

REPORT

GLOBAL ROUNDTABLE ON RICE

3-4 JULY 2012

MONTPELLIER FRANCE

INTERNATIONAL RICE COMMISSION

I. Opening of the meeting

The Global Rice Roundtable was held at Le Corum Conference Centre in Montpellier, France from 3 to 4 July 2012. The meeting was opened on Tuesday 3 July by Mr. Jose Alberto Ventura Muro (Peru) on behalf of the Chair of the 21st session of the International Rice Commission (IRC).

Mr. Muro welcomed participants noting that rice is the most important staple food for a large majority of the world's population, with some 450 million tonnes produced in 2011, an increase of 2.7% over the previous year. He noted that the biodiversity of rice systems is important for nutrition, food security and livelihoods particularly for those living in rural areas, however, rice faced the challenges of low productivity, lack of water, access to markets and environmental pollution. He recalled that the 21st session of the IRC held in Chiclayo, Peru in 2006 was convened under the theme of "rice is life". He highlighted the importance of the current meeting in undertaking an objective evaluation of the possible future role for the IRC in the formulation of policies and strategies on rice and encouraged all present to participate actively.

Ms. C. Batello (FAO) added her welcome on behalf of the Secretariat to the meeting participants and thanked the staff of Agropolis for their work in organizing this meeting. She noted that the IRC is at a crossroads and that it must undertake a rigorous analysis of the current and future needs of the rice sector, in the light of the substantive changes at both the international and regional levels that have taken place since it was established in 1948. She highlighted the fact that as a multi-lateral agreement the IRC is able to bring countries together to work on matters that one or two countries cannot address effectively on their own. She challenged participants to think beyond the confines of their individual countries in defining gaps or weaknesses in the current set of regional and international activities on rice where the IRC might play a role as well as in responding to new and emerging challenges. She also provided a brief overview of the development of the IRC since it was established. In closing, she indicated that the outcome of this meeting will be an important contribution to an informed discussion and decision on the future of the IRC at its 22nd Session in November 2012.

Mr. A. Derevier (France), Deputy Permanent Representative of France to FAO in Rome, welcomed meeting participants on behalf of the host country. He stated that while France was not a large producer of rice it had a long history of rice farming and a high per capita consumption. He drew the attention of the meeting to the fact that Montpellier is home to a large agricultural research community including IRD, CIRAD and CGIAR Headquarters. He noted that much had changed since the IRC was established and that this meeting provided an important opportunity to identify whether, in this changed environment, there was a continued role for the Commission, in order that the 22nd IRC might take an informed decision on its future.

II. Organizational matters

a) Participants:

The following 27 experts from 22 countries attended the meeting: Eko'o Akoufane Jean Claude (Cameroon); Ibet Outhman Issa (Chad); Ju Luo (China); Telce Abdel Gonzales Morera (Cuba); Leonardo Rafael Corral Dávalos (Ecuador); Alain Derevier, Alain Ghesquière, Nouroullah Ahmadi (France); Emmanuel Asante-Krobea (Ghana); Conde Nathalie Konan (Guinea, Republic of); Dharamkumar Seeraj (Guyana); Trilochan Mohapatra (India); I Made Jana Mejaya (Indonesia); Bahman Amiri Larijani (Iran); Amir Hamzah Bin Harun (Malaysia); Carlos Zandamela, Marcello Raul Chaquisse (Mozambique); Y.A.O Olaniran (Nigeria); Abdiel Aizpurua Pino (Panama); José Alberto Ventura Muro (Peru); Lupino J. Lazaro Jr. (Philippines); Seyni Ndao, Samba Kante (Sénégal); M.H. Muinudeen (Sri Lanka); Jerry Tjoe Awie (Suriname); Hale Ozsarac, Rukiye Sahin (Turkey). Achim Dobermann of IRRI participated on behalf of the Global Rice Science Partnership (GRISP).

A complete list of participants may be found in Annex 4 to this report.

b) Adoption of the agenda

At its opening session the meeting adopted the agenda in Annex 3 to this report based on the provisional agenda in document FAO/IRC/1.

III Working sessions

Working session 1

Mr. N. A. van der Graaff of the Secretariat chaired the working sessions. He reiterated that the purpose of the meeting was to identify themes relevant to a possible future role for the IRC. He further stated that in examining issues during the working sessions participants should consider whether they were of particular concern to rice and whether intergovernmental action was the most effective and cost efficient means for their being addressed.

