

PROGRESS REPORT on EPMRs and SWPs¹

INTRODUCTION

In fulfilling its monitoring and evaluation function, TAC/iSC conducts quinquennial external review of Centres. On average three Centres are evaluated every year. The lead time for planning each review is 18-24 months. The review process in the CGIAR has been a subject of discussion, and despite the four pillars of reform, the external review calendar has been maintained. By the end of 2003 iSC/TAC will have completed the reviews of IPGRI and ICRISAT while that of CIMMYT has been shifted to 2004 at the request of the Centre.

1. 5th IPGRI EPMR

The initial phase of the 5th IPGRI EPMR took place from 25 to 29 November 2002 and the main phase from 3 to 22 March 2003. The Panel was composed of: Mike Gale (UK), as Chair, Doris Capistrano (Philippines), John Mugabe (Kenya), Bert Visser (Netherlands) and Paul Zuckerman (UK), as Members, and Carlos Correa (Uruguay) and Jorge Chang (China), as Consultants. Resource Persons were: Sirkka Immonen for the iSC Secretariat and Selçuk Ozgediz for the CGIAR Secretariat.

The Panel completed its work and presented the report to the IPGRI Board and Management on 22 March 2003. The IPGRI Board and management prepared their response which has been received by the CGIAR and iSC Secretariats. The Panel Chair will present the review report at the iSC/TAC 84 meeting on 10 June, 2003, FAO, Rome, whereupon the Council will develop a commentary for consideration by ExCo5 and AGM03.

2. 5th ICRISAT EPR

The review of ICRISAT would be the last external Centre review organized by the iSC/TAC. The ICRISAT case is also the first separate but linked review in that the iSC will conduct an External Programme Review (EPR) while the CGIAR Secretariat is responsible for the management component.

The Panel composition for the programme component consists of: Paul Vlek (Netherlands), as Chair, Dunstan Spencer (Sierra Leone), Desirée Hautea (Philippines) and Anthony Hall (USA) as Members, and Amir Kassam of the iSC Secretariat as Resource Person.

The EPR began with a Design Visit in March 2003 (from 12 to 18) by the Panel Chair, Paul Vlek, one Panel Member, Dunstan Spencer, (Socio-economist) and the Panel Secretary. The visit coincided with the ICRISAT Board meeting from 10 to 14 March. This allowed three days overlap with the Board as well as interaction with senior management and staff. The Design team prepared a list of issues which the EPR will be focussing on. Based on the Design Visit, the remaining Panel slots have been filled. The Panel is currently conducting field visits to selected sites in Asia and Africa.

¹This is an iSC submission to ExCo4.

The Panel continues to work virtually until the middle of June when it will spend some 10 days (16-26 June 2003) at ICRISAT to interact with management and staff, validate the findings and revise draft chapters. The EPR Report will be finalized by mid-August and transmitted to the Science Council Chair, in time for the ExCo5 meeting in September 2003 and AGM in October 2003.

3. EPRs of IRRI and IFPRI

The External Reviews of IRRI and IFPRI have been commissioned by iSC for implementation starting in late 2003 and completion in 2004. The Centres are in the process of proposing potential candidates for Panel Chair and Members, panel profile and future dates of Board meetings and list of CCERs already carried out or to be undertaken. At its June 2003 meeting the iSC will consider a short list of names for handing over to the SC. Based on the lessons learnt from the ICRISAT review and on the Groups guidance, these two reviews could take the form of separate but linked model or revert to the former EPMPR pattern.

4. Other EPRs: ICRAF and CIFOR

The planning of these external reviews would have been initiated by now in order to adhere to the 18 months lead time. However, in view of the transition and the prevailing discussion on the evaluation process – these two reviews will be taken up by the SC at the earliest opportunity. The iSC Chair has interacted informally with one of the Centres on the planning and organization of the review.

5. Systemwide Programmes

To date, the former iSC/TAC has conducted external reviews of SGRP, eight SWPs with an ecoregional approach, CAPRI, SP-IPM and SLP as CCER with ILRI. These reviews, unlike the Centres ones, are financed by iSC/TAC. In 2003, a provision has been made to conduct the evaluation and impact of Alternative to Slash and Burn (ASB). It is proposed that the initiation and implementation of this activity be in the domain of the Science Council during the latter part of 2003 for completion in the first half of 2004. Subject to availability of resources, the future SC could consider the reviews of the Soil and Water Nutrient Management (SWNM) and the Participatory Research and Gender Analysis (PR&GA).

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