## Evaluation of CGIAR Program on Water, Land and Ecosystems (WLE): Management Response

## 18 April 2016

This Management response referred to here as 'the WLE Program' reflects a consolidated perspective of WLE Management (Program Director, Management Team and Operations Unit), WLE Steering Committee Chair, and the Director General and Board Chair of the Lead Center, IWMI.

## Introduction

The WLE Program would like to thank the Independent Evaluation Arrangement (IEA) and its Evaluation Team for the comprehensive and collaborative manner in which it conducted this independent evaluation. We have found the report supportive and informative, with valuable feedback and recommendations for the program in the development of its full proposal for a second phase. The Report is clear, well written, and overall balanced in its assessment of the program's progress during its first four years. It covers the breadth of the program and reflects on the various dimensions of performance and results in line with the Terms of Reference and the inception report. We provide below an overall response to the Evaluation Report

## Overview

We are very pleased by the Evaluation Team's overall conclusions that the WLE Program is making good progress, is on track to producing innovative results by the end of 2016, and that it is generating outputs of high standard, some of which are deemed to be of the "highest international standard" (Evaluation Report, p. ix, 79).

The Evaluation Team also concluded that the WLE Program is achieving outcomes at the regional and global levels that contribute effectively to the sustainable management of land, water and ecosystems (p. xi, 54). The WLE Program has, since the outset, had the objective of contributing scientific evidence and solutions for a transition to sustainable intensification of agricultural systems for poverty alleviation and livelihood improvements. This has been a deliberate strategy of contributing both to farming communities and to the development of the CGIAR system at large. The adoption of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Climate Agreement with transition to below 1.5-2C global warming, further strengthen the recommendation by the Evaluation Team that the CGIAR retains a program with WLE's focus on the interactions between ecosystems and agricultural production (Recommendation 12). This suggests the CGIAR needs further investments in the sustainability and resilience of agricultural development.

We appreciate the Evaluation Team's acknowledgement of the challenging context within which the program has been implemented while also highlighting the strong operational management of WLE: commending the high caliber of many of the personnel involved in the program Flagships and noting that the regions are managed by staff who are experienced, dedicated and respected in their areas of competence and responsibility (p. ix, 79).

We see these overall statements of support as a strategic opportunity to build on WLE's unique scope and defining characteristics of multi-disciplinary, multi-scale and multi-sectoral research across water, land and ecosystems. In this light, as WLE finalizes the implementation of phase 1 and prepares for a second phase program, the Evaluation Team has provided a twelve recommendations that will support this transition of which we fully concur with eleven and accept the other one partially.

Our detailed responses to these twelve recommendations and the related follow up actions can be found in the matrix below. However, we would like to highlight here two key points of clarification relate to the WLE budget and WLE's conceptual framework. First, in relation to IWMI's share of the program budget, throughout the Evaluation Report, the allocation of funds to IWMI is represented as 51% of the budget. As pointed out earlier, this figure is not representative of the IWMI research budget and incorporates all program level expenditures. Rather than 51%, IWMI's research budget is represented as 32% of all funding of the program. Footnote 13 (p. 11) of the final report provides this detail, but without this explanation in the main text, readers may misinterpret the budget allocation to IWMI.

Second, while we agree with the Evaluation Team that the Ecosystem Services and Resilience Framework (ESRF) framework can be abstract and has been difficult to fully integrate into the WLE program, the Evaluation Report does not reference cases where the ESRF has been supported, where its use has transformed dialogues with partners, nor where it has contributed to the literature and global initiatives (e.g., IPBES, TEEBAgFood, Capacity building activities with NatCap ecosystem service assessment models, World Bank/GEF Volta Strategic Action Programme). We provide more details on the further development of the ESRF in the matrix below.

