



**INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR LIVING AQUATIC RESOURCES
MANAGEMENT**

INFORMATION PAPER

**Response to the Offer of the Government of Egypt for the Use of the Facilities of the
Central Laboratory for Aquaculture Research, Abbassa, Egypt**

**Mid Term Meeting of the Consultative Group of International Agricultural
Research, Nairobi, Kenya**

22-26 May 1995

Purpose:

To brief members of the Consultative Group of International Agriculture Research (CGIAR) on ICLARMs progress in responding to the offer of the Government of Egypt for the use of the facilities of the Central Laboratory for Aquaculture Research, Abbassa.

Summary and Conclusion:

In response to an offer from the Government of Egypt, ICLARM and the CGIAR have begun proceedings to determine appropriate terms and conditions pertaining to the offer, including the assessment of the costs of refurbishing the facility, steps to designing a research and training program to be run from it and the first stages for financial planning of the work program.

The ICLARM Board has determined that the site should serve as a regional facility from which ICLARM could increase the quantum of its work in Africa and the Near East, and at which training, pond and laboratory facilities could be accessed. The site should cover not only inland aquaculture studies but also coastal and coral reef work. National and regional partners will be involved in planning and then implementing the work program.

The action in train and planned will include the review and oversight processes of TAC and the CGIAR to ensure that all decisions made are in accordance with CGIAR priorities and that actions taken will enhance the CGIAR's capacity for aquatic resource research, especially in Africa.

Background:

In November 1994, the Government of Egypt informally began discussions with the CGIAR Chairman over the possibility of offering the International Center for Living Aquatic Resources Management (ICLARM) use of the Central Laboratory for Aquaculture Research (CLAR) at Abbassa, Egypt, as well as the Maryut Marine Fish Hatchery (near Alexandria on the Mediterranean Sea) and access to Lakes Manzalla and Bardawil and marine parks in the Red Sea for study sites. The CLAR had been largely financed under the USAID National Agricultural Research Program (NARP). The site has been operating since early 1987.

First visit

On behalf of the ICLARM Board, Dr N. Brady (Vice Chairman, ICLARM Board of Trustees) and Dr M. Williams (Director General, ICLARM) visited Egypt on 16-18 December 1994 to inspect the Abbassa and Maryut sites and other research sites and to hold discussions with Egyptian officials, including Dr Yusuf Wally who is the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister for Agriculture and Land Reclamation (Note: Dr Wally has subsequently also been given responsibility for

Fisheries and Animal Resources.) A team of engineers made an initial assessment of the costs of refurbishing the center.

At the conclusion of that visit, Drs Brady and Williams reported to the Board on the visit and the Board agreed a set of conditions governing the possible use of the facility by ICLARM. These conditions included:

- terms and conditions over access to the facilities, employment of staff and host country arrangements in Egypt.
- provision of additional funds to ICLARM to cover the costs of negotiating the arrangements for the use of the facility, its refurbishment, and stable operating funds at a reasonable level. The Board:
 - stressed the need to protect the existing ICLARM priority research programs in Asia and Africa since an extensive planning process determined that these are clearly of the highest priority globally; they are well underway; and they include many commitments to partners and beneficiaries.
 - determined that ICLARM should not take any form of responsibility for the operations of the Maryut Marine Fish Hatchery since this was a production not a research operation. However, access to the facility as well as access to field sites in Egypt could be useful depending on the eventual research programs developed for the Abbassa site.
 - reiterated that ICLARM would continue to press ahead with finalizing the Philippine headquarters agreement and selecting and planning the headquarters site there.
- The Board further determined that:
 - the processes of the CGIAR and the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) should be respected in all stages.
 - tight project planning must be used throughout.
 - the involvement of national partners in setting and carrying out the research and related agenda will be critical.

The CGIAR Chairman was informed of the Board's decisions in late 1994.

Formal offer

A formal offer was made publicly on behalf of Dr Wally at the Ministerial Level meeting at Lucerne in February, 1995. At this meeting, the Government of Egypt became a full member of the CGIAR.

Second visit

In late March 1995, a team consisting of Professor J. Dillon (Chairman, ICLARM Board of Trustees), Dr Williams, Dr Munro (ICLARM), Mr M. Klass (Director of

Finance and Administration, ICRAF), and Mr R. Tadvalkar (CGIAR Secretariat), spent 7 days in Egypt.

During the visit, the team held two meetings with Dr Wally, examined the Abbassa site and met with its senior staff, visited Lake Manzalla and met with officials of several Government, development assistance and international agencies including the Agricultural Research Center (the parent body of the CLAR), the General Authority for Fisheries Development, the Environmental Affairs Authority of Egypt, the FAO, USAID, ICARDA (Cairo) and the University of Suez Canal.

The priority given to the offer by the Government of Egypt is demonstrated by the fact that the team dealt directly with the Deputy Prime Minister.

