

CONSTRUCTING A NEW VISION FOR THE INTERNATIONAL POTATO CENTER

CIP'S PROGRESS ON THE EPMR2002 RECOMMENDATIONS

October 2002

The Panel concludes that CIP has had significant achievements in [its three core areas of crop improvement and protection, natural resource management, and the social sciences] and that it will continue to be an important and needed Centre in the future.

– EPMR2002 team

Roots and tuber[.]s continue to be very valuable crops for the poor and in the marginal areas of the developing world. Because of their vegetatively propagated nature these crops require considerable research maintenance effort.

CIP as the key supplier of international public good research for roots and tubers clearly deserves greater support.

– iSC Commentary on CIP's EPMR 2002

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CIP is extremely appreciative of the rich, detailed, and valuable report provided to our Center by the EPMR team. We studied the report in considerable detail before submitting our response, shortly after the review. We feel that it was a very positive evaluation, with many commendations, worthwhile recommendations and suggestions for incremental improvements. At the same time, we find that our extensive preparations for the review and our self-examinations strengthened our understanding and commitment to some independently formulated decisions. As a consequence, even prior to the initiation of the EPMR we initiated changes in several areas.

We feel that we have made considerable progress toward implementing the EPMR recommendations. That progress is outlined in the following pages, as are the Interim Science Council's observations.

Recommendation 1

Integration of breeding efforts under single leadership

- CIP response: Proposed to conduct a CCER in 2006; interested in letting new projects demonstrate feasibility
- iSC: urges Center to re-evaluate situation within next two years
- Progress: CIP Board's Executive Committee will reconsider this recommendation at its next meeting, and will likely move forward the review to match iSC urgings.

Recommendation 2

Urgent identification of resources to establish a state-of-the-art high-throughput genotyping facility; skills and competency strengthening in bioinformatics and computational biology

- CIP response: Accepts
- iSC: Supports EPMPR Panel
- Progress: CIP has strengthened competency in bioinformatics by hiring a unit head who will conduct research on the topic.

Recommendation 3

Within overall Center strategy, conduct a priority setting of NRM to ensure balance between: applications vis-à-vis process; CIP mandate crops vis-à-vis livestock-based production systems

- CIP response: Accepts; will be handled as part of the visioning and priority setting exercise
- iSC: No comments
- Progress: See recommendation 18.

Recommendation 4

All CIP scientists to work together in the CONDESAN benchmark watersheds and use them as a mechanism for development, evaluation and dissemination of integrated technologies and policy

- CIP response: Accepts and will foster integration as appropriate; as a member of CONDESAN, however, will *recommend* that partners use CONDESAN as such mechanism for development, evaluation and dissemination
- iSC: Would have liked to see more analysis of potential benefits for both CIP and CONDESAN; endorses the Panel's recommendations
- Progress: The new CONDESAN Coordinator has started a dialogue with CIP scientists to identify opportunities for integration; partners are also being encouraged to identify opportunities.

Recommendation 5

CIP to continue to have strong scientific vision and methodological input in the CONDESAN consortium; Technical Committee and coordinators of crosscutting themes to be revived

- CIP response: Accepts and will communicate to CONDESAN leadership
- iSC: Commends Center for long-term commitment to this ecoregional consortium, which is in line with CGIAR's regional approach to research, stated in Plank 4 of the Vision and Strategy

Progress: The CONDESAN Coordinator is considering various mechanisms to comply with this recommendation; they will be consulted with the CONDESAN Board.

Recommendation 6

Continue the interaction of social scientists with biological and physical scientists but with broader involvement of partners and constituency groups

- CIP response: Accepts

- iSC: Joins Panel in commending CIP for the effective organizational location of social scientists and their participation in interdisciplinary teams. CIP's social science research has yielded strategically useful knowledge to biophysical researchers; this needs to be sustained.
- Progress: This recommendation is being applied in the implementation of programs such as the VITAA and SIUPA partnerships.

