

Minutes of 13th Meeting of the WLE Independent Steering Committee (ISC)

17-18 June, 2019, Aga Khan University, London

Present

Charlotte de Fraiture
Diane Holdorf
Izabella Koziell
Sasha Koo-Oshima
Jo Puri
Claudia Sadoff
Brent Swallow
Ann Tutwiler (Chair)

Observers

Adam Hunt
Emma Greatrix (minutes)

WLE Management Committee (joint sessions):

Jennie Barron
Ermias Betemariam
Pay Drechsel
Deepa Joshi
Matthew McCartney
Marcela Quintero
Roseline Remans
Claudia Ringler
Rene Veenhuizen
Anthony Whitbread

Monday, 17 June

1. Introduction

The Chair welcomed the ISC to the meeting. Following introductions by all members, the ISC thanked Charlotte De Fraiture for her exceptional service and inputs to WLE since the very beginning of the program in 2012, as Charlotte will step down from the ISC after this meeting.

The agenda for the meeting and the minutes of the 12th meeting were adopted.

The focus areas for the meeting were agreed to in line with the agenda, as follows:

- Proposal and process of establishment of the Commission on Sustainable Agricultural Intensification endorsed.
- Strategic Advice on getting WLE ready in 2020 to respond to the CGIAR's 2022-2030 plan requirements.
- Stronger understanding of the research for development progress and key planned actions in WLE's Flagships (sub-programs).
- Update on roles and responsibilities of WLE governance and management bodies.

2. WLE and the CGIAR

Izabella Koziell, the WLE Program Director, provided an overview of WLE and the CGIAR for the benefit of the newer ISC members, together with a brief on the current strategy of the CGIAR, looking forward to 2030. Discussions following the presentation included:

- Gender - Clarification that WLE's work on gender is separate to, but works with, the CGIAR level Gender Platform, which is currently under tender for a host organization.
- Funding - WLE tries to reach a ratio of funding each year of 80% bilateral funding to 20% W1-2 (CGIAR Funding). While most Centers bring in sufficient funding, there are two Centers which have struggled to reach the threshold, and measures have been put in place accordingly, which we will review each year. The Committee asked management to check whether other CRPs are enforcing this 4:1 funding ratio, and what sanctions are imposed on centers that do not meet the thresholds.
- Annual Reporting - Annual reports from CRPs are compiled into a single CGIAR level report which is provided to donors and is publicly available. While the process of compiling the WLE annual report is labor intensive, it is a useful exercise, with WLE producing a public facing report based on the material, as well as a variety of blogs and other products.
- Capacity Development - As an interim measure, in 2018, all CRPs used the "number of people trained" as a capacity development indicator. The Monitoring and Evaluation Community of the CGIAR is trying to craft a more appropriate and nuanced indicator to measure this in future.
- Other - In future, it would be useful for the ISC to see information organized and presented geographically.

3. WLE Commission on Sustainable Agricultural Intensification (SAI)

Chris Dickens, the IWMI principle researcher who has been supporting WLE in the development of the SAI Commission concept, dialed in for this session. Izabella described the objectives and structure of the SAI Commission as well as feedback from participants of the SAI event organized by WLE at the previous week's EAT Forum. During the Forum, the SAI Commission was announced as one of four key follow up Commissions to the EAT Lancet report. The others are the Food Economics Commission; the Blue Food Assessment (for both salt and fresh water); and the Earth Commission, which Johan Rockström is expected to co-Chair. ISC feedback and ideas on the SAI Commission included:

- **EAT Lancet Commission** - It is important to learn lessons from EAT-Lancet, in particular the range of reactions it provoked across the different audiences. Communications need to be very carefully managed and nuanced, paying careful attention to the different challenges facing developed and developing countries (or better industrialized and non-industrialized agriculture and food systems since these can co-exist in developing and emerging countries. WLE may consider linking strongly to SDGs or the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development rather than solely to EAT.
- One question not yet answered is **how to scale the planetary and human health diet** recommended by EAT Lancet, and remain within planetary boundaries. The related questions on land, water use and other inputs could be incorporated into the Commission.
- A **scenario-based tradeoff assessment** approach would allow the report to drill down into regional, cultural and social specificities.