At the conclusion of the visit, a joint statement of intent between the Deputy Prime Minister (and Minister of Agriculture, Animal Resources, Fisheries and Land Reclamation) of the Government of Egypt and ICLARM was signed (see copy attached), signaling

‘their intention to develop an agreement over the utilization of the physical facilities and equipment of the Central Laboratory for Aquaculture Research (CLAR) of the Agricultural Research Center by ICLARM for the purposes of international research and related activities in aquaculture, fisheries and other matters relevant to ICLARM’s mandate for the sustainable utilization, management and conservation of living aquatic resources.’

The joint statement acknowledged that its implementation would be subject to the financial and program considerations of the CGIAR.

During and just subsequent to this visit, a more refined estimate of the refurbishment costs was obtained from the same engineering firm who did the first estimate. The second estimate involved a visit to ICRAF and ILRI headquarters in Nairobi and to the ICARDA office in Cairo to assess the standard of finish required for an international center.

The latest refurbishment estimate is US\$3.3 million.

ICLARM Board consideration

Subsequent to the second visit, the ICLARM Board considered the matter at length during its April 1995 meeting and has proposed a detailed action plan for proceeding to the next stage, as well as a set of principles to govern the design of the research and related work agenda.

Specifically, the work program of the Egyptian facility will conform to the ICLARM needs for high priority global aquatic resource research and related activities. To this end, the site would serve as a regional facility from which

ICLARM could increase the quantum of its work in Africa and the Near East. It would also provide the opportunity for adding training facilities and a laboratory and pond experimental capacity presently largely lacking in ICLARM. With respect to the field facilities at Abbassa, however, it must be noted that the site is sub-tropical and therefore not typical of the tropical climate zones normally given priority by ICLARM. However, this factor is not seen as fatal but rather one which will need careful consideration as to how work conducted here can be transferred elsewhere and how use of the site can extend the climate range of ICLARM work (e.g. CLAR is already a member of ICLARM's International Network for Genetics in Aquaculture and has provided germplasm for the tilapia selective breeding program).

The Board stressed that the site will not cover only inland aquaculture studies in Egypt (its present mandate) but will also serve as a host to regional and global strategic studies (both biophysical and socio-economic) on coral reefs and coastal resource systems, and for training. Careful consideration will have to be given to how present facilities at Abbassa should be used, including the very extensive pond system, laboratory equipment for pollution and other environmental studies, fish feed preparation and fish processing.

National and regional agencies will be involved in the planning and implementation of the work program.

The outcome of the ICLARM Board's April deliberations was a detailed action plan for proceeding further.

The Action Plan and Progress to Date:

The ICLARM Board of Trustees views the Egypt initiative in three major phases - not necessarily fully sequential in time- a negotiation and planning phase, refurbishment phase and research start-up phase. The Board approved a detailed action plan for the first phase (negotiation and planning). The Chairman of TAC designated TAC member Professor Bram Huisman as the TAC liaison person over the developments.

Negotiation and Planning Phase Action Plan

Action	Progress to date
<i>Negotiations</i>	
1. Appoint an ICLARM coordinator to manage initiative	Coordinator commencing first week June.
2. Draft host country agreement, negotiate and finalize.	First draft being considered by ICLARM and CGIAR secretariat before transmission to Government of Egypt, early June.

3. Agree selection processes for existing staff of the facility with the Government of Egypt	To commence as soon as possible (June/July)
Planning	
1. Audit of fixed assets at Abbassa.	Done April 1995.
2. Finalize preliminary estimates of refurbishment costs.	Done April 1995.
3. Plan research agenda:	
(a) ICLARM staff to propose research concepts	June/July 1995
(b) Coordinator to develop list of research and other regional fisheries agencies and to approach for their involvement	June/July 1995
(c) Pre-proposals and requests for research ideas to be circulated to regional agencies for reaction, requests for possible collaboration	July/August 1995
(d) Visit to CLAR by chair of ICLARM Program Committee and others including senior ICLARM staff, Prof. B. Huisman (TAC liaison officer).	Late June/early July 1995
(e) Arrangements commenced for September planning workshop	August 1995
(f) ICLARM priority-setting procedures to be reviewed and revised where necessary in the light of the renewed CGIAR, the new imperatives for managing living aquatic resources and the possible use of the Abbassa facilities	July/August 1995
(g) 10-15 day research planning workshop to be held in Egypt covering topics identified in the preliminary discussions, focusing on priority resource systems, priority research thrusts, ICLARM mission and national partner interests	Approx. 17-28 September 1995
(h) ICLARM Program Committee meeting to discuss workshop recommendations	September 29-30, 1995
(i) Refining research plan into 5 year plan for work out of CLAR and submission to TAC out-of-session	October 1995
(j) Approval of plans by the full ICLARM board	Out-of-session October 1995
(k) Submission of plans to ICW 95	October/November 1995

4. Estimate annual operating costs under various work program options, after consulting other CGIAR centers and other aquaculture and fisheries research facilities on costs.	Preliminary discussions held with ICARDA (Cairo) and first estimates obtained for first three years. Extensive consultation with aquatic resource research facility managers still required to refine the first estimates.
5. Draw up financing plan for refurbishment and operations	CGIAR secretariat/Finance Committee/ICLARM
<i>Liaison, Reporting</i>	
1. Establish good liaison arrangements with TAC and the CGIAR over developments	Ongoing
2. Report to MTM on progress	Done (this report)

Next Steps:

The negotiation and planning phase activities are expected to be completed by the time of ICW 1995. At this stage, the ICLARM Board of Trustees will have commented, and hopefully approved out-of-session, the research plans and other actions.