Recommendation 7

Reallocate social sciences resources to do more work on science and technology policy issues

- CIP response: Accepts; reallocation of resources, however, will be deferred until completion of visioning, strategic planning and priority setting exercise. Center will seek closer partnership with IFPRI on science and technology policy issues
- iSC: No comments
- Progress: Closer collaboration with IFPRI is already taking place within the development of the Challenge Program on Sustainable Mountain Development.

Recommendation 8

Develop a consistent framework for the collection and analysis of basic data on adoption and constraints; strengthen skills on sophisticated statistical approaches for collection of such data

- CIP response: Accepts; will incorporate evaluation and definition of consistent framework as part of the visioning and priority setting exercise
- iSC: Alarmed by discrepancy between release of CIP-derived varieties and the much lower and variable adoption of those materials. Encourages CIP to do household studies and beyond that to examine cultural factors at village level for adoption and impact. Strongly endorses Panel's recommendations
- Progress: CIP shares the iSC concern. The Center has embarked on an initiative to promote its materials more aggressively in targeted regions that are ripe for varietal change. CIP has also made a greater commitment to participatory plant breeding to

incorporate users' criteria, thereby speeding up the process of varietal selection and enhancing the odds that suitable varieties will be forthcoming. CIP has had more success with smaller NARS having less potato-growing area than with larger, stronger NARS. Efforts to increase Center presence in countries where potato-growing is more important, such as China, will help to redress these historical disparities in CIP-related varietal change.

Recommendation 10*

Formulate a strategy for engaging in different types of partnerships, including the private sector

- CIP response: Accepts; a task force will be formed
- iSC: Would have liked to see more analytical assessment in the [EPMR] report of the Center's collaborative research partnerships as a basis for this recommendation
- Progress: The progress in this area will continue as one of the target objectives of the vision and priority setting exercise.

Recommendation 11

Encourage more frequent publications in refereed journals and set more demanding annual publication performance targets

- CIP response: Accepts fully, and goes beyond EPMR's points to include: reorganization of information services; strategies that enhance and expand outlets for peer-reviewed research results of the types produced by IARCs and our partners; better recognition for high-quality research performance, including project-based support and scientist-based rewards
- iSC: Joins the Panel in encouraging CIP to adopt a more determined and systematic strategy to publishing. In the Panel's view more of the quality work done at CIP could easily be advanced into refereed journals
- Progress: CIP is reorganizing its communications area to provide the appropriate support and to realign Center priorities concerning publications. The performance

* Numbering error in the EPMR report

appraisal has been modified to include annual publication targets, against which IRS will be assessed.

Recommendation 12

Reallocate resources from management staff to hire a competent international development officer and use the leadership of that officer, together with a marketing survey, to develop a strategic plan for increasing external funding

- CIP response: Accepts, but may implement this differently, in the form of a “development program”
- iSC: Calls CIP’s due attention to the Panel recommendation to employ an international development officer, given the variable performance in resource mobilization in the past by CIP
- Progress: CIP is in the process of recruiting the Project Development Officer. The Center is also improving its fund raising efforts by: redefining the project development process; hiring consultants to help in donor identification and proposal development; re-assigning responsibilities for fund raising among directors, project leaders and regional representatives; and developing business plans for projects.

Recommendation 13

That the Board of Trustees change CIP’s External Auditor at the conclusion of the current end-of-year audit/reporting cycle, and every 3-5 years thereafter.

- CIP response: Accepts; this has been implemented
- iSC: No comments
- Progress: The new External Auditor, Deloitte and Touché, is already working as of April 2002.