| Evaluation Recommendation  | Management   | Management Follow-up  |   |  |   |  |
|--|--|---|---|--|---|--|
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| Recommendation 1. The<br>conceptual underpinning of<br>WLE. WLE should clarify and<br>further develop the conceptual<br>underpinning of the program,<br>including but not limited to the<br>ESRF. The ESRF should be seen<br>as a 'living' document to be<br>examined and continuously<br>developed by the program.  | Accepted.<br>The Ecosystem Services<br>and Resilience<br>framework (ESRF)<br>developed during phase<br>1 is an important<br>element of WLE's<br>overall approach, as it<br>provides the basis for a<br>critically important  | <ul> <li>1.1. The WLE phase 2<br/>proposal has articulated<br/>a coherent CRP<br/>conceptual framework,<br/>which will be developed<br/>further with key<br/>partners as we move<br/>toward implementation.</li> <li>1.2. For phase 2, we will</li> </ul>   | <ul><li>1.1. WLE phase 2</li><li>Core Writing</li><li>Team.</li><li>1.2 Leader of ESA</li></ul> | <ul><li>1.1. The phase 2<br/>proposal was<br/>submitted in<br/>April 2016.</li><li>1.2. ESRF</li></ul> | No.   |  |
| <ul> <li>Specific actions should include<br/>the following:</li> <li>Define testable hypotheses<br/>for the overall approach and<br/>develop a structured program<br/>of research and knowledge<br/>aggregation activities to<br/>examine these hypotheses.</li> <li>Broaden the scope of the<br/>ESRF to include a more<br/>complete coverage of<br/>institutional, social, economic<br/>and livelihoods issues and the<br/>analysis of transformative<br/>change.</li> </ul> | sustainability structure.<br>Our recently submitted<br>phase 2 proposal<br>responds fully to this<br>recommendation. As<br>stated there, we will<br>adapt the ESRF scope,<br>integrating and drawing<br>from elements of other<br>available frameworks,<br>and ensure its<br>relevance to a broader<br>sustainability focus and<br>is flexible enough to | adopt a flexible,<br>demand-driven strategy<br>to redefine the ESRF as<br>a sustainability lens to<br>assess proposed agro-<br>ecosystem<br>interventions. It will<br>support the recently<br>adopted SDGs and be<br>tested in collaboration<br>with AFS-CRPs to ensure<br>it will be a practical and<br>comprehensive tool<br>that can be used in<br>multiple contexts. WLE<br>will collaborate very | Flagship will lead<br>the work on the<br>ESRF framework.  | development<br>will be<br>implemented in<br>2017-2018.   |   |  |

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| <ul> <li>Establish a closer relationship<br/>with the PIM CRP which has the<br/>mandate and expertise to<br/>address a number of the<br/>concerns over the scope and<br/>focus of the WLE approach,<br/>including in relation to<br/>institutional and policy analysis.</li> <li>Recognize and integrate a<br/>wide range of research<br/>traditions and methods and<br/>avoid prescriptive use of the<br/>ESRF in all activities and at all<br/>institutional levels.</li> <li>Develop the framework as a<br/>flexible set of concepts and<br/>principles that can be adapted<br/>to the specific context and key<br/>issues of different focal regions<br/>and flagships/clusters.</li> </ul> | adapt to multiple<br>contexts.  | closely with PIM in this<br>work, as is stated in the<br>phase 2 proposal.<br>1.3. Further refinement<br>of the overall CRP<br>conceptual framework<br>will be done as part of<br>detailed work plans for<br>2017 and beyond. | 1.3. The new<br>Director of WLE,<br>who will mobilize<br>in the 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter<br>of 2016, will lead<br>the refinement of<br>WLE's broad<br>conceptual<br>foundation. | 1.3. Further<br>clarification of<br>WLE conceptual<br>underpinning<br>late 2016 to mid-<br>2017.   |  |
| Recommendation 2. WLE's<br>Theory of Change. WLE's<br>theory of change needs to be<br>strengthened. It should relate<br>directly to the analysis of<br>change and clearly set out a<br>usable and adaptable approach<br>to examine change processes at<br>all levels. This should be done in  | Accepted.<br>Articulating a credible<br>TOC for the NRM<br>focused CRPs is a<br>complex challenge<br>Unlike the case for<br>commodity research,<br>there is no clear, single<br>pathway for NRM and | 2.1. The TOC was<br>thoroughly revised in<br>the WLE phase 2 pre-<br>proposal resubmission<br>to consider the wider<br>social and institutional<br>aspects of the specific<br>changes processes the<br>program aims to        | 2.1. WLE Phase 2<br>Core Writing<br>Team.  | 2.1. Completed<br>on 2 April 2016;<br>any further work<br>needed will be<br>done later in<br>2016. | Funds will be sought to<br>support the decision<br>analysis work on WLE<br>impact pathways; and<br>for additional analysis<br>on barriers and drivers<br>of change in agricultural<br>systems. |

