

CGIAR

Document No:	MTM/99/23
Distribution:	General
Date:	May 26, 1999

Mid-Term Meeting 1999 May 24 - 28 Beijing, China

<h3>The Third System Review: From Proposals to Practice</h3>

System Review Follow-up: Consultative Council Propositions on Governance

ÿ Recommendation by Cosponsors on the Integration of TAC and IAEG

The paper prepared by TAC and IAEG for MTM99 (entitled: *Future Relationship Between IAEG and TAC*) makes two alternate proposals for integrating the committees. At their May 23, 1999 meeting held in Beijing the Cosponsors discussed the two options proposed by TAC and IAEG and concluded that, while both proposals have merit, the discussion by the CGIAR would be facilitated by blending the best features of the two proposals into a single proposal. The attached note describes a third option the Cosponsors recommend for consideration by the CGIAR. The Chairs of both TAC and IAEG concur with this new option.

Recommendation by Cosponsors on the Integration of TAC and IAEG

The paper prepared by TAC and IAEG for MTM99 (entitled: *Future Relationship Between IAEG and TAC*) makes two alternate proposals for integrating the committees. At their May 23, 1999 meeting held in Beijing the Cosponsors discussed the two options proposed by TAC and IAEG and concluded that, while both proposals have merit, the discussion by the CGIAR would be facilitated by blending the best features of the two proposals into a single proposal. This note describes **a third option** the Cosponsors offer for consideration by the CGIAR. The Chairs of both TAC and IAEG concur with this new option.

What Is Needed

The System Review recommendations, as clarified and modified by the discussion at ICW98 and the Consultative Council meeting, point in the following directions:

- to ensure generation and timely flow of information reflecting the CGIAR's impact;
- to simplify CGIAR's governance by reducing the number of committees and units servicing them while maintaining the independence of the evaluation function; and,
- to increase efficiency and reduce costs by streamlining evaluation procedures and support structures.

Generation and timely flow of information on impact requires a dedicated and focussed effort. This is the main reason the IAEG was created as a separate unit. There will continue to be a need for having a group of experts oversee these activities. Having a small group dedicated to evaluation also ensures flexibility to adjust as activities evolve.

Simplifying governance (in the case of evaluation) requires having fewer committees reporting to the CGIAR and having fewer units supporting the committees. The independence of the evaluation function would be preserved by ensuring its externality from the CGIAR's decision-making and operational bodies.

Increasing efficiency and reducing costs requires eliminating duplication and relying on the same overhead structure when this makes sense. Also, because impact assessments and the design of evaluation processes for external reviews are supported by the same academic disciplines and professional practice, there would be efficiencies in linking the planning and backstopping of these two types of evaluation.

A Third Option.

The Cosponsors recommend that the objectives noted above can be achieved by an arrangement that has the following features:

All System-level evaluation responsibilities would reside with TAC. The IAEG mandate would be transferred to TAC and TAC would be responsible for impact assessment and other types of evaluation (in the case of external reviews of centers, jointly with the CGIAR Secretariat). This way, all types of evaluation conducted at the system level would be coordinated by a single group, instead of having impact assessment being coordinated by one and other evaluations by another. Also, as evaluation is part of an integrated planning continuum that includes strategic and operational planning and monitoring, having all these functions under the TAC umbrella would enhance the synergies among them. As TAC has independence from the Group and the centers, evaluation responsibilities would continue to reside with an independent body.

The Cosponsors would appoint a small external standing panel to work as an “expert” panel of TAC on impact assessment and evaluation. The chair of this panel would serve as a member of TAC. The Cosponsors would consult with the TAC Chair on the composition of the panel. The chair of TAC’s Standing Committee on Priorities and Strategies would also serve as a member of the panel. This would help reinforce the linkages between evaluation and priority setting.

All System-level external evaluations commissioned on behalf of the CGIAR would be organized through TAC, with this panel serving as the principal instrument of TAC. This Panel would report to TAC and, through TAC, to the Group, instead of direct reporting to the Group (as is the case now.) The panel would define its priorities for impact assessment in concert with TAC (through discussion of themes, plans and methods with the full TAC). TAC would provide guidance to the panel and have final say on the terms-of-reference and panel composition of external reviews, and on the assessment of quality of science. It would also be the first recipient of all evaluation reports. This way, TAC would be less involved with *process management*. Instead, it would be engaged more with *analysis*.

There would be one secretariat supporting TAC and the standing panel on impact assessment and evaluation. The Secretariat would have a wing dedicated to impact assessment and evaluation working under the guidance of the chair of the standing panel.

There would be one TAC budget, with a line item for impact assessment and evaluation. The Cosponsors would monitor the spending on impact assessment and evaluation as part of their oversight of TAC. The standing panel’s work plan and budget would be incorporated in the overall TAC work plan and budget. The standing panel would develop its own work plan and budget, and TAC would have an opportunity to comment when these are submitted to the Cosponsors. Funding for major impact evaluation studies would be secured from sources other than the regular TAC budget financed by the Cosponsors.

The operational consequences of the integration of IAEG and TAC would be worked out by the Cosponsors, in particular, the respective host agencies (UNDP and FAO).

May 26, 1999