

cg iar News

Nourishing the future through scientific excellence

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CGIAR Rice Breeder Wins 2004 World Food Prize

Dr. Monty Jones from Sierra Leone, a former rice breeder at WARDA-The Africa Rice Center won the 2004 World Food Prize. He shares the prize with Professor Yuan Longping of China. The award, given by the Iowa-based World Food Prize Foundation, carries a cash prize of \$250,000.



"The scientific and technological advances we applaud today offer an historic opportunity to put food on the tables of hungry millions and to lift them out of poverty," said U.S. Secretary of State Colin L. Powell, while congratulating the winners at the award ceremony held in April at the U.S. Department of State. Secretary Powell was joined by Ann M. Veneman, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, and Jacques Diouf, Director General, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

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Group of Eight Summit endorses CGIAR

The recently-announced 2004 G-8 Action Plan provides a strong boost to CGIAR, and focuses on three priorities:

- Ending famine in the Horn of Africa
- Raising agricultural productivity
- Promoting rural development in food insecure countries

"We are delighted that the G-8 Action Plan recognizes the imperative of reducing hunger, poverty and environmental degradation," said Ian Johnson, CGIAR

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CGIAR Chairman

Ian Johnson

CGIAR Director

Francisco Reifschneider

CGIAR Members

African Development Bank
 Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development
 Asian Development Bank
 Australia
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 International Fund for Agricultural Development
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 Kellogg Foundation
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 Luxembourg
 Malaysia
 Mexico
 Morocco
 Netherlands
 New Zealand
 Nigeria
 Norway
 OPEC Fund for International Development
 Pakistan
 Peru
 Philippines
 Portugal
 Rockefeller Foundation
 Romania
 Russian Federation
 South Africa
 Spain
 Sweden
 Switzerland
 Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture
 Syrian Arab Republic
 Thailand
 Uganda
 United Kingdom
 United Nations Development Programme
 United Nations Environment Programme
 United States of America
 World Bank



Message from the Chairman and Director

We are pleased to present you with the summer edition of "CGIAR News." An e-version of CGIAR is available at www.cgiar.org. This issue provides a snapshot of research accomplishments and development impacts achieved by the CGIAR Centers, acting in concert with a broad range of partners.

The award of the 2004 World Food Prize to Monty Jones for his efforts to develop NERICAs, the New Rices for Africa, tops the good news. It is a fitting tribute to the quality and relevance of research conducted by WARDA-The Africa Rice Center, and a powerful example of participatory research that is Africa-based, African-led, and directed toward Africa's specific development needs. In other news, we are delighted that a world-class CGIAR Science Council chaired by Per Pinstrup-Andersen is off to a flying start, ensuring that CGIAR science continues to be at the leading edge for maximal development impact.

News on the financial front is also uniformly good. The draft 2003 financial report shows CGIAR Member contributions totaled \$381 million, confirming the stability of CGIAR finances and offering a resounding vote of confidence in the system's ability to deliver practical results that improve poor people's livelihoods.

The Government of Mexico will be hosting Annual General Meeting 2004. The venue is especially significant, going back to the origins of the CGIAR, birthplace of the Green Revolution and home to CIMMYT. Plans are proceeding apace for another banner meeting where participants will get to witness first-hand the various research-for-development initiatives by the Centers, including field visits to CIMMYT and national research centers of excellence.

The IFPRI-ISNAR alliance is now complete. The new ISNAR program will be located in Addis Ababa, under IFPRI governance. It is another example of how the CGIAR is reshaping itself for achieving greater development impacts in Africa and beyond.

Finally, we were delighted to have the opportunity to visit CIAT, CIP, and ICARDA and to have fruitful discussions with the staff. Thanks to an excellent program of visits, we learned a lot and came away reassured that the CGIAR's mandate is making critical contributions toward the drive to achieve sustainable development.

We hope you have a relaxing summer. As always, we welcome comments on this newsletter which can be sent to cgjar@cgiar.org.

Cordially,

Ian Johnson
 CGIAR Chairman

Francisco Reifschneider
 CGIAR Director

Top Honors for Hubert Zandstra

The Government of Peru awarded the "Great Cross for Distinguished Service" to Hubert Zandstra, Director General, CIP, in May. Dr. Zandstra was recognized for his research contributions on potato, sweetpotato, lesser known Andean roots and tubers, and for his dedication to promoting integrated management of natural resources in the world's mountain regions, particularly in Peru. The honor is one of the highest bestowed upon a foreigner by the Peruvian Government which hosts CIP.

Speaking at the award ceremony held at CIP headquarters in La Molina, the Peruvian Minister of Foreign Affairs, H.E. Manuel Rodriguez Cuadros commended Hubert Zandstra's contributions to Peru, in particular his association with the National Working Group on Mountain Ecosystems organized by the Peruvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2002, the International Year of Mountains. The Minister also recognized Dr. Zandstra's contributions that have helped Peru to enhance its influence at international fora on biodiversity conservation and the sustainable development of mountain regions.

