



24th CGIAR System Council Meeting
10–11 June 2026, Antalya, Türkiye

Agenda Item 02	Update from the Integrated Partnership Board Chair
Distribution notice:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> May be distributed without restriction <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted to Members and Active Observers <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted to Voting Members only
Issue date:	1 June 2026
Purpose:	<input type="checkbox"/> For consent agenda/information <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For discussion <input type="checkbox"/> For discussion and decision <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)
Requested action:	Discussion
Executive summary:	<p>This item provides the System Council with a report from the Chair of the Integrated Partnership Board (IPB) on activities since SC23, during the six-month transition from the IPB to the new CGIAR Board.</p> <p>The report covers IPB meetings, engagement and decision-making in Q1/Q2 2026, including updates on governance, financial oversight, resource mobilization, portfolio oversight, and combined assurance.</p> <p>It also reflects the IPB's focus on maintaining stable oversight of the Integrated Partnership during this period of governance transition.</p>
Draft decision points:	N/A
Supporting materials:	Pre-read presentation slides
Prepared by:	CGIAR Secretariat

Report from the Integrated Partnership Board Chair to the System Council

Roel Merckx
Integrated Partnership Board Chair

Role of the IPB

From the Charter of the CGIAR System Organization:

Definition

“Integrated Partnership Board” means the governing body of the CGIAR System Organization and of the Integrated Partnership.

Article 8.1 a:

The Integrated Partnership Board is accountable to the System Council, with respect to the oversight of the implementation of the Integrated Partnership’s vision, strategic direction, partnership strategy, governance and financial and programmatic performance

IPB meetings, engagement and decision-making

Since SC23 (December 2025):

Two virtual meetings – February and May 2026

- Typically either the Q1 or Q2 meeting is in person, however the IPB was mindful of the need to effectively prioritize use of resources for CGIAR's governance, and elected to hold both meetings virtually
- An in-person convening is instead planned for September 2026, after the reconstitution of the Board and under its new Chairpersonship

Ad hoc calls and electronic decision-making

- One ad hoc meeting and two meetings of Performance Assessment sub-committee
- Participation in touchpoints on Portfolio
- Electronic decision-making on CGIAR Board model, Framework/Charter amendments,
- Decision-making currently in process on Portfolio Narrative, Intellectual Assets Report and SO Personnel Policy Amendments

Modalities of reporting to SC in Q1/2 2026:

Communiqués after each meeting:

- *Sent to the System Council, AOC, AFRC, GAC, and SO management team*
- *Summarizes discussions/conclusions and lists all decisions taken*

Link: [IPB-008 \(11 February\) Communiqué](#)

Link: [IPB-009 \(12-13 May\) Communiqué](#)

Formal meeting summaries published:

Link: [IPB-008 Meeting Summary](#)

IPB-009 Summary undergoing review/approval

Regular meetings between IPB Chair and SC Chair, with GAC Chair and EMD

These modalities will be reviewed and built on as part of strengthening communications and engagement between the new CGIAR Board and Council

All decisions of the Board are available in a searchable database at: <https://www.cgiar.org/integrated-partnership-board#Decision+Register>.

IPB decisions taken in Q1/2 2026

Date	Thematic Area	Decision
16 January 2026	Financial oversight	Appointment of Ernst & Young (EY) as external auditor of the CGIAR System Organization for fiscal year 2025 <i>(Note that an earlier decision in 2025 had been taken to reappoint PWC, who withdrew from the engagement on the basis of a rules change that meant they could no longer audit non-profits; a procurement process was undertaken overseen by the AFRC to appoint EY)</i>
3 March 2026	Governance	Approval of the proposed CGIAR Board model <i>(also approved by the GAC and the System Council)</i>
12-13 May 2026	Partnerships; SO matters	Approval of the final text of the United Arab Emirates - CGIAR System Organization Host Country Agreement.
12-13 May 2026	Resource Mobilization	In line with the Regulation on the Authorizing Environment of the CGIAR System Organization, approved an authorization framework enabling the EMD to respond to time-sensitive bilateral opportunities and CGIAR Impact Ventures pilots within defined guardrails
12-13 May 2026	Financial oversight	Approved the Audited Financial Statements of the CGIAR System Organization for the 2025 fiscal year
12-13 May 2026	Financial oversight	Approved the appointment of Ernst & Young (EY) as the External Auditor of the CGIAR System Organization for the 2026 fiscal year.

Process decisions (approvals of agendas and meeting summaries) not been included in the above for brevity; all other decisions included.

IPB focus in Q1/2 2026

Maintaining stable and effective oversight of the portfolio and its funding during a time of change – and constructively supporting the governance evolution.

Vision, strategic direction and advocacy

- Guidance to EMD and GLT on the process and progress in developing the 2040 Institutional Strategy
- Encouraged staged approach to strategy development with clear points of engagement for the Board and with partners
- Recognizing ‘reform fatigue’ risk – encouraged open-mindedness to form following function once strategy is developed/well-supported

Governance

- External audit – approval of SO 2025 financial statements (unqualified audit opinion)
- Agreeing KPIs with EMD; measuring performance against 2025 KPIs through a 360 performance process; approved renewal of EMD contract
- Support for governance transition and input into key Board operational documents (i.e Rules of Procedure; Conflicts of Objectives policy)

IPB focus in Q1/2 2026

Maintaining stable and effective oversight of the portfolio and its funding during a time of change – and constructively supporting the governance evolution.

Partnership engagement and Resource Mobilization

- Oversight of progress against three “Protect-Grow-Diversify” pillars of the Resource Mobilization strategy
- Approval of authorization framework enabling the response to time-sensitive bilateral opportunities and CGIAR Impact Ventures pilots within defined guardrails

Financial and Programmatic Performance

- Regular updates from Chief Scientist; strategic guidance provided on cross-cutting portfolio issues and prioritization approaches
- At date of issue of this report – review/approval of 2025 CGIAR Portfolio Narrative Report
- Including through IPB-AFRC – monitoring of 2025 budget implementation

IPB focus in Q1/2 2026

Maintaining stable and effective oversight of the portfolio and its funding during a time of change – and constructively supporting the governance evolution.

Combined Assurance

- Through the IPB-AFRC
- Dialogue with Advisory Services

- Oversight through the IPB-AFRC (with regular reports to the full Board) of establishment and maturity path of the integrated assurance functions and implementation of the Risk & Oversight Plan:
 - **For Risk & Internal Controls:** Strong progress in terms of maturity of its practices and ownership by the EMD and GLT. To continue progress to greater maturity and given the highly dynamic external environment, the GLT should have more targeted discussions on risks that fall outside the agreed risk appetite - and the mitigations for those risks and their effectiveness partnership-wide and at Centers.
 - **For Internal Audit:** Emphasis on ensuring that resource gaps and vacancies are addressed and supporting alignment in audit planning and leadership, to realize efficiencies and deliver a coherent, partnership-wide assurance framework.
 - **For EBC:** With IP-EBC Executive now in place since 1 May, full implementation of the Escalation Framework is a critical priority including finalization of the Data Transfer Agreement and alignment of definitions to support timely aggregated reporting.
- Dialogue with IAES Director on multi-year evaluation plan and input on options presented to help shape the plan as it evolves. Encouragement to continue exploring joint engagement by IAES with Internal Audit and Risk.