

**-Report from Parallel Session 11  
Discussion of the Fifth External Review of IRRI**

(CGIAR Mid-Term Meeting-May 28, 1998)  
Chair: W Yang; Secretary: P Sachdeva

The session, chaired by W Yang (ADB), was attended by over 80 participants. The chair of the Review Panel, B Tinker of the UK presented a summary of the panel's findings and recommendations. IRRI's Interim Director General R Havener read out a written statement from the Board Chair R Rabbinge, and then presented the Center's response. The TAC commentary was presented by L de Vaccaro, after which the floor was opened for discussion. A large number of CGIAR members and IRRI's partners expressed appreciation of the Panel's report, and pledged continued support for IRRI's work which in their view has been undertaken very professionally.

### **Highlights of Panel Recommendations**

The Panel made 11 recommendations, that were fully endorsed by TAC. Highlights include the following:

- combine the three separate rainfed programs into a single program
- design a strategic program on soil carbon nitrogen dynamics
- strengthen INGER; and evaluate the bioinformatics program
- update the policies on IPR and the private sector's involvement
- undertake an annual assessment of performance of the Board and DG
- strengthen the Center's management systems
- prepare a Capital Plan, and document future adjustments clearly.

### **Discussion and Conclusions**

The participants expressed their appreciation of the comprehensive and excellent report of the Panel, as well as the responsiveness of the IRRI Board and Management to the recommendations made. They noted with satisfaction:

- the very significant accomplishments of the Center during the review period
- the strong emphasis on new developments in biotechnology and rice genomics, and the increasing collaboration with the private sector
- the progress made in recent months to overcome difficulties in management, and the results achieved by the institutional stabilization process now underway
- the good financial health of the Center.

Participants endorsed the main recommendations of the Panel.

Specifically, they:

- concurred with the proposed integration of the three rainfed programs, with due consideration to ecoregional variations
- commended IRRI's decision to suitably modify its IPR and biotechnology policies in light of changes in the external environment and in the CGIAR System