Independent Science and Partnership Council

25 April 2017

End of Meeting report

15th Meeting of the Independent Science & Partnership Council

4 April 2017, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Rome, Italy
5 April 2017, Bioversity International, Maccarese, Italy

Item 1: Opening of the ISPC Meeting

i. Welcome and opening, Maggie Gill, Chair ISPC

Main points:

- Maggie Gill, Chair ISPC, opened the meeting and welcomed participants;
- Outlined the new pattern for ISPC meetings: one of the biannual meetings will be held in Rome and the other at one of the CGIAR Centres;
- Introduced FAO ADG for Agriculture and Consumer Protection Ren Wang and expressed her thanks to FAO for hosting the meeting and more generally for hosting the Secretariat at FAO Headquarters.

ii. Welcome, Ren Wang, ADG-AG FAO

Main points:

- FAO is currently focusing on achieving its strategic objectives. The Finance Committee has approved the new biennial plan that will be presented to FAO Council later this month;
- The scope of innovation cannot be tackled only by one stakeholder and thus FAO is interested in strengthening ties with organizations such as the CGIAR;
- FAO has gone through a re-organization. Starting from January this year FAO has nominated a new Deputy Director-General Climate and Natural Resource. A new department has been added on Climate, Biodiversity, Land and Water, headed by an Assistant Director-General. This department is a hub consolidating the units working on biodiversity and climate change;
- The CGIAR is an important partner for FAO. FAO will organize a symposium on agro-ecology in February 2018 and would very much like to work closely with the ISPC and CGIAR in organizing this event.

Item 2: Updates System entities

(Presentation)

i. ISPC developments and follow up since ISPC 14 meeting, Maggie Gill, Chair ISPC

Main points:

- Highlighted staffing changes in both the Council and Secretariat. Jennifer Thomson as a new Council Member and Nancy Johnson in the ISPC Secretariat;
- ISPC has been developing its own Theory of Change in the absence of a System approved TOC;
- Activities carried out under the five ISPC work streams:
    - Science Dialogue: SF16 – a follow up workshop to SF16 (held in Addis in April 2017), was held in Oxford in December 2016. There will potentially be 14 papers in the SF16 special issue, planned to be published in Agricultural Systems at the end of 2017. Furthermore, the SF16 evaluation report was published and exchange visits were organized for five early career scientists who were funded in the framework of the SF.
    - Quality of science/research: A working group with representatives for the system has been established, information was collated (sent by DDGs-Research) on current practice within Centers and a workshop was held with participants from within CGIAR and external experts;
    - Foresight/horizon scanning: Mapping of recent and ongoing activities on foresight within and outside the CGIAR has been carried out, and an Independent Foresight Assessment on "Global Agri-food Systems to 2050: Threats and opportunities" was initiated. A workshop was held in collaboration with University of Naples from 7-8 April 2017;
    - Agri-food innovation systems and partnership: The ISPC Secretariat has an ongoing collaboration with CSIRO to explore the nature of agri-food system innovation, the role of research within this system, and the way different types of innovation processes lead to impact. A joint workshop in December 2016 focused on identifying limitations and missed impact opportunities of current agri-food innovation systems; exploring the nature of frameworks and tools needed to advance innovation and impact;
    - Standing Panel on Impact Assessment: an external evaluation of the SIAC program was conducted and the report has been published. A concept note has been submitted for a phase 2 of SIAC. SPIA is organizing a conference in Nairobi (6-8 July) jointly with PIM, to present SIAC1. Most SIAC-supported studies, including several synthesis pieces, will be completed by the time of the conference;

- The ISPC will be leading a workshop to provide advice on thinking on resource allocation with the System Council in May;
- A self-evaluation of Council provided insight into how we function, an internal evaluation of the CRP review process. Currently preparing for the IEA evaluation of ISPC and the further strengthening of ISPC communication;
- Some other ISPC system level contributions: Initiating partner for the expert consultation on AR4SDGs, acting as System resource on performance indicators and governance issues for the SMB, and informal and formal inputs to Expert panel on CGIAR research program on grain legumes and dryland cereals.

ii. IEA update, Rachel Bedouin, IEA (Presentation)

Main points:

- Core mandate and scope of IEA: the IEA advises the System Council, provides accountability, contributes to learning and supports decision-making through conduct of independent, external evaluations;
- Evaluations have covered: Independent External Evaluations of CRPs, CGIAR System-wide evaluation, Cross CGIAR issues, themes, policies, CRP Commissioned Independent External Evaluations, Central scientific services and Genebanks, CGIAR institutions and units (ISPC, SMO, SPIA), Evaluation of IEA, Governance and Management reviews of Centers;
- IEA developed a Theory of Change based on the draft terms of reference that are currently under discussion, developed by its science working group;
- Reflecting on evaluations of CRP1, the CRPII evaluation plan builds on lessons learned – revision of evaluation guidance, refinement of evaluation scope and questions, use of common experts, and increased consistency on evaluation approaches;
- With a view to enhancing effectiveness and efficiency, IEA in cooperation with SO and Centers is developing a multi-year evaluation plan;
- The purpose of the ISPC evaluation, covering the period from 2011 to date, is to provide accountability to SC and CGIAR as a whole (summative) and to draw lessons and make recommendations for the future (formative). The evaluation team is composed of team leader Prof Mary O'Kane, Australian, senior advisor to the Government of New South Wales. The second team member is Dr. Eija Pehu, former Science Advisor at the World Bank. Draft terms of reference have been developed (February-March), an inception report (April-May) will refine the approach/methodology, an intermediary report is foreseen in September and the final report will be ready in November 2017.