- The SAI Commission would **go beyond systematic review** and look at what we know about what is working and what is not. It will be important to clearly explain the concept of “evidence of what works,” since this is not widely understood.
- Reviewing best practice is not just about technology. **Policy and institutional incentives** are vital.
- **Avoid too much of a focus on cost** of sustainability, considering the recent Food and Land Use (FOLU) report, which states that while *transition* to new methods is expensive, there is unlikely to be significant net increase in cost of new food and land use systems.

WLE’s role would be to critically appraise evidence. There are **methodologies for systematic reviews of evidence**. At the start of the Commission, a review protocol needs to be built, including key questions about geographic coverage, interventions etc. For every piece of evidence, it is important to ask what works; for whom; how; where; and how much it costs. Once these questions are answered, WLE will consider whether the evidence is relevant, credible and sufficient. With such complex issues, not all evidence will be of “gold standard.” *Jo Puri offered to advise on methodologies and approaches for systematic review.*

In addition to the areas outlined in the presentation, the ISC considered potential areas of focus, including:

- Production from field to landscape.
- Diversified diets: what this means for smallholder farming, water management, biodiversity, etc.
- The enabling environment (policies and institutions) needed for sustainable production.
- Old vs. new technology? We are largely considering “what works” which means that newer technologies (e.g. vertical farming, cultured proteins) may not yet have sufficient evidence for the same type of evidence review process. That said, it is important to consider these newer options, and for this a different kind of review process/protocol would be needed.
- Equity, inclusivity, diversity.
- Circular economy.

The ISC concluded that **the SAI Commission should be global in scope**, despite the risks and challenges. CGIAR funding can only be used to support research in developing economies, and indeed this is our comparative advantage. However bringing in the perspectives of industrial economies, as well as large-scale farmers in our existing countries of focus, is both strategic and necessary. The resulting report could then be communicated across the globe, and used as a basis for formulating incentives that consider trade and market systems, and the impacts of decisions and policies across the world. A global focus will also mean that this Commission fits in with the other three post-EAT Lancet Commissions, all of which are global. A developing economy and smallholder focus would be too narrow, and insufficient to effectively be able to address global diversification of crops and diet, and provide solution options.

Given WLE’s expertise and capacity in developing economies and restrictions in use of funding, WLE’s approach would be to invite partners to join the Commission, to lead on the components on industrial economies and large scale producers. Suitable partners might include the ‘A5’ major agricultural Universities, e.g. Wageningen, Cornell and EMBRAPA, as well ICIPE, the AVRDC (Vegetable Center), etc.

On staffing, the current proposal is for at least two Commissioners per chapter, with two of the Commissioners to take on the roles of Chair and Co-Chair. Commissioners’ responsibilities will include thinking through structure, framework and main areas of content. Following the EAT Lancet model, the proposal includes a lead author per chapter, who compiles the research and writes. WLE could consider alternatives, such as the Cornell model, which uses post-doctoral researchers to support Commissioners, without additional authors.

The ISC agreed that WLE would first re-design the proposal, including staffing structure, to reflect exactly what the Commission wants to achieve. This may well be beyond the W1-2 funding available but there is strong feeling in the group that the Commission is a concept that could attract the attention of donors. If fundraising proves unsuccessful, we can scale back staffing requirements and scope accordingly. The proposal and budget should pay specific attention to communications.

It is intended that the work of the Commission take place over approximately two years, to be completed by November 2021. Rather than focus solely on the final report, the Commission can be viewed as a process, selecting key milestones, products and events for engagement along the way. This should be factored into planning for the Commission from the beginning. One option for launching the Commission could be explore options to present the initial plan at the pre-UNGA Climate week day, being organized by the Global Resilience Partnership on 22 September. Linking to key global events can be useful for a variety of purposes: specific chapters or other interim products could be publicized; side events can be organized to seek inputs from external partners; and Commissioners and/or authors can generate awareness and publicity via panel sessions.

There is a potential opportunity to have the final SAI Commission report branded as a CGIAR, rather than WLE, initiative.

Summary of ISC advice on SAI Commission:

WLE will re-draft the SAI Commission proposal taking into account the ISC discussions outlined above, and in particular:

- The SAI Commission will be global in perspective. To go beyond developing countries and smallholder farming, WLE will need partners with relevant expertise and funding.
- The proposed staffing structure and budget will be adjusted to reflect the needs and scope of the Commission. This is likely to be higher than the current budget allows, and WLE will need to fundraise accordingly.
- A strategy will be formulated to work on key milestones during the process, rather than fully focussing on the end product in 2021. Key events will be used for consultations and raising awareness, as well as release of staged products.

