

Breeding for Tomorrow and Genebanks Science Program: intended governance and management arrangements

This document sets out the intended governance and management arrangements for and next steps towards a “Breeding for Tomorrow and Genebanks” Science Program that brings together the “Breeding for Tomorrow” and “Genebanks” proposals under a single programmatic framework.

This document is presented for information only, in support of the CGIAR Integrated Partnership Board’s and System Council’s consideration of the individual Program proposals for “Breeding for Tomorrow” and “Genebanks” submitted for concurrence/ approval pursuant to articles 8.2.t of the [Charter of the CGIAR System Organization](#) and 6.2.p of the [CGIAR System Framework](#).

Introduction

From March to September 2024, separate proposals for a “Breeding for Tomorrow Science Program” and “Genebanks” were developed as part of the design of CGIAR’s 2025—30 science and innovation Portfolio. Both proposals were submitted to CGIAR’s Independent Science for Development Council (ISDC) for its moderated, independent, and external review on 27 September; and ISDC has reviewed and provided recommendations on each proposal.

In the meantime, following leadership agreement on the management arrangements for the new Portfolio in mid-September 2024, the CGIAR Executive Managing Director (EMD) has requested that “Breeding for Tomorrow” and “Genebanks” be brought together in a single “Breeding for Tomorrow and Genebanks” Science Program in a way that leverages the linkages and dependencies between CGIAR’s breeding and genebanks operations while ensuring operational autonomy for and upholding CGIAR’s standing funding commitment to genebanks.

In response to that request, the CGIAR Global Leadership Team (GLT)¹, at its meeting on 8—9 November 2024 and having considered two potential models, agreed on the governance and management arrangements for the Breeding for Tomorrow and

¹ The GLT is composed of the Directors General of all CGIAR Centers that are Parties to the CGIAR Integration Framework Agreement (IFA) as well as the CGIAR EMD, Deputy EMD, and Chief Scientist (expected to be in role from January 2025).

Genebanks Science Program as set out in this document. These arrangements do not alter the substance of the two proposals submitted for ISDC review.

Intended governance and management arrangements for the Breeding for Tomorrow and Genebanks Science Program

The collections managed in the CGIAR genebanks are held in trust on behalf of the international community. The individual Centers responsible for these genebanks have a legal obligation to ensure their effective management and availability in perpetuity, and are bound to the terms and conditions of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (hereafter ‘Treaty’) as well as to long-term agreements with the Global Crop Diversity Trust (hereafter ‘Crop Trust’). For these reasons, these intended governance and management arrangements are designed to ensure the autonomy and independence of the CGIAR genebanks in terms of their governance, funding, and operations; while enabling collaboration and synergies with CGIAR’s breeding work. Specifically, drawing on the broader, agreed management arrangements for the 2025—30 Portfolio:

1. The Program is led by a Director, appointed by and reporting to the CGIAR Chief Scientist. At the Portfolio level, the Director is a member of and represents the Program in CGIAR’s Global Science Team (GST). At the Program level, the Director is responsible for the full Program across two Pillars: genebanks (five Areas of Work [AoW]) and breeding (five AoWs). At the Program level, the Director convenes a Leadership Team of Delegates from Centers that contribute to the Program (to achieve efficiencies and avoid proliferation of representation, Center Delegates will represent both breeding and genebanks), as well as the Leads and Co-Leads of all of the Program’s Areas of Work (AoW). In addition, the Program Leadership Team includes a Genebanks Coordinator, reporting to the Program Director, whose main responsibility is to coordinate work across the five genebanks AoWs. Other responsibilities will be described in the terms of reference to be developed for that position.
2. The Program Director is accountable and authorized to provide scientific leadership and alignment of the full Program, act as the principal internal focal point and external representative for the Program, and ensure that funds from CGIAR Trust Fund Windows 1 and 2 (W1/2) are used for their intended purpose and that associated reporting requirements are met. The Director is accountable for ensuring the ringfenced budget allocation to CGIAR genebanks, based on extensive, previously conducted cost analysis².
3. As an integral part of their role, the Program Director is accountable for ensuring that both the genebanks and breeding Pillars of the Program are enabled and

² SC17-05, *Assuring the financing of CGIAR’s work to fulfill its obligations towards the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* (https://storage.googleapis.com/cgiarorg/2022/10/SC17-05_Funding-the-Genebanks.pdf)

empowered to implement their proposed programs of work with sufficient independence in terms of funding, prioritization, and overall direction; while seeking collaboration and synergies where strategic and relevant.

