

Summary of ExCo 8 Discussion and Conclusions on Report from the Centers¹

CBC

Uzo Mokwunye updated ExCo on several issues discussed by CBC at its recent meeting in Penang:

- CBC discussed experience to date on implementation of the CGIAR nominee process. He made a plea to members to help populate the database so as to increase the number of qualified candidates.
- CBC also examined the possibility of a shared approach to addressing board liability. CBC canvassed the situation for individual boards, including costs for insurance.
- CBC is greatly satisfied with the board orientation programs, although a significant number of Board members have still not benefited from them. Two more programs are planned in Morocco in December 2005. To date, 92 members have attended. Quality of boards is very important to CBC and it is working to ensure that those who agree to serve are empowered to carry out their responsibilities.
- The Board Chairs held a two day retreat on how the CBC can be a more effective organ in the CGIAR. A retreat report will be available at the end of June 2005.
- In partnership with the CGIAR Secretariat, the CBC will shortly commence a stripe review of board governance. The review is expected to be finalized in time for discussion at the spring (northern) 2006 ExCo meeting.

CDC

William Dar updated ExCo on CDC and Alliance Executive matters not otherwise covered in the agenda. He noted that the Alliance Executive plans to adjust its meeting schedule so that it is far enough in advance of ExCo meetings to enable the submission of a written report. He reported on the following:

- A set of “Guidelines for Collaboration with the Private Sector” was approved for use by all Centers. A Scientific and Know-how Exchange Program (SKEP) between Centers and selected private sector organizations was recently initiated, with the first exchange to take place shortly. The PSC and Centers are organizing a “CGIAR-Private Sector” conference in October 2005 to explore how Centers and the private sector can work better together. A further initiative on delivery systems for specific products is also being undertaken.
- CDC is working with GRPC and has approved two documents in regards to Centers that manage genebanks and in-trust collections. The first document is titled *Agreements Between Governing Body and the IARCs and Other Relevant International Institutions*. CBC and CDC have authorized the DGs of Centers that manage genebanks to sign the agreement on behalf of their Centers,

¹ Excerpt from Eighth Meeting of the CGIAR Executive Council (May 11-12, 2005) Summary Record of Proceedings, May 31, 2005.

following approval by their respective Center Boards. The document will replace former agreements signed in 1994 with FAO. The second document is titled *Guiding Principles for the Development of Future Harvest Centres' Policies to Address the Possibility of Unintentional Presence of Transgenes in Ex Situ Collections* and is meant to protect Centers from criticism that they have not paid attention to this important matter. A communications campaign is suggested when final wording is approved in 2006.

- Systemwide and Ecoregional Programs (SWEPS): In January 2005 Centers completed achievements report and an assessment on 10 SWEPS supported by the World Bank. The report is available from Meryl Williams of the Future Harvest Alliance Office.
- The Marketing Group continues to be an important unit in presenting a unified public face of the CGIAR System to the world. The CDC has discussed ways to make it more strategic and effective.
- Alliance of Future Harvest Centers of the CGIAR: The Alliance has made rapid progress in the past year to create mechanisms to undertake and govern collective action. CDC has constituted itself as the Alliance Executive. CBC has been developing the basis to constitute itself as the Alliance Board. An Alliance Charter has been drafted. The Alliance has made substantive progress on SSA "quick wins" identified in 2004.

Discussion:

- One member asked if there isn't a way for the Centers to undertake some consolidation on their own. The cost savings from reducing the number of boards and board members would be significant and it shouldn't be too difficult to deal with given the impending reconstitution of CDC and CBC.
- Details on the TOR for the stripe review were requested. Although a report is scheduled for presentation in 2006, it would be good for ExCo to receive an interim update.
- How does the alliance eventually see itself operating? It would be helpful for ExCo to receive a note on this. The Chairman suggested that this note should cover the work plan, budget, staffing, and the value added of the Alliance. It should be submitted for discussion by ExCo at its next meeting. Such a note would be helpful to CGIAR Members as many do not understand the Alliance.

U. Mokwunye noted that the point about the number of board members is well taken, but CBC can not mandate consolidation of Centers. The Centers are not one organization and they operate in different environments with different mandates; one size does not fit all.

F. Reifschneider informed ExCo that the TOR for the stripe review would be shared with ExCo, for information.

Conclusions:

- *The Co-chair thanked the CBC and CDC Chairs for their reports.*