Mr. T. Reeves of the Secretariat made a presentation introducing the working paper on *Options for the IRC and its Secretariat* (FAO/IRC/2). He reviewed the objective and functions of the Commission as set out in the relevant articles of its constitution highlighting the fact that only Member countries could take a decision on its future (FAO/IRC/5). He described the decline in participation of Member countries in the work of the Commission, noting that the last time there was a quorum at a meeting of the Commission was in 1994 and that the last time the Commission had met was in 2006. He highlighted the outcomes of the auto-evaluation of the IRC in 2006; of the Independent External Evaluation of FAO (2007) which recommended that the IRC be wound-up, and a 2009 report on possible options for the future of the IRC.

He subsequently introduced an initial list of possible themes or high level policy issues gleaned from Member countries and other key stakeholders that could potentially be considered by the IRC followed by an initial list of global and regional fora that are currently dealing with rice issues in one way or another. He proposed that the meeting should focus on identifying possible themes that might be addressed by the IRC, an intergovernmental body, and to map them against existing regional and global initiatives in order to identify any gaps or areas where the Commission might add significant value in the future.

Ms. C. Batello of the Secretariat introduced the compilation of the responses to the questionnaire on the reform of the IRC that had been received from nine countries to date (FAO/IRC/3 - China, Ghana, Guinea, Indonesia, Iran, Panama, Peru, Senegal and Sri Lanka). In introducing the paper she highlighted the following seven themes gathered from the responses: biotechnology and genetically modified rice; food chain approach; climate change adaptation and mitigation; rice versus energy biofuel production; production versus quality/nutrition; irrigated versus dryland production systems; and the role of rice producers in sustainable development.

In concluding, she challenged participants as to whether these responses reflected the concerns in their countries or regions and whether there were further issues to be included. Participants that had yet to complete the questionnaire were encouraged to do so and send them to the Secretariat as soon as possible.

In opening the meeting to discussion, participants were asked to briefly introduce themselves, their experience in working on rice and share their views on possible issues that might be addressed by the IRC. All participants identified rice as a food crop of importance in their country. The technical issues raised included the challenge of increasing rice production in order to reduce dependence on imports, while at the same time facing declining productivity; increasing scarcity of water; and the over use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides resulting in environmental pollution and pest resistance. In addition, changing weather patterns are disrupting traditional planting cycles in some countries. There is a need to bring further areas under cultivation in some countries and for improved technology and knowledge transfer both within countries and between countries. Further work is also needed to improve the quality

of rice produced and to better understand the possible role of biotechnology in developing adapted varieties.

On the issue of the role of the IRC, views ranged from a proposal that it be abolished as there did not appear to be any fundamental issues related to rice that are not covered by other institutions to those who thought that the IRC had a critical role to play in information gathering and dissemination. A key question raised was the need to keep in mind the potential “*value added*” by the IRC in addressing technical or policy issues relevant to rice.

Working sessions 2 and 3

To facilitate discussion, participants broke into three regional working groups. The groups were tasked with identifying three or four key themes related to rice that they thought would be best addressed through an intergovernmental body such as the IRC. The groups reported the results of their deliberations to the plenary. Seven themes were identified in total (Table 1 – Annex 1). The themes were compiled and mapped against an initial list of current global and regional initiatives/programmes that were working in these areas and further discussed in plenary (Table 2 – Annex 1).

The working groups were subsequently invited to review this table in the light of the information provided in the presentations on the programme of work under GRISP and Climate Smart Rice production and asked to consider which-if any-of the themes might already be addressed by these initiatives. In reporting to the Plenary the three working groups confirmed the importance of the seven themes that they had identified. They also identified a range of possible functions or roles for the IRC relevant to the themes (Table 3 – Annex 1).

It was agreed that the Secretariat would compile the three working group reports into a matrix. The consolidated matrix may be found in Annex 2 to this report. It was also agreed that the matrix would be further elaborated by the Secretariat to include additional global and regional programmes considered relevant to the listed thematic areas and that this would be useful input to the 22nd Session of the IRC.

IV Presentation and Panel Discussion

a) Global Rice Science Partnership

Mr. Achim Doberman, Deputy Director General of the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) made a detailed presentation entitled “*Possible linkages between the Global Rice Science Partnership (GRISP) and the IRC*”, on behalf of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research Centres (AfricaRice; International Centre for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) and IRRI).

