Meeting Summary
20th System Council meeting
Brasilia, Brazil, 12-13 June 2024

Purpose:

This document presents the formal meeting summary for the System Council's 20th meeting ('SC20'), as approved by the System Council on a no objection basis with effect from Monday 14 October 2024.

It supplements the SC20 Chair's Summary (issued 21 June 2024) that confirmed decisions taken and agreed actions during the meeting.

Distribution notice: This document may be distributed without restriction.

Introduction

This document presents a summary of the 20th meeting of the System Council ('Council') held on 12-13 June 2024 in Brasilia, Brazil. It follows the release of the SC20 Chair's Summary (issued 21 June 2024).

By way of overview:

Format: The meeting was held in person with some virtual participation over two consecutive working days: Wednesday, June 12, and Thursday, June 13, 2024.

Agenda items: The meeting covered agenda items within 18 sessions set out in the table of contents on the following page.

Decisions: The Council took seven (7) decisions and agreed on two (2) positions and actions during its meeting as initially recorded in the SC20 Chair's Summary and reproduced in sequence in this summary.

Participants: Annex 1 sets out a list of meeting participants.

Basis of preparation: Pursuant to Article 9.2(a) of the System Council Rules of Procedure, the Secretariat shall not produce a verbatim record of proceedings. The following document therefore neither attributes interventions, nor reproduces direct quotes of any individual System Council member, Active Observer, or other invited guest.

Contents — *Listed in the order that they were taken in the Agenda*

Day 1
Agenda Item 1: Meeting Opening

1. The Council's Chair, Juergen Voegele, opened the meeting, participating virtually due to unforeseen travel circumstances. He welcomed the participants assembled at the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (Embrapa) headquarters in Brasília, Brazil and those attending virtually. The Chair congratulated Embrapa and CGIAR for signing the [Memorandum of Understanding between CGIAR and Embrapa](), indicating that this is what the world needs for the big players in agriculture across the world to come together with the One CGIAR, where collaboration in various special areas will address the world's needs. The Secretary confirmed there was a quorum.

2. The Chair welcomed new Council voting members[1], alternates, and participants, including:

    a. Voting members:
        i.   Vice Minister Christian Alejandro Garay Torres — Latin America & Caribbean
        ii.   Mariam bint Mohammed Almheiri — UAE (Temporary Voting Member)
        iii. Stefan Schmitz, Executive Director — Crop Trust
        iv.   Renaud Seligmann — World Bank
        v.   Mustafa Altuğ Atalay — Türkiye West Asia & North Africa (attending virtually)

    b. Alternate members:
        i.   Mohammad Ali Ebrahimi — West Asia and North Africa (Iran)
        ii.   Bosibori Bett — ACIAR, Australia

    c. Other delegates:
        iii. Jaspreet Stamm — Crop Trust
        iv.   Anne Clyne — Crop Trust
        v.   Joachim Langbein — Germany

    d. Representing the CGIAR System Board Chair:
        i.   Patrick Caron, System Board Vice Chair
        ii.   Shenggen Fan, System Board Member

    e. In their first Council meeting since formally taking up their CGIAR executive management roles:
        i.   Ismahane Elouafi, Executive Managing Director
        ii.   Guillaume Grosso, Deputy Executive Managing Director

    f. Invited guests:
        i.   Shingo Kimura, Principal Natural Resources and Agriculture Economist, Asian Development Bank
        ii.   Representatives from the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA):
              a) Jorge Werthein
              b) Gabriel Delgado
              c) Muhammad Ibrahim

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[1] Composition : https://www.cgiar.org/how-we-work/governance/system-council/sc-composition/

3.   The Chair offered framing remarks that highlighted the critical global challenges faced by the world. He noted that despite past progress, key trends in food security, nutrition, and climate resilience are worsening. Citing recent heat waves and their impacts on health and food production, the Chair emphasized the urgency of CGIAR's mission. He stressed CGIAR's vital role, along with its partners, in helping billions cope with these adverse trends. The Chair called for intensified efforts to deliver timely, impactful research and innovations where most needed, emphasizing the need to accelerate work, as the current pace is insufficient to address the challenges. He underscored CGIAR's crucial role in transforming food, land, and water systems for a more sustainable future, urging the organization to stay ahead of emerging global challenges.

4.   Vice Minister Christian Alejandro Garay Torres (Peru) was nominated to serve as Co-Chair of the meeting. However, Torres graciously declined the position and passed it on to Embrapa's representative on the Council, who is the alternate for the Latin America and Caribbean constituency.

5.   Decision SC20-DP1: Appointment of meeting Co-Chair
The System Council appointed Pedro Luiz Oliveira de Almeida Machado, System Council Latin America and Caribbean constituency alternate member as the non-voting Co-Chair for the 20ᵗʰ System Council meeting, pursuant to Article 5.2 of the CGIAR System Framework.

6.   The Co-Chair expressed appreciation for the opportunity to serve and noted that Vice Minister Christian Alejandro Garay Torres (Peru) would serve as the Voting Member for the Latin America and Caribbean constituency during the meeting.

7.   The Chair formally presented the provisional agenda, per the Secretariat's 'Revision 2' communication. This revision incorporates several changes: extended time for agenda item discussions, moving Agenda Item 6 to Day 2, and a proposed Closed Session at the end of Day 1. Additionally, the report from the Nominations Committee of the System Council will now be presented in open session under Agenda Item 7. The Chair acknowledged the need for flexibility to accommodate crucial discussions, particularly during the session on integrated governance. No additional items were proposed, and the Chair assured attendees of his readiness to adapt the agenda should new topics emerge during the meeting. No declarations of interest were made regarding the agenda.

8.   Decision SC20-DP2: Adoption of the agenda
The System Council adopted the Agenda, as re-issued on 9 June 2024.

Agenda Item 2: Reflections from Prof. Lindiwe Majele Sibanda, System Board Chair

9.   The System Board Chair, Prof. Lindiwe Majele Sibanda, provided opening reflections via video link, apologizing for not being able to join the Council meeting in person.

She noted that in her absence, Patrick Caron, System Board Vice Chair, and Shenggen Fan, System Board member, would represent the Board.

10. The Board Chair expressed gratitude to the meeting hosts, Silvia Massruhá and Pedro Machado, for their warm welcome and Embrapa's hospitality. She highlighted the significance of the newly signed Memorandum of Understanding, which deepens the collaboration across various areas and serves as a template for enhanced partnerships with other major national and regional research and innovation actors and systems. Additionally, she praised Brazil's leadership through the G20 in prioritizing the fight against hunger, poverty, and inequality.

11. The Board Chair welcomed Her Excellency Mariam bint Mohammed Almheiri, acknowledging the United Arab Emirates' first System Council meeting as a temporary voting member and its leadership in driving innovations to transform food, land, and water systems amidst the climate crisis.

12. The Board Chair provided updates on four priority areas:

    a. <u>Science and Innovation</u>
        i. The Board Chair expressed full support for the direction outlined in the 2025-2030 Portfolio Narrative, noting that it raises CGIAR's collective ambition and positions the organization for significant scientific advancement. The Board emphasized that the new portfolio builds on previous progress, providing clarity and stability for future direction, while addressing key points raised by the System Council, including consolidation, prioritization, integration, responsiveness to demand, and co-creation with partners. She noted that the transition from 32 initiatives and five platforms to nine programs and three accelerators reflects an integrated approach across all Centers and funding sources.
       ii. The Board Chair also highlighted the importance of robust partner inputs gathered through structured listening sessions conducted in over 25 countries. The Board Chair affirmed broad alignment with the Independent Science for Development Council's (ISDC) constructive suggestions and expressed eagerness for the System Council's guidance moving forward.
      iii. The Board Chair indicated the System Board's endorsement of the updated CGIAR Engagement Framework for Partnership and Advocacy, recognizing it as a major milestone in CGIAR's journey. The updated framework responds to the recommendations of the high-level advisory panel on partner engagement and aims to strengthen CGIAR's ambition to deliver impact, share capacities, and play a convening role in connecting local and global solutions to future challenges. It adapts the partnership strategy to the evolving global context while enhancing CGIAR's role as a custodian of public goods and a scientific diplomacy leader. The Board Chair also emphasized the importance of involving a broader range of partners in the next phase of the Portfolio design process.

b. <u>Funding and Financing</u>

    i. The Board Chair indicated that the Board and the AFRC guided the delivery of a revised Window 1 budget for 2024 that prioritizes science and innovations with 90% of the available resources. This budget aligns spending with leadership's goals; introduces funding scenarios to mitigate risks, integrates ICRISAT into the shared portfolio, and represents a leap forward in terms of clarity and transparency of presentation and implementation.

    ii. Furthermore, she expressed the Board's recognition of funders' efforts to increase Window 1 funding contributions, noting that overall funding to CGIAR has rebounded by 17% post-COVID-19. However, as funding remains below the 2014 peak, the Board Chair emphasized the need to diversify and seek innovative funding sources is greater than ever.

    iii. The Board Chair asked what the funders on this Council are prepared to stand behind and how we can bring in others. She conveyed that the Board supports the recruitment into the Integrated Partnership Board (IPB) of new members who can open doors to new funding opportunities for CGIAR and its partners.

c. <u>People and Organizational Structure</u>

    i. The Board successfully oversaw the onboarding of the new Executive Managing Director (EMD) and Deputy Executive Managing Director (DEMD) noting with satisfaction that both leaders have quickly delivered excellent results. The Board is highly pleased with their performance and how effectively they complement each other.

    ii. The Board supports the leadership's vision for a robust and agile organizational structure aligned with evolving, integrated governance arrangements. The Board has engaged at every step, endorsing the proposed way forward and requesting the Council to provide the resources needed to deliver on this promise.

d. <u>Governance</u>

    i. The Board is fully committed to finalizing the governance transition process. Three of the Board's seven members have agreed to rotate off the Board, while four have agreed to roll over to the IPB, enabling a phased approach to filling the new IPB.

    ii. The Board has handed over its authority to appoint its own members, to enable the Council to launch the IPB nominations process.

    iii. The Board prioritizes ensuring a clear delineation of roles and responsibilities between the IPB and the Council. The Board Chair noted that a joint Council-Board working group has been convened to refine these roles, and they are nearing completion, fully committed to achieving this goal together.

13. The Board Chair emphasized the critical importance of the next six months for finalizing the governance structure and onboarding the IPB. She highlighted the need to adapt the organizational structure to ensure it is fit for purpose, with active

involvement from the Global Leadership Team, including all Centers' Directors General (DGs). She thanked the Council for their efforts and expressed enthusiasm about ushering in this CGIAR's new era.

14. The Council Chair thanked the Board Chair for outlining progress made and the path forward across the Board's priority areas. He emphasized the importance of partnerships, both internal and external, stressing the need for increased outreach efforts. He also noted that the finish line of the governance transition was now within reach. He suggested that Council members reserve their reflections and comments until after the EMD's update, the next agenda item.

Agenda Item 3: Update from the Executive Managing Director

15. At the invitation of the Co-Chair, Ismahane Elouafi, the Executive Managing Director (EMD), shared her reflections on the first six months in her role, expressing gratitude for the support of her DEMD, Guillaume Grosso. She spoke about the inspiring and humbling experiences gained from visiting each CGIAR Center and engaging with many partners, observing the innovative work being done in the field. She appreciated the maturity of CGIAR's reform process, noting the strong collaboration, unified vision, and commitment from partners and stakeholders.

16. The EMD outlined three key priorities for her and the DEMD. First, she emphasized the importance of delivering relevant and impactful research and innovation with partners, focusing both on programming for the next six years and on successfully concluding the current initiatives that began in 2022, which are expected to be completed by 2024. She stressed the need to demonstrate that CGIAR has delivered on these initiatives.

17. The EMD recounted significant milestones over the past six months, including:
    a. <u>CGIAR's involvement in COP28:</u> The EMD highlighted CGIAR's pivotal role at COP28, where food and agriculture took center stage in climate change discussions. This engagement underscored CGIAR's critical role in addressing climate change and food security and fostered strong partnerships.
    b. The EMD shared insights from her visits to CGIAR Centers, where she engaged with staff and a diverse range of partners, including heads of state, government officials, university presidents, farmers, donors, and other key stakeholders. She emphasized the strong buy-in from Center leadership, staff and partners for the integrated partnership model of 'One CGIAR.' She highlighted that 'One CGIAR' comprises 10,000 employees, covering all disciplines from fisheries to crops, forestry, natural resource management, and water management. This multifaceted partnership leverages CGIAR's comprehensive expertise to address global challenges holistically, reinforcing the organization's vision and commitment through these interactions.
    c. <u>Donor and partner engagements:</u> The EMD discussed her interactions with donors and partners, where she articulated the leadership team's clear priorities and gathered valuable feedback.

   d. <u>Scaling scientific ambition:</u> The EMD emphasized CGIAR's commitment to scaling its scientific ambition, with the potential for a $2 billion annual portfolio in the coming years. She also mentioned an ongoing study to leverage and scale strategic assets aligning with the needs of partners.