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| parallel with the actions<br>described in Recommendation<br>1, reflecting the close<br>association between the<br>program's conceptual approach<br>and the theory of change. | policy-oriented<br>research for<br>development to lead<br>directly to measurable<br>outcomes and impacts<br>and the numbers of | achieve. The revised<br>TOC was positively<br>received by the ISPC,<br>and has been further<br>expanded upon in the<br>full proposal. If |  |  |   |  |
| <ul> <li>Undertake an analysis of what<br/>the program is seeking to<br/>change</li> <li>Undertake an analysis of the</li> </ul>   | actors involved in the<br>process is considerable.<br>The ISPC has<br>acknowledged this in                                     | necessary, we will refine<br>it further in response to<br>the ISPC feedback.   |  |  |   |  |
| drivers of and barriers to<br>change in agricultural systems<br>at all scales and institutional<br>levels  | numerous SPIA-<br>commissioned studies. <sup>1</sup><br>Nevertheless, in   | 2.2 During the<br>implementation of<br>phase 2, we will<br>continuously assess and   | 2.2. WLE Phase 2<br>Flagship Leaders<br>supported by the<br>manager, | 2.2. Continuously during phase 2 implementation. |   |  |
| • Develop a structured<br>approach to the analysis of<br>social and institutional aspects<br>of the change processes. This   | relation to these and<br>other comments, WLE<br>has completely revised<br>its TOC and impact                                   | refine the TOC and<br>impact pathways as<br>necessary. It will be a<br>management tool, and a  | Monitoring,<br>Evaluation and<br>Learning (MEL).                     |  |   |  |
| should build on and expand the<br>work on behavioral economics<br>currently found in the DAI core<br>theme.  | pathways for phase 2,<br>and the ISPC<br>appreciated the<br>progress made in its   | source of learning how<br>to be more effective in<br>achieving outcomes and<br>impacts.  |  |  |   |  |
| <ul> <li>Give explicit consideration to<br/>potential externalities at all<br/>spatial and temporal scales and<br/>along relevant value chains.</li> </ul>                   | comments on our<br><u>revised pre-proposal</u> .<br>The program does not<br>currently have the                                 | 2.3 A specific initiative<br>to apply the DAI<br>decision analysis work  | 2.3 DAI Flagship<br>Team with<br>Flagship Leaders                    | 2.3 By 2019,<br>contingent on<br>funding.        |   |  |

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Merrey (2015) provides a summary of many of these studies. Full citation: Merrey, D.J. 2015. An Evaluation of CGIAR Centers' Impact Assessment Work on Irrigation and Water Management Research. Rome, Italy, Standing Panel on Impact Assessment (SPIA), CGIAR Independent Science and Partnership Council (ISPC). 83 pp.

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|  | resources to adopt all<br>the details of this<br>recommendation but<br>we will treat our TOC as<br>a hypothesis to be<br>tested and refined or<br>revised periodically<br>based on lessons<br>learned.   | approach to the impact<br>pathways within WLE<br>has been outlined in the<br>phase 2 proposal as part<br>of the RBM strategy.  | supported by<br>MEL Manager.                        |  |   |
| <ul> <li>Recommendation 3. Nurturing young scientists.</li> <li>WLE should assign sufficient resources to maintain the positive feature of having a significant number of junior scientists as project leaders.</li> <li>Specific actions should include the following: <ul> <li>Encourage collaboration between young and senior scientists</li> <li>Encourage mentoring of young by senior scientists to generate good publications and visibility.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | Accepted.<br>The Evaluation Team<br>has highlighted the<br>positive experience of<br>WLE in using promising<br>junior scientists as<br>project leaders, while<br>senior scientists provide<br>strong mentoring and<br>intellectual support. We<br>plan to continue this<br>practice and our senior<br>scientists will continue<br>to mentor younger<br>scientists, both within<br>the CGIAR center<br>partners and our<br>national partners. Our | As noted by the<br>evaluation team, WLE<br>already has a good mix<br>of senior and junior<br>scientists, and we were<br>commended for how we<br>mentor and encourage<br>junior scientists.<br>Greater attention will<br>be given in Phase 2 to<br>facilitate collaboration<br>and mentoring. | WLE Director<br>assisted by senior<br>scientists.   | Continuous<br>throughout the<br>program. | No.<br>However, additional<br>funding would enable<br>WLE to expand its<br>support for post-<br>graduate and post-<br>doctoral scientists and<br>facilitate more<br>formalized mentoring. |