4. Roles and Responsibilities with WLE Governance

Emma Greatrix, Head of WLE Program Management, presented the governance issues to be discussed by the ISC, namely clarification on the division of responsibilities between the IWMI Board and the ISC, and proposed adjustments in Flagship Leadership.

The ISC agreed on the following table of responsibilities between the IWMI Board and ISC for key WLE decisions. **The table is moved to approval by the IWMI Board:**

Decision Point	Role of ISC	Role of Board
1. Annual Plan of Work and Budget (POWB)	Move to approve based on virtual meeting highlighting key points	Approval
2. Annual Report (AR)	Move to approve based on virtual meeting highlighting key points	Approval
3. Any key future documents	Move to approve based on virtual meeting highlighting key points	Approval

4. Significant adjustments in financial profile of the program, e.g. funding reallocations between partners	ISC Chair moves to approve (Following advice from IWMI DG and Program Director/ PMU)	Approval
5. Approval of measures to resolve conflict/ disagreement between parties	ISC Chair moves to approve (Following advice from IWMI DG and Program Director/ PMU)	Approval
6. Actions in response to a significant risk, non-performance, or major strategic shift	ISC moves to approve (Following advice from IWMI DG and Program Director/PMU)	Approval

For the move to approval of the Plan of Work and Budget and Annual Report (Points 1 and 2 in the table), it was agreed that:

- WLE Flagship Leaders will institute a peer to peer assessment approach, to review the work of other Flagships in the POWB and AR.
- The MC and Program Management Unit (PMU) will review the document overall.
- The M&E Consultant will continue to play a role in checking the evidence.
- The AR will be subject to the Quality Assurance process run by the CGIAR as part of the new CGIAR Performance Based Management Standards.
- Two virtual meetings will be organized per year, for the ISC to review the POWB and AR. During these meetings, the ISC will reflect on the key points, in line with the areas of responsibility of the ISC (as per TOR). On agreement, the ISC will move the POWB and AR to approval by the IWMI Board.

“Significant” adjustments to the financial profile for WLE (Point 4 in the table) that would require ISC Chair and Board involvement include any proposed decrease of allocations to partner Centers. In such cases, the ISC Chair will consult with the Center to be affected, and/or the CGIAR ISC representative. Other adjustments in program budgets above 10% can also be considered “significant.”

To encourage a model of Flagship management in which Flagship Leaders work fully across all involved partners rather than focussing on their own Center, the ISC proposes that an incentive mechanism is instituted. Incentives might be in the form of reward and recognition for good leadership. WLE is encouraged to consider placing a term on Flagship leadership, and for the future, attaching Flagship Leadership to qualified individuals, rather than a given Center nominating the Flagship Leader.

WLE is also encouraged to consider streamlining costs and functions of the Management Committee, such as by limiting the number of MC meetings in a year.

Summary of ISC advice on Governance:

- The table of responsibilities between the ISC and the IWMI Board is moved to the IWMI Board for approval.
- WLE is encouraged to institute incentives to encourage more inclusive and cross Center Flagship Leadership.
- WLE is encouraged to streamline Management Committee costs.

5. Performance Assessment to 2021

The processes in place to assess CRP performance in this phase are being developed by the CGIAR, and are largely built around the Performance Based Management (PBM) Standards, which will be assessed in 2020. These standards will focus on quality of management and documentation of CRPs. This approach represents a welcome departure from high level targets for research which have proven difficult to measure in a research environment, when results become apparent in the longer term. Preparing for PBM will be a major focus for the WLE PMU in the coming year.

WLE will run six outcome evaluations before 2021, one of which is complete, another of which has just started, and a third identified. It was estimated that the first three probably represent about 20% of the WLE portfolio. The ISC recommended to seek maximum coverage of WLE impact pathways with the next three to be identified, and these should try to cover all Centers, since the first three have been heavily focused on IWMI, and on water.