Recommendation 14

Completion, as soon as possible, of the changes required to transform CIPFIS into a full-fledged Management Information System; managers at all levels to be given access to

complete and transparent budgetary information on the activities they are accountable for; CIP management to devise incentives to encourage and increase cost-consciousness and efficiency

- CIP response: Accepts; notes that implementation of these enhancements was planned before the EPMR and was ongoing prior to the EPMR main phase
- iSC: Pleased that the Center agrees with recommendations
- Progress: The CIPFIS enhancements to implement forward commitment for goods and services are advanced and will be fully implemented in November 2002. This will provide more complete budgetary information for project leaders. The Center is working on an ongoing initiative to integrate all systems, including human resource management, and to transform CIPFIS into a fully-fledged MIS in 2003. There is close to 50 percent completion to date, with substantial ongoing cost/benefits emerging for CIP.

Recommendation 15

The Board to ensure that it receives adequate financial and budgetary information from management and that it spends sufficient time exercising its budgetary and financial oversight functions

- CIP response: Board accepts and has in the past year moved to elevate its attention to financial oversight
- iSC: Concerned that the Board's performance in the oversight of financial and budgetary matters has not been strong. The last EPMR made a similar recommendation: "that the Board continually monitor CIP's liquidity and operating fund levels and establish a timetable for achieving what CIP management proposes as prudent and reasonable targets"
- Progress: As of last year the Audit Committee has stepped up oversight functions. A mid-term report on progress in implementation of agreements was requested from management. The Committee continues to receive quarterly financial reports. Financial and budgetary matters are also being addressed at the Executive Committee meetings (October and March each year) before the annual Board meeting.

Recommendation 16

Board to be more challenging and forward looking in its discussions of the Center's long-term scientific strategy

- CIP response: Board accepts the point; notes that it has been awaiting finalization of the change management activities of the CGIAR and the outcomes of the regional planning efforts as necessary inputs into the process
- iSC: Joins the Panel
- Progress: The Program Committee has been regrouped into two Committees, each with different responsibilities. One will focus on the accomplishments of project activities; the other will attend to science policy and program directions. The Board has commissioned management to prepare two position papers on IPR and biotechnology policy. It has had input into the design of the visioning and priority setting exercise and will participate actively in it.

Recommendation 17

That the DG not be a member of the Nominations Committee and that the DDG-F/A not be the Secretary to the Board and its Executive Committee

- CIP response: Board accepts the first point and has already completed implementation; as to the second point, the Center's founding statutes prescribe the position of the Secretary of the Board.

Recommendation 18

Develop a vision and strategic plan that integrate crop improvement and protection, natural resource management, and the social sciences in an approach that will guide the understanding of problems developing countries face as they experience economic development

- CIP response: Accepts; plans to implement this through a year-long process

- iSC: Agrees with the Panel's view that priority setting needs to involve partners and constituency groups and be methodologically suitable for the different areas of activities
- Progress: A visioning and priority setting exercise has been initiated. The science roadmapping approach will be used. Wide consultation involving key stakeholders at all levels will take place. A document will be submitted for Board approval in March 2003.

CIP-Vision exercise

The process for the CIP-Vision exercise has been influenced by discussions on science and technology roadmapping (Galvin 1998, NASULG 2001, MacKenzie et al. 2001). The exercise will be chaired by the Center's Deputy Director General for Research and co-chaired by the CIP Board of Trustees' Program Chair. The CIP-Vision will be defined through participatory consultation with a Stakeholder Plenary that includes CIP's Board of Trustees and staff, as well as partners from donor, research and development agencies, and from international, regional, national and non-governmental organizations. These Plenary members have been nominated by CIP staff and balanced for geographical and institutional (partner type) representation. The Plenary will number approximately 300 persons.

The Vision exercise is divided into seven steps:

1. first Stakeholder Plenary consultation
2. definition of Challenge
3. formation of Task Force and Challenge Team
4. development of Challenge Essay
5. second Stakeholder Plenary consultation
6. Board of Trustees input and approval (March 2003)
7. Report to Plenary (approved Vision Statement)

After the circulation of the Vision Statement to the Plenary (April 2003), a calendar for the Strategic Planning process will be established.