iii. SMO update, Elwyn Grainger-Jones, CGIAR System Organization (Presentation)

Main points:

- The SO targets to support a good working atmosphere across the system, a performance management system, meeting expectations of funders with manageable transaction costs, an efficient and functional governance system, a funding system that provides the right incentives for research quality, innovation focus and impact in the CGIAR's areas of comparative advantage;
- Key changes in the SO office: Operating system: resources have been organized around tasks and there has been a reduction in the number of separate units. A funder engagement and communication unit has been created, and the volume and status of SMB/SC coordination role has been recognized;
- Key tasks for 2017: System financial management, SMB and committee support, SC and committee support, fundraising and donor engagement, communications and branding, programming support, supporting implementation of ongoing policies and guidelines and supporting IT platforms. In addition, special attention will be given to fixing the funding model process, CRP governance review, performance management framework, completing the CGIAR portfolio, completing essential TORs for system entities/functions, establishing a risk management framework (audit framework), and the completion of the governance architecture.

Main discussion:

- What is the difference between SMO and SO? There is no difference. System Office is the preferred name;
- The SO agreed on a portfolio last year and any flexibility depends on the funders. The November 2017 SC meeting will discuss the key question of indicative funding and relative spending priorities;
- Need to find a way to make sure that funders are comfortable in putting funds into W1 and 2 and how to avoid any major funding cuts;
- The SO will remain engaged in science, but at the level of formulating and supporting the science, not doing it;
- The SC approved the 2017 budget without ISPC ToRs. ToRs should be approved this year so that a multi-annual budget and workplan can be discussed and approved at the November 2017 SC meeting. The frustration at not having defined ToRs is understood, but the SO wants the IEA evaluation findings to contribute.

Item 3: Planning for Science Forum 18

(Presentation)

i. Assessing the land resource–food price nexus of the Sustainable Development Goal Title sub-item, Michael Obersteiner, IIASA (by Skype) (Presentation)

Main points:

- Presented some biophysical models used by IIASA. The Environmental Policy Integrated Model (EPIC) simulates crop productivity and associated GHG emissions. Global assessment of biophysical climate change impacts and mitigation strategies in crop production systems done by coupling biogeophysical model global data on crop production systems and the environment. The Global Forest Model (G4M) is a spatially explicit model simulating land use change and forest management decisions and estimating respective CO2 emissions;
- Integrated modeling cluster developed, built around the Global Biosphere Management Model (GLOBIOM) which integrates the agricultural, bioenergy, and forestry sectors and draws on comprehensive socioeconomic and geospatial data;
- Modeling approach to facilitate in-depth understanding of trade-offs that transcends silos by looking at the global net effect of targeted policies in service of specific SDGs. SDGs mapped to specific, concrete policy options in seven policy silos and GLOBIOM used to project outcomes (food prices, land use change, biodiversity loss and deforestation, fertilizer & water use) of policies across silos;
- Policies in service of individual SDGs create trade-offs between environmental outcomes and food security. Some policies meet specific goals but exacerbate trade-offs;
- Multiple goals need to be addresses by smart portfolios of policy instruments. Trade-offs are inevitable, but innovation might bring solutions.

ii. Discussant, Tom Tomich, ISPC

Main points:

- More than the shortcomings of policy siloes, we should be focusing on research siloes and associated shortcomings;

- Within the ISPC, it is essential to think about a portfolio of activities. There are trade-offs across CRPs and there is a tendency in the proposals to shrink scope and focus less on trade-offs.

Main discussion:

- There is a potential role for the big data platform. Foresight requires a combination of big data sets to understand and make sense of trends;
- The purpose of the Science Forum should be to demonstrate to the wider world (including donors) and within the CGIAR that there is plausible thinking going on about where long-term research needs to go. How can the Forum help us fine-tune the relevance of our research and translate it into impact with our partners?
- Also need to consider research management implications – what are the instruments / mechanisms to nudge policies?

Main ISPC follow-up:

- Feedback on topic and venue requested, including volunteers to co-host the meeting;
- Volunteers from the CRPs to serve on the Steering Committee. During the last two Science Fora, A4NH and CCAFS had major roles.

Item 4: Discussion on Quality of Research for Development (QoR4D) workshop outcomes and feedback from different constituencies

i. Panel discussion, Maggie Gill, ISPC; Holger Meinke, ISPC; Peter Gardiner, SMO; Peter Carberry, ICRISAT; Vincent Gitz, CIFOR

Main points:

- *Maggie Gill, ISPC*: Different interpretations of quality of science (QoS) in the System; following the ISPC Task Force recommendation, a working group was established and a workshop organized in early February to get buy-in and input from the System. QoS refers to credibility and robustness of data. The CG is expected to deliver and relevance has to be taken into account, including alignment with the SRF and legitimacy – therefore expanded to QoR4D. ISPC doesn't want a top-down approach, but something that is fit-for-purpose at different levels. Consultation document produced and sent to constituencies for feedback by 12 April – revised document will be presented to donors at the System Council meeting in May.
- *Holger Meinke, ISPC*: ISPC's role is to facilitate excellent research across the CGIAR. Need to cover the whole spectrum from basic/fundamental research to impact, in consultation with stakeholders; provide some sense of academic purpose to the scientists within the CGIAR; provide feedback/provocation to Centers/CRPs to ensure that a supportive enabling environment is provided; move away from naïve evaluation of performance to effectiveness of science.
- *Peter Gardiner, SO*: SO is including QoR in the annual reporting for the phase-II CRPs in 2018. Template currently being developed and will be discussed at the Science leaders meeting in June. Template focusses on three areas: input (assessing resources and management, track-record of staff), research process (qualitatively describing learning and adaptation) and output (emphasis on work plan and budget aligned with progress). Good indicators for research management and client satisfaction are currently lacking.
  (Presentation)