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|   | play a critical role in this regard.   |   |  |                                  |   |  |
| Recommendation 4. WLE<br>publication policy. WLE<br>participating Centers should<br>commit to fully following WLE<br>publication policy. Specific<br>actions should include the | Accepted in principle.<br>All scientific reports are<br>already peer reviewed<br>internally. WLE<br>participating Centers<br>commit to following   | 4.1 Promote the<br>publication policy<br>amongst WLE<br>participating Centers.  | 4.1. WLE<br>Knowledge<br>Management &<br>Communications<br>(KMC) . | 4.1. August 2016.                | No.   |  |
| <ul> <li>following:</li> <li>All publications should be internally peer-reviewed</li> <li>No WLE publications should appear in predatory journals.</li> </ul>                   | WLE publication policy<br>as part of their<br>contractual agreements<br>(PPAs). This policy is in<br>line with <u>CGIAR policy</u> .<br>WLE will continue to<br>promote its publication<br>policy and provide  | 4.2 Carry out an audit of<br>predatory publications<br>for publications in 2015<br>to clarify how many, if<br>any, there are, and take<br>action to stop this<br>practice if it exists. | 4.2. WLE KMC<br>and partner KMC.                                   | 4.2. By<br>September 2016.       |   |  |
|   | opportunities for<br>researchers to better<br>understand it. In<br>regards to predatory<br>journals, WLE received<br>a very high rating in the<br>Elsevier analysis and<br>the occurrence of<br>articles in predatory<br>journals was very rare.<br>Measures will be taken<br>to ensure they are<br>completely excluded. | 4.3 Review and update<br>publication policy as<br>necessary.  | 4.3. WLE KMC<br>and partner KMC.                                   | 4.3. October –<br>December 2016. |   |  |

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| supporting statements)                                    | Recommendation                            | (each action has a<br>reference number)     | for Action (keyed to actions) |                      | required to implement<br>Recommendation? |
| Recommendation 5. Dedicated research facilities. There is | Accepted in part.<br>We agree that having | 5.1. Where appropriate, explore with Center | Flagship Leaders<br>and WLE   | By December<br>2016. | Not initially. Additional funding may be |
| need, opportunity and                                     | long-term dedicated                       | partners, AFS CRPs, and                     | Director.                     | 2010.                | required for                             |
| capability for long-term                                  | strategically located                     | NARS with which we are                      | Director.                     |                      | instrumentation and                      |
| research at dedicated field                               | field sites that are well-                | partnering to identify                      |                               |                      | management of field                      |
| facilities strategically located in                       | managed and fully-                        | potential field sites                       |                               |                      | sites over the longer                    |
| developing countries. WLE                                 | instrumented can be                       | where a WLE co-                             |                               |                      | term.                                    |
| should play a role in                                     | very useful for some                      | investment would be                         |                               |                      |  |
| maintaining and establishing                              | types of biophysical                      | cost-effective and                          |                               |                      |  |
| such long-term research                                   | research interventions                    | provide a higher return                     |                               |                      |  |
| facilities because well-managed                           | or impact assessments.                    | on research investment                      |                               |                      |  |
| and well-instrumented field and                           | They may not be                           | than alternative                            |                               |                      |  |
| catchment scale laboratories                              | appropriate, though,                      | approaches.                                 |                               |                      |  |
| are needed to underpin the                                | for fully capturing the                   |   |                               |                      |  |
| research of WLE and other                                 | cycle of R4D research                     | 5.2. Assess the potential                   |                               |                      |  |
| CRPs. Such studies are also                               | where the program                         | for additional W3 or                        |                               |                      |  |
| essential to provide much                                 | moves on from                             | bilateral funding for                       |                               |                      |  |
| needed empirical data for                                 | discovery to                              | participating in existing                   |                               |                      |  |
| calibrating and validating the                            | implementation and                        | field laboratories.                         |                               |                      |  |
| extensive WLE's modelling                                 | onward to new areas of                    |   |                               |                      |  |
| efforts. Specific actions that are                        | research and                              | 5.3. Where practical,                       |                               |                      |  |
| needed include:   | challenges. Moreover,                     | include in phase 2                          |                               |                      |  |
| <ul> <li>Develop strategic</li> </ul>                     | establishing and                          | POWBs investments in                        |                               |                      |  |
| collaboration with institutes                             | maintaining such sites                    | such field sites.                           |                               |                      |  |
| that have field and catchment                             | also requires                             |   |                               |                      |  |
| scale laboratories or are willing                         | committed funding                         |   |                               |                      |  |
| to invest in them.  | over a long time period.                  |   |                               |                      |  |
| Undertake multi-scalar                                    | In the current financial                  |   |                               |                      |  |
| research at spatial scales that                           | context, this is                          |   |                               |                      |  |