He described GRISP as an evolving alliance of IRRI, AfricaRice and CIAT with CIRAD, IRD JIRCAS and some 900 research and development partners worldwide. He briefly reviewed GRISP’s management and governance structure and current five-year work plan (2011-2015) which is supported by more than 100 million USD annually in direct funding through CGIAR Centres as well as co-funding by GRISP partners. He highlighted the extensive stakeholder interactions through networks and consortia in Asia, Africa and Latin America, as well as the International Rice Congress held every four years (which includes a ministerial round table and policy forum), the African and Latin American rice congresses held in between and the annual GRISP Global Forum. Specific examples of the workplan include: capacity building through a scholarship programme; new frontiers research; gene discovery and breeding to make rice climate proof including increased tolerance to heat, drought, soil salinity and submergence; mechanized and diversified cropping systems; developing global standards for “*best practices*” or “*GAP*” for sustainable rice production; developing and promoting decision-support tools including through advances in real time crop monitoring systems and on policies such as price support, input subsidies and

trade restrictions and mobile phone applications for farmers. He briefly highlighted the role of GRISP in focussed research and development on new technologies and in information dissemination through the GRISP web-portal and other media that provide background information and case studies to support lesson learning, policies and guidelines, as well as facilitating a global community of practice on rice. He identified possible complementary roles for the IRC including: political advocacy for work on rice; endorsing technical and policy guidance briefs on specific issues/technologies, guidelines or standards (e.g. GAP, grain quality, varieties) and information dissemination. In order for this collaboration to be fully realised he highlighted the importance of the political commitment of member countries to support the work of the IRC in future, a well structured work plan with concrete deliverables, regular meetings and above all regular and predictable funding.

b) Panel Discussion on Climate Smart Rice Production

Mr. T. Reeves moderated the discussion of a Panel of scientists from CIRAD (Nourollah Ahmedi), IRD (Alain Ghesquiere) and IRRI (Achim Dobermann) on potential options for increasing rice production while adapting to, or mitigating the effects of climate change. The Panel reflected on issues connecting rice production, food security and global climate change.

Some of the principal effects of climate change highlighted including increasing temperature, rising sea levels and atmospheric levels of carbon dioxide were discussed from the perspective of their potential impacts on rice production. It was noted that one aspect that had not received a lot of attention was the potential effects on pests and diseases of rice. There was detailed information provided on initiatives to better model the effects of climate change on rice ecosystems and the role of models in better understanding the characteristics of plants resilient to climate change that could be applied to the identification and selection of adapted varieties. In terms of adapting to the effects of climate change there was general agreement in two areas: i) that research would lead to the development and availability of adapted varieties and ii) that with the on-going development of best practices for rice, farmers would be able to adapt to the expected changes. In considering the possible mitigation of climate change, it was noted that while there was a lot of interest in reducing green-house gas emissions as a result of rice production, it was important to look at these emissions in the appropriate context, for example that some 40% of emissions are associated with fertilizer production and use. There was thus a need to work at improving fertilizer use efficiency. Overall it was thought that changes in management practices including cropping systems and efficiency improvements would provide win-win opportunities to reduce the “*carbon footprint*” of rice production.

V Summary of key outcomes of the Roundtable

The meeting recognized how the context in which the IRC was operating had significantly changed since it was established in 1948 and that there were now a multiplicity of global and regional fora which were directly or indirectly working on issues relevant to rice. The meeting reached consensus on seven themes relevant to rice and a range of possible functions associated with these themes, that might be undertaken by a re-oriented IRC. These themes and possible functions have been compiled in a matrix that may be found in Annex 2 to this report.

In preparing for a decision on the future of the IRC by its 22nd Session, participants emphasized the importance of costing the various options and ensuring that if it were to continue, sufficient and secure funding would be available for its operation.

This report will be translated into French and Spanish, sent to all meeting participants and posted on the IRC website

VI Preparation for the 22nd Session of the International Rice Commission

The 22nd Session of the IRC is scheduled for 29-30 November 2012 at FAO Headquarters in Rome, immediately preceding the 145th Session of the FAO Council (3-7 December 2012). The 22nd Session will need to take a decision on the future of the IRC. Holding the meeting in Rome back-to-back with the FAO Council will help ensure the presence of sufficient Member countries to constitute a quorum.

In follow-up to the present meeting the Secretariat will review/analyse additional global and regional initiatives with work programmes relevant to the seven themes and use this information to further populate the matrix in Annex 2 of this report.

