

Detailed response to iSPC review of CRP7¹

We thank the iSPC for the comments received. We find several of the comments insightful in building a more effective CRP; for example we welcome the critique that there are insufficient intermediate products within the longer-term strategy. However, we find many of the comments unrealistic and, in some cases, incorrect. We also find the commentary lacking in ambition. However, we do suggest ways to deal with most comments and believe the planned way forward will strengthen the proposal and the implementation of CRP7. Many of the valid comments brought up by the iSPC can be addressed during the early implementation phase, and should not require further revisions to the proposal.

We have structured the response below to show how we plan to deal with the comments.

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A. Major issues, that will be addressed in a revised proposal before 15th November

Issue raised by iSPC	Response	Action
LONG-TERM & INTERMEDIATE DELIVERABLES Page 6: need to “offer a logical time frame for deliverables, Including some long-term deliverables with intermediate products”	The current document gives plenty of detail on the products to be delivered in the first three years, but is less clear on the longer term and intermediates.	We will add in a section making explicit the long-term deliverables and intermediate products.
ESSP PARTNERSHIP Page 3: “The bridge between the CGIAR’s existing climate change work and the ESSP community is still to be developed.” “The ESSP will contribute largely through Theme 4”. “It is not clear if actual partners have been selected for the work and at what cost versus the greater detail of the Centre-specific funding”.	The ESSP, unlike the CGIAR, relies on a large scientific community agreeing a research agenda, and then raising funds for that research, with perhaps 90% of the \$ 2 billion of research funds coming through individual fund raising efforts rather than centrally held funds as per the CGIAR. Thus, while engagement is well developed at the central ESSP level, we need to do more at lower levels. That said, leadership of two of the four Themes rests with non-CGIAR institutes; and ESSP scientists	We will add in more explicit sections on the role of the ESSP, be more explicit about the ESSP role in governance (through ISP) and also give them a role in the selection of the ISP (Independent Science Panel). We will give further budget details on funds going to ESSP and indicate the likely funds to be raised from ESSP and the risks that are associated with such funds.

¹ We use CRP7/MP7 to refer to the mega program, reserving “CCAFS” for the current Challenge Program

	have already been engaged for all four themes. Many ESSP and global change scientists were involved in earlier drafts of the proposal, and the scenarios activity is already engaging global change scientists at regional level.	
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B. Major issues that will be addressed in the first 12-15 months of implementation

Issue raised by iISPC	Response	Action
<p>ABSENCE OF SRF Page 1: “In the absence of an adequate SRF”</p>	<p>We recognize that an accepted SRF is not in place, and that this limits clarity on strategic directions, and on boundaries among CRPs.</p>	<p>By month 12: As soon as the SRF is in place, we will review the need for changes to the CRP document.</p>
<p>STRATEGIC DIRECTION Covering letter: “the selection of future promising research avenues are unclear” Page 1: “This could be best achieved by redirecting the strategic direction of the program” Page 2. “Secondly, and arising from the above, the generation of this MP (and potentially other following MPs) aggregates currently funded components of CGIAR research projects which continue under existing contractual obligations.” “It is unlikely that <i>all</i> such components will or should continue as part of a strategic, long term research program.”</p>	<p>The iISPC writes as if CRP7 should start on a completely clean slate. Centres have currently funded activities and commitments drawing on restricted and unrestricted funding. In year 1 it is impossible to exclude these, as otherwise Centres will renege on contracts or close down existing investment. There has to be a process of integration into the core agenda. Thus, what is described under the CRP7 Themes is the strategic long-term direction (page 39-77 in proposal), whereas the 3-year products described in the annex include the products that are on-going commitments.</p> <p>Mechanisms have been put in place in CRP7 to ensure an increasingly coherent set of activities over time, through, for example ex ante tools, priority-setting within the context of regional scenario development, and an independent body in the governance structure (ISP) that makes the allocation decisions among themes/objectives/centres/partners. This is an excellent opportunity for strategizing and priority-setting across the entire CGIAR system, where funds are directed at those activities that make a difference for adaptation and mitigation. The CRP7 proposal involves a 3 year plan for bringing 15 centres together on a joint climate change agenda.</p>	<p>By 15th Nov: Clarify in the proposal the intention of the annex (that it represents strategic products as well as on-going current commitments)</p> <p>By month 12: (after the first ISP meeting; after the production of the SRF) prepare a strategy paper on CRP7, where the strategic directions are carefully laid out.</p>