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| range from the field to the river<br>basin          | extremely unlikely and<br>could compromise<br>higher value<br>interventions in other<br>areas.<br>However, WLE<br>recognizes that some<br>long-established<br>Centers have such sites,<br>as do some of our<br>national partners. In<br>addition, AFS CRPs may<br>be supporting such field<br>laboratories; during<br>phase 2 WLE will be<br>collaborating closely<br>with several of these<br>CRPs. | -   |   |           |   |
|   | WLE will explore with<br>these partners whether<br>a WLE co-investment<br>would generate useful<br>empirical data and<br>added value. In<br>addition, WLE will seek<br>to continue its<br>collaboration with   |   |   |           |   |

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| Recommendation 6. Learning,<br>knowledge synthesis and<br>aggregation. WLE should make<br>a focused effort to learn from<br>its experience in different types<br>of projects and within and<br>across focal regions. Specific<br>actions should include the<br>following:<br>• Develop a strategy for<br>knowledge synthesis and<br>aggregation across the<br>program.<br>• Allocate sufficient resources,<br>and leadership from among the<br>strongest researchers in WLE. | watershed and river<br>basin programs such as<br>the Tana Water Fund in<br>Kenya in order to<br>collect long-term data<br>on impacts of<br>interventions and other<br>basin organizations<br>which routinely<br>maintain such data<br>sets.<br>Accepted.<br>Although WLE is still at<br>a relatively early stage<br>given the long-term<br>nature of its work, the<br>Steering Committee<br>had requested<br>something along these<br>lines in March 2015.<br>WLE management<br>developed a proposal<br>for a " <u>WLE Solutions</u><br><u>Platform</u> ". That concept<br>is broader than what<br>the evaluation team<br>recommends but | <ul> <li>6.1 WLE has already<br/>begun this process as<br/>noted. For background,<br/>the synthesis document<br/>is available <u>here</u>.</li> <li>However, resource<br/>constraints mean we<br/>cannot implement this<br/>as quickly as we would<br/>like.</li> <li>6.2. Initiate knowledge<br/>synthesis work around a<br/>small set of cross-<br/>cutting themes during<br/>2016.</li> </ul> | WLE's new<br>Director,<br>supported by the<br>Flagship Leaders<br>and making use<br>of postgraduate<br>students. | 2016-2017 | Yes.  |
| To facilitate this process, WLE should establish a strategic   | includes as a major<br>element, synthesis of   |  |  |           |   |

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| group working directly under<br>the Program Director to be<br>responsible both for the<br>development of the overall<br>program strategy and the<br>identification and management<br>of key syntheses products.<br>• Provide resources to flagship<br>leaders to instigate and<br>facilitate discussions on key<br>themes in project clusters, with<br>support from lead researchers<br>in the field (both inside and<br>outside WLE), to identify<br>generic conclusions and areas<br>where results are specific to the<br>context of individual projects.<br>• Where this has not happened,<br>undertake global reviews of the<br>'state of the art' for the key<br>themes. | knowledge organized<br>around a set of key WLE<br>research questions.<br>Budget constraints<br>during 2015-2016 have<br>prevented us from<br>making much progress<br>on this to date; and we<br>do not have sufficient<br>resources to establish<br>the proposed "strategic<br>working group."<br>Nevertheless, we do<br>propose to make<br>progress on developing<br>credible, systematic<br>syntheses of knowledge<br>during the next phase. | <ul> <li>6.3. Include knowledge<br/>synthesis in the work<br/>plan for year one (2017)<br/>in WLE phase 2.</li> <li>6.4. Seek additional<br/>funding to ensure the<br/>scientific quality of the<br/>synthesis products.</li> </ul> |  |   |  |  |
| Recommendation 7. Impact<br>Assessment. The Evaluation<br>Team recommends that WLE<br>should make strategic   | Accepted.<br>The proposal to make<br>strategic investments in<br>impact assessment is  | 7.1 The WLE phase 2<br>proposal includes a<br>specific evaluation and<br>impact assessment  | Manager,<br>Monitoring,<br>Evaluation and<br>Learning, | The plan is<br>included in the<br>proposal for<br>phase 2. If fully | Yes.<br>Bilateral funds have<br>already been sought;<br>additional funds will be |  |
| investment in impact<br>assessment taking into account<br>available resources. Specific   | agreed, based on a plan<br>that reflects strategic<br>importance, scale of   | strategy and plan,<br>including a range of<br>assessments highlighted   | supported by the<br>Program<br>Management              | funded, impact<br>assessments will<br>begin in 2017.                | needed to fully<br>implement this<br>recommendation.                             |  |