Summary of ISC advice on Performance Assessment:

- The three outcome evaluations to be commissioned for WLE should ensure a broad coverage of the portfolio and the partner Centers involved

6. WLE 2022-2030: Blue Skies and Grey Skies

IWMI Director General, Claudia Sadoff introduced the ongoing CGIAR “reboot” which will result in the CGIAR 2030 Plan. The new System Reference Group (SRG), which includes representatives of CGIAR Centers and donors, has tasked three working groups with proposing key strands of the CGIAR strategy and structure for the 2030 Plan. They are:

- Theme 1: Research objectives and focus – defining a portfolio coverage
- Theme 2: Research delivery model(s) – defining the pathway from innovation to impact
- Theme 3: Institutional arrangements – ensuring efficiency, impact and value for money

The broad timeline for agreeing the key points of the 2022-2030 plan is:

- July 2019: SRG retreat to draft proposals for each theme
- October 2019: proposals presented to System Management Board
- November 2019: proposals presented to System Council for approval

There is growing recognition among CGIAR Science Leaders of the sustainability agenda, and the climate and environment risk drivers. WLE can help support and curate scientific results that bring together the elements necessary to bring about transformation, such as scale and depth of impact; behavior of individuals and institutions; policy and disruption.

The ISC feels strongly that the SAI Commission is an important initiative to support the CGIAR 2030 Plan. **The ISC will provide a letter to the SRG before its meeting in July**, highlighting key issues the ISC considers important to the CGIAR 2030 Plan process, drawing on the discussions in this meeting, the EAT forum and the results of the sustainability transformation survey initiated by WLE. WLE recognizes that addressing climate change is vital, but it is not the only lens for the sustainability agenda, it is important to craft messaging carefully.

The ISC discussed the following opportunities, challenges and risks for WLE and its agenda in terms of preparing for the end of this phase and the beginning of the next.

Opportunities:

- CGIAR recognition of ‘planetary boundaries’ and ‘sustainability’ in 2019-21 Business Plan
- The survey on the sustainability transformation has been completed and has the potential to be useful - WLE needs now to make use of this data

Challenges and Risks:

- This issue is now considered a planetary **emergency** which we only have 10 years to solve. How can WLE convene relevant science to respond to this?
- The CGIAR is not visible enough in some circles that lie at heart of these debates, which can make it difficult for our voice to be heard
- After 2022, the portfolio of the CGIAR will be quite different and WLE will almost certainly not continue in its current form

Summary of ISC advice on future strategy:

- The ISC will send a letter to the SRG before its meeting in July, highlighting the contribution that the SAI Commission and WLE work on the transformation to sustainability can make to the 2030 planning process

Tuesday, 18 June

7. Flagship presentations

The ISC was joined by the WLE Management Committee (MC) on the second day of the meeting. Flagship Leaders spent the morning presenting the outlook and recent achievements of WLE's Flagships and Gender portfolio, seeking feedback and inputs from the ISC.

Following a presentation on Flagship 4 (Variability, Risks and Competing Uses) by Matthew McCartney (IWMI) and Claudia Ringler (IFPRI), discussion points and suggestions from the ISC included:

- Variability and scarcity of water is the entry point of this Flagship, but it is not solely water focused. Competition for resources, including land, are considered, but this does not always come out clearly.
- The Flagship supports SDG processes (e.g. 6.4.2) but WLE/CGIAR visibility could be improved.
- FP4 may consider linking with the Global Climate Fund as a science/learning partner.
- FP4 may consider reaching out to new categories of partner such as municipalities and infrastructure managers, who have much to lose from the effects of flooding.
- FP4 could make relevant contributions to UNGA climate week and the 2020 IUCN World Conservation Congress.
- WLE may wish to reconsider the nomenclature of green/grey infrastructure, to demonstrate more clearly that this work focusses on biodiversity and ecosystems.

Flagship 1 (Restoring Degraded Landscapes) was presented by Marcela Quintero (CIAT) and Ermias Betemariam (ICRAF). Discussion points were:

- WLE is part of the Science Policy Interface group through FP1/ICRAF and will present a technical report on degraded landscapes at the upcoming UNCCD CoP.
- One of the major outputs of this Flagship since Phase 1 has been the development of Soil Information Systems (SIS) in a number of African countries; efforts continue, with partners such as ISRIC (World Soil Information), to make soil information publicly available across Africa.
- Investment in soil carbon sequestration is currently popular. WLE helps decision makers understand when and where there is potential to invest in soil carbon and what is needed to make it work. Often, as has been shown in Kenya, good soil management practice is the best way to improve soil carbon capacity.

- The focus of the impact pathway for this work, in Kenya for example, is for the ministries involved (Water, Environment, Forestry) to agree to a joint approach and co-develop initiatives. WLE provides documentation and attends meetings as needed.
- It is proposed that WLE scientists learn the language of impact investment, and are able to propose cheap, credible ways of measuring outcomes.
- WLE should consider developing business cases related to soil and land restoration investments.