18. The EMD emphasized that CGIAR is "the network of networks," a unique position that allows the organization to bring science and innovation to the forefront of discussions on transforming food, land, and water systems globally. She highlighted that CGIAR's network spans the entire world, positioning it to drive these critical conversations. The EMD also noted the recent approval of the integrated partnership framework by the System Board and discussed the ongoing development of a partnership strategy. She underscored the importance of evolving relationships with national systems, using the recently signed Memoranda of Understanding with Embrapa and the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences as examples of this evolving collaboration.

19. Regarding the 2025-2030 Portfolio, the EMD outlined the following key elements:
   a. Five impact areas: poverty reduction, healthy diets, climate change adaptation, biodiversity, and gender. The EMD emphasized that these five areas are critical to CGIAR's work, and everything the organization reports must clearly demonstrate how it has made an impact in these areas. She highlighted that these impact areas are not just priorities but the foundation for all CGIAR activities and outcomes, stressing their importance for both the organization and its funders.
   b. Eight science programs: These programs will focus on CGIAR's core areas of expertise, ensuring that the organization's scientific efforts are aligned with its mission.
   c. Scaling for Impact with Partners: The new scaling initiative marks a significant innovation for CGIAR, aiming to amplify impact through closer collaboration with partners. The EMD underscored the importance of engaging with development agencies to expand reach and enhance impact. She also highlighted the pivotal role of the private sector in scaling up the most mature and ready-to-expand initiatives, urging the System Council to explore effective strategies for partnering with the private sector to achieve the desired scale.
   d. Three cross-cutting Accelerators: Gender and social inclusion, digital innovation, and capacity sharing. These accelerators will be integrated across all programs to enhance the effectiveness and inclusivity of CGIAR's initiatives.
   e. CGIAR's Assets: The EMD underscored the importance of CGIAR's key assets, such as Genebanks and knowledge repositories, which are vital to the organization's success.
   f. Finance: The EMD briefly mentioned the financial aspects, emphasizing the need to align resources with the strategic priorities outlined in the portfolio.

20. To conclude, the EMD announced CGIAR's inaugural Science Week in Nairobi, planned for July, featuring interactive sessions on sustainable food systems. Co-hosted with the Kenyan government and national partners, the event aims to shape scientific responses to global challenges. She thanked the Council, emphasizing that

CGIAR's progress is made possible by the commitment, collaboration, and financial support of its funders.

Key Discussion Areas

21.   Council members expressed appreciation for both the Board Chair's and the EMD's updates. Key reflection themes included:

Integration, Governance, Risk Management, and Accountability

a.   **Governance and Accountability:** Council members acknowledged the progress in integration reform but emphasized the urgent need to strengthen governance and accountability frameworks within CGIAR.

b.   **Structures and Delivery:** They stressed that having the right structures and accountabilities in place is critical to delivering on the integrated 2025-2030 Portfolio.

c.   **Roles and Responsibilities:** The need for a clear delineation of roles and responsibilities between the Council and the IPB was highlighted.

d.   **Audit and Ethics Integration:** Members reiterated the importance of integrating internal audit, external audit, and ethics and business conduct functions, a priority underscored six months ago and urged management to demonstrate progress with clear timelines well before the next Council meeting.

e.   **Risk Management:** The Council emphasized the need for a comprehensive approach to risk management to ensure the organization can effectively manage risks and maintain funder trust.

f.   **Milestones and Expectations:** They expect concrete milestones on these issues leading up to the next meeting, stressing that strong governance, funding, and operational mechanisms are essential for delivering on CGIAR's commitments and securing continued support from funders.

Confidence in CGIAR Leadership and Strategic Vision

g.   **Support for Leadership:** Council members expressed strong support for the leadership's vision and priorities, appreciating initiatives such as the renewed Science Week and increased participation in global forums, which enhance CGIAR's visibility and engagement.

h.   **Research Impact and Collaboration:** Recognition was given to CGIAR's transformative research impact, alongside efforts to foster innovation and collaboration across the organization and with external partners.

Funding and Financial Model

i.   **Funding Commitments and Sustainability:** Council members applauded significant funding commitments and partnerships, particularly new investments from the UAE and Germany's long-term support. They emphasized the need for sustainable financing models, including a shift from funding 'Windows' to 'Envelopes' that support strategic objectives, ensuring predictable funding for CGIAR's Genebanks and strategic assets, and diversifying the funding base by exploring connections with climate, biodiversity, and health sectors.

Research Impact, Partnerships, and Collaboration

j. **Portfolio Design and Partnerships:** Members supported efforts to design the new Portfolio by prioritizing CGIAR's comparative advantage and strengthening impactful research partnerships. They stressed the importance of catalyzing impact through diverse partnerships, including extension services, NGOs, and the private sector.

k. **Reintegrating CIFOR-ICRAF:** An update was requested on reintegrating CIFOR-ICRAF into CGIAR, with the Board Vice Chair highlighting a new [joint communiqué announcing progress in exploring future collaboration avenues](#).

l. **Acknowledgment of Crop Trust's Anniversary:** Members acknowledged the Crop Trust's 20th anniversary and noted the invitation to its October celebration event in Des Moines, Iowa, coinciding with the World Food Prize ceremony.

m. **Asset Management:** Council members emphasized the importance of effective management of CGIAR's shared assets, including Genebanks and other physical resources. They highlighted the need for adequate funding to maintain these assets and ensure their availability for supporting the success of CGIAR's programs. The discussion underscored a collective approach to asset management, ensuring that all programs contribute to and benefit from these essential resources.

Science Highlight 1— Bridging the Last Mile to Impact

22. The Co-Chair introduced a series of presentations showcasing CGIAR's scientific achievements, with selected DGs presenting throughout the agenda. These presentations focused on the science driving CGIAR's impact. The EMD introduced the first session, emphasizing CGIAR's evolving role in bridging research and real-world impact.

23. Bram Govaerts, DG of CIMMYT, presented on CGIAR's approach to scaling impact and last-mile delivery. Key points included:
    a. CGIAR's catalytic role in turning data into actionable information across five impact areas.
    b. A conceptual framework for scaling, including multi-scale data systems and integrating policy processes with innovation scaling.
    c. Data-driven approach and partnerships with national systems, development banks, and private sector entities.
    d. Emphasis on gender-responsible innovation and scaling strategies.
    e. Examples of successful scaling models across regions showcasing CGIAR's ability to deliver a range of agricultural solutions, such as MasAgro (Crops for Mexico), Southern Africa Accelerated Innovation Delivery Initiative Rapid Delivery Hub (AID I — also known as MasAgro Africa), and Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation (TAAT), through an integrated network and scale innovations multilaterally.

Key Discussion Areas

24. Questions were raised about embedding evaluation into institutional innovations and generating evidence for effectiveness in different contexts. Bram Govaerts explained that evaluation occurs at multiple levels, citing an example from Mexico where 120,000 farmers contribute data to inform policy and program design. This data is compared across regions, including Latin America, Africa, and South Asia, to extract conceptual learnings. A community of practice on scaling further examines these efforts for priority setting, monitoring, and evaluation. He also highlighted the use of early-warning systems within research networks to address challenges like Ug99. He noted that this knowledge base will be integral to the upcoming CGIAR Portfolio's Science Programs.

25. The Co-Chair expressed gratitude for the inspiring presentation and emphasized the critical importance of implementation. He poignantly noted that CGIAR's true effectiveness is measured by its ability to ensure that innovations reach farmers at the grassroots level. The Co-Chair underscored that if CGIAR cannot effectively deliver these innovations to farmers, it is not fulfilling its mission, highlighting that the organization's success is ultimately defined by its impact on the ground.

Agenda Item 4: CGIAR Research and Innovation Portfolio

26. The Council Chair invited Prof. Holger Meinke, Chair of the Independent Science for Development Council (ISDC), to present key elements from the ISDC's review of the CGIAR 2025-2030 Portfolio Narrative.

27. The ISDC Chair provided a high-level overview of the ISDC's review and recommendations to supplement the ISDC's background report and detailed suggestions for Portfolio writers. He expressed that the ISDC was extremely pleased with the Portfolio's development, calling it a significant step forward. He emphasized that the ISDC's feedback is intended for improvement rather than criticism, noting that, as scientists, the focus is often on areas that can be enhanced. He also acknowledged that the Portfolio is rapidly evolving and that some of the ISDC's feedback may have already been addressed in the latest iterations.

28. The ISDC Chair focused on seven key points: i) funding integration, ii) research focus, iii) mission-critical work, iv) partnerships and scaling, v) comparative advantage, vi) organizational structure, and vii) duplication. Key ISDC recommendations included:
    a. Providing a clear statement of work to be discontinued, either due to successful completion, which should be celebrated or because the science is uncertain, acknowledging that there is uncertainty in areas of science and space in the Portfolio for new and innovative research aspects that need to be addressed.
    b. Clearly articulating the Portfolio bundling, explaining how bilateral and Window 1 funding will be integrated into the Science Programs.
    c. Outlining science priorities and highlighting attractive aspects of the Portfolio that could draw new investors while clearly stating where CGIAR positions itself within the development, policy, and research continuum would help balance the document's target audience.

    d. Strengthening the value proposition by making it more compelling, bold, and clear. While the current value proposition includes many good elements, it needs to be articulated in a way that is more accessible and impactful.

    e. Outlining post-December 2024 plans, including MELIA and capacity-building sections, and addressing potential risks if the inception phase exceeds three months.

29.   The ISDC strongly recommended merging the 'Sustainable Farming' and 'Landscapes' Science Programs, describing this recommendation as a deliberate provocation to ensure that CGIAR's science has the greatest possible impact. The ISDC emphasized that ongoing debates around land sparing, land sharing, sustainable intensification, regenerative agriculture, and nature-based solutions are complex and contested. Merging these Science Programs would position CGIAR to better facilitate these conversations constructively and to lead and influence global policy development. The ISDC stressed that the current structure does not fully capitalize on this opportunity. However, if the merger is not pursued, it is crucial to establish mechanisms for close coordination between the two programs to facilitate debate and assist in coordinated policy development.

30.   Additional ISDC feedback included guiding questions and comments on:

    a. <u>Partnerships</u>: Assessing CGIAR's impact and identifying areas for improvement in its partnerships. Has CGIAR achieved the desired impact? If not, where is there scope for improvement?

    b. <u>Comparative Advantage</u>: Conducting multi-level analyses to identify weaknesses and opportunities within CGIAR's approach.

    c. <u>Theory of Change</u>: Clarifying whether the impact areas should be positioned as end goals or aligned with the 2030 targets, and how the Theory of Change relates to the ways of working outlined in the strategy.

    d. <u>Organizational Structure and Ways of Working</u>: Summarizing how each Portfolio component will address the ways of working to ensure a clearer pathway to implementation.

    e. <u>Priority Setting</u>: Clarifying how pooled and bilateral funding will be managed, which work will be prioritized for pooled funding, and identifying any deprioritized areas.

    f. <u>Impact</u>: Highlighting the critical role of partnerships with national agricultural research and extension systems (NARES) in enhancing CGIAR's impact.

    g. <u>Accelerators and Assets</u>: Clarifying their necessity, function, and expected achievements.

    h. <u>Science Program Coordination</u>: Improving coordination among the Science Programs, particularly in relation to policy implications, to ensure consistency and prevent gaps or overlaps.

    i. <u>Support for 2030 Strategy</u>: Ensuring each Science Program clearly articulates how it supports the 2030 Research and Innovation Strategy, allowing for assessment of the quality of science and identification of any potential gaps.

    j. <u>Avoiding Policy Disconnect</u>: Strengthening coordination across Science Programs to prevent any disconnect in policy and maintain public trust in science.

k. <u>Multifunctional Landscapes</u>: Emphasizing the need for multifunctional landscapes to manage complex environments such as forests and water resources, which could also serve as a gateway for engaging with new and existing partners.

31. The ISDC Chair announced a planned side event at CGIAR Science Week featuring the launch of an Agricultural Systems Special Issue on enabling inclusive innovation in agriculture and food systems. He highlighted the strong representation of female and early-career CGIAR authors in the special issue.

32. The EMD invited CGIAR's Science Managing Directors, Appolinaire Djikeng, Johan Swinnen, and Sonja Vermeulen, to share additional comments on the Portfolio development process.