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| <ul> <li>actions should include the<br/>following:</li> <li>Undertake new impact<br/>assessment studies, as<br/>previously recommended by<br/>Merrey (2015),</li> <li>Define a plan of impact<br/>assessments</li> <li>Include meta-syntheses that<br/>assess outcomes across projects<br/>to provide an understanding of<br/>the effectiveness (or otherwise)<br/>of different approaches to<br/>addressing key development<br/>themes within the program<br/>[points summarized]</li> </ul> | innovation, resource<br>investment and<br>capacity of researchers<br>and partners. Specific<br>proposals for impact<br>assessments are<br>included in the WLE<br>proposal for phase 2.  | by Merrey (2015). Some<br>are proposed to be<br>funded using W1/2<br>funds; for others we are<br>seeking funding from<br>bilateral sources, e.g.<br>through 3IE and other<br>impact assessment<br>funding bodies.  | Unit and Flagship<br>Leaders.   |  |   |
| Recommendation 8.<br>Partnerships WLE management<br>should do a comprehensive<br>stocktaking of existing<br>partnerships across the<br>program. Specific actions<br>should include the following:<br>• Identify where the best<br>potential exists for<br>consolidating partnerships at<br>cluster and regional levels.   | Accepted.<br>This activity was<br>planned for the 2 <sup>nd</sup> half<br>of 2016. However,<br>because of the<br>uncertainty of phase 2<br>and funding concerns, it<br>is difficult to make any<br>firm commitments as<br>yet. However, we plan<br>to update the <u>Phase 2</u> | <ul> <li>8.1. Update phase 2<br/>partnership strategy<br/>based on the IEA review<br/>recommendations and<br/>ISPC feedback on the<br/>phase 2 proposal.</li> <li>8.2. Once the future is<br/>clearer, develop clear<br/>messages for current</li> </ul> | <ul> <li>8.1. Program</li> <li>Management</li> <li>Unit</li> <li>8.2. Program</li> <li>Management</li> <li>Unit, including</li> </ul> | 8.1. July –<br>September 2016<br>8.2. October –<br>December 2016 | No  |
| <ul> <li>Initiate a dialogue with<br/>partners on actions to ensure</li> </ul>  | partnership strategy<br>based on feedback   | partners in phase 1<br>projects (particularly in   | Flagship and<br>Project Leaders.  |  |   |

| <b>Evaluation Recommendation</b>   | Management   | Management Follow-up  |   |   |   |  |
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| <ul> <li>continuity in partnerships to<br/>mitigate the impact of existing<br/>funding uncertainties over the<br/>future of the program.</li> <li>Recognize that different<br/>partnerships may be needed for<br/>different ToC steps or pathways<br/>(e.g. for moving from research<br/>outputs to development<br/>outcomes).</li> </ul>                              | from ISPC and this IEA<br>review. That strategy<br>already fully reflects a<br>recognition that<br>different partnerships<br>are needed at different<br>stages along the impact<br>pathways.   | focal regions) and<br>discuss potential<br>options for continuing in<br>phase 2.  |   |   |   |  |
| Recommendation 9 Gender.   | Accepted.  | 9.1. Inclusion of the dual  | 9.1 WLE Gender                                      | 9.1. WLE phase 2  | Yes.  |  |
| <ul> <li>WLE should employ a dual<br/>strategy in its gender work.</li> <li>Specific actions should include<br/>the following:</li> <li>Examine how gender<br/>integrates into WLE's technical<br/>priorities (as is being done) but<br/>also identify a few separate</li> </ul>   | This recommendation is<br>fully reflected in the<br>WLE phase 2 proposal.<br>We have integrated<br>gender issues into<br>specific Flagship<br>Clusters of Activities in<br>a very substantial  | strategy in the WLE<br>phase 2 proposal,<br>though given limited<br>resources, we<br>emphasize integration<br>of gender into Flagship<br>research.                | Specialist.   | proposal<br>completed and<br>submitted in<br>April 2016.  | WLE has allocated over<br>10% of its anticipated<br>W1/2 funding to<br>gender, but this is<br>inadequate to fully<br>implement this<br>recommendation.<br>Therefore, additional |  |
| <ul> <li>gender priorities and develop</li> <li>research questions around</li> <li>them.</li> <li>Provide GPI with research</li> <li>resources to support some</li> <li>cutting edge transformative</li> <li>work specifically on gender,</li> <li>aimed at understanding how</li> <li>gender disparities and gender</li> <li>relations effect agricultural</li> </ul> | manner. The Gender in<br>Development core<br>theme will develop a<br>comprehensive<br>framework to ensure<br>the full integration of<br>gender into Flagship<br>research in a way that<br>leads to cutting edge<br>results. We have also | 9.2 Seek additional<br>funding from W3 and<br>bilateral sources to<br>include additional<br>partners with strengths<br>in gender-NRM research<br>and development. | 9.2 WLE Gender<br>Specialist.                       | 9.2. Preparation<br>of proposals for<br>additional<br>funding in latter<br>half of 2016 and<br>in 2017. | funds will be sought.   |  |