"One of my most gratifying professional experiences was the reintroduction of potato seed, a technology used by the ancient Incas, in Callejón de Conchucos in Ancash," said Zandstra while accepting the award. In 1994, Father Ugo de Censi approached CIP after the region's farmers had lost all their seed due to a devastating drought. With the seed CIP sent, farmers were able to increase their yields fivefold, and the community no longer had to constantly search for good quality seed.

In his remarks, the Minister highlighted the significance of having CIP headquarters in Peru, a country known as the birthplace of the potato. He emphasized that just as the populations of Mexico and Central America are known as the cultures of maize, the people of Peru should be known as the culture of the potato, both for the connection of the crop to Peru's ancient Andean heritage, as well as for the global value of the tuber which is the world's fourth most important food crop. 🌱

For more information on CIP,
www.cipotato.org

Announcements

Ronald Cantrell, Director General, IRRI, has resigned his position effective December 31, 2004. He is stepping down for health and family reasons.

William Dar, Director General, ICRISAT, has been given a new 5-year term of office beginning January 2005. The decision was announced at the 50th meeting of the ICRISAT Governing Board held in April 2004.

Bram Govaerts, CIMMYT, won Belgium's Development Cooperation Prize for his thesis "Soil quality assessment of zero tillage wheat/maize trials in the highlands of Mexico."



The Peruvian Minister of Foreign Affairs, H.E. Manuel Rodriguez Cuadros honors Hubert Zandstra at the award ceremony.



With an exchange of signatures, ISNAR was dissolved and is transformed as a new program under IFPRI governance located in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Shown in the picture are Board Chairs and Directors General of ISNAR and IFPRI, who were joined by Ian Johnson, CGIAR Chairman and Francisco Reifschneider, CGIAR Director.

Committees of Center Board Chairs (CBC) and Center Directors (CDC) Meet at ICARDA

After a last-minute security alert caused by an event in Damascus, we heaved a sigh of relief when the all clear signal was finally given for our May 2004 meetings at ICARDA headquarters in Aleppo, Syria. The meetings were effectively supported by the efficient and friendly ICARDA staff. This, coupled with the excellent hospitality in Aleppo—the oldest continuously inhabited city on earth—made for a fine venue and productive meetings. We also benefited from an impressive overview of the ICARDA research program and magnificent site. This report provides highlights from both Committee meetings and the joint meeting of the Committees.

Programmatic and Global Organizational Alignments for the CGIAR: To both the CDC and CBC, the Future Harvest Centers' collective engagement in the CGIAR programmatic and structural alignment review is currently the most critical issue for attention. In Aleppo, the Committees interacted with the chairs of CGIAR Task Forces, both virtually and a face-to-face meeting with one co-chair, Per Pinstrup-Andersen.

The Future Harvest Centers intend to greatly increase their capacity for collective action and will solidify and operationalize their efforts at a CDC workshop planned for July in Addis Ababa. CBC representatives will also be taking part in the workshop. In addition, participants will meet with key African research leaders. The workshop will revisit organizational models for collective action, receive reports from the Centers' working group looking into programmatic and structural alignment in Sub-Saharan Africa, and develop a communications strategy to promote the current as well as future reality of Centers working together. Inputs from the CIMMYT-IRRI alliance exercise are also to be included to the extent possible, and will take account of how forestry, fishery, livestock, water and policy are encompassed.

Science Council: Both Committees interacted with Per Pinstrup-Andersen, Chairman, Science Council (SC), and expressed pleasure that a strong and independent SC was established. The Centers see the priorities for the work of the new SC as (1) program priority setting at the System level, (2) a definitive job on the programmatic Performance Indicators, (3) capacity building and training work, (4) research design for the Challenge Programs and lessons from the implementation phase of the present CPs, (5) impact culture and research on impact, and (6) how to better address and increase emphasis on key program areas such as forestry, fisheries and water.



CGIAR Working Group on Performance Indicators: CBC demonstrated its support for the Working Group that was appointed by the CGIAR Executive Council to design and implement a Performance Measurement System for the CGIAR Centers. CBC has accepted the responsibility to develop some performance indicators on governance. The CDC and the SC are also very actively involved in the development of other indicators.

ISNAR-IFPRI Program: This was our first meetings without ISNAR in attendance as an independent Center. We were pleased to learn about the excellent progress being made in translating the ISNAR mandate into IFPRI's work program.

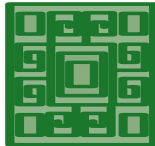
Future Harvest Alliance Office: We are pleased that the Future Harvest Alliance Office is now fully operational, consisting of the new position of Executive Officer and the Executive Secretary of CDC. The first priority of the Alliance Office will be to build on improvements over the last several years and ensure that CDC operates more effectively. As Executive Officer, Meryl Williams will lay the ground work for CDC on key strategic issues such as the programmatic and structural alignment exercise.

Update from Task Force on Millennium Development Goals: The Centers are active in several ways to help achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). First, Centers are orienting their own work programs and strategies to place the Goals at the core. Second, several senior Center executives are members of the UN-MDG Task Forces on Hunger, Water and Environment. Third, the Technical Support Center for the MDGs is proposed to be located at World Agroforestry Center. The CDC intends to make more visible the work that the Centers are doing to support the MDGs.

Compensation Study: Both CBC and CDC welcome this study and see it as contributing to the overall reform process especially in harmonizing common and basic compensation policies and urge that the study methods be sufficiently rigorous.