33. The Science Managing Directors thanked the ISDC for its insights and shared their priorities moving forward, including:
   a. Focusing the Portfolio: Centering the Portfolio on five impact areas aligned with megatrends and building the Science Programs around these challenges.
   b. Bilateral and Window 1 Funding: Aligning these funding streams to tell a cohesive and unified story.
   c. Performance and Results Management: Developing a robust system to monitor and assess performance and results.
   d. Partnerships and Collaborations: Strengthening existing partnerships and fostering new, innovative collaborations.
   e. Detailed Science Programs: Transforming the high-level Portfolio Narrative into detailed and actionable Science Programs.
   f. Technical Teams: Establishing teams to ensure consistency in comparative analysis and narrative development across the Portfolio.
   g. Ex-Ante Evaluation and Impact Assessment: Planning for evaluations and assessments to inform future planning efforts.
   h. Accelerators and Scaling: Utilizing Accelerators to ensure that when a proof of concept or innovation is in place, it can be effectively scaled. These Accelerators are designed to interconnect the Science Programs and enhance the ability to deliver on specific challenges within the megatrends.
   i. Governance of Science Programs: Considering any adjustments to the governance structure to support the new ambitious Portfolio structure.
   j. Recognizing Achievements: Highlighting CGIAR's successes through the CGIAR Initiatives Dashboard to integrate achievements into the Portfolio's ongoing development.
   k. Policy Integration: Ensuring that different elements within the Portfolio collaborate effectively, preventing isolated efforts and enhancing the ability to address complex global challenges collectively.

34. At the invitation of the Chair, the Board Vice-Chair provided additional comments, conveying the Board's strong support for the 2025-2030 Portfolio development process and confidence in the EMD and leadership team. He emphasized the need to articulate better CGIAR's partnership strategy within the Portfolio, particularly its

role as a 'network of networks.' This includes enhancing the focus on capacity sharing, connecting local and global challenges, and playing a convening role. Additionally, the strategy should emphasize CGIAR's role in policy and policy research, its capacity as the custodian of global public goods, and its contribution to scientific diplomacy.

35.   The Chair clarified that the goal of the session' was to gain approval for the overall Narrative and strategic direction of the Portfolio.

Key Discussion Areas

36.   Council members expressed appreciation for the presentations and the progress that had been made on the 2025-2030 Portfolio Narrative. Key reflections included:
      Endorsement and Way Forward
   a.   Strongly endorsed the current portfolio framing, calling for swift updates based on inputs, including from the upcoming Science Week.
   b.   Requested clarity on the timeline and engagement opportunities until the final draft in November.
      Portfolio Structure and Integration
   c.   While appreciating the ISDC's recommendation to merge the 'Sustainable Farming' and 'Landscapes' Programs, the consensus among Council members was to maintain them as separate Science Programs. However, the Council agreed that there should be close coordination between the two Programs and that they would be strengthened with the inclusion of forestry and agroforestry, particularly in collaboration with CIFOR-ICRAF.
   d.   Suggested changing back the title of the 'Scaling for Impact' Program to 'Catalyzing Impact' to better reflect its focus on catalyzing impact with partners, rather than solely on scaling, emphasized the importance of communicating that CGIAR's role extends beyond scaling efforts.
   e.   Recommended further elaboration on the 'Landscapes' Program's target innovations and potential synergies with other Programs.
   f.   Called for clarification of CGIAR's high-level mission, specifically how it balances the dual goals of ending hunger and transforming food, land, and water systems, highlighting the need for a clear articulation of this balance within the Portfolio.
   g.   Emphasized the importance of a more explicit focus on water management across the Portfolio.
   h.   Highlighted the relevance of the Gender Accelerator as a critical component in achieving CGIAR's objectives.
   i.   Stressed that integration is key, starting with policy and extending throughout the entire Portfolio, to avoid the risks of siloed approaches, which could be detrimental to achieving CGIAR's objectives.
      Financial and Programmatic Alignment
   j.   Requested greater clarity on mapping Window 3 and bilateral projects to the Portfolio Programs and Accelerators, including management of grants extending beyond 2024.

k. Recommended that Science Programs' budgets be informed by multiple dimensions, including previous funding levels and scientific needs, likely resulting in differently sized programs, and called for scenario-based funding proposals.

l. Suggested prioritizing concrete research and budgets before shifting to more interactive elements within the Portfolio. Additionally, raised a concern about CGIAR's ambitious funding goal of $2 billion annually, emphasizing the importance of having a clear and realistic strategy to achieve this target to avoid the risk of designing a plan that cannot be fully funded.

Prioritization and Comparative Advantage

m. Recommended conducting ranking activities within Programs, cautioning against over-reliance on megatrend analyses that could dilute CGIAR's foundational strengths.

n. Called for multi-level comparative advantage analyses and impact assessment.

CGIAR System Results and Impact

o. Recommended aligning the Results Management Framework (RMF) with the 2030 strategy and emphasized the need for a well-resourced RMF function to effectively articulate CGIAR's impact narrative.

p. Emphasized the importance of a well-resourced RMF to effectively support CGIAR's narrative, ensuring clear and coherent communication. Additionally, stressed the need for coordination mechanisms to link CGIAR's innovations directly to the needs of farmers and communities on the ground.

q. Requested a stronger focus on poverty reduction as an Impact Area, health as a cross-cutting theme, and CGIAR's role as custodian of global public goods.

Regional Engagement and Partnerships

r. Emphasized the need for coordinating mechanisms to link CGIAR innovations to farmers' needs and facilitate action with NARES and regional partners to maximize impact in specific geographies.

s. Expressed strong support for accelerating gender equality and social inclusion and requested more explicit inclusion of agribusiness and private sector engagement in the Portfolio.

t. Called for a clear articulation of CGIAR's partnership strategy, balancing the need for CGIAR visibility with effective partner engagement, emphasizing opportunities to influence global agendas and identify optimal partners for impact.

Emerging and Cross-cutting Themes

u. Called for increased focus on fragile, conflict-affected, and post-conflict zones, as well as developing programs for small island states in the Pacific and Caribbean regions.

v. Highlighted the need to address market concentration issues in agribusiness and consider household economics, targeting innovations that don't require massive investments to reach the poorest.

w. Emphasized the importance of maintaining flexibility and responsiveness to emerging global challenges in the Portfolio.

x. Called for strengthening nutrition as a cross-cutting theme, emphasizing its vital role in health and its integration within the Portfolio, particularly under the 'One Health' approach.

y. Highlighted water's critical role as a cross-cutting issue, linking irrigation, water storage, hydroponics, and soil moisture. Stressed the need for greater integration of water across Science Programs to improve productivity.

Management and Governance

z. Raised questions about management and oversight mechanisms, including leadership of Science Programs, budgetary authority, assurance processes, and the EMD's role in oversight. Additionally, inquired about the implementation of yearly audits and regular reviews for each Science Program, Accelerator, and Asset Program.

aa. Called for a clear strategy to manage risks associated with the ambitious research agenda and fundraising goals, stressing the importance of ensuring that all Science Programs contribute financially to common enablers that support CGIAR's collective goals.

bb. Requested clarification on the transition plan from current initiatives to the 2025-2030 Portfolio structure.

cc. Emphasized the importance of robust governance mechanisms, including management, oversight, and auditing while ensuring quality scientific assessment across the Portfolio.

dd. Highlighted the need for cross-fertilization between Science Programs to identify overlaps, gaps, and synergies, stressing the importance of making policy a cross-cutting theme across the Portfolio not limited to a single Program.

37. In response, CGIAR leadership reaffirmed their commitment to incorporating feedback, emphasizing prioritization, comparative advantage, and expansion into new sectors such as nutrition and health, in close collaboration with partners. They committed to presenting a transition plan and governance solutions by September, ensuring the safeguarding of key research areas during the transition to the 2025-2030 Portfolio structure.

Session Outcome

38. Decision SC20-DP3: Endorsement of the CGIAR 2025-2030 Portfolio Narrative
The System Council endorsed the CGIAR 2025-2030 Portfolio Narrative as the set of strategic priorities for CGIAR Research and Innovation, pursuant to Article 6.1 a) iii. of the CGIAR System Framework, and provided guidance to inform the next phase of design of the Portfolio.

Agenda Item 5: Round Table - CGIAR Lessons from National Agricultural Systems

39. The Chair opened the session on food security and CGIAR's strategic objectives and invited the EMD to moderate the panel, which included Vinicius Guimarães (Embrapa), Muhammad Ibrahim (IICA), and Garba Sharubutu (Sub-Sahara Africa Representative).

40. Key points from the panelists' responses to questions on food security, climate change resilience, and CGIAR collaborations included:

   e. Food Security Approaches — Emphasis on availability, accessibility, stability, quality, and sustainability of safe, nutritious food:
      i. Initiatives include new crop varieties, reducing waste, digital agriculture, soil health, and intra-regional trade.
      ii. Focus on family agriculture and policies to stimulate local production.

   f. Climate Change Resilience — Tailoring regional solutions, developing drought-tolerant crops and bio-inputs:
      i. Promoting climate-smart practices, policy engagement, and private sector collaboration.
      ii. Implementing integrated systems and early warning for climate-related issues.

   g. Enhancing CGIAR Collaborations — Building strategic alliances, scaling technologies, and strengthening South-South collaborations:
      i. Emphasizing monitoring, evaluation, and capacity building.
      ii. Leveraging CGIAR's global mandate to facilitate knowledge transfer.
      iii. Utilizing CGIAR's extensive germplasm collections for crop improvement programs.

Key Discussion Areas

41. Council participants engaged in dialogue with the panelists, focusing on several key areas:

   AI and Digital Transformation
   a. Noted varying levels of AI implementation across institutions, ranging from early exploration to active capacity building.
   b. Highlighted Embrapa's ongoing exploration of AI tools in forestry and digital agriculture.
   c. Emphasized IICA's efforts in building capacity and sharing information on AI applications in food systems.
   d. Recognized Nigeria's initiatives in utilizing AI for soil analysis and crop variety selection.

   Addressing Emergency Food Security
   e. Stressed the importance of consistent, long-term policies to support food security and agricultural development.
   f. Highlighted the need to overcome political challenges that can disrupt agricultural progress.
   g. Emphasized the value of integrating programs like school feeding with family farming to enhance food security.
   h. Recognized the importance of addressing food waste alongside efforts to increase production.

   Strengthening Research-Education-Extension Linkages
   i. Called for increased collaboration between research institutions, educational bodies, and extension services.
   j. Emphasized the need for specialized training and professionalization of extension workers.

k. Suggested the development of clear impact indicators to measure the effectiveness of research-extension linkages.
l. Proposed the creation of 'teaching hospital-like' environments for agricultural graduates to gain practical experience.

<u>Enhancing Collaboration and Capacity Building</u>

m. Suggested joint capacity sharing programs between CGIAR and national/regional institutions like Embrapa.
n. Emphasized the importance of developing regional capacities for NARES, particularly in smaller countries.
o. Highlighted the potential for South-South collaboration in agricultural research and development.
p. Called for increased focus on management research alongside technological innovations in capacity building efforts.

42. The Co-Chair thanked the panelists and the EMD for the engaging roundtable.

Science Highlight 2— Leveraging Partnerships for Impact

43. Continuing the Council's showcase of CGIAR Centers' scientific achievements and ongoing initiatives, the Co-Chair invited the EMD to introduce the second presentation, emphasizing partnerships' critical role in CGIAR's work for developing, validating, and scaling impactful technologies across Africa and beyond.

44. Baboucarr Manneh, DG of AfricaRice and CGIAR Regional Director-West and Central, presented successful partnership examples:
   a. Integrated Rice-Fish Farming System (IRFFS) initiative with WorldFish in Liberia, increasing rice yields and fish consumption, enhancing food security and nutrition.
   b. Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation (TAAT) project, involving multiple CGIAR Centers and partners across 34 sub-Saharan countries, significantly increasing farmer incomes and food production.
   c. Accelerating Impacts of CGIAR Climate Research for Africa (AICCRA) initiative, scaling climate-smart agriculture to millions of smallholder farmers.
   d. ILRI's collaboration with advanced research institutes and national partners to develop solutions for East Coast Fever in livestock.

Key Discussion Areas
45. A brief discussion followed the presentation, highlighting implementation complexities:
   e. Early research results suggest overall emission reductions in rice-fish farming due to decreased fertilizer use, with reduced mosquito larvae as an added health benefit. Further quantification of emissions is ongoing to confirm these initial findings.
   f. Successful CGIAR Center collaboration example: Global Rice Breeding Program partnership between AfricaRice, IRRI, CIAT, and national partners.

g.   Acknowledgment of regional variations in post-harvest rice biomass management, ongoing research for sustainable practices, and mechanization constraints in Sub-Saharan Africa.

46.   The Co-Chair expressed gratitude for the informative presentation.

Agenda Item 7: Update on the Implementation of the Integrated Governance Arrangements

47.   At the invitation of the Chair, Council Representative Robert Bertram (USA) co-chaired the session, inviting the DEMD to share overall framing remarks on the progress in implementing CGIAR's integrated partnership governance reforms as agreed to in the Unified Governance Review (UGR) Memorandum recommendations.

48.   The DEMD, Guillaume Grosso, outlined three pillars of implementation:
a.   Pillar One: The transition from the System Board to the Integrated Partnership Board (IPB) is progressing, with the nomination process well underway.
b.   Pillar Two: The ICI (Integrated, Coordinated, and/or Independent) Forum has been established to systematically approach integration across CGIAR Centers.
c.   Pillar Three: The revision of CGIAR's governing instruments (Charter and Framework) is under review by stakeholders and the initial draft of the Internal Rules Framework (IRF) is currently under internal review alongside the work of the ICI Forum.