- *Peter Carberry, ICRISAT*: ICRISAT interested in a system that spans the range of QoR decision points, from reporting to their Board on 15 impact measures and the individual staff evaluations. Added complexity of two cadres of science staff: internationally recruited and nationally recruited. How to go down from the four elements of the frame of reference to indicator level? It is also important to capture and support internal critique, self-reflection and risk-taking, which are crucial for good research. Supportive of effort to institutionalize Institutional review Boards (IRBs) across the System. Science of delivery and learning from that is critical.
- *Vincent Gitz, FTA*: Move from QoS to QoR4D and the integrated version of the four elements mirrors the recognition that quality cannot be measured solely in academic terms – there is a need to incorporate transdisciplinary approaches to allow for a more comprehensive and operational assessment of the quality of the CGIAR's work. Recognition of trade-offs/tension between the four elements needed. The "effectiveness" element could overwhelm the three other elements. Need to get the right balance between different kinds of research. Next steps: we need to have a better understanding of QoR4D from a management perspective; use QoR to design the right enabling environment; what can be the set of incentives at different levels to encourage but also assess QoR? What concrete actions need to be taken? Who is best placed to do what?

Main discussion:

- Terminology is key. Need to avoid words that lead to perceptions of lesser quality;
- Good science leadership is fundamental for high QoR and needs to be much more deliberated upon: How do we reward scientists that step out from their normal paradigms of acting?
- Four elements are comprehensive and at different scales. How do we provide incentives to research teams and not just individuals? Scientists should not be appraised just on the number of publications; additional criteria needed such as how outputs lead to outcomes promised to donors;
- Principles and elements of the frame of reference are good but the process is missing. Reporting on an annual basis is too cumbersome a periodic evaluation every three years would be better. On an annual basis, need something managerial and report on outputs, for example some product lines (publications, tools and methods, capacity development, technical assistance for development agencies, etc.);
- PIM is trying to give guidance to Centers that do not have an IRB in place. Perhaps the SO should have a systemic capacity for this?
- Unease that recommendations of the ISPC Task Force not implemented yet – should be brought up at the next SC meeting – far more important than the pending evaluation of the ISPC;
- Important how grey literature is included and assessed. Peer review is essential for all publications, not just journal articles;
- Need to define the QoS criterion used in external evaluations. It makes sense to place science within the research process. But there is risk of dilution of core issues. QoS is not simple and is contentious;
- Metrics used for quality seem to be very different between the CGIAR and academic institutions – we should not push ourselves to the least common denominator, rather CG scientists should be compared to someone at the same level outside the CGIAR;
- From a donor point of view, overriding assurance needed that the CG is conducting high quality research. CG needs to be known for influencing things and being notable.

Main ISPC follow-up:

- Preliminary feedback on the consultation document to be received now from the constituency leaders. Over the next few months, detailed feedback expected on how the frame of reference will be implemented.

Item 5: SPIA: SIAC Phase-I end conference and proposal for a Phase II

i. Presentation, Doug Gollin, SPIA Chair (Presentation)

Main points:

- Strengthening Impact Assessment in the CGIAR (SIAC) program closes end of June, with portfolio of 40 projects led by 28 different institutions (including 11 of the CGIAR centers);
- End of SIAC conference will take place 6-8th July hosted by World Agroforestry Center in Nairobi and is jointly organized with the CRP on Policies, Institutions and Markets;
- Day 1 of the conference will have the theme of "Adoption of technologies", whereas Day 2 will focus on "Impacts on development outcomes". Two full-day workshops will take place on Day 3, one on social science in the CGIAR (run by PIM) and another on a set of studies estimating adoption of NRM practices at large-scale (run by SPIA);
- SPIA are working with a core group of partners (World Bank LSMS-ISA team; IFAD; FAO; BMGF; DFID; USAID; Excellence in Breeding and Big Data platforms) and linking to the CGIAR Country Coordination process, to develop a proposal for a second phase of SIAC to start in January 2018;
- The three key parts of the proposed program are: 1) a set of surveys in priority countries for the CGIAR, to allow us to track changes in key indicators from the SRF; 2) capacity-building activities and new partnerships with external institutions; 3) portfolio of impact evaluation studies focused on evidence gaps regarding strategically important causal links in the SRF

Main discussion:

- Without country-level demand and desire to be involved in the proposed surveys, SPIA is not going to be able to collect the data. There is an inherent virtue to working with the national programs, and the alternative is to do what CGIAR has done for too long, namely having lots of scientists collecting data in small samples in an uncoordinated fashion;
- SPIA's role in quality control / quality assurance relating to studies carried out by the individual centers is one that has been hard to define in Phase 1. A voluntary mechanism did note work well – the positive incentive for being seen to have done good work was not strong enough for studies to be submitted to such a rating system;
- There is a question about what SPIA does relative to other units, and how SPIA's insights feedback into a prioritization process (assuming that there is indeed a process to feed into);
- SPIA's views on methods, and a perspective on this will be presented in Nairobi, with a focus on methodological pluralism. Certain questions have to be addressed through RCTs. Other types of questions need alternative methods. A wide range are included in SIAC currently (RCTs; mixed methods studies; qualitative studies) but articulating the rules quality matching methodology to specific study context, is challenging.