<p>IMPACT TARGETS Page 3: “it is hard to judge the realism of these results or even how they were derived.”</p>	<p>We agree that the impact targets, drawn from the current SRF document and additional analysis from IFPRI, are largely conjecture, but the tools are not in place to deliver well-grounded impact targets.</p>	<p>By month 15: New impact targets will be prepared after the first ex ante tools become available as a result of work in CRP7.</p>
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C. Issues seen by iISPC as major issues, which we disagree with and for which no or limited action is proposed

Issue raised by iISPC	Response	Action
<p>AMBITION Page 1: “It is highly ambitious in its research and policy aims.” Page 3: “The crowding of the MP with existing CGIAR work collected under the climate change banner may diminish the vision of success, namely, ‘being recognized, together with the partners, as the foremost global source of relevant research...” Page 3: “With four themes, 3 objectives per theme and nearly 100 products to be delivered in three years the MP promises to cover a lot. The range of products is very diverse from, stress tolerant breeding lines....” Page 4: “The iISPC would caution on the need to expand the place-based work to additional sites”</p>	<p>There is a series of comments related to CRP7 being too ambitious. We disagree, and would argue that the iISPC is failing to see the opportunities that the reform is opening up, whereby the CGIAR can indeed “be recognised as the foremost global source” of knowledge on climate change and agriculture.</p> <p>Of course, having a diverse array of centres involved does not equate to success. This has to come through strategy development and careful program implementation. Centre strategies often take 12+ months to produce (in institutions where staff have been regularly interacting). This will not happen in a six-month proposal development period cutting across all centres.</p> <p>The iISPC implies that CRP7 covers too much. With 4 themes and 3 years, 100 products is only on average c. 8 products a year per theme, for, on average, US\$1.5m per product. This is far from ambitious. If the iISPC wants to see fewer products, then they can be grouped into larger units. (Note also inaccuracies in the iISPC commentary. For example, iISPC says the products to be delivered are too diverse and lists “stress-tolerant breeding lines”. The proposal is very clear that breeding for new technologies takes place in other CRPs. Only in the target regions will we test technologies that have been developed by other CRPs).</p> <p>The iISPC regards the expansion from three regions in year 1, to two further regions in year 2 and three further regions in Year 3 as too ambitious. CRP7 misses a huge</p>	<p>No action.</p> <p>No action, but note proposed strategy document to be prepared in Table B.</p> <p>No action, but note the plan to produce an extra section of the proposal that sets out long-term deliverables and intermediate products (Table A).</p> <p>We could reduce the speed of implementation, if required to do</p>

<p>Page 4: “To achieve the impacts, the MP has planned for 12 key outcomes; many of which rely on close collaboration with other Centres”</p>	<p>opportunity if it remains focussed on only three regions, as opposed to being a truly global program. Given the CCAFS experience, we don't see the above as ambitious, especially when one considers that a large part of the regional work will link with the work of partners. And note that through CCAFS we will have had two years in the target regions, not one.</p> <p>The iISPC commentary implies that the 12 outcomes are over-ambitious and links this to cross-centre collaboration. This seems a strange comment – a fundamental requirement of a CRP is cross-Centre collaboration. We firmly believe that the outcomes listed are achievable. To achieve specific outcomes requires many carefully orchestrated steps and initiatives, but that is inevitable in tackling any complex problem (and in this process the key partners or subsets of Centres needed would be engaged). It is precisely the complexity of the problem of climate change that provides the justification for a major CGIAR initiative. We believe CRP7 is exemplary on how a functioning CGIAR should act.</p>	<p>so (with new budget by 15th November).</p> <p>No action.</p>
<p>INNOVATIVE BREAKTHROUGHS Page 3: “The proposal is difficult to interpret on research (Themes 1 and 2) and it does not clearly define where the really innovative research breakthroughs may come from.”</p>	<p>The proposal clearly explains where the major innovations will come from, under “Research approach to International Public Goods”. The main innovative breakthroughs will come as follows:</p> <p>Theme 1: The development of tools, methods and approaches for identifying holistic system level adaptation pathways that combine the best crop-based technologies with the most appropriate natural resource management regimes. New crop modelling techniques for evaluating breeding objectives that combine genetic parameters with sound agro-ecological analysis.</p> <p>Theme 2: Climate information (historic, monitored, predictive) that brings cutting-edge climate science to bear on the needs of agricultural decision makers. Methodology and infrastructure to predict agricultural impacts of climate fluctuations, to support index insurance, adaptive management and food security response in data-sparse regions.</p>	<p>No action.</p>