49.   The Nominating Committee of the System Council (NCSC) Co-Chair, Christophe Larose, reported on the progress in the IPB member recruitment process, highlighting three main points:
a.   The tight timeline the Committee has been working with, along with delays experienced during the process.
b.   The Committee hired a search firm to assist with recruitment and has shortlisted 23 candidates from a long list of 70, narrowed down from approximately 500 applicants.
c.   The proposed revised timeline takes into account the impact on the Centers if an IPB is not in place.

50.   He presented two action requests to the Council. First, he noted the NCSC's request for the Council to review and approve the proposed revised timeline for IPB membership decisions, which includes finalizing the slate of nominees by Monday, 22 July 2024, and holding a virtual, extraordinary Council meeting on Wednesday, 24 July 2024, to consider endorsing the slate. Second, the NCSC sought the Council's approval to proceed with the selection of an external firm to review the remuneration (honorarium) of the Integrated Partnership Board.

51.   ICI Forum Co-Convenor, Juan Lucas Restrepo, emphasized the importance of integration and coordination within CGIAR, highlighting the organization's strong history of coordination and the need for ongoing efforts. Key points included:

a. The ICI Forum's Terms of Reference and guiding principles have been agreed upon.

b. Dynamic mapping is underway to identify both low-hanging fruit and new opportunities for integration.

c. Six priority business cases for integration have been identified: internal audit, external audit, ethics and business conduct, cybersecurity, intellectual property, and international staff recruitment. Progress is being made on these cases, with champions from various Centers leading the efforts, and proposals expected to be presented for endorsement at the next Council meeting.

d. The Forum has also developed three white papers based on recent experiences, ensuring that these business cases are well-informed and result in the best possible solutions.

e. Common guidelines and ways of working are being established, even if some business processes or services remain independent.

52. The DEMD provided an update on efforts to align CGIAR's governing instruments with the integrated partnership governance recommendations:

a. A Governance Working Group, comprising senior legal and governance staff from Centers, is finalizing amendments to the Charter and Framework. To meet the ambitious timeline, their focus is solely on making governance changes in alignment with the Unified Governance Review (UGR) CGIAR Memorandum on the Implementation of Governance Recommendations.

b. Following an in-depth consultation process that yielded 188 submissions of substantive input, the Working Group is incorporating feedback and preparing a document explaining the changes, including a table mapping the specific recommendation provisions to the proposed changes.

53. Center DGs in attendance shared reflections on the ICI process:

a. Stressed that decision-making will be guided by a team of specialists, through evidence-based analysis, which is focused on cost-effectiveness, value for money, and risk management, as well as supported by communities of practice across the system.

b. Emphasized the Center-owned ICI process to bring the Integration Framework Agreement (IFA) to life, in a structured approach that ensures transparency and sustained momentum. Highlighted efforts to identify and scale 'beacons of excellence' within Centers, identify and promote excellent practices across the system, with clear rules and responsibilities, ensuring that resources are well-managed and tracked, enabling effective oversight.

c. Emphasized the need for robust business and operational cases, supported by governance frameworks that clearly define liabilities, accountabilities, and responsibilities.

d. Highlighted the importance of leveraging existing investments, creating strong business partnerships, and fostering a culture of entrepreneurship through scalable business cases that can be shared across Centers.

e. Reported progress on integrating audit and ethics functions, noting the importance of a coherent approach in these areas and the need to build momentum and confidence for more complex integrations later.

f.   Noted that over the past few years, staff have been preparing for global coordination and consolidation efforts. They are now psychologically ready and have high expectations for these changes. Additionally, bilateral discussions could improve efficiencies, especially in areas like security.

54.   The Vice Chair of the System Board provided a progress update from the Joint System Council-System Board Working Group. He noted that the group, comprising two System Board and two System Council representatives, was tasked with clarifying the roles and responsibilities between the Council and the future IPB.   Key points included:

a.   They proposed a revised Framework to clearly define the responsibilities of the Council and IPB, ensuring that each body leverages its strengths to enhance the partnership's effectiveness. The Framework, as outlined in the Working Group's proposal, includes clear decision-making roles for the Council and IPB to avoid duplication and ensures accountability, based on transparency and trust.

b.   The Framework covers key areas of CGIAR's work, including vision & strategy, governance, engagement, resource mobilization, financial & programmatic performance, and evaluation.

c.   A fundamental principle of the Framework is that there should be only one final decision-maker for any role or responsibility, ensuring clear lines of accountability. This empowers both the SC and IPB to perform effectively, each with a clear comparative advantage in its respective roles

d.   They outlined a process with three key roles: 'recommend' (gather facts, prepare proposals), 'concur' (review proposals and agree to advance them), and 'approve' (make the final decisions and be accountable for them). Importantly, when concurrence is required, a proposal cannot proceed to the approval stage without agreement from the concurring party. However, the final decision and full accountability rests with the designated approving body, ensuring clear responsibility for outcomes.

e.   To explain the relationship between the Council and IPB, they used a parliamentary metaphor: the Council as an 'upper house' overseeing overall vision and strategy, and the IPB as a 'lower house' overseeing management and execution.

f.   They noted that a 'Summary of reflections from a joint System Council-System Board Working Group' had been shared as a background document with the Council and requested that the Council members spend some time after the meeting considering and providing feedback.

55.   Due to time constraints, the Council agreed to defer members' reflections and the discussion of Agenda Item 7 until Day 2.

Agenda Item 8: Closed Session

56.   The Council entered a closed session to discuss two confidential matters. Pursuant to article 4.3 b and d of the Rules of Procedure of the System Council, the Council Chair allowed the attendance of the Council invited guests representing Japan and

Mexico to the closed session. At the request of management, a consultant was allowed to present to the Council on the first topic to be discussed.

Session Outcome

57. Decision SC20-DP4: Decision taken in closed session
The System Council approved the utilization of the Liquidity and Stabilization Fund for the completion of the One CGIAR transition process in support of the CGIAR 2025-30 Portfolio, up to a ceiling of US$ 8 million. As a matter of record, the System Council's decision was taken in closed session, pursuant to the powers of the Council set out in Article 7.9 of the CGIAR System Framework.

58. It was noted that there should be an opportunity to replenish the funds drawn from the Liquidity and Stabilization Fund in future years.

Day 2
Agenda Item 8: (Continuation of Closed Session)

59. The Council began Day 2 by continuing the prior day's closed session.

Session Outcome

60. Action SC20-AP2: Risk and oversight integration action plan
The System Council, with a shared vision for the future of CGIAR as an integrated partnership, underscores the critical and urgent need for the integration of the following functions across the System: Internal Controls & Risk Management, Internal Audit, External Audit, and Ethics & Business Conduct. Integration of these functions is a key step that needs to be undertaken before the end of December 2024.

The internal audit function, in particular, must be independent from management, in line with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditor.

The System Council asks the EMD, working with the ICI Forum, to submit a time-bound risk and oversight integration action plan on internal audit, external audit and ethics & business conduct to the System Board by 24 July 2024. The Council further asks the System Board to review and approve the action plan and submit it to the System Council for decision by 31 July 2024. The Council asks the Integrated Partnership Board (once appointed) to report on progress of the implementation of the Action Plan by the System as a whole and by individual Centers by the end of September 2024 and at each of its System Council meetings starting in December 2024.

The internal controls & risk function will be added to the ICI Forum priorities to complement the work on internal audit, external audit and ethics & business

conduct. The System Council asks the EMD, working with the ICI Forum, to submit an updated risk and oversight integration action plan that incorporates the internal controls & risk management aspects to the Integrated Partnership Board by the end of October 2024. The IPB will submit this action plan for decision by the System Council at its December 2024 meeting.

Agenda Item 7: (Continuation of Update on the Implementation of the Integrated Governance Arrangements)

61. The Council Chair opened Day 2's open session and invited Robert Bertram to continue leading the discussion on implementing integrated governance arrangements.

62. Robert Bertram called for comments on the updates presented at the end of Day 1, noting significant progress and a pending action point request from the NCSC.

Key Discussion Areas

63. Council members expressed appreciation for the presentations and updates. Key reflection themes included:
    Pillar One: Transition to Integrated Partnership Board (IPB)
    a. Emphasized the need to clarify the sequencing of changes to governing instruments relative to IPB nominations, ensuring that appointments may proceed but tenures begin only after the amended Charter and Framework are adopted.
    b. Stressed the expectation that the NCSC will present a proposal for performance assessment of IPB members by the next Council meeting.
    c. Supported seeking external assistance to review IPB member remuneration, requesting transparency by circulating current remuneration levels for all governance bodies.
    d. Highlighted the need to explore new ways of working for the expanded IPB to ensure strategic and agile operations amid the anticipated workload.
    e. Appreciated the clarification of roles and responsibilities between the Council and System Board, with further clarification requested on information flow to ensure sufficient oversight without overburdening the system.
    f. Raised questions about the distinction between resource mobilization and fundraising within the IPB and Council responsibilities.

    Pillar Two: ICI (Integrated, Coordinated, and/or Independent) Process
    g. Inquired about efforts to create a 'One CGIAR' culture across all staff levels to facilitate integration, with the EMD highlighting efforts to increase value for employees, improve transparency, and collaborate closely with DGs as a global leadership team to promote a unified culture throughout the organization.
    h. Expressed concerns over the slow pace of implementation and its potential impact on funding if progress is not demonstrated. Supported prioritizing work within the ICI Forum and providing regular updates to the Council. Emphasized

the need for better communication channels to ensure transparency and visibility of progress.

i. Reaffirmed that integration should be the default approach, with any need for coordination or independence requiring strong justification.

j. Urged integrating key functions, such as high-standard policies to ensure compliance with legal requirements, which is critical for maintaining contributions to the trust fund. Raised concerns that delays in integrating key functions — including internal audit, external audit, ethics and business conduct, internal controls, and risk management — could lead to financial and reputational risks, potentially jeopardizing continued funding or new agreements.

k. Reiterated the Council's previous request (SC19), for a time-bound action plan and a clear timeline for implementing the UGR recommendations. This plan should include accountabilities, deliverables, and costing, with a concrete list of integration activities from the ICI Forum to be completed by December 2024. Proposed an additional virtual Council meeting in September/October to monitor progress.

l. Stressed the urgency of establishing integrated oversight functions aligned with international 'gold standards' by the end of 2024, cautioning of potential negative consequences for funding if progress is not made. Highlighted the need for compliance with international standards for the professional practice of internal auditors, including ensuring functional independence.

m. Underscored the importance of transparency and accountability for the partnership's success. Supported the EMD's ambition to reach $2 billion and emphasized that achieving this goal requires a robust oversight and assurance mechanism to build trust among stakeholders.

Pillar Three: Governance Instrument Revisions

n. Stressed the need for transparency and robust oversight mechanisms to build trust among stakeholders.

o. Inquiries about the role and relationship of the General Assembly of Centers (GAC) to the Council and IPB.

p. Reiterated support for a comparison table of changes in the Charter and Framework documents against the UGR recommendations to aid understanding of modifications.

q. Suggested involving the Assurance Oversight Committee (AOC) in ongoing integration discussions to provide guidance and oversight.

64. The Chair emphasized that transparency and accountability are essential to the partnership's success. While supporting EMD's goal to reach $2 billion, the Chair stressed that achieving this requires a robust oversight and assurance mechanism to build stakeholder trust. The integration of internal controls, risk management, internal and external audits, and ethics and business conduct functions is critical. A time-bound action plan with a clear timeline for implementation by 2025 is necessary to meet international standards. The System Council and IPB are committed to providing the resources and support needed to move forward with this integration, which is key to unlocking additional resources and reducing reliance on bilateral funding, thereby strengthening the partnership's overall dynamics.

65.   The System Board Vice Chair added that the IPB would serve as the single source of accountability on behalf of the integrated partnership, ensuring that all quality standards are upheld.

Session Outcome

66.   Action SC20-AP1: Requests to the Nominations Committee of the System Council
The System Council requested the Nominations Committee of the System Council to:
   - Operate in accordance with its proposed, revised timeline for decision-making on Integrated Partnership Board (IPB) membership, including:
     o   a revised delivery date of a slate of IPB nominees of Monday 22 July 2024; and
     o   a proposal to convene a virtual, extraordinary System Council meeting session to decide on the slate of nominees, on Wednesday, 24 July 2024; and
   - Proceed with the selection of an external firm to be contracted by the System Organization in line with its procurement and contracting policies to review the remuneration (honorarium) of the Integrated Partnership Board members.