Gender and Diversity (G&D) Program Review: The Committees received the positive results of the External Review and approved the key recommendation to extend the G&D program for another four years.

A.U. Mokwunye, Chair, CBC
Kanayo Nwanze, Chair, CDC



CGIAR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 04 Please Mark Your Calendars

The Government of Mexico is hosting CGIAR's Annual General Meeting 2004. Over 1,000 international and Mexican policy makers, agricultural research experts, scientists, and development specialists are expected to attend.

"The Government of Mexico is honored to host the CGIAR's Annual General Meeting," said The Hon. Javier Usabiaga, Secretary of Agriculture, Mexico. "The outcomes will be of great importance in assisting member countries to make decisions that accelerate the fight against poverty and hunger and foster policies that benefit poor farmers and poor people."

Program Highlights

October 25: Centers' and Members' Day, followed by a reception hosted by the

Government of Mexico. An extensive exhibition opens showcasing the work of CGIAR Centers

October 26: Mexico-CGIAR Partnership Day. Field visits to international and Mexican research institutes.

October 27: Stakeholders Meeting—presentations and debate on critical issues facing agricultural research and the CGIAR today.

- Sir John Crawford Memorial Lecture 2004 — Hernando de Soto, Founder and President of the Institute of Liberty and Democracy, Lima, Peru, and celebrated author of "The Mystery of Capital" is the featured speaker
- CGIAR Reception hosted by Ian Johnson, CGIAR Chairman

October 28: Stakeholders Meeting continues

- Ministerial Roundtable — a Forum for dialogue with Ministers (Agriculture, Development Cooperation, Environment, and Finance) co-chaired by Secretary Usabiaga
- Presentation of CGIAR Science Awards
- The Innovation Marketplace — winners presentation

Afternoon: Business meeting commences (attendance by invitation only)

October 29: Business meeting (attendance by invitation only)

For registration, detailed program, plus information on accommodation and travel, visit www.cgiar.org and click on AGM2004.





Ian Johnson and Francisco Reifschneider with Willy Roca, Head of the Genetic Resources Conservation and Characterization Division, examining herbarium samples.

CGIAR Chairman Visits CIP

The humble potato is an essential crop. Consumed by rich and poor alike, global potato production and consumption is skyrocketing. Estimated annual values of major root and tuber crops — cassava, potato, sweetpotato, and yam — exceed \$40 billion, or 25 percent of the value of major cereals.

So what better place to see firsthand how root and tuber crops are increasing farmer incomes and global food security? Peru, in the high Andes, at the La Molina headquarters of CIP and field stations.

“Without continued work in agriculture, the world will be looking at a food deficit in the near future,” said Ian Johnson, CGIAR Chairman, while participating in a dialogue with CIP staff during his visit in March 2004.

“Agriculture is much more than food — it is central to the growth and prosperity of low-income countries, and there are new opportunities embedded within agriculture for improving environmental and human health.” He congratulated CIP for its work in improving agriculture

for the developing countries and referred to the Center as “one of the strongest CGIAR Centers.”

Mr. Johnson was accompanied by Kevin Cleaver, Director of the World Bank’s Agriculture and Rural Development Department, and Francisco Reifschneider, CGIAR Director.

The visitors interacted extensively with CIP scientists on critical challenges facing potato farmers such as biodiversity conservation, crop improvement, and sustainable management of natural resources.

A highlight of the trip was a visit to a in situ germplasm community bank maintained by indigenous Andean potato growers.

CIP maintains the world’s largest bank of potato germplasm, including some 1500 samples of about 100 wild species collected in eight Latin American countries and 3800 traditional Andean cultivated potatoes. The collection is maintained under FAO auspices, and materials are made available to plant breeders worldwide.

Mr. Johnson praised CIP for its “good track record in scientific excellence and partnership building.” He emphasized that the future for CGIAR Centers must continue to be in contributing the benefits of high quality agricultural research to the developing world, especially Africa, and partnering with other organizations to ensure that their research helped achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

The visit to CIP was preceded by the Annual Board of Governors meeting of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). In his address, Enrique Iglesias, President, IDB, emphasized the important role of agriculture in development, affirming that Latin America and the Caribbean must increase investment in agricultural research in order to be able to compete in international markets, reduce rural poverty and protect the environment. 🌱

For more information,
www.cipotato.org

Scientific Excellence Recognized

Ten scientists from Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Costa Rica, China, Ethiopia, Kenya and India have been recognized by IFAR, a foundation, dedicated to fostering scientific excellence in agriculture through the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) by way of partnerships, collaboration and awards.

The scientists are Helga Rodriguez Von Platen, Christian O. Thine, Zachee Ngoko, Xue-Jun Ge, Jules Bayala, Geetha Rani, Peter Gathumbi, Tilahum T. Habtemichael, Drissa Hema, and Reuben Muasya.

The awardees will spend up to three months working with world class scientists at CGIAR Centers, with all costs being covered.

An international team of experts reviewed the proposals, covering diverse research areas such as the development of rice lines for drought prone rice production systems; modeling gene-flow to assess risk to biodiversity in traditional cropping systems and the application of GIS and remote sensing in soil quality assessment.