A presentation on Flagship 3 (Rural Urban Linkages) was provided by Pay Drechsel (IWMI) and Rene Vanheezuin (RUAF Foundation). Discussion points included:

- The data generated by WLE on City Region Food Systems (CRFS) could be of benefit to private companies. It is advised to avoid Corporate Social Responsibility Departments as an entry point, since this is a business benefit.
- The private sector is part of this work and the CRFS assessments.
- It is suggested to link with WBCSD on this sector.
- In 2019, this flagship intends to expand the lens of the indicators being developed to focus on resilience and gender.

Jennie Barron (Swedish Agricultural University, SLU) and Anthony Whitbread (ICRISAT) presented on Flagship 2 (Land and Water Solutions). The discussion included:

- This Flagship is keen to work more in the Sahel, and is investing CGIAR funds in Mali and Burkina Faso. Whilst bilateral funds support a number of initiatives in the region, it is not easy to find donor support to the integrated approach to scaling landscape solutions that WLE is promoting. This region has the potential for cross Flagship research and the development of program level recommendations.
- Engagement with the Great Green Wall was suggested as a possible solution, along with organizing a science event in the region.

Roseline Remans (Bioversity) presented on WLE's Flagship 5 (Enhancing Sustainable Agriculture) to the plenary group. The discussion around this included:

- WLE recognizes that it is difficult to make good decisions in landscapes. FP5's objective is to help decision makers (national and district governments, in particular) make better decisions and investments when there are multiple factors at play.
- Clarification that FP5 is not creating new tools. It seeks to understand what is there already, how to bring these together to be more accessible to those who need to use the tools, and what works best.
- FP5 seeks to draw a framework to bring together the different types of tools and models that decision makers need at different points in the decision making process.
- IFPRI, IWMI, Bioversity and ICRAF are all involved in the development of this framework. This is a truly integrated, cross-Center approach, and it is challenging to implement, given each Center has its own priorities and ways of working.
- FP5 has committed to working with other CRPs. The first will be Roots Tubers and Bananas (RTB), through a case study in Uganda.
- It was suggested that useful outputs by 2021 would be:
 - o a dashboard/interface for planners/decision makers to be able to access this framework
 - o A set of case studies which show how the decision tools work

- It was noted that decision makers will tend to use whatever they have around them to make the decision in question so any tool or framework must be very easy to use, if it is to be applied successfully

It is recommended that WLE reflect further on FP5 plans, considering these questions in particular:

- How does the SAI Commission fit into the rest of FP5?
- A number of FP5 achievements to date have been inputs into important decision making processes. How does this fit with the W1-2 investments in FP5?
- Is FP5 still synthetic, working with the other WLE Flagships, as intended?

Deepa Joshi presented on the Gender Youth and Inclusion theme of WLE, which cuts across all WLE Flagships. The discussion focused on:

- The case study on Index Based Flood Insurance (IBFI). It would be interesting in future to review how many people were exposed to IBFI but did *not* buy the insurance, and for women, how this might be overcome. The barriers to uptake in investments like IBFI are well known. WLE is trying to focus now on identifying solutions.
- WLE was asked to carefully incorporate thinking around institutions, social and cultural issues when identifying these solutions.
- WLE might consider how to combine the various data sets available to derive a combined, more transdisciplinary product.

8. ISC Reflections

Following a full morning of presentations and discussion with the MC, the ISC reflected on the program in an 'in camera' session. These included:

Visibility

- Many of the Flagships had asked the ISC for suggestions on how to make their work more visible.
- WLE's breadth makes it difficult to represent. The shaping of the SAI Commission report, and the process leading up to the report, could be an important tool to overcome this barrier.

Policy

- All Flagships are engaging with policy, and having some success, but there does not appear to be a coherent, cross-program strategy for this. Is there a set of specific policy goals?
- The Flagships almost mirror the mandate of FAO. WLE works with FAO, but there could be more collaboration. This could be part of a strategy to bring together more coherent policy goals.