Science Highlight 3: What We Mean by Innovation in CGIAR

67.   The Chair invited Simon Heck, DG of the International Potato Center (CIP), to present on innovation across CGIAR.

68.   The DG emphasized that innovation in CGIAR involves a systematic process to catalyze impact from research, targeting well-defined, impactful challenges through equitable partnerships. Key examples of innovation across CGIAR included:
   a.   Livestock systems: Tailored solutions for diverse livestock systems.
   b.   Agronomy Science Scaling and Acceleration Platform (ASSAP): A multi-Center initiative that integrates research and delivery, explicitly defining roles and governance models with partners for delivery.
   c.   Program for Seed System Innovations for Vegetatively-propagated crops (VPCs) in Africa: Addressing complex challenges by linking technology development, market incentives, enterprise capacity, and regulatory systems for seed systems for crops such as sweet potato, cassava, and yam.
   d.   Pooling resources for innovation: Collaborating with private sector companies like HZPC (the world's largest potato seed company) to accelerate the development and adoption of tropically-adapted potato varieties, including benefit-sharing mechanisms.
   e.   Next-level breeding for root, tuber, and banana crops: A collective effort between several CGIAR Centers and funders to developing hybrid varieties of these crops for the first time in partner countries, enabling NARES leadership within CGIAR-NARES breeding networks.

69.   Simon Heck proposed three areas of strategic focus for the 2025-2030 Portfolio to enhance impact:

   a.   Leveraging insights and methods from management science to identify and address actionable challenges.

   b.   Strengthening partnerships to mobilize innovation capacity, positioning CGIAR as both an innovator and a connector.

   c.   Catalyzing impact at scale, aligning with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and poverty reduction goals, and involving scaling partners early in the innovation process.

70.   The DG concluded by emphasizing the need to shift from simply counting innovations to strengthening CGIAR's and its partners' capacity to innovate.

71.   The Chair commended the presentation, noting the clarity in defining various roles for CGIAR. He highlighted the incredible potential of artificial intelligence (AI) in accelerating breeding results, noting that it could reduce timelines from 12 to 8 years, and potentially even further. He emphasized that AI is revolutionizing both genetic sequencing and phenotyping, allowing scientists to achieve faster and more accurate results. This, he remarked, is a game-changer, enhancing traditional methods and generating widespread excitement across CGIAR's innovation landscape.

Agenda Item 9: Update on Gender in Research

72.   At the invitation of the Co-Chair, Nicoline de Haan, Director of the GENDER Impact Platform, provided a comprehensive update on gender research within CGIAR.

73.   The Director highlighted that CGIAR can make significant strides in improving gender equality and social inclusion by following these steps:

   a.   <u>Key Highlights:</u>

   i.   Data Collection and Analysis: Gathering detailed data on women's and young people's participation in agricultural activities.

   ii.   Setting Clear Goals: Defining specific, measurable goals for reducing the gender gap and increasing opportunities for young people.

   iii.   Implementing Programs: Developing and executing programs that support women's and youth's involvement in agriculture, such as training, access to resources, and leadership opportunities.

   iv.   Monitoring and Evaluation: Continuously assessing the impact of these programs to ensure effectiveness and making necessary adjustments.

   v.   Community Engagement: Involving local communities in the process to ensure that the initiatives are culturally appropriate and widely accepted.

   b.   <u>Social Inclusion and Research Framework:</u>

   vi.   Ensuring Inclusion: Ensuring all individuals have a voice in society and can live with dignity.

   vii.   Investigating Inequalities: Investigating informal and formal, individual and systemic shocks, vulnerabilities, and structural inequalities through research.

        viii.   Focusing on Empowerment: Emphasizing economic empowerment, voice, and agency in research and practice.

c.   <u>Gender Equality and Inclusion (GEI) Accelerator for 2025-2030 Portfolio:</u>

      ix.   Leading Innovation and Research: Leading innovation and research while building coherence across the new Portfolio.

      x.   Engaging Early and Often: Involving the Accelerator early and frequently to serve both outward and inward-facing functions.

      xi.   Developing Innovative Approaches: Developing and testing innovative GEI approaches through a dedicated research lab.

      xii.   Leveraging Integrated Work: Leveraging integrated GEI work across CGIAR and synthesizing learnings.

     xiii.   Focusing on Impact and Capacity: Focusing on impact assessment, policy influence, and capacity development in collaboration with CGIAR's Capacity Sharing for Development (CapSha) mechanism.

d.   <u>Gender Transformative Approaches (GTA):</u>

     xiv.   Understanding and Addressing Inequalities: Understanding and addressing social inequalities through community engagement and iterative processes.

     xv.   Implementing GTAs: Implementing GTAs, as illustrated by a detailed example from Ghana, which involved raising awareness of gender inequalities, improving women's access to resources and opportunities in the livestock sector, engaging men as allies, and providing gender training for government animal-health service providers.

     xvi.   Measuring Transformative Change: In partnership with IFAD, FAO, and other organizations, developing guidelines for measuring gender transformative change in food security, nutrition, and sustainable agriculture contexts.

e.   <u>Expanded Mandate and Collaborations:</u>

     xvii.   Linking with Other Programs: Linking with programs on youth, AI and digital inequalities, and financial inclusion.

    xviii.   Leading Thought Leadership: Hosting upcoming GENDER Impact Platform thought-leadership events on gender research and gender and extension.

74.   The Director acknowledged the vibrant CGIAR gender research community and highlighted the growing influence of CGIAR-trained gender researchers in key positions at organizations such as UN Women and USAID.

Key Discussion Areas

75.   Council participants praised the progress in gender research and the efforts of CGIAR's gender researchers and allies. Key reflection themes included:
<u>Portfolio Integration and Implementation:</u>

a.   Inquired about the strategy to integrate Gender Transformative Approaches (GTA) into the 2025-2030 Portfolio's eight Science Programs. The Director noted that gender researchers in the Centers are responsible for advancing the GTA agenda.

b. Questioned how grassroots innovations, often generated by women, can be incorporated into the GEI Accelerator's research. The Director mentioned an upcoming toolkit designed to support this process.

c. Recommended consistently reflecting the Accelerator's work across the new Portfolio's Science Programs and clarifying how current Initiatives, such as on Gender Equality, Gender and Breeding, and the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI), will be integrated. The Director confirmed that these initiatives will be incorporated, and that strategic planning is underway.

d. Inquired about the level of technical expertise across CGIAR to deliver high-quality outcomes and scrutinize gender research quality. The Director acknowledged this as an area for improvement and emphasized the importance of building stronger teams and enhancing capacity.

e. Suggested incorporating additional thematic areas such as disaster risk reduction and the use of disaggregated data by sex, age, and disability (SAD). There was also emphasis on integrating recommendations from the GENDER Platform evaluation into the new Accelerator proposal. The Director confirmed that the GENDER Platform evaluation recommendations are under consideration in the Portfolio's development.

Policy, Approach, Quality Assurance:

f. Called for a high-level CGIAR gender policy to provide a robust foundation, allowing for flexibility and integration, and emphasizing gender equality as a human right central to CGIAR's goals. The Director agreed on the importance of such a policy and agreed that good research must be gender inclusive.

g. Emphasized the importance of methodologies that ensure researchers listen to communities rather than imposing preconceived notions, and inquired how this approach could lead to scalability. The Director acknowledged the complexity of this challenge and emphasized the critical role of gender researchers working alongside technical scientists. She also highlighted the importance of applying the GEI social inclusion toolkit to guide this process. The Director agreed that while it is essential to gather insightful examples from small communities, the ultimate goal is to scale these approaches effectively to reach millions of women and youth globally, ensuring that CGIAR's impact is broad and meaningful.

h. Expressed strong support for a focus on gender, emphasizing the importance of foundational well-being, economic opportunities, and women's leadership and empowerment. There were inquiries about balancing these three dimensions, addressing trade-offs and resource allocation in research. The Director agreed on the necessity of a comprehensive approach, highlighting ongoing efforts to integrate various research areas within CGIAR, emphasizing the importance of voice and leadership, and noting that all three dimensions are essential for advancing the system as a whole.

i. Inquired about who is responsible for ensuring high-quality outcomes across the new Science Programs, especially given the complexity and technical expertise required for research on gender and social norms and women's agency. The Director acknowledged that currently a single science quality

officer on the gender team oversees this area, and that as the complexity of gender research grows this will need to be evaluated.

<u>Collaborations</u>

j. Emphasized CGIAR's unique position as a partner in gender research innovation, highlighting the importance of being responsive to those who are driving societal change and identifying opportunities for partner contributions. The Director acknowledged this perspective, noting that CGIAR aims to work in equitable partnerships and help others improve their gender approaches.

k. Called for clear coordination between the GEI Accelerator and other Accelerators and Science Programs, emphasizing that coordination is crucial for integrating gender-transformative approaches across the entire portfolio. The Director highlighted the need to pursue synergies with the other Accelerators to maximize impact and ensure that gender considerations are embedded in every aspect of CGIAR's research Science Programs.

l. Inquired about whether the rigorous gender transformational research going forward will be conducted solely within CGIAR or in collaboration with other international organizations, particularly the United Nations and FAO, given FAO's strong gender programming. The Director affirmed that CGIAR works closely with FAO and other international organizations such as WFP, UN Women, and IFAD, leveraging their implementation data to enhance research outcomes while acknowledging the need to build capacity to sustain these collaborations.

Agenda Item 10: Update on Gender, Diversity, and Inclusion in CGIAR

76. At the invitation of the Co-Chair, Lavanya Shrinagesh, Director of Gender Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Culture, provided a comprehensive update on CGIAR's gender, diversity, and inclusion (GDI) initiatives and key achievements in 2023, 2024, and future plans.

77. Key highlights from the presentation included:

a. Implementation of the approved GDI Action Plan in partnership with CGIAR Centers, focusing on inclusive leadership, workplace culture, diverse representation, and accountability.

b. Opportunities for mentoring within CGIAR, emphasizing that mentoring is not only about career advancement but is also creating a developmental culture at CGIAR. This approach is designed to support professional and personal goals while supporting career development. Additionally, she highlighted the positive feedback on the Wellness at CGIAR campaign, which aims to enhance well-being across the organization.

c. Notable achievements in 2023, including: The scaling of the Respect at Workplace and Inclusive Leadership training, which touched more than 1000 staff across multiple global HQ's. The launch of the first ever CGIAR enterprise-wide engagement survey, which yielded a 58% response rate and noted that 85% of respondents would recommend CGIAR as a good place to work, placing CGIAR ahead of its peers and equal to those in the upper quartile of the benchmark for this key indicator. The Inclusive Workplace Awards with over

150 nominations across Centers, and a workforce representing 126 nationalities across 71 countries.

    d.   Advancement of workplace GDI through inclusive recruitment processes, integration of GDI in key projects, and supporting learning and development initiatives.

    e.   Improvements in gender balance, particularly within the Senior Leadership Team, where representation increased from 30% to 39%. While progress at the leadership level is significant and impactful, she also noted that the overall gender balance has remained fairly unchanged despite the inclusion of ICRISAT in the dataset. Additionally, a slight decrease in female post-docs and senior scientists was identified, which will be addressed moving forward.

    f.   The GDI Data Dashboard remains openly accessible, sharing progress on key dimensions and enabling data-led action planning with Centers.

    g.   Diversity at CGIAR is approached as multidisciplinary, multicultural, and multigenerational, with efforts to capture and understand all staff through various data tracking methods.

    h.   Engagement surveys have provided insights into the experiences of persons with disabilities at CGIAR, leading to considerations for employee resource groups to enhance support systems.

78.   Additional initiatives included:

    a.   Launch of a mentorship program and 'Connect at CGIAR' initiative to foster cross-Center engagement.

    b.   Implementation of a Wellness at CGIAR campaign.

    c.   Introduction of an Allyship program and bite-size learning modules for leadership development.

    d.   Plans for scaling up respect at workplace and inclusive leadership training across regions include the release of new guidelines on inclusive holidays, inclusive language, and flexible workplaces. Additionally, a focus is being placed on updating exit interview policies based on insights from the engagement survey and GDI data collection.

    e.   By the end of this year, CGIAR will also launch a leadership development program, centered on shared leadership competencies and methodologies.

    f.   Development of a culture framework and action plan, championed by the EMD and DEMD.

79.   Council members expressed appreciation for the comprehensive report and emphasized the importance of regular GDI updates. Key reflections included:

    a.   Survey Results Interpretation: Members noted apparent contradictions in the engagement survey results, such as high overall satisfaction (85% engaged) alongside concerns about work-life balance and mental health prioritization. The Director clarified that the presentation provided a high-level overview, and that deeper analysis aimed to identify areas for improvement rather than just highlight positive aspects.

    b.   Disability Representation: Concerns were raised about the low number of staff identifying as living with a disability (87 out of 9000). The Director

acknowledged this was CGIAR's first time collecting such data and recognized the need for campaigns to destigmatize disability and encourage disclosure.

c. Integration with One CGIAR: Members strongly suggested linking GDI to the ICI processes and One CGIAR culture development, particularly in recruitment and ethics and business conduct. The Director highlighted the development of a culture framework and action plan as key elements in fostering behavioral change, emphasizing that changing organizational culture requires constant reinforcement and messaging.

d. Leadership Diversity: Concerns were expressed about the need for more female leaders at the DG level. The Director noted progress, with two female DGs currently compared to none in the previous year and expressed confidence in further improving this balance. She emphasized the importance of considering both gender balance and broader diversity factors in leadership appointments.

e. Comprehensive Diversity Data: Members requested data on staff from least developed countries (LDCs) and Sub-Saharan Africa. The Director confirmed that detailed regional representation data would be available on the updated GDI dashboard.

f. Ongoing Process: The Director emphasized that GDI is a continuous process requiring ongoing effort to become integral to CGIAR's DNA. She stressed the importance of embedding GDI in all aspects of organizational operations and decision-making.

g. Resource Allocation: Members expressed hope that CGIAR would adequately resource GDI functions, particularly to address wellbeing and accountability issues.