New Agreements Strengthen VASAT

Efforts to strengthen the Virtual Academy for the Semi-Arid Tropics (VASAT) initiative received a boost with ICRISAT signing memoranda of understanding with the prestigious U.S. National Academy of Sciences and Sun Microsystems Inc.

The links with NAS will promote free access to and sharing of electronic publications for VASAT.

The NAS was established on March 3, 1863. It is a premier scientific institution, and over 80 Nobel laureates are academy members. NAS is a leading e-publisher in the academic world and over 3000 world-class scientific reports and publications are available from its website. These reports are known for their scientific excellence and insights on contemporary issues and development. To build up its capacity to deliver international public goods, VASAT will generate information and instruction materials from NAS literature for the benefit of farmers in the semi-arid tropics.

"We are pleased to have this link with scientific literature published by the National Academy of Sciences," said William Dar, Director General, ICRISAT, noting that the agreement will help to enhance VASAT's reach by generating and disseminating information and instruction materials. "This is a major asset in terms of knowledge and information sharing, and will greatly strengthen the VASAT initiative."

ICRISAT is the first CGIAR Center to enter into a formal partnership with NAS.

The alliance with Sun Microsystems brings together expertise of two institutions to deploy e-learning services to anyone, any-time, and anywhere.



Sun Microsystems's Vice President for Global Education and Research Ms. Kim Jones and William Dar exchange signed MOUs.

Sun Microsystems is a global leader in e-learning. Top international universities, including Stanford University, use Sun platforms to operate learning and content management systems for distance learning programs and digital libraries. Thanks to the new agreement, ICRISAT joins this network of advanced learning institutions, enabling interchange of expertise and access to software. This will boost ICRISAT initiatives on e-learning and contribute to building e-learning capacities at other CGIAR Centers.

ICRISAT and Sun will jointly work to build a network of learning portals with other institutions in India so as to facilitate exchange of e-content and e-learning services through an open architecture, leading toward the establishment of an e-learning hub in India.

Access to the international public goods generated by VASAT will be broadened, enabling unprecedented access by a wide variety of groups. 🌱

For more information, click www.icrisat.org, www.national-academies.org, www.sun.com

Scientific Excellence Recognized continued

"I believe the applications we received this year were outstanding. It is gratifying to see the high standard of academics from developing countries who are choosing to work on programs which have the potential to offer real benefits to the poor," said Ruth Haug, Chair of the Evaluation Committee and Director of Research at NORAGRIC, the Agricultural University of Norway. "Their work is

focused on delivering global public goods and they are exceptional young people." The Evaluation Committee included experts from Brazil, Cameroon, India and New Zealand.

"IFAR has a strong commitment to partnerships," said Francisco Reifschneider, IFAR President. "We are confident that one of the best ways we can foster effec-

tive partnerships is through awarding fellowships which benefit both the individual and the CGIAR Centers where the fellows will work, and which produce knowledge and expertise for the public good, focusing on the needs of developing countries." 🌱

For more information, visit www.ifar4dev.org

From Science Council Chair

The 15 Future Harvest Centers' research and related activities are carried out in about 240 projects, system-wide programs and challenge programs. The project descriptions present 821 very interesting pages. I know. I read them. A lot of good research is being done. Does this collection of projects present a cohesive CGIAR research program focused on a set of priorities established by the CGIAR? Not really. Should it? The answer is not obvious. It seems reasonable to assume that each of the 240 projects and programs reflects the combined priorities of the donor(s) and the Center(s). It is this highly decentralized and successful system of decision-making and research that is the envy of many less effective international efforts.

Furthermore, each Center was created to solve a well-defined set of problems specific to a commodity, an issue, an eco-region or a geographical region. So, why should each Center not do its own thing in collaboration with like-minded NARS and advanced institutions?

The answer, of course, is that the environment, within which the Centers work, has changed. Rapid advances in molecular biology and information and communication technology have opened up new opportunities for the use of science to alleviate poverty and manage natural resources, while at the same time creating new opportunities for collaboration and merging of certain genomics activities. The expanded role of the private sector in agricultural research, the expanded use of exclusive rights for research inputs and outputs, and new and emerging challenges facing agriculture and poor people in developing countries combined with successful solution of many of the problems individual Centers were aimed at solving, all contribute to the need for programmatic and structural changes in the CGIAR.

In the early nineties, as the number of Centers supported by the CGIAR grew,

voices arguing for more inter-Center activities and a stronger and more coordinated effort grew stronger. The result was a series of new organizational structures such as inter-Center programs, system-wide programs, merging of Centers, and most recently, the creation of Challenge Programs. Some of these new structures were driven by programmatic needs, emerging priorities and opportunities for increased efficiency and effectiveness. Others were unfortunately driven by the desires for structural change for its own sake. The former generally succeeded, the latter failed.

One of the critical questions facing the new Science Council is how the CGIAR can capture the benefits from a more cohesive system program focused on key emerging issues for which international public goods-type agricultural research is needed without losing the potential benefits from decentralized and flexible decision-making and research. In other words, how do we help amplify the impact of the CGIAR beyond the sum of the impact of the 240 projects and programs and how do we maintain a critical mass of research to solve the most important problems.

