

TAC CHAIR'S REPORT

(Agenda Item 10 - Friday 30 May)

Through the past twenty four months, response to the challenge of renewal and the directives of Lucerne, TAC's efforts have focused on strategies, priorities, and recommendations for resource allocation. Earlier this week, I presented TAC's recommendations for resource allocation for the period 1998-2000. These motivated the discussions of MTPs on Wednesday and Thursday. As well, we pursued our role in assessing the quality and relevance of science. In that arena, with the CGIAR Secretariat, three external reviews were sponsored. The Group discussed, in Parallel Session II, the results of those reviews of ICRISAT, ISNAR and IPGRI. I will now turn to other aspects of TAC's work.

As you know, priority-setting in the CGIAR has become a continuing activity, and much analysis is being conducted by TAC in support of this activity. Currently, TAC is undertaking strategic studies on research priorities for marginal lands and on CGIAR commitments in Latin America and the Caribbean.

At ICW96 I reported to you that TAC had begun a study on CGIAR research priorities for marginal lands, with a panel chaired by Dr. Michael Nelson of New Zealand. Two draft reports of this study have been reviewed and as a result a three-pronged approach is underway as we have added to the study the relationship between land types and poverty and the relationship between poverty and land degradation. In pursuing this work and in the light of burgeoning demand for improved information on the location and level of poverty, TAC contracted GRID-Arendal to undertake a pilot study aimed at incorporating the best available data for mapping poverty and land characteristics. As a part of moving forward with efforts to extend the maps globally, we expect this might lead to a September session, perhaps jointly sponsored by Norway and TAC, to involve a broad CGIAR and technical audiences. Moreover, TAC will strongly support initiatives for collaborative work by CGIAR Centers with other partners such as UNDP, FAO, World Bank and national programmes to develop georeferenced databases on poverty.

With respect to the Latin America and the Caribbean study, TAC proposes to assess the opportunities to increase complementarities between CGIAR Centers and other research agencies in LAC, in view of the CGIAR's commitment to generate research of international applicability in efficient and effective manners. This study is part of a series of regional assessments initiated by TAC in 1995, starting with the West Africa study. The study is chaired by Dr. Lucio Reza of Argentina and is underway in two phases, with a desk study to be followed by an assessment phase. We expect to discuss the report at TAC 74 in March 1998.

Good progress has been made on a review of the CGIAR activity classifications and the development of a log-frame format. At TAC 72, a report was discussed on the outcome of the CGIAR Activity Classification Workshop held from 25-27 February 1997

in Feldafing, Germany. The Workshop was organized by TAC in close collaboration with the German Government and the Humboldt University in Berlin, and was attended by representatives of the broad CGIAR community. At TAC 72, Professor Uwe Nagel presented the report on the findings of the Workshop. The effort to date was applauded by TAC Members. At the Workshop, the current CGIAR planning process was analyzed, and the associated CGIAR logical framework was teased out, and its consequences for priority setting and impact assessment evaluated. The effort is well launched, the most relevant players are involved, and continuing interaction is occurring. After two further rounds of joint consultations, we expect to have a framework, including indicators and the other supporting paraphernalia required, by March 1998. It is expected that a final proposal will be submitted to the Group at MTM98.

As for the external reviews, during 1997 TAC will carry out, in association with the CGIAR Secretariat, the external programme and management reviews of CIMMYT, IRRI, IFPRI and CIFOR. These are underway and will be presented to the Group in 1998. Planning has also begun for the external reviews of ICRAF, ICLARM, and ILRI which will be conducted during 1998. In addition to these external reviews of Centers, TAC has begun the planning of the first external review of the Systemwide Genetic Resources Programme to be conducted during 1998. The terms of reference for the review will be discussed during TAC 73 in September, 1997.

The Committee's next meeting will take place at IFPRI in Washington from 22 to 28 September 1997. The major topic on its agenda will be to review the center financing plans and their implications for CGIAR priorities. As well, a major topic will be to identify strategic issues of critical importance to the System. We will solicit impressions of stakeholders, bring these to TAC, identify those of highest priority, and move to their analysis. We intend to involve a broad range of people in these efforts.

Mr. Chair, I would now like to end this brief presentation. I would be happy to answer any questions you or the members of the Group may wish to raise. Thank you for your consideration.