	<p>Framework and capacity to evaluate portfolios of production practices and risk management interventions from the standpoint of climate resilience.</p>	
<p>EX ANTE MODELLING Page 4: “This proposal relies heavily on <i>ex ante</i> modelling. Some descriptions of the work on adaptation appear unrealistically aspirational and requiring better grounding with experienced agronomists or breeders e.g. [theme 1, objective 2, p. 45]. Similarly, “<i>Modelling of virtual crops under a changing climate to identify future priority traits</i>” (p.42) is an attractive but challenging concept to implement.”</p>	<p>When addressing adaptation needs for a 2030 or 2050 world, <i>ex ante</i> modelling becomes a primary approach for analysis, as on-the-ground research can only be performed in a 2010 world. Alternative approaches include the use of spatial and temporal analogues, which the program will develop too. Nevertheless, there is an inevitable reliance on modelling.</p> <p>That is not to say that modelling is the only approach. Understanding the social and institutional processes that support adaptation is critical, and this is a strong component in the research agenda. The modelling of virtual crops is already underway, under the leadership of an ESSP Theme Leader.</p>	<p>No action.</p>
<p>GOVERNANCE Page 2: “the iISPC is concerned that the suggested governance of the program through a lead Centre (in this case CIAT) undermines the authority of the Consortium Board and the flexibility of the program leadership and its scientific advice to set program direction”.</p>	<p>Governance arrangements have been discussed at length with the Consortium Board, and in the steps that led to approval by the Consortium Board a number of changes were made which have now been criticized by the iISPC. The bottom-line is that if a lead centre is to have to burden the full financial and legal responsibilities expected in a performance contract, then it has to have some say in the governance structure. We believe the proposed mechanism should be tested. If it is unworkable, then the only solution would be to greatly expand the mandate and size of the Consortium Board, and have all Programs run out of the CB, so that there is alignment on legal and financial responsibilities and program leadership.</p> <p>We believe that the current system, with an independent science panel, is workable. In strictly legalistic terms the ISP is advisory to the CIAT Board. However, as indicated in the text, the ISP will make allocation and partnership decisions and work like the programme committee of a Centre Board. Discussions with CIAT have indicated that it would only be in exceptional circumstances that the ISP would be over-ruled by the CIAT board, and these circumstances would relate</p>	<p>Governance to be examined as part of the proposed review of management systems after 24 months.</p>

	to financial and legal risks, not based on programmatic directions. Selection of the lead centre was made by the current independent steering committee of CCAFS, and among the criteria in selecting CIAT was precisely its willingness to continue promoting some independence in governance. We believe that CRP7 is significantly more independent in governance than most other CRPs.	
<p>PLATFORM</p> <p>Page 1: "Indeed the proposal is structured more for the CCAFS to be a platform servicing and, to an extent, co-financing the other Centres and managing climate change policy relationships, than a true research program in its own right."</p> <p>Page 3: "Nearly all Centers are involved in this MP, as are a wide range of partners..... As a result the proposal corresponds more to a description of a 'platform'".</p>	<p>We strongly disagree that it is a platform; the comments misrepresent the proposal text. We believe it is very clear that CRP7 has both research and platform functions. The platform functions are relatively small: providing climate change context to all CRPs, providing climate change-related data and tools, and providing access to the climate change policy community. Even generating the data and tools for the platform function is a large research effort, involving the generation of IPGs. There are many key research areas in CRP7, as is clear by reference to the "<i>Research approach to International Public Goods</i>" section of each Objective description.</p> <p>That there are 15 co-operating centres, should not be equated with being a platform. There are excellent (but few) researchers in all CGIAR centres that focus on climate change. CRP7 brings them together to do cutting edge research. This should be seen as a ground-breaking in terms of the CGIAR reform process. If the CGIAR is going to mainstream CC issues in all its work, and if it is going to leverage synergies across Centres, then all centres must participate in CRP7.</p>	No action.
<p>TRANSACTION COSTS</p> <p>Page 6: "MP7 will likely generate large transaction costs, with many meetings and negotiations required for smooth operations."</p>	The Challenge Program already involves six centres in very large roles and numerous other centres in smaller roles. Transaction costs can be carefully managed, e.g, all meetings must be efficient and well facilitated. In addition, much work is done by teleconference.	No immediate action. Will progressively improve management of travel & internal communications.
<p>LIGHT COORDINATING STRUCTURE</p> <p>Page 5: "The very light coordinating structure may be overextended trying to get all of this done."</p>	As compared to the challenge program, one additional staff member will be added to the coordinating unit and CIAT will make available its administrative services.	No immediate action proposed. As part of management review after 24 months (as per proposal) the