Provided a suitable work program can be designed to TAC's and the ICLARM Board's satisfaction, and that the negotiations with the Government of Egypt are proceeding satisfactorily (and some aspects are finalized), then the next critical phase is the financing of the facility and its work program. The ICLARM Board has set stringent conditions on additionality of resources to ICLARM before it can consider taking up the offer of the Government of Egypt.

The TAC response to the report of the panel undertaking the Mid Term Review of ICLARM (see MTM 95 Agenda Item 11) also drew out points to be considered carefully over the Egyptian offer, including scientific and technical, strategic institutional and long-term financial considerations.

ICLARM's Board and management believe that the careful approach taken to date, the conditions the Board has imposed and the detailed action plan, in conjunction with the review and oversight processes of TAC and the CGIAR, will ensure that all decisions made enhance the CGIAR's capacity for aquatic resource research, especially in Africa.

ICLARM envisages that the refurbishment phase will take about 1 year and should commence late 1995 or early 1996, funds and CGIAR approval processes being in order. The handover of facilities and the recruitment of staff should commence in 1996 but will not have to wait for refurbishment to be finished.

Acknowledgments:

ICLARM acknowledges the generosity of the Government of Egypt in offering it the use of the Abbassa facilities. We also wish to thank the Chairman of the CGIAR, Mr Ismail Serageldin, for his strong support and the CGIAR Secretariat for all their assistance given to date. We thank ICRAF for making available the valuable services of Mr Michael Klass. ICARDA staff, especially the Director General Dr El-Beltagy, and also the Cairo office director, Dr El-Sol, and his staff have generously given advice and assistance.

ICLARM

May 1995

Mid Term Meeting, Nairobi, Kenya.

JOINT STATEMENT OF INTENT BETWEEN MINISTER OF
AGRICULTURE ANIMAL RESOURCES, FISHERIES AND LAND
RECLAMATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF EGYPT AND THE
INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR LIVING AQUATIC RESOURCES
MANAGEMENT

Recognizing the critical importance of living aquatic resources to food security at the national and global levels, acknowledging the challenges in ensuring the maximum possible benefits from these resources and the environments which support them and realizing the potential contribution which research can and must make to achieving sustainable food security:

The Government of Egypt, through the Minister for Agriculture , Animal Resources, Fisheries and Land Reclamation, and the International Center for Living Aquatic resources Management (ICLARM) , a center of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), wish to jointly announce their intention to develop an agreement over the utilization of the physical facilities and equipment of the Central Laboratory for Aquaculture Research (CLAR) of the Agricultural Research Center to ICLARM for the purposes of international research and related activities in aquaculture, fisheries and other matters relevant to ICLARM's mandate for the sustainable utilization, management and conservation of living aquatic resources.

In developing the agreement, the parties note that its implementation will be subject to the financial and program considerations at the CGIAR, the parties will respect the following principles:

#Arrangements will be mutually beneficial and acknowledge the mission and responsibilities of each partner.

Under ICLARM's management, the facilities of the present CLAR will be operated fully in accordance with the principles of the international agricultural research centers in the Consultative Group of International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) System.

Negotiations to finalize legal and other arrangements will proceed as swiftly as possible so as to minimize uncertainty over the outcomes.

Specifically, the agreement between the parties will:

Be developed in accordance with the consultation and approval processes of the CGIAR.

Encourage the Government of Egypt to become a signatory to the ICLARM International Agreement.

Through the Government of Egypt, continue to develop and promote its national research capacity in fisheries and aquaculture so that ICLARM will not be perceived to be substituting for national efforts but rather complementing and strengthening them.

Establish the details of appropriate privileges and immunities to be provided by the Government of Egypt to ICLARM under an Egypt host - country agreement.

Establish a suitably long period of lease for ICLARM over the facilities and guaranteed water rights for the facility so as to provide security and stability in the arrangements.

Establish a clear and agreed process whereby ICLARM selects national and regional staff for the new international facility, and determine processes for the fair placement of staff of the present CLAR who are not taken on by ICLARM.

The welfare of such staff will be of paramount concern to the parties, especially with respect to safeguarding their future career prospects within the Egyptian national research system.

Discuss a mechanism for consultation over Egyptian national strategic research priorities which may form part of the work program of the new international facility and for regional (Africa

and west Asia) research consultations including for priority setting and development of collaborative research partnerships.

Establish the arrangements for allowing ICLARM access to research sites and facilities in Egypt including but not limited to the Maryut Marine Fish Hatchery, Lake Manzalla, Lake Bardawil and the marine conservation reserves of the Red Sea.

Signed:

Prof. Dr. Youssuf Wally
Yousuf Wally
Deputy Prime Minister ,
Minister of Agriculture ,
Animal Resources, Fisheries &
Land Reclamation

Meryl J. Williams
Meryl J. Williams
Director General
ICLARM