Main ISPC follow-up:

- Summarize, publish and publicize all the outputs from SIAC Phase 1;
- Develop SIAC Phase 2 proposal for decision at the System Council meeting in the autumn.

Item 6: Enhancing the interface between research and development partners (Presentation)

i. Scene setting, FAO vision and outcome of the FAO, IFAD, World Bank, and ISPC/CGIAR expert consultation, Ben Davies, FAO

Main points:

- Informal initiative between Rome-based agencies over the last one year to discuss working together towards the SDG agenda (specifically for goals 1 and 2) in a better manner. Underlying this is the recognition that we need to understand the agricultural and rural context better;
- From FAO's perspective, the question is how we better garner FAO activities to achieve SDG1, and strengthen linkages between SDG1 and SDG2;
- Workshop was held in January 2017, over two days, to discuss the informal initiative. Principles identified for working together: i) Coordinating what is practical, not forced collaboration; ii) Informal setup, not bureaucratic; iii) Focus on the continuum between research and country level policy / impacts; and iv) bring down high-level knowledge generation work to country level;
- Four elements (steps) were identified for follow-up: i) Mapping exercise: drawing on expert opinion to identify gaps in knowledge and the current evidence base; ii) Country level coordination on data-research-policy continuum; iii) Annual expert gatherings: The expert workshop will continue on an annual basis, and look at emerging issues in research, methods, data etc.; iv) Joint research facility: Contingent on external funding, a dedicated fund to foster agricultural research linked to SDGs 1 and 2 will be set up.

ii. Scene setting, FAO vision and outcome of the FAO, IFAD, World Bank, and ISPC/CGIAR expert consultation, Ren Wang, FAO (Presentation)

Main points:

- Enabling, expanding and advancing innovation can play a catalytic role for achieving SDGs. However, many countries still struggle to understand the role of innovation as a driver for (rural) economic development, with the exceptions of China, India or Malaysia;
- FAO envisions innovations as a cross-sectoral, multi-disciplinary, and multi-actor process that goes beyond promoting specific technologies;
- In the context of the CGIAR, there are some challenging questions: i) Is the CGIAR research agenda truly demand driven?; ii) Is the CGIAR investment in research benefiting the national Agricultural Innovation Systems (AIS)?; iii) How are the integration sites articulated and leveraged as a new business model?; iv) How can we unlock existing national AIS to ensure new research outputs reaching small holder farmers?; v) Can we promote national innovation strategies side-by-side with our research investment in the CGIAR?; vi) How can we reconcile the Research and Development Agendas to ensure optimum impact?
- SOFA 2014 highlighted the role of innovation – be it by family farmers, governments in policy making or rural advisory services and research and extension institutions;
- COAG 25 highlighted the role of innovations in achieving SDGs. Countries encouraged FAO to play a greater role in strengthening their national agricultural innovation systems as well as help them benchmark where they are.

Main discussion:

- Need to reflect on what can be done to facilitate policy design, and the contribution science can make to more effective policies. The final objective is innovation in policy design. Need to recognize that policies are made in silos (different ministerial departments) and while inter-sectoral mechanisms exist, it is challenging to make them work;
- On the question of the challenges in 'site integration' or country coordination (CGIAR terminology) type of efforts, recognize that country level collaboration is challenging and involves many actors. But, it is worth the effort;
- ISPC considered partnership funding allocation as a part of CRP review criteria as well as a part of strategic partnerships.

Main ISPC follow-up:

- FAO and ISPC to work on in-depth case studies on partnership and innovation modalities;
- ISPC to follow-up with the System Office on country collaboration, as a part of the FAO, World Bank, IFAD and ISPC / CGIAR effort.

ii. Focus on partnerships for impact and some practical examples/lessons and open discussion:
Nighisty Ghezae, ISPC; Holger Kirscht, GIZ; and Maya Rajasekharan, CIAT
(Presentations: Ghezae, Kirscht & Rajasekharan).

Main discussion:

- The GIZ collaborations with ICRAF and IRRI (Swarna Sub-1) is based on demand from national programs or the CGIAR offering a product? In that context, the One World Initiative seemed an interesting approach to moving technology off the shelf to farmer fields. This raises a question of whether one could offer funding to national programs, and let them identify CGIAR technologies for dissemination. Such a marketplace arrangement could also set long-term priorities for the CGIAR;
- Is it time for CIAT to step back from PABRA? Recognition that the role of CIAT in PABRA has evolved over a period of time, and that it plays a catalytic role in bringing resources to the PABRA network;
- The idea that partners should be recipient of funding but not co-invest was challenged (CRP investment to non-CGIAR partners). As an example, when CIAT stopped investing in rice, partners recognized the importance of the work and their lack of capacity, brought funding to the table. Need to look at sustainable business models. Additionally, the context from early CGIAR days (resource-constrained NARS) has changed and NARS can get funding through their own channels these days;
- Examples were given of other multi-funder initiatives and the critical role of private sector and alignment at the national level. For instance, ICARDA's optimization of water resources (raised bed intervention) was initially funded by IFAD and the Arab Fund, and followed by USAID, Kuwaiti Fund, BMGF and others. Despite such effort, the intervention did not scale beyond a province until the national wheat campaign stepped in.