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| <ul> <li>innovation, productivity and sustainability.</li> <li>Identify a few partners that have expertise in working with women and technology at the grassroots level.</li> </ul>  | reached out to new<br>partners to further<br>strengthen our gender<br>work.   |  |   |            |   |
| Recommendation 10.<br>Composition and role of the<br>WLE Steering Committee. The<br>Steering Committee should<br>reassess its composition.<br>Specific actions should include<br>the following:<br>• Include one or more members<br>with training in social sciences<br>research.<br>• Undertake a rigorous and<br>holistic debate on the role of<br>ESR in the sustainable<br>intensification of production by<br>closely engaging researchers<br>from various disciplines,<br>including scientists who can<br>bring agriculturalists'<br>perspectives. | Accepted.<br>Section 7.5 (page 77) of<br>the IEA evaluation<br>states that "WLE has a<br>balanced and<br>independent<br>governance body, that<br>brings together<br>appropriate expertise,<br>includes a majority of<br>independent expert<br>members, and<br>accommodates lead<br>center and partner<br>representation." We<br>greatly appreciate this<br>conclusion of the IEA<br>team. The importance<br>of the social and<br>agricultural sciences<br>within the Steering<br>Committee is also<br>recognized; we note | 10.1. As stated in WLE's<br>phase 2 proposal, as<br>current members of the<br>SC complete their<br>terms, we will identify<br>replacements that<br>maintain a good<br>distribution of skills<br>(including social and<br>agricultural sciences)<br>while ensuring regional<br>and gender balances.<br>The SC will continue to<br>engage with the<br>program scientists on<br>adapting and<br>broadening the ESR<br>framework, the<br>Solutions Platform, and<br>other critically<br>important strategic<br>issues. | The WLE Steering<br>Committee and<br>Lead Center<br>Board | 2017-2022. | No.   |

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|  | there is already                  |   |   |           |   |
|  | considerable practical            |   |   |           |   |
|  | experience in these               |   |   |           |   |
|  | areas amongst its                 |   |   |           |   |
|  | members. The Phase 2              |   |   |           |   |
|  | proposal includes                 |   |   |           |   |
|  | provision for reviewing           |   |   |           |   |
|  | the composition and               |   |   |           |   |
|  | skills mix of the                 |   |   |           |   |
|  | Steering Committee                |   |   |           |   |
|  | and this is on the                |   |   |           |   |
|  | agenda for the next               |   |   |           |   |
|  | meeting in June 2016.             |   |   |           |   |
|  | As noted in our                   |   |   |           |   |
|  | response to                       |   |   |           |   |
|  | Recommendation 6, the             |   |   |           |   |
|  | SC is already fully               |   |   |           |   |
|  | engaged in dialogue               |   |   |           |   |
|  | with WLE scientists on            |   |   |           |   |
|  | the ESR framework and             |   |   |           |   |
|  | has supported the                 |   |   |           |   |
|  | emphasis in phase 2               |   |   |           |   |
|  | towards a broader                 |   |   |           |   |
|  | sustainability focus.             |   |   |           |   |
| Recommendation 11. Strategic                     | Accepted. During                  | 11.1 WLE is moving  | Program   | 2017-22.  | No.   |
| management and Program                           | Phase 1, it was not               | towards enhanced  | Management  |           |   |
| Planning and Integration.                        | possible to deviate               | results based   | Unit  |           |   |
|  | from the proportional             | management in Phase 2,  |   |           |   |