4. The selection process for the Program Director ensures that the successful candidate holds the necessary range of skills, expertise, and experience required to effectively lead the Program across all its components. The selection panel for the Director is chaired by the CGIAR Chief Scientist and includes senior internal and external experts in both breeding and genebanks.
5. The selection panel for the Genebanks Coordinator brings together relevant internal and external expertise on genebanks, including a representative of the Directors General of Centers that manage genebanks (also known as “Article 15 [A15] Centers”).
6. The Director of the Breeding for Tomorrow and Genebanks Science Program (and the Genebanks Coordinator) are employed by the CGIAR System Organization and hosted by CGIAR Centers at duty stations preferably in the Global South. The Genebanks Coordinator may also serve as AoW Lead or Co-Lead for one of the genebanks AoWs.
7. The Director of the Breeding for Tomorrow and Genebanks Science Program, with input from the Genebanks Coordinator for the genebanks AoWs, assigns a highly qualified Lead and Co-Lead for each of the Program’s AoWs following a transparent process as implemented across other Programs and Accelerators. The accountabilities, responsibilities, authorities, reporting arrangements, and performance management of these assignments is aligned with the agreed management arrangements for the Portfolio. The performance management of the Genebanks Coordinator is aligned with relevant System Organization policies.
8. CGIAR Center Directors General remain responsible for ensuring that the legal obligations to the Treaty are met.
9. CGIAR Funders retain the ability to earmark CGIAR Trust Fund Window 2 (W2) contributions to the genebanks Pillar (comprising the five genebanks-related AoWs). Such earmarked contributions are not subject to the restrictions applied to other AoW-level contributions (which cannot exceed 50% of a Funder’s total W1/2 contributions).
10. The ringfence mechanism that assures funding to support the operations of genebanks remains a standing item on the System Council agenda for updating and review on an annual basis. To inform this process, the Crop Trust provides an independent report on the technical status of the CGIAR genebanks to the System Council. The Crop Trust will undertake independent technical review and audit of genebanks’ essential operations as per the CGIAR-Crop Trust Memorandum of Understanding.

11. The Genebanks Coordinator ensures continued, annual technical reporting on the CGIAR genebanks through the Genebank Online Reporting Tool, providing coherence and long-term tracking of the genebanks results.
12. Given the large size of the Breeding for Tomorrow and Genebanks Science Program and the size of some of its AoWs, should it be deemed effective and efficient, dedicated program management capacity may be sourced to meet the unique needs of individual AoWs and the combined genebanks AoWs. Such capacity includes, but is not limited to, project management and coordination; monitoring, evaluation, learning, and impact assessment (MELIA); reporting; data and knowledge management; communications; and resource mobilization. The resourcing for these dedicated functions is borne by the respective AoW/ set of AoWs, with the line management of program management staff following agreed management arrangements.
13. All AoW Leads and Co-Leads and the Genebanks Coordinator are members of the Breeding for Tomorrow and Genebanks Program Leadership team (PLT). They work alongside each other, the Director, and Center Delegates to promote coherence and synergies across the Program as a whole, while ensuring that the specific objectives of each Pillar continue to be met.
14. Each Pillar convenes external, independent, multi-stakeholder advisory groups to provide independent advice on the quality of science and management.
15. In the event of a concern, by the Genebanks Coordinator, an AoW Lead or Co-Lead, a Center Delegate, or the advisory group, regarding Centers' continued ability to fulfill their genebanks-related obligations and commitments, they may escalate such a concern to the CGIAR Global Science Team (GST) via the Program Director and the convener of the A15 Centers' Directors General, who may further request the Chief Scientist to escalate any substantiated concerns to the GLT, where required.

The governance and management arrangements for the Breeding for Tomorrow and Genebanks Science Program will be periodically reviewed and adaptively managed to ensure they are fit for purpose.

Breeding for Tomorrow and Genebanks Science Program

Next steps

Timing	Step
2024	
late-November—early-December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position of Director, Breeding for Tomorrow and Genebanks Science Program designed and advertised, Selection Panel formed • Position of Genebanks Coordinator designed and advertised, Selection Panel formed
~November 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary action plan for how ISDC’s recommendations will be addressed as part of the Inception Phase submitted to the CGIAR Integrated Partnership Board (IPB)
25 November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IPB meeting to consider concurrence with the Programs and Accelerators and preliminary W1/2 budget for 2025
November 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program and Accelerator proposals, ISDC reviews, proposed 2025 budget, IPB decisions, and updated action plan for the Inception Phase submitted to the System Council for review and, if deemed appropriate, approval.
Week of December 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21st Meeting of the CGIAR System Council (SC21): approval moment for Programs and Accelerators
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary 2025 work plan for the Breeding for Tomorrow and Genebanks Science Program completed and approved (a single plan for the Program, clearly identifying the activities and deliverables that are specific to the genebanks Pillar)
2025	
Q1—2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positions of Director, Breeding for Tomorrow and Genebanks filled • Position of Genebanks Coordinator filled • AoW Leads and Co-Leads assigned • Detailed Plan of Results and Budget for the Program completed and approved, with details on activities and the associated allocation of W1/2 funding across the AoWs, as well as by Centers for the W1/2-funded work they will deliver • ISDC recommendations, IPB and System Council guidance addressed • Inception Report for the Program completed