I believe the answer is to be found, not initially in structural changes, but in a more cohesive system program driven by a small number (say 10–15) of well-defined system priorities, which aims to maximize the impact per dollar spent by the CGIAR, while, at the same time, keeping a small portion of funding for exploratory research that may result in new system priorities. If the CGIAR stakeholders can agree to move in this direction, the next step would be to agree on the priorities. This might be difficult, because priorities imply not only inclusion but also exclusion of certain research activities that may be of particular interest to one or more stakeholder. A review of the priorities guiding the 240 on-going projects, system-wide programs, and challenge programs might be a place to start. Results from the soon to be com-

pleted priority and strategy work by the Science Council and priority-setting work by the Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR) could provide very important input. In fact, efforts to move towards a small number of system priorities should be an integral part of the Science Council's on-going work on priorities and strategies.

Each priority area would aim to help solve a critical current or emerging problem facing poor people in developing countries. An overall goal and timeframe would be specified along with objectives, timelines, and annual milestones for each major activity within each program. Center performance would be measured on the basis of achieving relevant milestones, and on the complementarity and synergy achieved as its research is effectively blended into larger system priority programs. The execution of the agreed-upon work program would remain with the Centers and their collaborators and inter-Center collaboration and structural changes would be determined by programmatic needs. Some programs may best be done by one Center in collaboration with NARS and advanced institutions while others may require input from many or all of the Centers.

Would such an approach work for the CGIAR? I believe it could, but only if donors are willing to focus most of their financial support on those system priorities and pay full overhead and only if Centers are allowed sufficient flexibility to carry out a small amount of exploratory research and related activities, that are not part of the system priorities but are essential to keep a program dynamic and moving towards emerging opportunities and needs. Research is best carried out in an environment of learning, exploration, flexibility, and decentralized decision-making. A problem-solving applied research institution such as the CGIAR must keep its eyes on the prize, but it must also maintain an environment conducive to innovation.

Per Pinstrup-Andersen



Science Council members and observers during a tour of ICARDA, May 2004.

Great Expectations

Per Pinstrup-Andersen, Chairman of the new CGIAR Science Council opened the inaugural meeting by noting the high amount of attention the meeting was attracting. "Not only is there tremendous goodwill towards us but expectations are very high, both among donors and Centers," he said. "We will do everything we can to meet those expectations and we will ensure that we work in a transparent and consultative manner."

Nine members of the new Council and observers met at ICARDA to discuss setting CGIAR system priorities, the IRRI external program and management review, the recently completed biosafety study report, and to begin to determine future activities.

The Chairman introduced a wide ranging discussion on developing system priorities by proposing that a movement towards closer integration of priorities in the form of a small number of system priorities which together would provide a cohesive system program, might enhance the overall impact per dollar spent. He noted that this approach has been welcomed by donors and Centers alike. The Council will continue the discussion in a consultative manner.

Richard Flavell presented the highlights of a very positive review of IRRI, and Council members discussed ways in which imple-

mentation of recommendations might be monitored in an appropriate and effective manner.

The biosafety report prepared by Brian Johnson and Gabrielle Persley generated extensive discussions. The Report commends the CGIAR Centers on biosafety measures currently in place governing the experimental phase of work on living modified organisms and notes that most Centers are working closely with national governments in developing regulatory frameworks. However, Dr. Johnson and his panel propose that biosafety issues, in particular those concerned with preparing the risk assessments required to seek regulatory approval for the large-scale release of new genetically modified crops, need to be considered earlier in the project phase in order to make most efficient use of resources. A proposed workshop to discuss implementation of the Report's recommendations by the Centers and their partners will be considered by the Council.

The next meeting of the Council will be held in Rome in September. 🌱

All papers discussed during the inaugural meeting are available on www.sciencecouncil.cgiar.org

CGIAR Strengthens its Partnership with NEPAD

CGIAR and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) have signed a memorandum of understanding to better harness agricultural science and technology, and global knowledge systems for the benefit of Africa's farming populations.

"The memorandum is an expression of common interest by NEPAD and CGIAR Centers," said Kanayo Nwanze, Chairman, CGIAR Center Directors Committee (CDC) and Director General, WARDA-The Africa Rice Center. "It is an umbrella that sets the stage for our mutual working together in Africa."

The memorandum was cosigned by Professor Wiseman Nkuhlu, Chairman of the NEPAD Steering Committee.

In addition, the agreement was endorsed by the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) which has been recognized by NEPAD as the technical coordinating mechanism

for agricultural research for development (AR4D) activities in Africa.

NEPAD is fully engaged in the implementation of the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Program (CAADP) and has identified some key crops and policy related issues including governance of agriculture as specific to the CAADP priorities and pillars.

Launching of joint work programs, conducting analytical work, seminars, and forging of public-private partnerships are covered in the agreement which bodes well for the increasing the productivity and profitability of the agricultural sector as an engine of economic growth. 🌱

For more information, www.nepad.org, www.fara-africa.org, www.cgiar.org

Update on Generation Challenge Program



The Generation Challenge Program (GCP), formerly known as the Challenge Program for Unlocking Genetic Diversity in Crops for the Resource-Poor, is making significant progress. A management team is in place, led by Robert S. Ziegler, Director, GCP. In addition, four Subprogram Leaders, and a Capacity Building Coordinator have been appointed. Research activities have been organized as clusters, and 14 new initiatives are underway, with over \$6 million having been disbursed to member institutions for the first year of research.