Program coherence

- As with policy, although things have improved, the structure of the CRPs by Flagship still gives an impression that individual research programs are working separately.
- Ways to continue to bring together and promote the WLE bigger picture and added value it brings, include:
 - o The SAI Commission, including recommendations on how to deal with certain tradeoffs efficiently and sustainably, within boundaries
 - o Flagship 5 has potential to bring together some of the research and findings across WLE
 - o WLE could select some of the deliverables that WLE is committed to, and promote these, thereby bringing focus and attention, which is not possible when trying to

communicate on everything - WLE is advised to identify approximately ten pieces of work (or “best bets” or “big wins”) that are cutting edge, interesting, innovative and could capture an audience

- Based on these examples, WLE will identify channels to project these messages over the next two years
- Synthesis of WLE work - The delivery of a synthetic piece would demonstrate the substance behind the big wins above

Synthesis

- A meta-analysis/synthesis of WLE’s work would be an effective way to bring out the results of WLE, at the program level.
- A synthesis would consider what works and what does not, how it works, how much it costs and would also serve to feed the Commission.
- It is possible to publish a summary first, with details to follow later.
- A synthesis review can include grey literature, as long as this is included in the protocol.
- The review can identify key, evidence-based conclusions that WLE has reached, and showcase specific cases.
- This synthesis would be separate to the Commission but part of the same process and meta-narrative. Given WLE’s limited resources, it is important that these can be run together.
- The ISC lends its full backing to WLE allocating funding to such a synthetic review.

Summary of ISC advice to the MC

1. WLE is advised to identify approximately ten pieces of work (“best bets” or “big wins”) that are cutting edge, interesting, innovative and could capture an audience. Based on the key messages of or policy changes around these areas, efforts should be focused on promoting those.
2. WLE is encouraged to initiate a synthetic review of its results. This could focus on selected topics highlighted by the program.
3. WLE should build a program of visibility and messaging based around its work, with a focus on policy and institutional change. Visibility should be built around (and efforts combined where possible):
 - a. The SAI Commission
 - b. Synthetic Review of WLE results
 - c. Selected “Big Wins”

9. Plenary MC and ISC Session

The Chair summarized the deliberations of the ISC, noting that the UN Secretary General is going to declare a planetary emergency at the UN General Assembly meetings in September. The work that WLE is doing is very timely. Considering this, the ISC has a number of suggestions for WLE to consider:

1. The metanarrative around the planetary emergency is already in place. WLE is well positioned to put together evidence that underpins the emergency, and already has a significant weight of evidence around some of our solutions (e.g. Rural-urban, land degradation, etc.). What can WLE say that we are doing/have done/ have evidence on, that will help to help the world with this emergency? Based on the wealth of knowledge across WLE, how do we shore up evidence of solutions, and share, promote, and use these in these key fora and for clearly identified objectives? **A synthetic review of WLE solutions and evidence would be timely and useful.**

2. We need to be better at showing the value of the program and the work that it is doing. **The ISC proposes that WLE selects approximately 10 initiatives** (“Big Wins” or “Best Bets”) that are potentially scalable, have depth, are disruptive and link to policy. These can be heavily promoted by WLE, and link to the metanarrative on planetary emergency.
3. Strategic communications and outreach. We need to avoid the impression that we are trying to cover everything. **Communications should be focused, demand driven and well planned.**
4. We need to demonstrate that the work being done under WLE is core to the CGIAR 2030 Plan. ‘Planetary boundaries’ is now part of the narrative, and WLE should do what it can to support any CG adjustment towards sustainability. WLE is encouraged to think about its work in terms of the five transformations outlined in the existing CGIAR business plan. **The ISC will harvest the results of the recent survey on transformation, and send a letter to the CG leadership in advance of upcoming System Reference Group meetings in July**, highlighting the contribution that the SAI Commission and WLE work on the transformation to sustainability can make to the 2030 planning process.
5. The ISC recommends that **the Commission is not viewed only as a product, but as a process** that will be carefully planned to build momentum along a series of key events, to input and influence, as well as to seek advice and expertise. UNCCD CoP and UNGA were suggested as potential forums to convene experts, and start to generate ideas and interest.
6. Whilst the CGIAR mandate is around developing countries, the SAI Commission cannot omit industrialized countries and large scale farming. **The SAI Commission must be global in scope** and WLE will need to find appropriate partners to fund and lead on this.
7. **The ISC will approve the POWB and AR each year through virtual meetings.** The MC is asked **to play a greater role in peer to peer style review of these documents.** Overall, the ISC is there to support WLE in its decision making.
8. It is encouraging to hear about the progress in gender and the move towards gender transformatory solutions for action. **It is important to bring out examples of solutions from the WLE portfolio in concrete terms.** Youth should also be better incorporated.
9. Many of the suggestions above focus on policy and institutional change objectives, since these are needed to truly bring about change. To be successful in such change, **WLE needs to know what it is we want to change and what our message is before setting out a strategy and identifying partners.** There are also opportunities that present themselves along the way that WLE can be ready for, if it has its ‘best bets’ ready. Impacts can be national or global.