Main ISPC follow-up:

- ISPC needs more feedback on country pilots (item 6.i);
- Partnerships in the CGIAR have come a long way – there are signs of a partnership strategy in the Phase II CRPs, in comparison to the extension phase;
- What makes for effective partnerships remains an open question. There is also a need to look at newer opportunities for funding such partnerships;

- Many examples of successful partnerships were discussed, including aspects that do not work. It is clear that finding the right space to discuss failures is helpful. The Informal initiative between Rome-based agencies over the last one year to discuss working together towards the SDG agenda, underlies the recognition that we need to understand the agricultural and rural context better.

Item 8: Welcome

i. Welcome, Maggie Gill, Chair ISPC

ii. Welcome by Bioversity International, Ann Tutwiler, Director General Bioversity (Presentation)

Item 9: Presentation from Bioversity

Main points:

- Brief presentation of the institute's strategy and priorities for the coming years followed by a tour of the campus, wherein ISPC members stopped at six distinct "stations" to talk with researchers in detail about the specifics of particular projects;
- Smart use of tree diversity in forest restoration for multiple benefits. Using seasonally dry tropical forest in Columbia as a model, a scalable map-based tool intends to assist restoration practitioners with the identification of appropriate tree species and sources of forest reproductive material;
- Fruit tree genetic diversity in Central Asia: increasing value, managing threats. Conducting social and biophysical research to understand and improve management practices of fruit and nut tree species to increase the long-term value to local women and men and alleviate the impacts of multiple threats from human activities;
- Searching for drought tolerant bananas: phenotyping biodiversity. Exploring the genetic diversity of bananas selecting a subset of 32 edible varieties to objectively quantify stress and tolerance;
- Seeds for needs: crop diversity for resilience. Deploying existing diversity to farmers from wherever it is found, whether in genebanks, plant breeding programmes or in their own fields;
- Farm to school networks embrace biodiversity for food and nutrition. Finding ways to better link school feeding, local farmers and biodiversity for food and nutrition;
- Banishing banana wilt: can it get any easier? Testing and refining a new management practice to control the disease – the Single Diseased Stem Removal.

Item 10: Identifying linkages between the Genebank platform and ISPC SPIA

i. Introduction, Rodomiro Ortiz, ISPC (Presentation)

ii. Genebank Platform, Isabel López Noriega (Presentation)

Main points:

- The idea for the session came from a side meeting at a meeting on the treaty on plant genetic resources for food and agriculture;
- Genebank platform has 3 components: conservation, use and policy;
- Genebank seeks to engage other constituencies in the CGIAR through a policy network;
- CGIAR reports every two years and includes some information on use of genebank materials but could do more, especially regarding non-monetary benefits of genebanks (e.g. capacity development, technology transfer);
- Proposes that Genebank Platform and ISPC/SPIA collaborate on: reporting, jointly attend meetings, or organize special sessions; jointly identify uses for future research.

iii. DNA fingerprinting work of SPIA, James Stevenson, ISPC Secretariat (Presentation)

Main points:

- It is increasingly difficult to identify specific varieties in farmers' fields and this is crucial challenging for tracking uptake of CGIAR varieties;
- Conventional approaches such as expert opinion and farmer survey are frequently incorrect;
- DNA fingerprinting is the gold standard and has decreased dramatically in cost in recent year, making it feasible to think about using it in large scale surveys;
- Accurate identification via DNA fingerprinting depends on having a complete, well classified reference library of materials, which depends on genebanks;
- In the studies, there is a large category of 'other', meaning not classified in reference library. Might be of interest to the genebank for further study.

Main discussion:

- The representative from the treaty secretariat urged the group to think beyond biannual reporting;
- More thought is needed to clarify complementarities between the genebanks and SPIA;
- More clarity is needed on identifying the challenges being raised at treaty level;
- New technologies like gene editing raise fundamental challenges, including to bypass the treaty;
- In terms of the contribution of genebanks to impact, the segment of the pathway between genebanks and breeding may be more important that between breeding and farmers' fields;
- Conservation of generic resources should be done for its own sake, not just because economic value in short term;
- Some suggestion were mainly about possible ex post and ex ante studies;
- Getting a system in place for monitoring uptake of varieties at scale is very important, both to document use and to improve efficiency, for example when varieties are being used in inappropriate places (e.g. sub1 rice in areas that don't flood);
- Another convening between breeders and SPIA partners working on DNA fingerprinting is planned, organized by CIMMYT.