GCP capitalizes on the CGIAR's strengths — scientific knowledge, access to genetic resources, and strong alliances with NARS — and is pioneering new modes of research and collaboration. The GCP partnership comprises 15 member institutes (including eight CGIAR Centers, five

advanced research institutions, and two national agricultural research systems) and has initiated a unique competitive grants program to foster expanded partnerships.

GCP aims to capture and utilize the benefits of the simultaneous revolutions in biology and information and communications technology, bringing the power of these revolutions to bear on the problems of resource poor farmers who practice agriculture in some of the world's harshest marginal environments. The intersection of these disciplines have yielded powerful discoveries about similarities across crop species that allow scientists to effectively and efficiently use genetic resources for improving food crops grown and consumed by poor people.

Smart partnerships that avoid duplication of effort lie at the core of GCP strategy.

GCP and HarvestPlus are collaborating on a substantive joint research and capacity-building effort in eastern and central Africa. In addition, GCP has strong congruence with the Water and Food challenge program, particularly in the area of incorporating drought tolerance in food crops and improving water use efficiency in agriculture.

With the strong support of CGIAR donors, and cooperation from a dedicated community of scientists, GCP's objective of building a global platform of molecular biological tools for crop improvement for the benefit of resource-poor farmers is fast becoming a reality. 🌱

For more information, visit www.generationcp.org

Red Wood for a Green Future

The sustainable future of mahogany as a source of livelihoods received a boost following a major international workshop held in Mexico, sponsored by CIFOR.

The dark-red and highly prized timber from the world's rapidly diminishing supply of mahogany trees epitomizes the ongoing conflict and controversies regarding tropical forests. Most media coverage has focused on the underbelly of the mahogany trade, reporting accusations of slavery, threats to indigenous South American tribes, and the dangers of unchecked illegal logging.

There is truth to this media coverage. Loggers efforts to get this prized timber are frequently accompanied by violence. Only last year the Brazilian Government freed more than 1,400 slave laborers working in the mahogany sector.

Mahogany need not be associated with violence, crime or unsustainable logging. Indeed, methods to ensure a sustainable future for the mahogany industry do exist and actions to address current problems are underway.

In November 2003, CITES, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, required producer countries to define sustainable rates of harvest and limit their exports to that amount of mahogany timber. Aware of the threats to the species, the United States and several European countries have rejected Brazilian mahogany exported under phony permits. The Brazilian Government now has suspended all mahogany logging.

The CIFOR workshop held in Chetumal, Mexico builds on the results of seven years of collaborative research in Mexico and Belize to develop sustainable mahogany management strategies for local livelihoods.

"Forest owners are experimenting with ways to manage natural forests to guarantee the future of this magnificent wood," said CIFOR's Laura Snook, a workshop organizer.

Snook worked with fellow researchers Luisa Camara-Cabrales and Patricia Negreros-Castillo, and collaborated with

Victoria Santos, the forester responsible for managing hundreds of thousands of hectares of community forests for the Organización de Ejidos Productores Forestales de la Zona Maya. In Belize, Snook worked with the Programme for Belize, an NGO that manages 4 percent of the land area in that country.

At the workshop participants learned that mahogany seedlings do not survive under the forest canopy, along skid trails or in small gaps produced by felling trees. This fact was corroborated by researchers and anecdotal observations of foresters. "Mahogany trees regenerate and grow best in clearings measuring thousands of square meters that are opened by slash and burn agriculture, fires or machinery," said Snook.

Foresters are now making efforts to harvest multiple-species to create similar openings large enough to favor regeneration. Many of the research-based conclusions presented and discussed at the workshop are helping provide an essential foundation for the sustainable management of mahogany forests. 🌿

World Potato Congress Endorses CIP Genebank

The 5th World Potato Congress held in Kunming, People's Republic of China, adopted a resolution commending CIP for "establishing an international potato genebank for the benefit of all humanity" while endorsing "public and private sector investments that will maintain the rich diversity of species available in CIP-held collections through Bioandino, the Fund for Andean Biodiversity."

"The resolution was proposed by John Hillman, Director of the Scottish Crop Research Institute, UK, and seconded by Ghislain

Continued on page 14





Valuing a Seed — Sky is the Limit

One wild tomato has contributed to a 2.4% increase in global production, worth an additional \$250 million. A 0.1% increase in the solid content of a tomato is worth about \$10 million a year to the processing industry in the state of California alone. Three different wild peanuts have contributed resistance to root knot nematodes that decimate harvests, costing the world's peanut growers millions of dollars in lost revenues.

A new project, to be formally launched in Sri Lanka in June 2004, specifically targets areas where plant genetic resources are facing severe threats to their survival.

Now, thanks to support from the Global Environment Facility, IPGRI researchers will be able to better conserve plant genetic resources through a new project — *In situ* Conservation of Wild Crop Relatives through Enhanced Information Management and Field Application — that brings together conservation efforts in five countries including Armenia, Bolivia, Madagascar, Sri Lanka and Uzbekistan.