10. Summary of moves to approval for the IWMI Board and highlights of ISC advice to WLE

10.1 Move to Approval by IWMI board

To clarify the roles and responsibilities of the IWMI Board and the WLE ISC, the ISC moves the following Table of responsibilities to approval by the IWMI Board:

Decision Point	Role of ISC	Role of Board
Annual Plan of Work and Budget (POWB)	Move to approve based on virtual meeting highlighting key points	Approval
Annual Report	Move to approve based on virtual meeting highlighting key points	Approval
Any key future documents	Move to approve based on virtual meeting highlighting key points	Approval
Major adjustments in financial profile of the program, e.g. funding reallocations between partners	ISC Chair moves to approve (Following advice from IWMI DG and Program Director/PMU)	Approval
Approval of measures to resolve conflict/ disagreement between parties	ISC Chair moves to approve (Following advice from IWMI DG and Program Director/PMU)	Approval
Actions in response to a significant risk, non-performance, or major strategic shift	ISC moves to approve (Following advice from IWMI DG and Program Director/PMU)	Approval

10.2 ISC Advice for follow up by WLE

The following advice was provided by the ISC which requires follow up actions from WLE:

Summary of ISC advice on SAI Commission:

WLE will re-draft the SAI Commission proposal taking into account:

- The SAI Commission will be global in perspective. To go beyond developing countries and smallholder farming, WLE will need partners with relevant expertise and funding.
- The proposed staffing structure and budget will be adjusted to reflect the needs and scope of the Commission. This is likely to be higher than the current budget allows, and WLE will need to fundraise accordingly.
- A strategy will be formulated to work on key milestones during the process, rather than solely focusing on the end product in 2021. Key events will be used for consultations and raising awareness, as well as release of staged products.

Summary of ISC advice on Governance:

- WLE is encouraged to institute incentives to encourage more inclusive and cross-Center Flagship Leadership.
- WLE is encouraged to streamline MC costs.

Summary of ISC advice on Performance Assessment:

- The three outcome evaluations to be commissioned for WLE should ensure a broad coverage of the portfolio and the partner Centers involved.

Summary of ISC advice on future strategy:

- The ISC will send a letter to the SRG before its meeting in July, highlighting the contribution that the SAI Commission and WLE work on the transformation to sustainability can make to the 2030 planning process.

Summary of ISC advice to the MC

- WLE is advised to identify approximately ten pieces of work (“best bets” or “big wins”) that are cutting edge, interesting, innovative and could capture an audience. Based on the key messages of or policy changes around these areas, efforts should be focused on promoting those.
- WLE is encouraged to initiate a synthetic review of its results. This could focus on selected topics highlighted by the program.
- WLE should build a program of visibility and messaging based around its work, with a focus on policy and institutional change. Visibility should be built around (and efforts combined where possible):
 - The SAI Commission
 - Synthetic Review of WLE results
 - Selected “Big Wins”

Annex 1: AGENDA

13th Meeting of the WLE Independent Steering Committee (ISC)

17 – 18 June 2019, Aga Khan University, London

Meeting objectives and expected outputs

- Proposal and process of establishment of the Commission on Sustainable Agricultural Intensification endorsed
Outputs:
 Agreed next steps for submission of the SAI Commission proposal
 Recommendations on selection process and profile of SAI Commissioners and Lead Authors
- Strategic Advice on getting WLE ready in 2020 to respond to the CGIAR’s 2022-2030 plan requirements
Output:
 Summary of recommendations for WLE to consider for action in 2020 regarding the next phase
- Stronger understanding of the research for development progress and key planned actions in WLE’s Flagships (sub-programs)
Output:
 Advice on key actions in 2019-2021 agreed
- Update on roles and responsibilities of WLE governance and management bodies
Output:
 ISC acknowledgment of decision-making processes and responsibilities in WLE