Item 11: Looking forward: future opportunities for the CGIAR comparative advantage

i. Panel discussion chaired by Maggie Gill, ISPC. Five panelists: Vern Long, USAID; Karen Brooks, PIM/IFPRI; Prabhu Pingali and Patrick Webb, ISPC, and Yemi Akinbamijo, FARA (via skype). (Presentation)

Main points:

- The Chair opened the session by reminding participants of the principal criteria for an 'Ideal' CRP portfolio, which should include: forward looking vision, priority setting at portfolio level, adaptability to critical needs, baseline funding security, building on System comparative advantage, integrated research outputs (in terms of SLOs), and strong monitoring and evaluation;
- Comparative advantage is related to (i) the skill set of the CRP team (CGIAR plus partners), and (ii) the skills of other providers. Both aspects are dynamic;
- External reviewers have identified several areas where they considered CGIAR to be world leader, but these areas remain patchy. Donors are asking for identification of alternative suppliers, and that FP leaders need to provide further justification to their comparative advantage;
- In the panel discussion, Vern Long noted a substantial change in the research landscape between NARS and programs in Africa, which may lead to a question on the value proposition of CGIAR. On a policy level, she noted the CGIAR's potential for providing a very specific global platform, where the system can deploy IPGs, particularly for germplasm and seeds;
- Karen Brooks focused her intervention on describing revealed comparative advantage and the demand side, as illustrated by the evolution of funding and financial support by donors. She noted that CGIAR has an international reputation for its ability to develop tools, and research methods and outputs, but it needs quality metrics to assess the value of its work and nature of its partnerships;
- Yemi Akinbamijo described briefly FARA's work in facilitating spillover of R&D and IPGs across African regions. He highlighted the importance of analyzing the evolution of the demand side from CGIAR partners in the continent. He reported that an overarching framework has been developed for agriculture in Africa; and the CGIAR is welcome to contribute in further strengthening the science agenda;
- Patrick Webb focused his intervention on three issues: scale, costs and clients. He commented that the SRF is very broad and if the goal of the SRF is to characterize the nature of the problem, is the CGIAR always part of the solution. He also noted a lack of understanding of where comparative advantage should be pitched;
- Prabhu Pingali started with a historical reminder about the initial inception of the CGIAR in 1958. If this would happen today the key issues would be rapid urbanization, climate change, diet change, and obesity levels, role of private sector. The conversation would also probably include technology advances, the NARS growing stronger. So what kind of a system would the CGIAR be if we started today? Key gaps to fill would include (i) pre-breeding knowledge and applications into developing country agriculture; (ii) genetic resource management and conservation; (iii) orphan where crops productivity growth is still lagging; (iv) provision of global information and global public goods (policy advice, big data, agronomy, policy models.

Main discussion:

- Basing CGIAR priorities on donor's funding preference might be a wrong way to approach the question. Although there is a need to consider comparative advantage in the context of the environment in which CGIAR operates;
- Would perceptions of quality of research affect the views of comparative advantage? The case discussed was the International Wheat Yield Partnership. It is funded by non-traditional donors to the system, and tackling questions that the private sector will not necessarily handle for breaking wheat yield barrier in an environment subject to climate change;
- What relative weight should CGIAR give to demand coming from various constituencies. Although the NARS are evolving and developing, there are still critical knowledge gaps, where CGIAR could contribute, to complement the work by NARS and sub-regional organizations such as FARA;
- Development programs think about exit strategies, and usually plan ahead. So should research programmes. Some research topics will arguably last for a long time (e.g. genetic resources and genebanks etc.). Planetary challenges are in the order of the day, and not just at country level;
- Consumers are the real source of demand. Diets are changing rapidly, poverty is falling. Number one contributor to global burden of disease is diet. The nature of that demand is changing rapidly, no longer business as usual. But is our portfolio fit for that purpose?

Main ISPC follow-up:

- Need to look at where research can have influence on the demand side, and where the greatest potential for moving the system forward in addressing global challenges at the highest levels and providing IPGs and science leadership;
- Need for a visionary but realistic approach to the constraints of CGIAR infrastructure and system architecture. ISPC can provide a space for exploring some of these tensions and discussions.

Item 12: Conclusions and next steps

i. Overall conclusions, Maggie Gill, ISPC Chair:

- Clear need to continue discussions on comparative advantage across the System;
- The potential topics for Science Forum 2018 have been put forward: feedback can be given in the end-of-the-meeting feedback form, including suggestions for hosting entities;
- On Quality of Research for Development (Q4RD), the ISPC will seek immediate feedback from DDG-Rs, CRP leaders, IEA, and Center Board Members;
- Meeting participants invited to inform the ISPC of opportunities to enhance the interface between research and development partners that were not discussed;
- SPIA will follow up on the discussions (Item 10) with the Genebanks Platform.

Annex 1

Independent Science and Partnership Council

CGIAR

15th Meeting of the Independent Science & Partnership Council

4-5 April 2017 - Rome, Italy

4th April: Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations – Rome, Italy

Meeting room: A-235, Iraq Room

5th April: Bioversity International - Maccarese (Rome Fiumicino), Italy

Meeting room: Sakura room

Annotated Agenda

Tuesday 4th April

09:00 – 09:15 Item 1. Opening of the ISPC Meeting

- Welcome and opening by ISPC Chair Maggie Gill
- Welcome by FAO AG Assistant Director-General Ren Wang

09:15 – 10:15 Item 2. Updates System entities

- ISPC developments and follow up since ISPC 14 meeting *(Maggie Gill, ISPC)*
- IEA update *(Rachel Bedouin, IEA)*
- SMO update *(Elwyn Grainger-Jones, CGIAR System Organization)*

10:15 – 11:00 Item 3. Planning for Science Forum 18 *(Chair: Maggie Gill, ISPC)*

- Presentation: "Assessing the land resource–food price nexus of the Sustainable Development Goal" *(Michael Obersteiner, IIASA)* - via skype
- Discussant (*Tom Tomich, ISPC)*

Background and purpose: The ISPC organizes the Science Forum every 2 years to provide a vehicle for dialogue on major science issues affecting the CGIAR Systems. SF18 will draw upon the results of the last three Science Fora and explore the potential interactions (synergies and trade-offs) between reducing poverty and improving nutrition and natural resource management. SF18 is intended to build a basis for enhancing policy relevance using foresight techniques to help identify where there are good opportunities to increase synergies and reduce trade-offs, and also to build a dialogue with policy-makers into the analytical process. The purpose of this session is to present the concept for SF18 and solicit advice from the audience on the topic, concept and planning.

