



Credit: Oliver Gilestro for Center for International Forestry Research

Foresight As a Foundation to Understanding Trade-offs



Independent
Science for
Development
Council

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Fact Sheet 1

RESPONSIBLE RESEARCH

ISDC leads various rigorous, science-based activities guided by the principle of independence to support the One CGIAR reform. The 2020 approved workplan focuses on System Council's request, through its Strategic Impact, Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (SIMEC), for **thought-leadership to the System on trade-offs**. Responsible science takes time. The research and analysis underpinning ISDC's advice on trade-offs will fill key gaps in the agri-food literature. This is necessary for CGIAR to make evidence-based decisions. The outcomes will be shared during the 10th meeting of System Council in early June, as well as through the Research Transition Advisory Group (TAG 2) and with science leaders.

A FOCUS ON FORESIGHT

The grounding to build trade-off advice to the System is the extensive body of knowledge related to foresight that has yet to be fully used by decision-makers. The foresight synthesis uses the lens of the CGIAR five impact areas of poverty, gender, nutrition, environment, and climate change. The research aggregates and analyzes previous foresight studies for agri-food systems. The world faces substantial transformations such as demographic waves, technological advances, disease and health challenges, climate change, and economic

and political shifts, which all affect what is grown by whom, how food reaches consumers, and consumption patterns. These trends will provide an evidence base for the One CGIAR reform ensuring that the new CG will stay relevant for the 21st century. ISDC commissioned global experts to conduct a rapid synthesis from mid-February through April 2020.

THE VALUE OF UNDERSTANDING TRADE-OFFS

Making informed and evidence-based portfolio decisions to deliver One CGIAR's mission, *Ending hunger by 2030—through science to transform food, land and water systems in a climate crisis*, requires consideration of potential trade-offs.

ISDC engaged global experts to develop a trade-off report that builds on the foresight synthesis as a foundation to answer what would be the possible impacts of different CGIAR future investments across the five impact areas, along with plausible alternative development pathways. The report will provide previous published models and case studies to describe the advantages and disadvantages of each from the perspective of CGIAR stakeholders. The trade-off report will be written through an accelerated project from mid-April to late May.

ISDC MEETING CONSENSUS

A key passage in the development of trade-off advising for System Council occurred the week of 20th April, where ISDC and selected guests interacted in an online meeting. The agenda was designed to share knowledge, present foresight synthesis findings, and give adequate time for open discussion and group work on how the foresight outcomes will guide the trade-off report. Invited guests included CGIAR leaders, TAG 2 co-leads, and the co-conveners of the CGIAR Foresight Community of Practice to ensure diversity in discussions and cohesion across CGIAR.

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