<p>Page 5: “It will be challenging to command the leadership and fulfilment of obligations on such a large number of fronts and to work in several regions simultaneously.”</p>	<p>Through carefully worded and strong contractual arrangements between CIAT and Centres/partners, obligations will be met. In the absence of deliverables, funds will be redirected to other partners that are able to deliver.</p>	<p>functioning of the coordinating unit will be examined.</p>
<p>MANAGEMENT REVIEW Page 6: “The iISPC further suggests that as part of the revision process a management review should be implemented immediately, before the Program coordination is moved from its current location.”</p>	<p>We do not understand the origin of this comment. There is no mention of an immediate movement of the current location. In fact the proposal text reads: “In the short-term the University of Copenhagen will host the coordinating unit, but with CIAT-Colombia undertaking some administrative functions. As per the proposed transitional arrangements (Annex 3) there will be a review of this arrangement after 24 months. If the coordinating unit is to move a leading candidate location is Nairobi”.</p>	<p>No immediate action. Management review planned after 24 months.</p>
<p>STAGING OF RESEARCH Page 4: “suggesting that it would be better if the gap analysis is done well at 3 critical, representative and manageable sites. Research would be aided by some staging of activities where in the first stage the best bet options (agriculture) could be linked to the scenario analysis to identify major gaps. This could then focus much of the agenda.”</p>	<p>Obviously, it is crucial to stage activities, as is happening now and as is reflected in the products that will be produced in the first three years (annex 1), but setting out detailed time lines for work in diverse regions is not necessary in a CRP proposal. The proposed staging suggested by the iISPC also represents rather linear thinking. Critics of the CGIAR, and research in general, are that smallholder farmers are over-characterised and that no action ever happens. We want to do action research that starts from “day 1” rather than Year 2. Much of the preparatory work is already underway under CCAFS, and it would be a waste to ignore this and start from zero once again.</p>	<p>No action.</p>
<p>CIFOR AND FORESTRY Page 1: “there is the conspicuous exclusion of work from CIFOR on climate change expected to take place under the <i>Forest and trees</i> MP.”</p>	<p>There is text in the proposal that explains the role of CIFOR clearly: “CIFOR will not draw a budget from MP7 but will fully collaborate with MP7”. In addition MP6 (that includes CIFOR) is mentioned many times in the CRP7 proposal, and ten of the times it is mentioned relate to work that is done by CIFOR (REDD, landscape management, institutions for mitigation payments). CIFOR has participated in every planning meeting of CRP7 (and at the major launch conference was better represented than other Centres). That CIFOR is not drawing a budget from CRP7 relates to the fact that co-financing is largely directed at technology development in other CRPs, and CIFOR does not include technology development in its research agenda.</p>	<p>Continue close collaboration with CIFOR.</p>

<p>FORESTRY POLICY PROCESSES Page 1: “CIFOR has shown leadership in raising the profile of the CGIAR in relation to climate change and it is not clear why there should be two parallel tracks and how the policy objectives of CCAFS relate to that program”</p>	<p>The international policy processes on climate change are parallel processes, and it would be naïve of us to think that a CRP of the CGIAR will change this. Forestry is in a very different arena from agriculture, and while the idealistic may want to bring the two together, this is not a simple task, and there are reasons why many persons, especially those in the forestry community, will argue for the need for two tracks. Forests are already on the global climate change agenda, while agriculture still needs to make it onto the agenda. But CRP7 does lay out the areas where there will be collaboration, and focuses on getting agriculture on track alongside and, where possible, in tandem with, forestry.</p>	<p>Continue with current efforts to link agriculture and forestry agendas e.g. currently organising joint sessions with the forestry community for Forest Day and Agriculture Day in Cancun.</p>
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D. Minor issues, that can be dealt with in a revised proposal by 15th November (involving a few added sentences or an additional paragraph or making an issue more explicit)