The five countries have areas of great plant diversity, and have joined international agencies such as FAO, World Conservation Union, U.N. Environment Programme, and others to implement rational, cost-effective measures to conserve wild crop relatives. The five-year project was developed by IPGRI, in strong collaboration with national partners.

Seeds are a precious resource in the fight against nature's vagaries. Plant breeders everywhere regularly turn to nature and wild relatives of crops to develop new varieties that can better withstand natural stresses such as drought, pestilence, and disease.

All five countries have ongoing conservation programs. Armenia and Uzbekistan each surveyed their crop wild relatives some decades ago and created limited protected areas with crop wild relatives being taken into account to some extent. Indeed, Armenia's Erebuni Reserve is one of few reserves in the world deliberately created to conserve crop wild relatives, in this case wild wheats. Bolivia and Madagascar have not yet fully surveyed

their resources nor established reserves to protect them. Sri Lanka has conducted several projects to conserve crop wild relatives and raise awareness of their importance, but has no national strategy.

The project will facilitate sharing of experiences of the five partner countries. National information systems will be developed and decision-making processes strengthened to help set priorities and implement them. An integrated information system, to be developed with the international partners, will bring several kinds of data under a single umbrella for ease of access. To speed up conservation efforts, better information and easier access will help researchers and plant breeders to use crop wild relatives, in turn contributing to increasing awareness of their value and thus the desirability of enhancing conservation measures. Using participatory approaches, the project will also address tough questions of access and benefit sharing. 🌱

For more information, www.ipgri.org

Strategic Human Resources Advisory Service Established

People are critical to the success of CGIAR's mission of mobilizing science in the service of poor farmers.

A new Strategic Advisory Service for Human Resources (SAS-HR) set up by five CGIAR Centers (CIAT, CIMMYT, IPGRI, IWMI, and WorldFish) in cooperation with CGIAR System Office, is working to attract, motivate, develop, and retain staff.

In April, SAS-HR held its first workshop at CIMMYT headquarters to develop a human resources framework to meet management needs. The ultimate goal is to achieve each center's vision through the development of high caliber, committed, and motivated staff.

Although CGIAR Centers share common human resources problems, do they communicate with each other and share successful solutions? "Now five of them do just that, as partners in SAS-HR," said N.P. Rajasekharan, Director, SAS-HR.

"In talking about common problems we did find a big convergence," said Koen Geerts, IPGRI's Director of Finance and Administration and workshop participant. "Why not exchange information rather than re-invent wheels, sometimes the wrong wheels?" Geerts felt that it was a big accomplishment for five Centers to come together and discuss shared problems.

Sharing Best Practices

A highlight of the workshop was the showcasing of best practices with each Center presenting its most successful human resources strategies. IMWI focused on implementing the OneStaff approach, which was also mentioned as one of IPGRI's strengths; WorldFish explained its job evaluation system, and CIAT presented its use of the Internet for recruitment, occupational health program, and social welfare fund. CIMMYT described its national staff administration, corporate policies, and how it managed a recent downsizing effort.

"The advisory group for SAS-HR is on track to address my main expectations," said Joachim Voss, Director General, CIAT. "I hope they will help us to create sensible, effective, and cost-saving changes."


Participating centers save time and costs by sharing ideas, strategies, and solutions. Using staff and management input, they are already defining human resources needs, developing strategies that recognize center diversity and autonomy, creating solutions, and establishing an e-community of HR professionals.

Promoting Effectiveness and Equity for CGIAR Center Staff

To ensure success, CGIAR Centers must display not only excellence in science but also organizational effectiveness said Masa Iwanaga, Director General, CIMMYT, and host of SAS-HR. Other speakers included Eric Schlesinger of the World Bank's Human Resources Department who described the 360-degree appraisal process and its benefit of peer evaluations.

In an example of cost-effective communications, Francisco Reifschneider and Ravi Tadvalkar from the CGIAR Secretariat briefed participants by video conference about the first CGIAR systemwide compensation survey being conducted.

"People are the foundation of our knowledge-based CGIAR system," said Reifschneider. He endorsed the "OneStaff" initiative, which aims to create an inclusive and equitable environment for all staff members regardless of differences in employment contracts. The initiative will promote transparency by providing equal opportunities and clearly explaining differences in benefits to staff. It could facilitate movement from national, to regional, to international staff categories by clearly defining what is needed for advancement. He felt that OneStaff will help to further develop and support the vision and values that SAS-HR participating Centers have for their staff, adding that the "Concept behind OneStaff requires a gradual transition in the organizations, part of the evolution of the CGIAR System as a whole."

To foster wider learning within the CGIAR, many SAS-HR meetings and initiatives will be open to all Centers. 

World Food Prize continued

Jones was awarded the prize for pioneering research that led to the development of New Rices for Africa (NERICAs) while working at The Africa Rice Center in Côte d'Ivoire during the mid-1990s.

"We are delighted that Monty Jones has won this prestigious global award," said Ian Johnson, CGIAR Chairman and World Bank Vice President for Sustainable Development. "It is a fitting tribute to the power of modern science successfully mobilized for improving human well-being in Africa and beyond."

