI, and IPGRI), one Center Board Chair (IPGRI), one from TAC/iSC, one from private sector, one from NGO, one from NARS, and one observer from FAO Commission on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture).

**Next Steps:**

Nominations for membership will be solicited from the CGIAR stakeholder groups: CGIAR members, Science Council, Center Directors Committee, Private Sector Committee, NGO Committee, NARS and other partners. Members will be selected by the ExCO and endorsed to the CGIAR for final approval. It is expected that the new GRPC will have been appointed by early August 2003.

**Attachment 1**

<b>Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research Genetic Resources Policy Committee (GRPC)</b> (as of April 15, 2003)	
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<p><b>Dr. Robert Bertram</b>                      Chief, Multilateral Programs Division                      Center for Economic Growth and Agricultural                      Development, Global Bureau                      Agency for International Development                      (USAID), Room 2.11-085, Ronald Reagan                      Building, 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue                      Washington, DC 20523                      UNITED STATES</p> <p>Tel: (202)663-2254                      Fax: (202)663-2552                      Email: <a href="mailto:rbertram@usaid.gov">rbertram@usaid.gov</a></p>	<p><b>Dr. Bernard Le Buanec</b>                      Secretary General                      FIS/ASSINEL                      Chemin du Reposoir 7                      CH-1260 Nyon                      SWITZERLAND</p> <p>Tel: (41-22) 3654420                      Fax: (41-22) 3654421                      Email: <a href="mailto:assinsel@iprolink.ch">assinsel@iprolink.ch</a>  <a href="mailto:assinsel@worldseed.org">assinsel@worldseed.org</a></p>
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<p><b>Dr. Ronald P. Cantrell</b>                      Director General                      International Rice Research Institute (IRRI),                      DAPO Box 7777                      Manila                      PHILIPPINES</p> <p>Tel: (63-2) 8105337                      Fax: (63-2) 891-1292                      Email: <a href="mailto:r.cantrell@cgiar.org">r.cantrell@cgiar.org</a></p>	<p><b>Mr. Renato Salazar</b>                      Chairperson                      Programme Coordinating Committee                      c/o SEARICE, 331 Eagle Court Cond.                      26 Matalino Street, Quezon City                      PHILIPPINES</p> <p>Tel: (63-2) 644-6844                      Fax: (63-2) 922-6710                      E-mail: <a href="mailto:renesir@pacific.net.ph">renesir@pacific.net.ph</a></p>

<p><b>Membership slot formerly occupied by Marcio de Miranda Santos (former chair of IPGRI Board of Trustees)</b></p>	<p><b>Membership slot formerly occupied by Timothy Reeves (former Director General of CIMMYT)</b></p>
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