Schedule overview

	Monday 17	Tuesday 18
Morning	ISC	ISC & MC Joint session
Afternoon	ISC	1.30 – 2.45 ISC session
		2.45 – 5.30 ISC & MC Joint session
Evening	ISC and MC Dinner	

Monday 17 June: Independent Steering Committee

Time	Agenda Item No. and Title	Presenter	Objective & Output	Background documents
0900	1. Introductory Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome, introductions Adoption of Agenda Meeting Objectives Approval of minutes from 12th Meeting 	Ann Tutwiler	To open the meeting and introduce members	1.1. Minutes of 12 th ISC meeting 1.2. Chair's summary from 12 th ISC meeting 1.3. Minutes of January virtual meeting 1.4. Minutes of March virtual meeting
0945	2. WLE and the CGIAR: overview, status and necessary actions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rapid recap on the program 20 mins + 10 Q&A 	Izabella Koziell	To bring ISC up to speed with WLE portfolio level aims and objectives	2. Program Director's Report to IWMI Board, April 2019
1015	Coffee Break			
1045	3. WLE Commission on Sustainable Agricultural Intensification (SAI) Discuss and agree on next steps for establishing the Commission and Secretariat	Izabella Koziell (& Chris Dickens)	Outputs: Agreed next steps for submission of the SAI Commission proposal; Recommendations on selection process and profile of SAI Commissioners and Lead Authors	3.1 WLE response to comments from ISC on SAI Commission proposal draft 3.2 SAI Commission proposal draft, March 2019
1215	Lunch break			
1315	4. Roles and Responsibilities within WLE Governance Examining how the various governance and management bodies of WLE can work together more effectively and efficiently	Emma Greatrix/ Izabella Koziell	Resolve final issues around decision-making Outputs: Acknowledgement by ISC of decision making process and responsibilities in WLE; Endorsement of proposal to adjust Flagship leadership co-management arrangement	4.1 Brief on roles and responsibilities of WLE governance and management bodies
1430	5. Performance Assessment to 2021 WLE in the CGIAR 2019-2021 business period and expected requirements for performance assessment (Impact Assessment, Evaluations, Performance Based Management)	Izabella Koziell	Seek ISC advice on actions around specific performance assessment and evaluation issues 2019-2021	
1500	Break			
1530	6. WLE 2022-2030: Blue Skies and Grey Skies Setting the context: CGIAR reform 2022-2030, Commission, end of program 2021, synthesis/promotion of results, Other	Izabella Koziell Ann Tutwiler & ISC	Allow opportunity for ISC to consider future strategy of WLE, bringing in sector expertise Output: Suggestions from ISC on future direction of WLE for debate with WLE Management	6.1 Summary of CGIAR Sustainability Transformation Survey results 6.2 Road Map for the CGIAR System 2030 Plan

	commissions/summits. Structured ISC discussion on opportunities, challenges, risks for WLE, beyond 2021, considering comparative advantage of the program, and external and CGIAR context		Committee (following day)	
1700-	Wrap Up, close for the day	Chair		
1830 WLE ISC and MC DINNER				

Tuesday 18 June: Independent Steering Committee and Management Committee

Time	Agenda Item	Presenter	Objective & Output	Background documents
0845	7. Welcome	Chair	Brief on Day 1 and set priorities for the day ahead	
0900	8. Flagship Research for Development highlights <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updates from each of the WLE Flagships and GYI <p><i>(session includes coffee break)</i></p>	Adam Hunt; Flagship Leaders	To update ISC on Flagship plans and accomplishments To give the ISC a stronger understanding of the program to be able to make informed suggestions on portfolio level strategy Flagships may request advice from ISC on specific Flagship level challenges	8.1 WLE 2019 Plan of Work and Budget (POWB) 8.2 WLE 2018 Annual report
1230-1330 Lunch				
1330-1445	9. ISC Closed Session Reflections on Flagship progress and perspectives, and on WLE vision for 2022 onwards	Chair	Output: Recommendation(s) from ISC for WLE	
1445 Coffee Break				
1515	10. MC and ISC Joint Plenary Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ISC Feedback for flagships Joint discussions on perspectives post 2021 SAI Commission 	Chair	Output: Summary of recommendations for WLE to consider for action in 2020 regarding the next phase Output: Advice on key actions in 2019-2021 agreed	
1700	11. Chair's summary and closure of ISC meeting	Chair	Highlights including proposed recommendations Output: Chair's Summary	
1730	End of ISC meeting			