NERICAs combine the toughness of native African (*Oryza glaberrima*) rice varieties with the phenomenal productivity traits of Asian (*O. sativa*) rice varieties that were the mainstay of the Green Revolution. They are specifically adapting them to suit the harsh growing conditions of upland rice ecologies of Africa, home to 70 percent of the region's poor rice farmers, most of whom are women.

"Monty Jones has done us proud," said Francisco Reifschneider, CGIAR Director. "The award celebrates quality science for people-centered development, led by an African scientist, conducted in Africa, for the benefit of Africa and beyond."

Of a total of 22 World Food Prize laureates, ten CGIAR scientists have won this prestigious award widely considered to be the equivalent of a Nobel Prize for food and environmental sciences. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has designated 2004 as the Year of Rice.

Dr. Jones is a graduate of the University of Sierra Leone and received his M.Sc. in Plant Genetic Resources (1979) and Ph.D. in Plant Biology (1983) from the University of Birmingham, UK. In 2002, he was appointed Executive Secretary of the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), based in Ghana. 🌱

For more information, www.worldfoodprize.org

World Potato Congress continued

Pelletier, Vice President of McCain Foods Limited.," said Hubert Zandstra, CIP Director General. "We were delighted the motion passed with enthusiastic acclamation."

Bioandino seeks to raise funds for supporting the vast collections of potato genetic resources safeguarded at CIP, for the benefit of curators working throughout the Andean region, and for training the next generation of curators.

"The International Potato Center maintains the largest collection of potato genetic resources known to science, including close to 5,200 distinct cultivated types and more than 2,100 wild relatives corresponding to 151 species," said Professor Hillman when proposing the resolution. "The potato accessions maintained in CIP genebanks represent a priceless international resource that must be preserved for the future." He informed the world's potato researchers who had gathered at the Congress that preservation does not come without a cost. The average cost incurred in maintaining a single accession in the genebank is \$137 per year, and nearly \$20 million is needed to maintain the whole collection over the next two decades.

In his address to the Congress, Hubert Zandstra emphasized the importance of conserving potato genetic resources. "I believe more strongly than ever in the potato's promise, " he said. "Forward thinking researchers at CIP, with support from our donors, have worked hard to collect and characterize the potato's genetic wealth. The results of their efforts are felt every day as scientists use the genetic materials from thousands of traditional, wild, and modern potato varieties to incorporate improvements ranging from drought tolerance and higher pest resistance to better digestibility and more flavor." 🌱

G-8 Summit continued

Chairman and World Bank Vice President for Sustainable Development. "It is a significant endorsement of CGIAR's successful track record in mobilizing science in the service of poor farming communities who live on the fringes of the global economy."

Acting individually and collectively, G-8 Members agreed to "support work of the CGIAR and others that will channel more effectively resources allocated to research and development of drought, pest, and disease-resistant staple crops for use in developing countries."

The Plan encourages "CGIAR to increase its efforts in Africa, and increase funding for Challenge Programs on 'Water and Food' and those others which benefit Africa," and calls on the CGIAR to "Develop at least three new projects with the African Agricultural Technology Foundation."

"Agricultural development is central to the sustainable agenda," said Francisco Reifschneider, CGIAR Director. "The G-8 Action Plan will help us to catalyze new partnerships, North and South, at global, regional, national and local levels that will help us deliver global public goods that directly benefit poor people."

Other areas identified for support include the International Food Policy Research Institute's "Strategic Analysis Knowledge Support System," New Rices for Africa (NERICAs) and the Pan Africa Cassava Initiative and Global Cassava Partnership.

On the challenges of boosting agricultural productivity and rural development in food insecure countries, especially in Africa, the Action Plan drew attention to the outcomes of the successful IFPRI 2020 Vision Conference held in Uganda.

Recognizing that the challenges are multifaceted, the Action Plan calls for reforms of domestic agricultural, social, economic, and development policies with the full participation of civil society.

In addition, the G-8 statement supports fully the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the principles and goals set out in the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP) [see related story on p. 10]

Opening statement, G-8 Action Plan:

We are united in our belief that famine is preventable in the 21st century. Famine, food insecurity and malnutrition have many complex causes, and defeating them will require a global partnership between the governments of affected countries, donors, international institutions, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations. We renew our commitment to help build this partnership, particularly in Africa, where more than 200 million people remain threatened by famine or food insecurity.



CGIAR-supported Future Harvest Centers

International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT)
www.ciat.cgiar.org

Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR)
www.cifor.org

International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT)
www.cimmyt.org

International Potato Center (CIP)
www.cipotato.org

International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA)
www.icarda.org

International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT)
www.icrisat.org

International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)
www.ifpri.org

International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA)
www.iita.org

International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI)
www.ilri.org

International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI)
www.ipgri.org

International Rice Research Institute (IRRI)
www.irri.org

International Water Management Institute (IWMI)
www.iwmi.cgiar.org

West Africa Rice Development Association–The Africa Rice Center (WARDA)
www.warda.org

World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF)
www.worldagroforestrycentre.org

WorldFish Center
www.worldfishcenter.org