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| Specific actions should include<br>the following:<br>• Develop a prioritization<br>mechanism to deal with budget<br>cuts, focused on WLE's own<br>primary objectives as a CRP.<br>This is preferable to using a<br>proportional formula to allocate<br>budget cuts across flagships.<br>• Ensure the new system is<br>transparent and agreed upon by<br>main players. The criteria for<br>mapping bilateral projects into<br>WLE should be documented<br>and the responsibility for<br>reviewing and approving of this<br>mapping should be assigned to<br>flagship leaders with the WLE<br>director providing final<br>approval. | formula to allocate<br>budget cuts (or<br>increases) due to the<br>original "commitments"<br>by Centers to each CRP,<br>together with a lack of<br>a firm Results based<br>management (RMB)<br>mechanism.<br>WLE is committed to<br>moving towards RBM in<br>Phase 2, however the<br>current proposal<br>guidance requires CRPs<br>in the short term to<br>specify at this early<br>stage how funds will be<br>allocated to CG<br>partners within each<br>flagship, and it will only<br>be possible to see the<br>full results of an RBM<br>approach in years 2-3<br>when the evaluation of<br>initial activities has<br>been undertaken<br>against pre-established | with a clear strategy in<br>the proposal around<br>performance based<br>resource (re)allocation<br>in years 3 and 5 (based<br>on aggregate<br>performance in the<br>preceding period).<br>However, the<br>requirement in the<br>phase 2 full proposal<br>guidance for CRPs to<br>specify ex-ante how<br>funds will be allocated<br>to CG partners within<br>each flagship, again<br>places the onus on the<br>partner, rather than the<br>content.<br>In collaboration with<br>WLE's partners, efforts<br>will be made to adopt<br>the RBM approach<br>outlined to ensure that<br>within these strictures,<br>allocative decisions are<br>still made around |   |           |   |

| Evaluation Recommendation   | Management<br>Response to the<br>Recommendation   | Management Follow-up  |   |             |   |
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|   |   | performance and potential results.  |   |             |   |
|   |   | In the future, Flagship<br>Leaders will review and<br>approve bilateral<br>projects, with the<br>Program Director<br>providing only final<br>approval. This needs to<br>be considered within<br>the CGIAR context<br>however, balancing WLE<br>priorities, Center<br>stability, and capacity to<br>support Center partners<br>in leveraging bilateral |   |             |   |
| Recommendation 12. The<br>Continuing Imperative of WLE.<br>The Evaluation Team strongly<br>recommends that the CGIAR<br>retains a program with WLE's<br>focus on the interactions<br>between ecosystems and<br>agricultural production. It<br>should serve as an integrative<br>CRP at levels of organization<br>beyond the plot or field which | Accepted.<br>WLE entirely agrees and<br>appreciates this<br>endorsement by the<br>Evaluation Team. We<br>believe that this<br>recognition of the value<br>of an integrative CRP<br>focused on agriculture<br>within an ecosystems<br>and NRM perspective, | funds.<br>12.1. This<br>recommendation is<br>aimed at the CGIAR<br>itself. WLE will make<br>every effort to work<br>closely with other<br>integrative CRPs and<br>with the AFS CRPs to<br>add value to the entire<br>CGIAR Research<br>Portfolio.   | WLE's Steering<br>Committee and<br>Management<br>Committee, with<br>the support of<br>the CGIAR<br>community. | Continuous. | No.   |

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| are the targets of many other                       | and targeting levels              |   |   |           |   |
| CRPs (e.g. at the catchment,                        | above farms and fields,           |   |   |           |   |
| basin and regional scales) and it                   | is now well-established           |   |   |           |   |
| should take explicit account of                     | in the SRF, within the            |   |   |           |   |
| externalities and trade-offs that                   | new CRP portfolio and             |   |   |           |   |
| can become apparent at these                        | within the ISPC.                  |   |   |           |   |
| scales. The specific form of such                   |                                   |   |   |           |   |
| a program and its relationship                      |                                   |   |   |           |   |
| to other CRPs needs to be                           |                                   |   |   |           |   |
| established but to not have                         |                                   |   |   |           |   |
| such a program, whatever the                        |                                   |   |   |           |   |
| details of its form and                             |                                   |   |   |           |   |
| institutional focus, would risk                     |                                   |   |   |           |   |
| the momentum that has been                          |                                   |   |   |           |   |
| established by WLE in the                           |                                   |   |   |           |   |
| CGIAR's long-term efforts and                       |                                   |   |   |           |   |
| programs on natural resources                       |                                   |   |   |           |   |
| management.   |                                   |   |   |           |   |