Expected outcome and follow up: Inputs from the meeting participants on the concept and organization of the SF18, including the establishment of a steering committee. The input will be used by the ISPC secretariat in organizing the SF18.

11:00 – 11:30 *Coffee break*

11:30 – 12:45 **Item 4. Discussion on Quality of Research for Development workshop outcomes and feedback from different constituencies** *(Chair: Maggie Gill, ISPC)*

- Presentation and interventions from workshop participants *(Holger Meinke, ISPC; Peter Gardiner, CGIAR System Organization; Iain Wright, ILRI; Vincent Gitz, CIFOR)*

Background and purpose: The ISPC is facilitating System-wide agreement on the nature and assessment of QoR for development (QoR4D), and a working group on QoR4D was established in 2016 under ISPC chairmanship (the ISPC's work plan was presented at ISPC14). As a first step towards getting buy-in and agreement from the System entities, the ISPC convened a workshop which was held at FAO HQ, Rome, Italy on 6 - 7 February 2017. The purpose of this session is to present the results of the workshop and to get updated information from workshop participants on the feedback they are getting on the workshop results from their constituencies.

Expected outcome and follow up: Updated feedback from the key constituencies of the QoR4D WG will be used by the ISPC/QoR4D leads in generating the next iteration of outputs from the QoR4D WG.

12:45 – 13:45 *Lunch (Indonesia room, 8th floor)*

13:45 – 14:45 **Item 5. SPIA: SIAC Phase-I end conference and proposal for a Phase II** *(Chair: Maggie Gill, ISPC)*

- Presentation *(Doug Gollin, ISPC/SPIA)* and discussion

Background and purpose: The Strengthening Impact Assessment in the CGIAR (SIAC) program managed by SPIA is coming to an end in 2017. At the same time, SPIA is developing a proposal for the next phase of SIAC. The purpose of this session is primarily information sharing: to present the plans for an end of SIAC Phase-I conference in July 2017 (Nairobi) as well as the main features of the planned Phase II.

Expected outcome and follow up: The main expected outcome is informing the meeting participants of SIAC developments and getting feedback on the plans for Phase II. The ISPC/SPIA lead will follow up using the feedback in the proposal development.

14:45 – 15:55 **Item 6. Enhancing the interface between research and development partners** *(Chair: Maggie Gill, ISPC)*

Part 1: Scene setting, FAO Vision and Outcome of the FAO, IFAD, World Bank, and ISPC/CGIAR Expert consultation

- Presentations *(Ren Wang, FAO; Ben Davis, FAO)* followed by a question and answer session, facilitated by the Chair

Part 2: Focus on partnerships for impact and some practical examples/lessons and open discussion

- Presentations *(Nighisty Ghezae, ISPC; Holger Kirscht, GIZ)*

15:55 – 16:15 *Coffee break*

16:15 – 17:15 ***Part 2: continued***

- Pan African Bean Research Alliance (PABRA) Presentation *(Maya Rajasekharan, CIAT)*
- Open question and answer session, facilitated by the Chair
- Insight bites – CRPs/Centers

Part 3: Towards agreement / Way forward on countries and activities in the implementation of the FAO, IFAD, World Bank, and ISPC/CGIAR initiative presented earlier by Ben Davis

- Next steps and agreement for the FAO, IFAD, World Bank, and ISPC/CGIAR initiative - Agencies' interventions, facilitated by the Chair
- Summary and next steps *(Maggie Gill, ISPC)*

Background and purpose: In January 2017 the ISPC/CGIAR, FAO, IFAD and World Bank in partnership with the EC, organized an expert consultation *Focusing Agricultural and Rural Development Research and Investment on Achieving SDGs 1 and 2*. The participants developed a roadmap for action including an exercise to map current and planned agriculture research activities related to reducing poverty and food insecurity, and piloting a country level partnership between the agencies to enhance effectiveness of research delivery and impacts. The results of the consultation and its implications for improving partnerships for delivery along the research for development continuum are of great relevance to the CGIAR portfolio where weaknesses in delivery capacity was a key problem in several CRP proposals, resulting in reduced funding levels. Effective partnership to enhance innovation is also the theme of a major new FAO work program, as well as one of the ISPC work streams. The purpose of this session is to update the meeting participants of these different efforts and provide an opportunity to identify additional linkages between them.

Expected outcome and follow up: Enhanced opportunities for partnership between the country level research and development activities of the FAO and CGIAR, as well as the potential role of building such partnerships for funding allocations.