Issue raised by iISPC	Response	Action
<p>FORESTRY Page 4: “In the area of mitigation, there is clearly a lot of synergy, and also possible conflict, with the program on <i>Forest and Trees</i>. If the current MP will focus on mitigation through agriculture, the <i>Forest and Trees</i> program may addresses mitigation through forest conservation. Since agriculture is the major driver of deforestation, there could be much overlap. The iISPC has not seen the proposal for <i>Forest and Trees</i> at this stage and it is difficult to judge the relationships between these MPs. Also the general area of governance, especially relating to land use changes and land and forest tenure, are weak in the proposal. These governance issues will be critical to successful</p>	<p>We fully realise this and other points on the relationship between mitigation in agricultural and forestry contexts (with two members of the writing team having written peer reviewed publications on this topic, including on the governance issues in forest landscapes).</p> <p>This CRP7 proposal was submitted before the completion of the Forest and Trees CRP (CRP6). Agreement has been reached that there will be close collaboration between CRP6 and CRP7 on agriculturally driven deforestation (e.g. note two events jointly organised amongst CCAFS, CIFOR and ICRAF in Cancun at COP16).</p> <p>As explained in the proposal (page 58; Table 11) CRP6 focuses on forest-based mitigation (e.g. REDD), but because the forest sector is relatively advanced CRP7 will distill lessons from REDD to see how applicable they are to agricultural systems.</p> <p>The governance issues surrounding mitigation will be tackled in one of the 12</p>	<p>We will add sentences in Table 11 to further clarify where tenure is dealt with.</p>

<p>Adaptation to climate change as well as for mitigation”.</p>	<p>Objectives (Theme 3, Objective 2: <i>Institutional arrangements and incentives that enable smallholder farmers and common-pool resource users to participate effectively in carbon markets and reduce GHGs</i> – which is described in detail on pages 63-65). Issues surrounding land and forest tenure in the forest estate will be topics in CRP6; those in the agricultural estate in CRP7.</p>	
<p>CONCERNS ON SPECIFICS Page 4: “Concerns that should be discussed more fully include (i) data availability in some regions to be able to do local modeling (e.g. West Africa); (ii) the issue of scale transitions between place-based research and landscape and regional modeling results, (iii) the ability of mitigation strategies to lift poor farmers out of poverty (since their carbon footprint is small to start with once deforestation has occurred, and secondly because small farmers are not organized to capture the benefits of C sequestration that could happen through reforestation.) Adaptation and mitigation research may not be conducted at similar sites (as seems to be suggested (c.f. page 14, para 3). “</p>	<p>We agree, and have recognised, that data availability is poor in some regions. Scale is a crucial issue. Yes, we fully realise the issues raised about the ability of mitigation strategies to lift poor farmers out of poverty and can add explanatory sentences on this. Yes, we fully realise that not all research will be conducted at the same site and can make this explicit by adding some sentences.</p> <p>Two mechanisms in particular will be used in CRP7 to effect transitions of scale. First, the regional scenarios activities will provide an integrating framework. Second, careful characterisation work will also provide the basis for judicious extrapolation of site- and model-based research outputs to broader domains, where this is possible.</p> <p>Some adaptation and mitigation work will be conducted at the same sites (as explained c.f. page 14, para 3), but given the broader range of experiences than is present in the three target regions, other sites will be included for mitigation.</p> <p>Carbon sequestration in the soil, agroforestry and woodlots can all have significant impacts on GHG budgets, especially if large numbers of farmers take up these practices. CRP7 will focus on incentives including market-based incentives. Livelihood gains from mitigation may not be high, but should yield positive, rather than negative impacts.</p>	<p>We will add some sentences on each of these issues (data availability, scale, mitigation options that have potential for smallholders). We will add some sentences to clarify that while most field work will be conducted at the same site, some specific activities may use other sites that are better suited for the objectives.</p>
<p>POSITION OF REGIONAL FACILITATORS & THEME LEADERS Page 6: “The position of regional facilitators and theme leaders is unclear... By</p>	<p>Theme Leaders and Regional Facilitators are based at centres or ESSP organisations and their roles, including in the Management Team, are clearly spelt out (see “management mechanisms” section of the proposal).</p>	<p>We will add additional budget information on the coordinating costs associated with Regional Facilitators</p>

<p>not describing more fully their place in the management structure (versus the program structure) the proposal fails to make clear the true costs of managing the program.”</p>		<p>and Theme Leaders.</p>
<p>BOUNDARIES WITH OTHER CRPs e.g. Page 4: “there is no mention of the large activity on global climate change in the rice program (GRiSP)”.</p>	<p>This is an unfair comment as GRiSP introduced the climate change section after the CRP7 was submitted (in their latest round of changes that were presumably driven by iISPC).</p>	<p>Reference will be made to the new section in GRiSP. We suggest all boundary issues (with all CRPs) are tackled as part of the strategy paper mentioned in Table B.</p>