80. Due to time constraints, the Co-Chair recommended that Council members send any additional questions to the Council Secretariat for the Director to respond to.

81. The Council Chair concluded the session by thanking the Director for the presentation, acknowledging the progress made while emphasizing that significant work remains. He reaffirmed the Council's continued support for these important efforts in advancing gender, diversity, and inclusion within CGIAR.

Agenda Item 6: Study of CGIAR's Strategic Assets

82. The Chair introduced the session, highlighting the importance of addressing and aligning the strategic assets within CGIAR, which have been somewhat neglected despite their significance. Some assets are over 50 years old, and given the rapidly evolving research environment, the current assets across Centers may not meet future needs. DGs are grappling with funding challenges, forcing them to be creative in sustaining a billion-dollar organization, which is not ideal.

83. The Chair proposed the Council take time to understand the full range of assets, including genebanks, models like those at IFPRI, laboratories, greenhouses, and particularly the valuable land managed by Centers. While acknowledging the political sensitivity of these discussions, the Chair emphasized the necessity of addressing these assets and underscored the importance of having this conversation.

84. At the invitation of the Chair, the EMD provided an overview of the study's objectives to assist CGIAR leadership in making informed decisions about investments, resource allocation, and operational efficiencies to enhance impact and mission delivery. She noted a two-phased approach, with an initial focus on a rapid, qualitative assessment of investment opportunities, followed by a more comprehensive analysis of asset utilization, management, and funding.

85. The Partner and Managing Director of Boston Consulting Group presented a summary of the first Phase of CGIAR's Global Assets Study. Key findings included:
    a. **Two Main Gaps:** The study identified two main gaps: (i) an ongoing maintenance funding gap, and (ii) a debate on which assets should be upgraded. The study also emphasized the importance of reaching a consensus across Centers on the criteria for asset upgrades.
    b. **Inconsistent Cost Accounting:** Centers account for the costs of maintaining assets differently, making it challenging to develop a consistent approach to maintenance and upgrades.
    c. **Opportunities for Improvement:** The study identified over 60 opportunities for improvement, with 20 prioritized and 8 recommended for immediate action. These opportunities include further utilization of assets, potential consolidation, and renewable energy investments. Additionally, while the value of land was noted as important, it was not fully explored in this study and could be assessed in the future.
    d. **Recommendations:**
        i. Establishing a clear distinction between strategic and non-strategic assets.
        ii. Developing an improved cost methodology that can be consistently applied across all Centers.
        iii. Creating a central assets repository and inventory management tool to ensure comprehensive asset management.
        iv. Exploring alternative sources and models of funding to address gaps in asset maintenance and upgrades.
        v. Deciding which assets need to be funded and how this decision will be made.
        vi. Determining what constitutes an upgrade and deciding on the appropriate level of utilization of the assets.
    e. **Phase-Two Proposal:** While acknowledging that no single Center is representative of all Centers, for the second phase of the study the consultant recommended conducting a deep dive into one Center, aiming to develop a detailed blueprint for efficient asset management, which can be adapted and applied across all Centers. The blueprint would also aim to help align asset management strategies with CGIAR's 2030 research goals.

Key Discussion Areas

86. The Chair highlighted the value of the study's conceptual approach, stressing the importance of defining what is needed by 2030 and how assets are used and shared with NARES partners.

87. The Council expressed appreciation for taking a holistic approach to assessing CGIAR's assets. Key reflection themes included:

     Methodology and Approach

     a. Stressed the need to clearly define strategic assets and determine what portion of associated costs will be covered.

     b. Recommended a follow-up study with clear definitions and priorities, focusing on cost optimization, updated data assets, and reducing overhead and indirect cost recovery rates.

     c. Highlighted the distinction between qualitative and quantitative aspects of the study, advocating for an integrated cost accounting exercise across all Centers. This would require cooperation from DGs and Centers to provide a quantitative assessment of asset values, while a qualitative case study approach across multiple Centers would capture the diversity in asset management and utilization.

     d. Called for a deeper assessment and strategic prioritization of assets for the next business cycle, recognizing that the current funding model, with 70% of funding from bilateral sources, affects asset management decisions.

     e. Suggested exploring land and intellectual property as potential revenue-generating assets. However, caution was advised regarding conflicts with host country agreements, such as restrictions on selling crops, underscoring the need for careful consideration of revenue generation within the constraints faced by the Centers.

     Synergies and Efficiency

     f. Emphasized the importance of prioritization based on CGIAR's 2030 (or 2050) goals, working backwards to identify required technologies and assets.

     g. Questioned the need for external consultants, proposing that internal expertise be leveraged to identify essential assets — with a suggestion to gather data internally before proceeding to a consultant-led second phase.

     Genebanks

     h. Stressed the importance of protecting Genebanks as CGIAR's most important strategic assets, recommending they remain centrally managed given their status as critical global public goods under the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.

     Financial Considerations

     i. Reiterated that 70% of funding comes from bilateral sources, which significantly impacts asset management strategies.

     j. Emphasized the need for Centers to continue applying full cost recovery practices, while clarifying what constitutes strategic assets and determining the portion of costs to be covered.

88. The Council agreed on the need for a second phase to address the diverse viewpoints on how to better manage assets. Members agreed to submit their individual viewpoints in writing, and the EMD will compile these inputs into a phase-two proposal. This proposal will evaluate whether the next phase should involve external consultants, be conducted in one or two stages, or focus on one or multiple Centers. It will also address the clarification of what constitutes strategic assets and determine what fraction of costs should be covered.

89. The EMD acknowledged the valuable feedback and committed to gathering additional inputs for a revised proposal for the second phase of the study. She recognized the apex status of Genebanks and the need to explore sustainable funding models, suggesting considering a separate infrastructure innovation fund model similar to a university infrastructure fund approach. The EMD also highlighted the importance of CGIAR's data as a key asset and emphasized the potential for digital innovation in this area.

Agenda Item 11: Financial Model Reference Group

90. At the invitation of the Chair, the DEMD presented an update on the Financial Model Reference Group's (FMRG) proposed funding model, designed to increase stability, predictability, and volume of funding for CGIAR's research and impact. He stressed the need to view this proposal as part of an integrated approach to strengthen CGIAR's funding base through advocacy, communications, and resource mobilization.

91. He recalled the FMRG's working timeline, from July 2023 to June 2024, with a goal to present its proposal for adoption in June 2024 in order to be implemented alongside the launch of the new Portfolio in 2025. He stressed the importance of considering the proposal as part of an integrated approach to strengthen CGIAR's funding base with a combination of advocacy, communications, and resource mobilization.

92. The DEMD described current funding challenges and the insufficiency of the 2% Centers' Cost Sharing Percentage (CSP) to cover the governance and independent functions, enabling functions, and cross-over science projects. He illustrated that in 2024, more than $60 million of Window 1 funds were used to support these system functions — an unsustainable practice. Using a simplified model example, he demonstrated that with $1 billion in total funding, the current 2% CSP would generate only $20 million, which is inadequate to cover even basic governance and independent functions, let alone cross-over science projects.

93. The proposed new funding model is designed to be pragmatic, dynamic, and responsive to funding levels and funders' needs. It includes:
    a. Window 1: Untied funding prioritized for Science Programs/Accelerators and Genebanks of the 2025-2030 Portfolio, strategic assets, and with the ability to also finance (and a commitment to an agreed cap) the governance and independent functions and system enablers. It can also accept funds for specific cross-cutting functions like independent evaluation.

b.   Window 2: Funding for Science Programs, Accelerators, and Genebanks, including their Work areas of the 2025-2030 Portfolio.

c.   Window 3 and Direct: Funding for Center/Multi-Center/System Organization projects, mapped to Portfolio programs.

94.   Regarding the current 2% CSP in the new model, the DEMD relayed a friendly amendment from the Center DGs, which Simon Heck, speaking for the DGs, elaborated on. The amendment requests postponing the final CSP percentage decision until after the Global Strategic Asset Study's conclusion. This amendment acknowledges ongoing efforts to increase science funding and reduce system enabling function costs. It recognizes that strategic assets might be funded from within the CSP as the ICI process delivers efficiency gains and CGIAR increases overall funding. It was emphasized that the DGs are committed to new efficiency gains through the ICI process and stressed the importance of Centers maintaining adequate full cost recovery practices, suggesting that any new asset funding mechanism should focus only on what Centers cannot recover through existing mechanisms. The DEMD noted the FMRG agreed to consider strategic asset funding as part of the CSP, keeping it at 2%, with gains from enabling functions (via ICI process) and possible cost reductions in governance and independent functions translating into more funding for assets. This approach balances sustainable funding for strategic assets with the Centers' operational realities and ongoing efficiency efforts.

95.   A proposal to raise the CSP to 2.5% with a clear designation of 0.5% for genebank only was proposed but not agreed. There was an agreement that the CSP rate is decided by the IPB with concurrence from the SC after proper review and analysis and discussion with Centres (including legal implications by the EMD/DEMD as it is included in IFA agreement).

Key Discussion Areas

96.   Council members expressed appreciation for the work of the FMRG and provided the following reflections and comments:
<u>Window 1</u>
a.   Strong support for implementing an agreed cap on Window 1 funding allocated to enabling functions and potentially governance/independent functions, ensuring significant funds remain available for research.

b.   Emphasized the need for clear rules, accountability, and traceability in Window 1 allocation to different Science Programs.

c.   Stressed the importance of a proactive strategy to ensure Window 1 remains attractive for donors and focuses on research funding.

d.   Highlighted the potential complexity and linkage between Window 1 and Window 2 funding, underscoring the need for a robust theory of change for Window 2.

<u>Window 2</u>

e. Strong support for reopening Window 2 to grow the shared research agenda and attract new donors, with caution about potential trade-offs with Window 1 funding.

f. Debate over allowing work-package-level designations within Window 2 — some see it as attractive to funders, others worry about undermining program coherence and risking funder-driven research agendas.

g. Recognition that thematic and geographic earmarking could strategically attract additional funding sources and support specific program growth.

h. Concerns about potential increases in transaction costs and reporting burdens with excessive soft earmarking in Window 2.

Window 3

i. Emphasized the importance of continuing to map Window 3 funding to the full Portfolio.

CSP/Strategic Assets/Genebanks

j. Cautions against relying on Window 1 to fund strategic assets.

k. Calls for clear rules and processes on strategic asset funding from the CSP and understanding how prioritization of CSP fund use will be managed.

l. Suggestion to develop a 20-year scenario for asset costs to inform long-term planning.

m. Concerns that the friendly amendment on strategic asset funding is too dependent on reaching $2 billion target.

n. Questions about timeline for deciding on strategic asset funding approach.

Partnerships and Strategy:

o. Emphasis on maintaining flexibility and responsiveness to emerging global challenges in the funding model.

p. Strong support for using the new funding model to strategically attract additional funding sources, particularly from emerging donors like Brazil, India, and China.

q. Suggestions to explore synergies across Centers and with NARES, citing examples of shared facilities leading to increased effectiveness.

Overall:

r. Emphasis on growing overall funding rather than shifting between Windows.

s. Importance of transparency and clear budgeting systems to make funding Windows attractive to donors.

97. The Chair thanked the Council members for their thoughtful reflections and, due to time constraints, requested that additional comments and discussions be postponed until after the next agenda presentation, which also addresses funding for CGIAR's work.

Agenda Item 12: Funding CGIAR'S Work

98. At the invitation of the Chair, the DEMD presented an update on CGIAR's funding landscape and resource mobilization strategy.

99. He first addressed the ambitious goals of raising $4 billion over 2025-2027 and $2 billion annually by 2030, posing the critical question of whether CGIAR is on track to

meet these targets. While overall funding has rebounded since the COVID-19 dip, it has not yet reached the levels seen in 2014. He emphasized the need for accelerated efforts to reach $1.3-1.4 billion annually by 2025, requiring an 8.5% annual growth rate, and $2 billion annually by 2030, requiring a 10% annual growth rate. Currently, CGIAR is growing at 7% per year, which is insufficient to meet these targets. Despite growth in all funding channels in 2023 and improved Center finances, CGIAR remains hyper-dependent on a small number of donors, with the top ten contributing 85% of the funding in 2023. This concentration risk poses significant challenges for long-term stability.