17:15 – 17:30 **Item 7. Summing up of day one**

17:30 – 18:30 *Reception at FAO (Caracalla room, 8th floor)*
19.30 Dinner for participants hosted by ISPC

Wednesday 5th April

09:00 – 09:15 **Item 8. Welcome**

- Welcome by Bioversity International Director General Ann Tutwiler
- Welcome by ISPC Chair Maggie Gill

09:15 – 11:15 **Item 9. Presentation from Bioversity**

11:15 – 11:30 *Coffee break*

11:30 – 13:00 **Item 10. Identifying linkages between the Genebank Platform and ISPC SPIA** *(Chair: Rodomiro Ortiz, ISPC)*

Including an analysis of germplasm use and impact in the CGIAR Center reports to the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources in 2017

- Presentations (*Isabel Lopez Noriega, Genebank Platform; James Stevenson, ISPC)* and discussion

Background and purpose: Collaboration between the ISPC and the Genebank Platform can add a new and valuable dimension to understanding, documenting and reporting on the use and the impacts of CG germplasm. This can, in turn, make a case for a multilateral system of access and benefit-sharing that continues to facilitate exchange and use of plant genetic resources. The purpose of this session is to explore possible linkages between the ISPC SPIA program and the Genebank Platform.

Expected outcome and follow up: The session is expected to result in some concrete proposals for linking information and results from SPIA to the planned reporting activities of the Genebank Platform.

13:00 – 14:00 *Lunch break (staff room, 1st floor)*

14:00 – 16:30 **Item 11. Looking forward: future opportunities for the CGIAR comparative advantage** *(Chair: Maggie Gill, ISPC)*

- Panel discussion *(Vern Long, USAID; Karen Brooks, PIM/IFPRI; Prabhu Pingali, ISPC; Patrick Webb, ISPC; Yemi Akinbamijo, FARA – via skype)*

with coffee break

Background and purpose: One of the most important questions facing the new CGIAR System is allocating resources to build up, and capitalize upon the Systems' comparative advantage – in a world where rapid change is affecting it. The purpose of this session is to explore differing viewpoints of how future trends are likely to affect CGIAR comparative advantage, and where there are new opportunities for the CGIAR research agenda. The session will consist of a panel discussion with a range of viewpoints being presented: CGIAR System council, ISPC, external including private sector.

Expected outcome and follow up: The outcome of this panel discussion will be used to inform subsequent discussion on prioritization and resource allocation.

16:30 – 17:00 **Item 12. Conclusions and next steps**

Closing

Independent Science and Partnership Council

ISPC 15 Meeting

organized by the CGIAR Independent Science and Partnership Council
at **FAO and Bioversity Headquarters,** Rome, Italy
4-5 April 2017

Annex 2

PARTICIPANT LIST

1	Yemi Akinbamijo	FARA *(virtually)*
2	Rachel Bedouin	IEA
3	Bas Bouman	IRRI
4	Karen Brooks	IFPRI/PIM
5	Teopardo Calles	FAO/AGP
6	Peter Carberry	ICRISAT
7	Gero Carletto	World Bank
8	Richard China	Bioversity
9	Federica Coccia	IEA
10	Rodney D. Cooke	CIP
11	Ben Davis	FAO/SP3
12	Nicole Demers	Bioversity
13	Jeroen Dijkman	ISPC Secretariat
14	Hans Dreyer	FAO/AGPM
15	Samy Gaiji	FAO/AGD
16	Peter Gardiner	CGIAR System Organization
17	Nighisty Ghezae	ISPC
18	Maggie Gill	ISPC
19	Vincent Gitz	CIFOR
20	Doug Gollin	ISPC/SPIA
21	Elisabetta Gotor	Bioversity
22	Elwyn Grainger-Jones	CGIAR System Organization
23	Michael Halewood	Bioversity *(virtually)*
24	Danny Hunter	Bioversity
25	Sirkka Immonen	IEA
26	Nancy Johnson	ISPC Secretariat
27	Talip Kilic	World Bank
28	Holger Kirscht	GIZ
29	Victor Kommerell	CIMMYT
30	Lakshmi Krishnan	ISPC Secretariat
31	Hilde Kruse	FAO/AGF

32	Catherine Le Clercq	FAO/ESN
33	Preetmoninder Lidder	ISPC Secretariat
34	Leslie Lipper	ISPC Secretariat
35	Jennifer "*Vern*" Long	USAID
36	Judy Loo	Bioversity
37	Daniele Manzella	International Treaty Secretariat
38	Isabel López Noriega	Genebank Platform/Bioversity
39	Charlotte Lusty	Genebank Platform/Bioversity
40	Dan McGonigle	Bioversity
41	Holger Meinke	ISPC
42	Michael Obersteiner	IIASA *(virtually)*
43	Óscar Ortiz	CIP
44	Rodomiro Ortiz	ISPC
45	Prabhu Pingali	ISPC
46	Thomas Price	GFAR/IFAD
47	Maya Rajasekharan	PABRA/CIAT
48	Anne Rietveld	Bioversity
49	Shri Chhabilendra Roul	ICAR
50	Nicolas Roux	Bioversity
51	Abdoulaye Saley-Moussa	FAO/AGD
52	Carlos Seré	Bioversity
53	Rachid Serraj	ISPC Secretariat
54	Kamel Shideed	ICARDA
55	Gwendolyn Stansbury	ISPC Secretariat
56	James Stevenson	ISPC Secretariat
57	Evert Thomas	Bioversity
60	Jennifer Thomson	ISPC
61	Tom Tomich	ISPC
62	Ann Tutwiler	Bioversity
63	Ira Vater	ISPC Secretariat
64	Jonathan Wadsworth	World Bank
65	Ren Wang	FAO/AG
66	Patrick Webb	ISPC
67	Stephan Weise	Bioversity
68	Timothy Williams	IWMI