



Securing the Future of CGIAR Genebanks

Date: March 11, 2011

Dear Inger,

The CGIAR reform continues at an unprecedented pace. This past week, in our tour of European Donor countries, we expressed the need for commitment to funding that would secure investment in long term agricultural research to resolve some of the world's most complex food and natural resource challenges.

To solve these challenges expressed in the SRF strategic level outcomes (SLOs) of reducing rural poverty, improving food security, improving nutrition and health as well as sustainable management of natural resources, the Consortium Board has presented to the Fund council a new portfolio of CGIAR Research Programs (CRPs). Two of these have already been approved and the Consortium Board has this week submitted, on behalf of the proponents, a number of new and exciting CRPs for consideration by the Fund Council.

However, as expressed at the beginning of the reform, the 'jewel in the crown' for the CGIAR is its genebanks. Ironically, one of the most valuable assets of the CGIAR has been the most difficult to secure funding for, due to the nature of the funding required which is not project related and is essentially core funding. We must secure a diverse and viable genetic pool contained in the genebanks and from which we can improve productivity for farmers, and tolerance to both abiotic and biotic stresses such as shifts in climate, drought and salt tolerance, shifts in fungal and viral diseases and insect pressures. The future of the planet depends on these valuable collections. Last year the Consortium Board commissioned a gene-bank costing study covering the majority of the CGIAR core collections. This study has now been made available to the Fund Council and has been taken into consideration.

Therefore I now take this opportunity to submit to you the attached proposal for funding the core genebanks through Window 1 of the CGIAR Fund. This proposal has been developed in close cooperation with the Global Crop Diversity Trust (GCDT) as well as Centres. As you recall, donors have agreed that a funding mechanism for gene banks should be separate from the funding of CRPs, and this is an important feature of the new CGIAR that is taken shape.

This proposal is positioned as an annual event, in line with the majority of donor funding, and will reduce the need for stability funding, ensuring Centres are able to resume normal operations for these valuable assets. In the future, multi-year mechanisms may be considered or if the size of the endowment for the GCDT reaches levels that would complete cover costs, this mechanism could be dissolved. We believe that this relatively straightforward proposal provides an excellent example of rapidly building trust within the new CGIAR system.



**Consortium
of International Agricultural Research Centers**

This proposal seeks financing from the CGIAR Fund for the CGIAR Centers' cost of maintaining and distributing CGIAR crop genetic resources, and to cover one-third of the one-time costs of optimizing the existing collections and introducing additional accessions from the regeneration project. The costs of these activities were identified and calculated in the 2010 gene-bank costing study which was commissioned jointly by the Consortium Office and the Global Crop Diversity Trust, in collaboration with the ten CGIAR centers that house crop germplasm. This proposal is to finance the 2011 costs for these activities at the CGIAR centers.

I trust that you will bring this proposal to the attention of the Fund Council for their consideration at the April Fund Council meeting.

With my best regards,

Carlos Pérez del Castillo