100. The DEMD noted that for the first time, CGIAR is moving to a scenario-based budget, introducing both a baseline scenario and a surge scenario to better manage funding variability and plan for different funding levels. This approach aims to enhance financial planning and adaptability in the face of funding uncertainties. He emphasized several key areas to accelerate efforts to reach the funding target by 2025:

   a. Enhancing Engagement with Donors: Strengthening relationships with existing donors and engaging new donors for long-term commitments.

   b. Innovative Funding Models: Expanding the use of blended finance and impact investing to attract diverse funding sources.

   c. Increased Advocacy and Communication: Boosting efforts to effectively communicate CGIAR's impact and value to potential funders.

   d. Strategic Partnerships: Building and leveraging partnerships with governments, international organizations, and the private sector.

   e. Efficiency and Accountability: Ensuring efficient resource allocation and maintaining high standards of transparency to build donor confidence.

Key Discussion Areas

101. Council members provided the following reflections and comments:

   Funding Strategies and Approaches

   a. Encouraged creativity and flexibility in funding approaches, given the changing 'color of money' coming to CGIAR.

   b. Expressed interest in exploring a replenishment model to improve predictability, planning, and build momentum for approvals within donor capitals.

   c. Suggested pursuing both replenishment and current funding approaches to maximize opportunities.

   d. Emphasized the need to diversify the funding base, particularly to include emerging economies like Brazil, India, and China.

   e. Proposed using new research topics (e.g., red palm weevil, desert farming) to attract new funders.

   f. Recommended allocating specific resources for scaling and capacity sharing.

   Replenishment Model Considerations

   g. Supported replenishments as a way to elevate CGIAR's cause to high-level decision-makers.

   h. Cautioned about potential risks of moving to a replenishment model, including loss of flexibility and relevance to current funders.

i.   Noted concerns about replenishment model requiring higher-level approvals (e.g., ministerial level).

Partnerships and Engagement

j.   Called for a clear articulation of CGIAR's partnership strategy, balancing CGIAR visibility with effective partner engagement.

k.   Emphasized engaging with the private sector to enhance funding opportunities.

l.   Suggested using the IPB to bring in new networks for innovative financing.

m.   Recommended making resource mobilization an explicit expectation of IPB members.

Streamlining and Efficiency

n.   Stressed the need to simplify and streamline reporting requirements to reduce administrative burden.

o.   Emphasized using unrestricted funding for strategic purposes, not gap-filling.

p.   Called for a clear implementation strategy and marketing plan to support fundraising efforts.

Integration and Communication

q.   Suggested updating the existing investment case rather than creating a new one.

r.   Called for better integration of advocacy and partnerships with communications and resource mobilization efforts.

s.   Emphasized the importance of CGIAR's ability to be relevant and flexible to funders' changing priorities.

Fundraising Coordination

t.   Highlighted the need for a strategy to reconcile Center-level and system-level fundraising efforts.

u.   Recognized that the next tranche of funding will be more difficult to secure, requiring coordinated efforts.

102.   The DEMD responded to these points, acknowledging the need to balance various interests and emphasizing the model's flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances. He stressed the importance of growing the overall funding base and highlighted the potential of the proposed model to attract new funders while maintaining support from existing ones.

103.   The EMD, Ismahane Elouafi, emphasized the need for leadership from the World Bank and Council to reach the $2 billion target. She highlighted potential new funding avenues, including work in conflict zones, climate finance, and partnerships with other organizations.

104.   The Chair concluded by emphasizing the need for creativity, pursuing all avenues for funding, and improving communication of CGIAR's narrative to attract support.

Science Highlight 4: How to Manage the Drylands in a Warming Climate — Think Global, Act Local

105.   At the invitation of the Co-Chair, Aly Abousabaa, DG of ICARDA, presented on managing drylands in the context of climate change, highlighting the collaborative

efforts of CGIAR Centers in leveraging global research and innovations while implementing solutions tailored to the specific needs of local communities to effectively address the unique challenges faced by dryland regions.

106. He presented on the significance of drylands, noting that they cover 48% of the world's arable land, support more than half of the global livestock, and are home to half of the world's population. He emphasized the critical challenges faced by these regions, including reduced productivity due to climate change, increasing populations, and expanding dryland areas. Key points included:

    a. CGIAR's collaborative response: A global strategy for drylands developed jointly by ICARDA, ICRISAT, CIMMYT, IITA, CIP, and other Centers, focusing on five key pillars:
        i. Climate optimization of farming systems
        ii. Leveraging biodiversity from Genebanks
        iii. Emphasis on soil, land, and water systems
        iv. Ensuring sustainable, diverse, and healthy diets
        v. Using science evidence to inform policy

    b. Technological innovations: Development of climate-smart crops, water-efficient technologies, and the use of remote sensing and digital technology to address water scarcity.

    c. Regional initiatives: Highlighted successful projects in various countries, including:
        i. Super early maturing lentil varieties in India
        ii. Drought-resistant wheat production in Morocco
        iii. Integrated desert farming in the UAE
        iv. Heat-tolerant wheat varieties for 12 African countries

    d. Emerging challenges: Highlighted the red palm weevil problem and plans for a global consortium to eradicate this pest.

107. The DG emphasized the importance of CGIAR Centers working together to address the complex challenges in drylands, noting that the magnitude of these challenges goes beyond the capacity of individual institutions. He also highlighted the role of partnerships, including with national research systems and governments, in developing and scaling up solutions for dryland management.

108. There were no immediate comments or interventions from Council members following the presentation, and members were encouraged to email the ICADA DG if they have any questions.

109. The Chair expressed gratitude for the insightful presentation. He expressed optimism about the strategic direction and highlighted the importance of innovative and collaborative efforts to address the challenges in drylands. He emphasized the need for continued creativity and strong communication to secure funding and support for CGIAR's impactful work.

Agenda Item 13: Assurance Oversight Committee Report

110. At the invitation of the Co-Chair, Muriel Uzan, Chair of the Assurance Oversight Committee (AOC), presented the committee's assurance report.

111. The AOC Chair began by emphasizing the AOC's critical role in providing oversight and ensuring accountability within CGIAR. Key points from her presentation included:
    a. A recommendation for strengthening the independence of the internal audit function across the entire system, noting issues such as internal audit's inability to directly access data and delays in management responses.
    b. A recommendation for working towards having one or two common external auditors engaged for independent assurance across the entire system.
    c. Emphasizing the need to consider risk management and internal controls as integrated functions within the ICI process.
    d. Highlighted the AOC's concern about the paused recruitment process for the Chief Audit Executive (CAE), stressing the AOC's recommendation that the independent Internal Audit professionals at the Centers should report functionally to the CAE, with the correct authority level and adequate level of independence.

Key Discussion Areas

112. Council members thanked the AOC for its oversight and provided the following reflections and comments:
    a. Expressed strong support for the AOC to engage with and provide oversight on the integration process for internal audit, external audit, and ethics & business conduct functions being worked on by the ICI Forum.
    b. Emphasized the expectation for CGIAR to excel in financial performance and accounting, complying with internationally accepted standards for audits.
    c. Raised concerns about Centers not accepting the authority and investigations of the ethics and business conduct function.
    d. Requested regular updates on the status of integration efforts.

113. The AOC Chair responded that she has been conducting regular update meetings with Clarissa van Heerden, the Independent Chair of the Audit Finance and Risk Committee (AFRC) of the System Board. At the request of the AOC Chair, Clarissa van Heerden, who was attending the session virtually, provided additional context, including:
    a. Assured the Council that CGIAR's internal audit processes are conducted in accordance with international standards and comparable to other similar international organizations.
    b. Noted significant improvement in transparency, and openness to, internal audit from all DGs over the past 2.5 years.
    c. Highlighted the progress in risk management across all Centers, while cautioning against creating a separate risk function that removes responsibility from Center managers and DGs.

d.   Advised careful consideration of trade-offs in moving to one or two external auditors, noting potential increased costs and complexity due to CGIAR's legal structure.

114. The AOC Chair clarified that the AOC's concerns were related to system-wide issues, such as:

a.   Internal audit's lack of direct access to data at the system-wide level.

b.   Negotiations required for conducting cross-cutting thematic audits.

c.   Low implementation rate (49%) of internal audit action plans.

d.   Incomplete execution of the 2023 internal audit plan (73% completed as of 31 March 2024).

e.   Understaffing of the risk management function and lack of connection between system-wide and Center-level risk mapping.

115. Council members emphasized the need to integrate AFRC and AOC perspectives to leverage existing strengths and ensure a cohesive assurance mechanism across risk management, internal controls, internal and external audit, and ethics and business conduct. The Board Vice-Chair suggested that the ICI process could address the alignment between system-wide and Center-level functions. Additionally, members recommended developing a comprehensive work plan with clear accountabilities, deliverables, costs, and timelines to implement the UGR recommendations as a priority.

116. The Co-Chair thanked Muriel Uzan for her insightful presentation. He expressed optimism about the strategic direction and highlighted the importance of innovative and collaborative efforts to address the challenges in internal audit, external audit, and risk management.

Agenda Item 14: Strategic Impact, Monitoring and Evaluation Committee Report

117. At the invitation of the Co-Chair, Alan Tollervey, the Chair of the Strategic Impact, Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (SIMEC), provided a report on the SIMEC's activities, which included overseeing the functions of the advisory bodies, including the Independent Advisory and Evaluation Service (IAES), and the Standing Panel for Impact Assessment (SPIA).

118. Key points from the report included:

a.   Discussions on the SPIA budget, relating to the broader conversations about Window 1 budget allocation to core functions.

b.   Endorsement of the Genebank Platform Evaluation, being highly complementary of the Platform's work in driving up standards across the system.

c.   Review of the evaluability assessment of the Regional Integrated Initiatives(RIIs), which highlighted issues such as lack of clear theory of change, limiting evaluation possibilities at the initiative level.

    d.   Engagement with the IAES team on the 2025-2027 work plan and review of the ISDC program of work activities, including ongoing discussions about ISDC's role in reviewing the entire portfolio versus only pooled funding parts.

    e.   Anticipation of significant changes in ISDC membership in 2025, with a request for an extension of one member's term.

    f.   Collaboration with the Project Portfolio Performance Unit (PPU) on broader MELIA (Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning, and Impact Assessment) agenda.

119.   The SIMEC Chair reported on a light-touch desk review assessing progress against key MOPAN findings from 2019:

    a.   Progress has been made in several areas, moving from 'red' to 'amber' or 'yellow' ratings.

    b.   Some areas remain 'amber/red,' indicating ongoing challenges.

    c.   Overall, a new MOPAN assessment would show improvement, but not yet a clean bill of health.

120.   The SIMEC Chair highlighted improved coordination with the AOC, including:

    a.   Joint meetings planned to ensure coherence between budget scrutiny and work plan assessments.

    b.   Implementation of cross-observer roles for better collaboration.

121.   The SIMEC Chair concluded by recognizing SIMEC members and acknowledging their diligent work in scrutinizing documents and providing feedback to the independent bodies.

122.   There were no immediate comments or interventions from Council members following the presentation, and members were encouraged to email the SIMEC Chair if they have any questions.

123.   The Co-Chair expressed appreciation to the SIMEC Chair for his concise and informative report.

Agenda Item 15: Report from the Independent Advisory and Evaluation Service

124.   At the invitation of the Chair, Allison Grove Smith, Director of the Independent Advisory and Evaluation Service (IAES), presented an overview of the service, focusing on key points and seeking feedback from the Council.

125.   Key points from the presentation included:

    a.   IAES supports three distinct mandates: independent advice (ISDC), impact assessment (SPIA), and evaluation (IAES), operating under five principles including independence and efficiency.

    b.   Reporting on five years of IAES operations, highlighting improvements in accessibility, relevance, and timeliness of their work.

    c.   Progress on implementing evaluation recommendations, with 25% of recommendations already having a response and about 50% on track.

> d. Efficiency gains compared to previous arrangements, with less funding used and lower annual costs.
> e. Results of a desk review assessing progress against MOPAN findings, showing improvements in many areas but ongoing challenges in others.
> f. Upcoming changes in ISDC membership, with significant turnover expected in fall 2025.
> g. Consideration of future demands, including coordination between pooled and bilateral funding, country-specific contexts, and responsiveness to the Integration Framework Agreement (IFA).

126. The Director sought feedback on:
> a. The types of decisions the System Council would appreciate input on from the Independent Advisory and Evaluation Service.
> b. The channels and mechanisms for interaction between IAES and various parts of CGIAR governance.

127. There were no immediate comments or interventions from Council members following the presentation, and members were encouraged to email the IAES Director with comments and guidance.

128. The Chair expressed appreciation for the report, noting that the accompanying background document had been read with interest.

Agenda Item 16: Report from the Standing Panel on Impact Assessment

129. At the invitation of the Chair, Travis Lybbert, Chair of the Standing Panel on Impact Assessment (SPIA), presented evidence from the SPIA workplan, new workplan proposals, and panel member nominations.

