

## Summary of AGM06 Discussion and Decision on Sub-Saharan Africa Challenge Program<sup>1</sup>

At AGM04, the CGIAR approved in principle the implementation of the SSA CP for a five-year period subject to a successful assessment of its 18-month inception phase. The report of the external review has previously been discussed by the SC and ExCo provided recommendations to the CGIAR. The external review panel chair, Cyrus Ndiritu and FARA Executive Secretary Monty Jones, joined the discussion (the former through video conference). F. Reifschneider shared ExCo 11 recommendations on SSA CP with the CGIAR.

### ***Discussion:***

- FARA and the SSA CP management should seek necessary expertise to help implement the panel and ExCo recommendations. SC should play an advisory role in helping to identify this expertise.
- Members expressed support for the ExCo recommendations but noted that the SSA CP is a novel approach and it will take time to deliver the expected outcome.
- Some Members recommended that AGM give credit to SSA CP for the progress that has been made during the inception phase. They agreed that the SSA CP should be given more time to provide the “proof of concept” for the IAR4D approach and to produce research results in the form of international public goods.
- The evaluation of the skills gap within the program should not be only focused on M&E skills, but also encompass cutting-edge human sciences, as well as interdisciplinary, managerial and communication skills.

### ***Decision:***

- *The CGIAR endorsed ExCo’s recommendations on SSA CP (below).*
- *Members recognize the progress that has been made by the CP during the inception phase.*

### ***ExCo 11 Conclusions and Recommendations to the CGIAR on SSA CP:***

- *ExCo recommends the CGIAR to request FARA to develop an action plan that addresses the concerns raised by ExCo members and the Science Council on the findings of the inception phase review. ExCo feels that the accountability and the ownership of the program must remain with FARA, and that the measures that have been requested as part of the action plan are conducive to strengthening FARA’s capacity to successfully implement SSA CP, and its future activities.*
- *Furthermore, as elements of the action plan, FARA is requested to:*
  - a) present critical milestones for the three year post inception phase;*
  - b) undertake an evaluation of its existing skills gap (with a special emphasis on methodologies and criteria to be used to evaluate the IAR4D concept),*

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<sup>1</sup> Excerpt from CGIAR AGM06 Business Meeting (December 6-7, 2006) Summary Record of Proceedings, January 26, 2007.

*that needs to be filled by the most appropriate providers with a view to strengthening the present capacity. As critical elements of this capacity strengthening exercise FARA is requested to focus on M&E as well as on capacity building of regional partners involved in the implementation of activities.*

- c) adjust the financial proposal for years 2007-09 to reflect the scaling back of the activities to three pilot sites from the proposed nine, and*
- d) develop a research program that has clear cross-site linkages.*
- *ExCo also recommends to membership that the Science Council play an advisory role in helping FARA identify the type of expertise that is required to increase the capacity of the institution, as highlighted above.*
- *ExCo recommends that the CGIAR reviews progress achieved by SSA CP until December 2007 at AGM07 against the critical milestones and indicators that were requested as part of the action plan. In order to avoid burdening FARA with excessive reporting to the CGIAR, ExCo further recommends that the action plan is accepted as the SSA CP MTP for the period 2007-2009.*
- *Finally, ExCo recommends to the CGIAR that the action plan be presented to ExCo for review and approval, following pertinent inputs from the Science Council and the CGIAR Secretariat, if required.*