



Subject: **Consortium Board submission of the proposal for Strategic Research Theme 5 of CRP 1.1 on “Enhancing the *in situ* management of agricultural biodiversity.”**

Date: January 26, 2012

Dear Rachel,

I am pleased to send you in attachment an additional Strategic Research Theme (SRT) on “Enhancing the *in situ* management of agricultural biodiversity”, for inclusion in CRP 1.1. The Consortium Board (CB) of the CGIAR submits this proposal to the Fund Council, appreciating its transmission to the ISPC, for their comments and recommendations. You may recall that I announced this was going to occur during the last Fund Council meeting, receiving support from some donors. We think that it would be extremely useful and timely for CRP 1.1 to receive ISPC’s comments on this new SRT. This would allow the team of scientists currently engaged in addressing all the other comments received from ISPC and donors on CRP 1.1, as part of its inception phase, to fully integrate this new component in their reflexions and responses. The document the scientists will produce at the end of the inception phase of CRP 1.1 would then be truly integrative and exhaustive.

The report of the CGIAR CB-Commissioned Genetic Resources Scoping Study identified gaps of relevance to global food security that are not addressed by the current portfolio of CRPs. The CB decided that the most important gaps should be filled by appropriate CRPs, rather than creating new structures. The Consortium thus initially invited the Lead Centre of CRP 5 to strengthen the Agro-biodiversity Component of CRP 5. To facilitate this integration, the Consortium identified three specific areas: (i) Research to develop improved agro-biodiversity management options; (ii) Research on supporting policies; and (iii) Research on mechanisms for up scaling new knowledge and its uptake.

Bioversity, CIAT, CIP, and ICARDA participated in the development of a draft for such a component. It was then recognized by both the lead centre of CRP 5 and these centres that the component did not fit very well in CRP 5. An amended proposal subsequently prepared by Bioversity, CIP, and ICARDA was submitted to the CB for review on September 14, 2011, indicating its integration into CRP 1.1, on dryland production systems. The Consortium reviewed the proposal and provided to the authors, various comments and recommendations for improvements. The proponents re-submitted their revised proposal to the Consortium one day before Christmas. The Consortium reviewed the amended proposal and asked for relatively small amendments to further strengthen it before submission to the Fund Council.

The attached proposal for an additional component to CRP 1.1 thus has a long and different history from that of other strategic research themes in CRP 1.1. The CB is now confident that this component is strategic, fills an important gap in the CRP portfolio, and fits in CRP 1.1. The CB acknowledges the effort made by scientists from Bioversity, CIP, ICARDA, and ILRI in elaborating this revised proposal. We particularly appreciate that this revised proposal takes into account the majority of comments we provided on the various previous submissions. Furthermore, this



component includes a new dimension on *in situ* conservation of animal genetic resources, which the CB considers is extremely relevant and useful.

This component (Strategic Research Theme 5 of CRP 1.1) is organized in five interrelated research topics that form a coherent research strategy for *in situ* conservation and management of agricultural biodiversity from understanding the status and trends, to developing tools and methodologies, facilitating and promoting use, developing appropriate information systems, and understanding the effect of policies and legal frameworks. Each research topic is described in terms of its objectives, research questions, methods and approaches, and research outputs. The CB appreciates the attention given to explaining the interactions among the research topics, the integration within CRP 1.1, and the linkages with other CRPs, and considers that the strategic coherence and clarity of research topics are satisfactory.

Although the proposal includes a session on Gender, the proponents will develop a full-fledged gender strategy within the first 6 months of its implementation, within the guidelines the Consortium has provided to all CRPs, and within the overall gender strategy which CRP 1.1. is currently developing.

Effective partnerships and new partnership practices will be essential for achieving the research outputs, development outcomes and impacts. The CB considers that the role of different partners should be explained in more detail, but recognizes that this can be effectively achieved during the inception workshops.

Concerning governance and management, the CB had requested that these should be aligned with the overall management structure and the mechanisms in place in CRP 1.1, and the proponents have now insured that this is the case. The initial 3-year budget appears to be reasonable and defensible.

The CB reiterates the importance of this component in addressing one of the gaps in the portfolio of CRPs identified by the Genetic Resources Scoping Study. The justification given in the proposal for inclusion of this research area into CRP 1.1 is convincing and the choice of CRP 1.1 is appropriate. This inclusion will indeed create a critical mass of expertise concerning the *in situ* management of agro-biodiversity because the lead centre of CRP 1.1 already has expertise in this field that will be complemented by that of Bioversity, CIP, and ILRI.

With my best regards on behalf of the CGIAR Consortium Board,

Carlos Pérez del Castillo

CGIAR Consortium Board Chair