The results of the roundtable discussion will be an important input to a working paper for the 22nd session of the IRC on the future of the Commission. The working paper will be circulated, in languages, to the participants of this meeting and to all member countries of the IRC. In developing the working paper and preparing for the 22nd Session of the IRC the Secretariat will work closely with the FAO Legal Office and the Permanent Representatives of the member countries based in Rome.

VII Other Matters

The meeting participants were privileged to be addressed on Tuesday evening by Mr. Y.A.O Olaniran Chair of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) and Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the UN Rome based Food Agencies. On Wednesday morning, Mr. Marcello Raul Chaquisse, Deputy National Director of Agrarian services of the Ministry of Agriculture in Mozambique, joined the meeting.

VIII Adoption of the Report

The meeting adopted the present report on the basis of the draft report that had been circulated during the meeting as amended, and entrusted that the finalisation of the report to the Secretariat.

IX Closure of the meeting

Mr. T. Reeves complimented the meeting on their active participation, in reaching a consensus around the seven themes and on the initial lists of possible functions relevant to a reoriented IRC.

Ms. Batello also thanked meeting participants on behalf of the Secretariat for sharing their knowledge and experience. She noted concerns that some of the meeting documents had been available only in English and assured participants that the report of this meeting and that all of the documents for the 22nd IRC would be in all the official languages of the Commission.

Mr. Muro thanked members for their contributions and highlighted the importance of the discussions over the past two days to work of the 22nd Session of the IRC on the future of the Commission. He noted that the report would be sent to all participants and further thanked the Secretariat for their efforts in making the meeting a success.

Following those remarks the Chair declared the meeting closed at 17:00 hours on Wednesday 4 July 2012

Annex 1

Table 1 Potential Themes for the IRC Nominated by Regions

Themes	Asia	LAC	Africa
1. Climate change	X	X	X
2. Sustainable Rice Intensification	X	(Food Security*)	X
3. Water and Land Availability	X	(Food Security*)	X
4. Capacity Building	X	X	X
5. Food Security/Smallholders		X	
6. Nutritional Value of Rice/Quality		X	
7. Biotechnology & GM Rice	X		

* Some aspects of Theme 5 related to Themes 2 and 3

Table 2 Potential Themes for the IRC and Existing International and Regional Programs in each Theme Area

Potential Themes	Existing International Programs/Institutions
1. Climate change	CGIAR, CCAFS, IPCC, GRISP, and Climate Smart
2. Sustainable Intensification	FAO, GRISP, Regional networks
3. Water and Land Availability	GRISP, IFPRI, IWMI, FAO
4. Capacity Building	Many e.g. CGIAR, GRISP, North/South Development agencies, Philanthropic organisations
5. Food Security/Smallholders	FAO, CGIAR, Regional networks and NGOs
6. Nutritional Value of Rice	CGIAR, GRISP, Harvest Plus, IFPRI
7. Biotechnology & GM Rice	Some aspects (e.g. biotech R&D) – Many Other aspects (e.g. GM trade issues) - Few

Table 3 Possible Future Functions/Roles for the IRC

1. Policy declarations and political advocacy on key issues including land and water availability for rice production; climate change adaptation/mitigation;
2. Facilitate development and/or endorse technical and policy briefs on specific issues including input costs/subsidies, seed policies, prices and others;
3. Commission specific research and development (R&D) needs in the identified themes for IRC
4. Collate and share latest information on rice production, demand, trade, new technologies and other key issues;
5. Provide feedback on R&D priorities for GRISP and others, and identify new opportunities and needs, facilitate technical cooperation;
6. Develop and maintain a comprehensive web-based ‘Rice Portal’ for information sharing on all key aspects of rice production; and
7. Lobbying and mobilisation of sufficient support by donors for all rice issues, including to ensure strong linkages between international institutions and national programmes.