130. Key points from the presentation included:
> a. Highlights from the Ethiopia country study, including adoption dynamics of improved maize varieties and forage grasses.
> b. Causal impact evidence of orange-fleshed sweetpotato in Uganda on child growth outcomes.
> c. Upcoming events like SPIA Fest in Delhi and a panel during Science Week.
> d. Nomination and renewal of SPIA panel members, with a target of nine total members.
> e. Funding update for SPIA's System Council-approved workplan, highlighting the adjusted budget of $45.5 million and a funding gap of $39.5 million.

131. Key reflections and comments from Council members included:
> a. Strong support for SPIA's work and its importance for demonstrating CGIAR's impact.
> b. Several members emphasized that SPIA's work in demonstrating impact is crucial for attracting new funding.
> c. Concerns about the optics of increasing SPIA's budget amid overall financial constraints.

d. Concerns about the trade-offs within the Window 1 budget to accommodate SPIA's increased funding.
e. Suggestions to explore cost savings in governance and enabler functions.
f. Questions about coordination with Centers' own impact assessment efforts.
g. Emphasis on the need for long-term planning of asset costs.
h. Suggestion to consider SPIA's budget increase as a strategic investment for future fundraising.
i. Recommendation to explore how SPIA can work with Centers on their impact assessments, including quality assurance and methodology support.
j. Concern about potential impacts on ISDC's capacity due to member rotations.

Session Outcomes

132. The Chair concluded there was strong overall support, with the caveat that management should carefully examine trade-offs and funding sources. With that, the System Council reaffirmed its commitment to an adjusted SPIA work plan and budget of approximately $45.5 million through 2030 (from the original budget of $49.5 million). The reduced budget reflects the decision to move Egypt from a full country study to a stocktake only country. The Gates Foundation reaffirmed its offer of $6 million contingent on other funders contributing, and USAID offered $1 million towards SPIA for the next year.

133. Decision SC20-DP5: Membership of the Standing Panel on Impact Assessment (SPIA)
The System Council approved the:
   • Extension of Dr. Sujata Visaria as SPIA Member for an additional three-year term with effect from 1 July 2024;
   • Extension of Dr. Monica Biradavolu as SPIA Member for an additional three-year term with effect from 1 July 2024;
   • Appointment of Dr. Jennifer Burney as SPIA Member for an initial three-year term with effect from 1 July 2024;
   • Appointment of Dr. Susan Godlonton as SPIA Member for an initial three-year term with effect from 1 July 2024; and
   • Appointment of Dr. Jenny Aker as SPIA Member for an initial three-year term with effect from 1 July 2024.

Agenda Item 17: System Council Leadership

134. The Co-Chair introduced a proposal for the reappointment of Juergen Voegele as Chair of the System Council. Juergen Voegele recused from the discussion and decision and exited the meeting for this agenda item.

Session Outcome

135. Decision SC20-DP6: System Council Leadership
The System Council approved the appointment of Juergen Voegele as Chair of the System Council for a third term of two-years with effect from 12 July 2024.

Agenda Item 18: Consent Agenda and Any Other Business

136. The Council Secretary introduced the Consent Agenda, confirming that no requests to remove any item from the consent agenda had been received by the relevant period, and thus the consent agenda was being put up for approval. The Council approved the consent agenda.

Session Outcome

137. Decision SC20-DP7: Membership of the Independent Science for Development Council
The System Council approved the reappointment of Magali Garcia as an ISDC member for a three-year term with effect from 1 July 2024.

Next System Council Meeting (SC21)

138. The Council Secretary announced that Germany has offered to host the next Council Meeting (SC21) in Berlin during the second week of December 2024. Appreciation was expressed to Felicitas Röhrig, the delegate member from Germany, for extending the invitation on behalf of the State Secretary. Felicitas Röhrig conveyed Germany's pleasure and honor in hosting SC21, noting that it would serve as a final celebration of Germany's 50 years of contribution to CGIAR.

Meeting Wrap-up and Close

139. The Chair took a moment to express the Council's deep appreciation to Embrapa, particularly its President, Silvia Maria Fonseca Silveira Massruhá, for their exceptional hospitality in hosting SC20. Special recognition was given to the IT team for their tireless efforts in ensuring smooth proceedings despite technical challenges. The Chair also extended gratitude to Francisco Guttierez and Pedro Machado for their invaluable support in preparation and behind-the-scenes work.

140. The President of Embrapa, expressed happiness in hosting the CGIAR meeting and emphasized the historical partnership between Embrapa and CGIAR. He extended an invitation to all participants for COP30 in Brazil, looking forward to continued collaboration on addressing global agricultural challenges.

141. In closing remarks, the Chair thanked all participants for their engagement and productive discussions. He expressed appreciation to the Secretariat team, working both in person and remotely. The Chair looked forward to ongoing collaboration and the field trip scheduled for the following day, emphasizing the importance of CGIAR's work in addressing current global challenges.

142. The meeting was closed.

Annex 1: Participant List

20th CGIAR System Council Meeting (SC20) *Participants list*		
Meeting Leadership	*Key*: **('*')** *indicates that voting member/active observer is being represented at the meeting by the alternate* **('**')** *indicated that voting member/active observer is being represented at the meeting by another delegated representative* **(v)** *shows virtual participation of a participant*	
Chair: Juergen Voegele (V) **Co-Chair: Pedro Machado** (LAC)		
System Council Voting Members (listed alphabetically)	**Member representative**	**Member Alternates** & Other Delegation Members
Australia	**Bosibori Bett***	
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	**Ruben Echeverria**	**Alternate: Renee Lafitte** Other delegates: Rinn Self, Mariana Kim
Canada	**Flora Mak***	Other Delegates: Santiago Alba-Corral and François Cloutier (V)
Crop Trust & IFAD	**Stefan Schmitz**	Other Delegates: Jaspreet Stamm, Anne Clyne (Crop Trust)
European Commission	**Christophe Larose**	
Germany	**Felicitas Röhrig***	Other delegates: Joachim Langbein, Sarah Schmidt and Stefan Kachelriess
Latin America and Caribbean	**Christian Alejandro Garay Torres** (Peru)	Other delegates: César Santisteban Pérez (Peru)
The Netherlands	**Timmo Gaasbeek**	
Norway	**Daniel van Gilst**	
South Asia	**S.M. Bokhtiar** (Bangladesh)***	
Sub-Saharan Africa	**Garba Sharubutu** (Nigeria)	**Alternate: Eliud Kireger** (Kenya) Other delegate: Carolyne Minayo (Kenya)
Sweden	**AnnaKarin Norling**	**Alternate: Madeleine Jönsson** (V)
Switzerland	**Manfred Kaufmann**	

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	**Alan Tollervey**	Other delegates: Laura Munro
United States of America	**Robert Bertram**	**Alternate: Jerry Glover** Other delegates: Gary Jahn
West Asia & North Africa	**Mustafa Altuğ Atalay** (Türkiye) (V)	Mohammad Ali Ebrahimi (Iran) Other delegates: Didem Kokden (Türkiye) (V)
The World Bank	**Renaud Seligmann**	
Temporary Voting Members	**Representative**	**Alternate & Other Delegates**
Belgium	**Carol Durieux** (V)	
Denmark	**Hanne Carus** (V)	
Ireland	**Patrick McManus**	Other delegates: Isabella Rae (V)
UAE	**Mariam Almheiri**	**Alternate: Fatema AlMulla** Other delegates: Kristofer Hamel**,** Richard Alasdair Paton, Mohamed Al Otaiba
Non-voting Ex-officio members	**Member**	**Other Delegates**
CGIAR System Board	**Lindiwe Majele Sibanda**, SB Chair (V - agenda item 2 only)	Patrick Caron, SB Vice Chair; Shenggen Fan, SB Member; Myra Wopereis, Special Advisor to the SB Chair (V)
Executive Managing Director	**Ismahane Elouafi**	Guillaume Grosso, Deputy Executive Managing Director; Maina Sahi, Advisor to the EMD (V)
Center/Alliance Representative 2: Convener of the Center Directors General	**Mark Smith**	
Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO)	**Selvaraju Ramasamy**	
Active Observers	**Representative**	**Alternate & Other Delegates**
Global Forum on Agricultural Research and Innovation (GFAiR)	**Ravi Khetarpal**	**Alternate: Hildegard Lingnau**
CGIAR Independent Science for Development Council (ISDC)	**Holger Meinke** (Chair)	Other delegates: Nompumelelo (Mpumi) Obokoh, ISDC Vice Chair; Magali Garcia Cardenas, ISDC Member
Secretary to the System Council		
Sylvia Oyinlola, Global Head, CGIAR System Council Support		

Invited Guests	Representative	
France (with voting rights)	**Bernard Hubert**	**Alternate: Jean Albergel**
Trustee of the CGIAR Trust Fund (World Bank)	**Jane Mwebi** (Trustee)	
Japan	**Akiko Tejima** (V)	**Alternate: Kosuke Minakuchi** (V) Other delegates: Yuko Watanabe (V)
Mexico	**Juan Bernardo Orozco Sanchez**	
CGIAR System Council's Assurance Oversight Committee (AOC)	**Muriel Uzan** (Chair)	
CGIAR Standing Panel on Impact Assessment (SPIA)	**Travis Lybbert**	
Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)	**Jorge Werthein**	Special Senior Advisor of the Director General of IICA
	Gabriel Delgado	IICA Representative in Brazil
	Muhammad Ibrahim	Director of Technical Cooperation of IICA
European Initiative for Agricultural Research for Development (EIARD)	**Nienke Bientema**	Secretary of EIARD
Asian Development Bank (ADB)	**Shingo Kimura**	Principal Agriculture and Natural Resources Economist
Session specific invitees		
Agenda items 1-3, 7 and 13	Christine Larson-Luhila, Deputy Director, Governance and Institutional Risk, AFRC Secretary (V)	
Agenda item 4: CGIAR Research and Innovation Portfolio	Appolinaire Djikeng, Managing Director, Resilient Agri-Food Systems (a.i.); Johan Swinnen, Managing Director, Systems Transformation; Sonja Vermeulen, Managing Director, Genetic Innovation (V); Aly Abousabaa, Director General, ICARDA; Baboucarr Manneh, Director General, AfricaRice, Bram Govaerts, Director General, CIMMYT; Simon Heck, Director General, CIP; Khuloud Odeh, Global Director, Digital and Data (V)	
Agenda item 6: Study of CGIAR's Strategic Assets	Gail Amare, CGIAR Senior Director, Facilities Management, Security and Admin (V); Pant Akshay (V), Karl-Waithaka Zoe (V), Kingombe Thomas (V), BCG	
Agenda item 7: Update on the implementation of the Integrated Governance Arrangements	Juan Lucas Restrepo, Director General, Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT (V)	
Agenda item 8: Closed session	Alexandra Moyas, Director, Office of Ethics and Business Conduct (a.i.) (V); Vanessa Goss, Ethics and Business Conduct Consultant (V)	
Agenda item 9: Update on Gender in CGIAR Research	Nicoline de Haan, Director, Gender Platform	

Agenda item 10: Update on Gender, Diversity and Inclusion in CGIAR	Lavanya Shrinagesh, Director, Gender equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Culture (V)
Agenda item 13: Assurance Oversight Committee Report	Clarissa van Heerden, AFRC Chair (V)
Agenda item 15: Report from the IAES	Amy Beaudreault, Lead, ISDC Secretariat (V)
Agenda item 16: Report from the Standing Panel of Impact Assessment (SPIA)	Ricardo Labarta, SPIA Principal Scientist; James Stevenson, Research Senior Fellow (V) and Mina Karasalo, Senior Officer, SPIA (V)
Additional participants	**Name/Role/Organization**
Embrapa	Paulo Duarte, Sibelle Silva, Daniela Lopes, Jane Simoni Eidt (V), Maria Jose Sampaio and Michelline Lins
SC Chair advisor	Jonathan Wadsworth, Agriculture Specialist, Agriculture and Food Global Practice
CGIAR Independent Advisory and Evaluation Service (IAES)	Allison Grove Smith, Director
CGIAR staff	Andre Zandstra, Global Director of Innovative Finance and Resource Mobilization
	Elise Perset, Director, Legal Services, CGIAR System Organization (V)
	Felipe Mendes, Senior Director, Financial Planning and Analysis
	Joaquin Lozano, One CGIAR Regional Director Latin America and The Caribbean
	Lotte Pang, Managing Director, Communications and Outreach
	Madina Bazarova, CGIAR Acting Co-Chief Audit Executives (V)
	Roland Sundstrom, Chief of Staff, EMD Office
CGIAR System Council Secretariat	Stacy Roberts, Governance Consultant (V)
	Stacy De La O, Governance Consultant (V)
Event support	
Daphne Voorips, Governance Officer, CGIAR (V)	
Olwen Cussen, Governance Officer, CGIAR	
Vashna Singh, Meetings and Events, Consultant, CGIAR	
Victoria Pezzi, Meeting and Events Coordinator, CGIAR	