

Proposal for the Establishment of a Science Partnership Committee

Proposition

The CGIAR Chairman should submit a proposal at MTM99 for establishing a Science Partnership Committee.

Context

The CGIAR Ministerial-Level Meeting held at Lucerne (Switzerland) on February 9-10, 1995 urged the CGIAR to establish partnership committees with NGOs and the Private Sector, as part of its continuing efforts to develop a more open and participatory system and strengthen its dialogue with members of the civil society. Both committees were set up shortly thereafter and are now functioning entities of the CGIAR system.

The third System Review, endorsing the approach followed by the CGIAR, said that "broadening and deepening partnerships and collaboration with other actors in the research-development continuum is of utmost importance to the future of the CGIAR."

The CGIAR Consultative Council, meeting in Brussels on January 27-28, proposed that the CGIAR should reach out to the international science community through the mechanism of a partnership committee, but that the total membership of all three partnership committees should not exceed the current total of twenty-four. The Council requested the CGIAR Chairman to submit a proposal at MTM99 for the establishment of a Science Partnership Committee.

Terms of Reference

The overall responsibility of the committee will be:

To strengthen communication and collaboration between the CGIAR system and the broader international science community; and to provide the CGIAR with advice and guidance on major scientific developments in environmentally, socially and economically sustainable agricultural development and research; and.

In doing so, the committee will be expected to:

- Formulate and carry out its own work program,
- Interact with the centers, TAC, the other partnership committees, and the standing committees of the Group, as well as the Group,
- As appropriate, submit proposals to the Group on research issues, on agricultural science policy, and on specific collaborative arrangements between the centers and other scientific institutes,
- Advise the CGIAR on suitable candidates for center boards, review panels, and other CGIAR bodies,
- Meet periodically and, at other times, communicate electronically,
- Present its views at the main meetings of the CGIAR.

Composition

The effectiveness of the committee will to a large extent be conditioned by the credibility of its members and their commitment to the mission of the CGIAR. Invitations to suitable candidates will therefore be based on wide consultation initially within the CGIAR system, and in the broader international science community.

Membership Profile

Candidates for membership will be drawn from both North and South and will be eminent scientists in fields directly relevant to the mission of the CGIAR.

Ideally, candidates will hold leadership positions in apex science bodies such as the International Council for Science (formerly ICSU), the International Union of Biological Science, the International Union of Concerned Scientists, the Third World Academy of Science, and national science associations. Committee members will not be expected to represent such bodies, but they will be able to serve as an effective link between the CGIAR and the institutions that form the unions or associations they lead.

Number

The Science Partnership Committee will consist of no more than eight internationally recognized scientists, with authority to co-opt other members on an *ad hoc* basis for specific tasks. Each committee member will be invited to serve in his or her personal capacity for a two-year renewable period.

Selection Process

Candidates for membership in the committee will be identified through consultation within the CGIAR system, and in the broader international science community, and will be invited to serve on the committee by the CGIAR Chairman. The first committee chairman will be nominated by the CGIAR Chairman and, subsequently, selected by agreement among committee members. A committee chairman will serve for a renewable two-year term, but not for more than two consecutive terms.

Working Arrangements

The committee's work program and budget will be presented annually for endorsement at International Centers Week, and funds authorized for the committee's work will be disbursed under the authority of the committee chairman. The committee will be free to establish its own support services or to seek these from the CGIAR Secretariat.

Next Steps

If the Group adopts the Consultative Council's proposition, the nomination of suitable candidates will be solicited initially from within the system, and the Chairman will invite candidates to join the committee which will be expected to hold its first meeting before International Centers Week '99, and to participate in ICW99.