Annex 2

Consolidated Matrix Themes, Possible Functions, Existing International and Regional Programs/Institutions**

THEMES	POSSIBLE ROLES/FUNCTIONS of the IRC						
	Policy Advocacy	Technical/ Policy Briefs	Commission studies	Information Sharing	Feedback/Priorities	Rice Portal	Lobbying/ Mobilisation
Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IPCC • CCAFS • GRISP • IFPRI • FAO • Regional Networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IPCC • CCAFS • CGIAR • Climate Smart • FAO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IPCC • GRISP • FAO • Regional Networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRISP • Climate Smart • IPCC • Regional networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Programs • Regional Networks • NGOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRISP • IRRI • Regional Networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Programs • Regional Networks • CGIAR
Sustainable Rice Intensification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAO • GRISP • Regional Networks • Intl Rice Congress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAO • GRISP • Regional Networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAO • GRISP • Regional Networks • CGIAR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAO • GRISP • Networks • Rice Congresses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Programs • Regional Networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAO • GRISP • IRRI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Programs • Regional Networks • CGIAR
Water & Land Availability for Rice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IWMI • IFPRI • FAO • IPCC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IWMI • IFPRI • FAO • IPCC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAO • Regional Networks • GRISP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAO • CGIAR • Rice Congresses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Programs • Regional Networks • NGOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAO • GRISP • IRRI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Programs • Regional Networks • CGIAR
Capacity Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAO • GRISP • Networks North/South Partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAO • CGIAR • Networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Networks • GRISP • North/South partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRISP • Networks • Rice Congresses • CGIAR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Programs • Regional Networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRISP • IRRI • ARC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Programs • Regional Networks • CGIAR
Food Security/ Sovereignty/ Smallholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAO • IFPRI • NGOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAO • IFPRI • GRISP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Networks • CGIAR • GRISP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAO • CGIAR • NGOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Programs • Regional Networks • NGOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRISP • IRRI • ARC • IFPRI (some aspects) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Programs • Regional Networks • NGOs
Nutritional Value/QA/ Certification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade agreements • IFPRI • CGIAR • National Programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRISP • Harvest Plus • IFPRI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRISP • Regional Networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRISP • CGIAR • Rice Congresses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Programs • Regional Networks • NGOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRISP • Harvest Plus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Programs • Regional Networks • NGOs
Biotechnology & GM Rice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CGIAR • GRISP • National Programs • Regional Networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRISP • Regional Networks • National Programs • North/south partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRISP • National Programs • North/South partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRISP • Rice Congresses • CGIAR • National Institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Programs • Regional Networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRISP • CGIAR • IRRI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Programs • CGIAR • Regional Networks

** Listing of existing programs is *not intended to be comprehensive*, but is strongly indicative of work in progress

Acronyms/Abbreviations:

ARC	- African Rice Center (CGIAR)
CCAFS	- Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security CGIAR Challenge Program
CLIMATE SMART	- Climate Smart Agriculture – a global partnership involving the World Bank, Regional Development Banks, IFAD, CGIAR and many others
FAO	- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GRIISP	- Global Rice Science Partnership (over 900 partners) <i>NB – In addition to the ongoing work of GRIISP partners, a GRIISP Forum is held annually.</i>
Harvest Plus	- Breeding Crops for Better Nutrition (including biofortification of rice with zinc). CGIAR Challenge Program (over 200 partners)
North/South partnerships	There are many existing rice technology partnerships between institutions in developing and more developed countries, some of which remain outside of GRIISP
IFPRI	- International Food Policy Research Institute (CGIAR)
International Rice Congress	- International Rice Congress, held every four years and including a Ministerial Round Table and Policy Forum
IPCC	- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IRRI	- International Rice Research Institute (CGIAR)
IWMI	- International Water Management Institute (CGIAR)
Regional Networks	<p>ASIA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• CORRA – Council for Partnership of Rice Members in Asia• IRRC – Irrigated Rice Research Consortium• ARBN – Asian Rice Biotechnology Network <p>AFRICA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ROCARIZ – Regional Rice Research and Development Network for West and Central Africa• ECARRN – Eastern and Central African Rice Research Network• ARI – African Rice Initiative <p>LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• FLAR – Fund for Latin America and Caribbean Irrigated Rice

Rice Congresses

* African Rice Congress

* Latin American Rice Congress

These are held between the meetings of the International Rice Congress

Annex 3

Agenda

- 1. Opening of the Meeting**
- 2. Adoption of the agenda**
 - a. Organization of work
- 3. Working Sessions**
- 4. Presentations and Panel discussion**
 - a. Presentation: The Global Rice Science Partnership (GRISP) and a possible role for the IRC as an intergovernmental body on rice
 - b. Panel Discussion: Climate Smart Rice Production
- 5. Summary of key outcomes from the Roundtable**
- 6. Preparation for the 22nd Session of the International Rice Commission**
- 7. Other Matters**
- 8. Adoption of the Report**
- 9. Closure of the meeting**

Annex 4

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