



Consortium Board approval letter on CRP 3.7 “More Meat, Milk and Fish by and for the Poor.”

Date: 11 March 2011

Dear Inger,

The Consortium Board (CB) of the CGIAR has the pleasure to submit to the Fund Council (FC), for its consideration and approval, the CGIAR Research Program (CRP) 3.7, entitled **“More Meat, Milk and Fish by and for the Poor.”**

This proposal, submitted by ILRI (lead center), CIAT, ICARDA and WorldFish, focuses on improving productivity and profitability of meat, milk and fish for poor producers. This CRP constitutes a key link in the overall chain of impacts of the Strategy and Results Framework of the CGIAR. The CB considers that this research area, which has received relatively low attention from donors up to now, is of strategic importance for the livelihoods of the poor in developing countries. The challenge in this CRP is to set up market chains that fully address the special needs and circumstances of the poor smallholders and fishermen. An additional challenge, fully in line with the spirit of the reform, is to create new research synergies by working on productivity improvement for livestock and fish in a more integrated manner than before the reform. The Board particularly appreciates the genuine integration of activities across the participating CGIAR centers that are proposed, and the overall quality of this proposal. We think that the proponents of this CRP have laid the ground for very innovative breakthroughs in research for development.

The first version of this CRP proposal (3 September, 2010) was reviewed by four external reviewers (including one on Gender), chosen for their international scientific reputation and knowledge of the subject matter, as well as a thorough examination by the CB. The CB provided comments and recommendations for improvement, in accordance with the common agreed criteria established by the CB and the ISPC for approval of CRPs.

In terms of **strategic coherence and clarity of objectives**, the CB requested a clearer explanation of the priority-setting process used in the CRP, and a more convincing justification that the emphasis on productivity improvement would in fact benefit the poor directly. The proponents have now described the data that will be collected and the criteria that will be used to set priorities rigorously. The approach will also be relevant for spatial targeting of interventions. The process will take up some research time and effort up front, as the CB had requested. The justification section of the proposal has been strengthened to better demonstrate the importance of meat, fish and milk production for small scale and vulnerable farmers. The proponents have now explained that the value chain development component is expected to leverage substantial development funding that will contribute to addressing the policy and institutional bottlenecks specific to each target value chain. By comparison, the technology development component is not likely to leverage additional funding and is thus the focus of the budget requested in the proposal.



Concerning **delivery focus and plausibility of impact**, the proponents agreed with the CB and an external reviewer that the emphasis on transgenesis, genomic hybridization and molecular hybridization are high-risk activities with a long time-scale to possible payoff. They stress that these are actually minor components of CRP 3.7 amounting to a ‘watching brief’ of potential technologies while making a particular effort to consider novel traits of relevance to the value chains.

The proponents agree with the CB on the need for understanding how the poor will benefit from the work proposed. They have addressed this by adding new text in various sections (2.3, 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3). They have also revised the section on Targeting, Gender and Impact to strengthen it and link it more effectively to the other two research themes, using the framework proposed by the Gender Scoping Study. These amendments and clarifications respond very effectively to the CB recommendations.

The CB considers that the impact pathways described in the various log frames presented in the proposal are convincing. The identification of the eight target value chains is likewise a good mechanism for clearly focusing the work on addressing development challenges. The CB concurs with the referee who states that this is a very innovative dimension of the proposal, and a very effective one as well.

Concerning **quality of science**, the Board concurs with the referees that it is sound. The Board appreciates the explanation of the value addition of ILRI and WorldFish working alongside on genetic issues, as well as the description of the value chain development work. For the CGIAR, these are novel, and much needed, approaches.

On the subject of **quality of research and development partners, and partnership management**, the CB requested a better explanation of the linkages with CRP 2 and 4. Early or anticipated mechanisms for collaboration between CRP 3.7 and CRPs 2 and 4 are now described in more detail. The proponents further indicate that shared research staff – working on related issues across these CRPs– are expected to create and drive initial bridging activities.

The proponents developed a more detailed explanation of the contribution of the private sector to the proposed work. This explanation was posted on their electronic consultation of stakeholders, and a paragraph was added to the updated proposal describing the role of the private sector in value chain development, and stressing its contribution to out-scaling of viable value chain models. *Their clarifications and updated text address effectively the CB recommendation.*

Regarding the **appropriateness and efficiency of CRP management**, the CB considered that the management structure presented in the first version was overly complicated. The proponents restructured their governance approach to reflect the recommendations given in the recently CB-approved Strategy and Results Framework. The CB appreciates the simplification, and the inclusive management approach proposed. One set of oversight committees has been abandoned and instead primary responsibility has been vested in the Program Planning and Management Committee (PPMC), which also serves to represent the main CGIAR partners. They have included the possibility of other partner representatives



based on their level of engagement and streamlined the composition of the PPMC to the key required individuals.

Concerning **clear accountability and financial soundness, and efficiency of governance**, the CB requested the proponents to include some clearly stated milestones and provide more details on the budget requested. The proponents have now provided a new section 'Timeframe and Milestones'. Essential activities related to the start up phase of this CRP have been listed in a Gantt chart and are the initial milestones. *This addresses the CB comment. No doubt, the milestones will need to be further fine-tuned at the launching of this CRP.*

At the request of the CB, the proponents have changed the budget presentation and narrative in the updated proposal. *The focus of the budget is on the major programmatic elements and the relative investment in the value chains as recommended by the CB.*

The proponents have now explained that CRP 3.7 expenditure plans are initially based almost entirely on current cost structures and the commitments made through restricted projects of participating CGIAR Centers. From 2012 onwards, there will be an increasing flexibility to adjust these to fill priority-funding gaps, and to suit the long-term CRP 3.7 strategy. Funds indicated for partners are only those that are directly channeled to them, and do not reflect the significant additional funds which go to partners indirectly, e.g. PhD students seconded by partners (appearing in personnel budget item), payments for partner operating costs and travel, and a range wide range of other support to partners which goes through other expenditures channels.

In submitting this proposal for the approval of the Fund Council, the CB would like to stress the importance and relevance of this CRP in the current CGIAR reform process. This CRP shows how Centers working together in a more integrated manner, with a range of existing and new partners can catalyze innovation in research and in development that could not have been catalyzed before the reform. We consider that this proposal has adequately responded the comments and suggestions from the CB and those from the four external reviewers. It fulfills the common criteria developed by the CB and the ISPC, and as such, is a comprehensive and strategic work program to address the CGIAR vision.

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

Carlos Pérez del Castillo