

**Options for the Future of the International Rice Commission and its
Secretariat - Working Document**

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Executive Summary

The International Rice Commission, established in 1948, and with a proud record of achievements for rice production in developing countries, has struggled to retain its relevance in a rapidly changing operating environment. As a result the number of Members participating at its sessions has declined to the extent that a quorum is questionable, and resources for technical and secretarial support have dwindled. At the same time there has been a (very welcome) proliferation of international and regional rice fora, particularly in relation to rice production technology, development and adoption, an area where the IRC has also focused in recent years. Against this background, the FAO IEE (Independent External Evaluation) recommended that the IRC be wound up, and some of its functions be transferred to the CGIAR.

In response to this IEE recommendation, FAO commissioned the preparation of this Working Paper on the future of the International Rice Commission. It presents a range of options for the future of the IRC, developed after detailed analysis of key reports on the IRC (including the 2006 auto-evaluation of the Support Program; and IRC Session Reports); feedback from meetings with experts within and outside FAO; written submissions from key stakeholders; and extensive desktop research. The options proposed are part of FAO's consultative process on the IRC and will be considered by Member Nations during 2009. As such there is no recommended option. However the overriding message is that without significant change the IRC's future is very uncertain, in other words, the *status quo* is considered to be unviable.

Five options are presented, they are:

- Option 1 – *Status quo*. This option implies a continuation of the IRC's current approach – 'business as usual'.
- Option 2 – Transfer some functions to the CGIAR. Some would argue that this has happened already, as the Centres and their partners have established flourishing rice technology networks in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Negotiation would be required to ensure no key issues were overlooked.
- Option 3 – Combine the IRC with the Inter-governmental Working Group on Rice (IGG) to form a single Rice 'Value-Chain' forum. Given the focus of the IGG on trade, consumption and marketing of rice, its combination with IRC would be very complementary and provide a single FAO forum on rice.
- Option 4 - Combine the IRC with the Committee on Agriculture (COAG). Given COAG's broad participation and consideration of overarching issues relating to food security, the inclusion of the IRC as a subsidiary, or a standing agenda item could provide benefits.
- Option 5 – 'Reform with Growth'. In line with FAO's renewal process this option provides an outline of a rejuvenated, well resourced IRC, and features aspects of options 2,3 and 4 above. It entails a change in focus, a rice 'value-chain' approach, working groups and integration of IRC into a vibrant global rice network.

All options, to a greater or lesser extent, seek to address the concerns with the IRC raised directly, or indirectly, by Members, and by other key partners and stakeholders. These concerns include the focus of the IRC agenda on technology issues, better done by others; Member participation; complementarity with partner organizations; technical support for work

between meetings; and resourcing. The options also recognize the FAO renewal process and are congruent with the 'new' core functions of the Organization. However, their major aim is to provide directions that will, within a vibrant global rice network, help to ensure the future of sustainable intensification of rice production in a rapidly changing world. At a time when food security is again tenuous in many countries, and where future rice production will be challenged by competition for land and water resources, by climate change, and by energy and other input concerns, a rejuvenated, well-resourced IRC could have a vital role to play in steering the future of the world's most important food crop.

Introduction

“Without doubt, rice is one of the planet’s most important commodities. Among cereals, rice has the greatest flexibility in adapting to varying agro-ecological conditions, particularly moisture – rice can grow in flooded and dry fields, in freshwater as well as under saline conditions near coastal areas. It provides half the world population with its major source of food energy and provides income opportunities for hundreds of millions of people. Culturally, it is a source of historical and national pride, central to many religious ceremonies, paintings and songs as a symbol of life, fertility and abundance. Rice fields are known for their beauty and ecological importance. Rice is a versatile grain, and tens of thousands of varieties have evolved over the millennia, with adaptation to local conditions in almost all types of climate and soil, where temperatures permit. Rice is grown within a multitude of fascinating ecosystems that sometimes include hundreds of other species of plants, fish and animals growing together symbiotically in flooded rice fields, providing food for farming families and produce for the market. Rice, therefore, symbolizes the complexities of agriculture and food.”

(Rice is Life 2005)

About 90% of the world’s rice is produced by small-scale farmers in low-income developing countries, especially in Asia, and consumed locally. Rice is the most important element of national food security in many of these countries, and is a key underpinning factor in global food security. In addition, rice-consumption is increasingly popular in many high-income countries. The United Nations General Assembly acknowledged the pivotal importance of this crop when it declared the International Year of Rice, in 2004, and recognized:

“... that if the world is ever to overcome hunger and its associated poverty, attention must be paid to the food crop that feeds more than 50 percent of the world’s population and provides more jobs than any other: rice.”

(Rice is Life 2005)

Of course, the fundamental importance of rice to world food supplies has long been known and this was the basis for the establishment of the International Rice Commission (IRC) by FAO. When the IRC was established in 1948 it was the only international mechanism for collaboration amongst countries and institutions to promote sustainable intensification of rice production, for food security and poverty alleviation.

However, given the continuing importance of rice, this is no longer the case with many other networks, organizations and institutions seeking to enhance collaboration, coordination and cooperation in relation to rice production. It was against this background of changes in the IRC’s operating environment that the Independent External Evaluation (IEE) of FAO (2007) made the following recommendation (3.10 b) in relation to the IRC:

“... there are two CGIAR centres dealing exclusively with rice; trade aspects are addressed by an Inter-Governmental Commodity Group in FAO. The International Rice Commission should be wound up. If the CGIAR wishes, some of its work may be continued under the CGIAR.” (FAO, IEE 2007)

In the light of the IEE recommendation this Working Paper seeks to present a range of options for the future of the IRC, to provide a basis for further consultation by FAO with Member Countries during 2009. The options described later in the report have been developed following an extensive consultative process involving over 50 key personnel working on rice and related issues, both within and outside of FAO.

Brief History of the International Rice Commission and its Achievements

The Fourth Session of the Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations approved in 1948, the establishment of the International Rice Commission (IRC) under Article XIV of the FAO Constitution, which provides for negotiation and conclusion of conventions and agreements concerning questions relating to food and agriculture.

The main objective of the IRC is “*to promote national and international action in matters relating to the production, conservation, distribution and consumption of rice, except matters relating to international trade.*”

The membership of the IRC is open to all Member Nations and Associate Members of the FAO. In order to become a Member of the Commission, the Country needs only to send the Instrument of Acceptance to the Director-General of FAO.

Article IX of IRC’s Constitution states that “*The Constitution shall enter into force as soon as notifications of acceptance have been received from the governments of at least ten countries members of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations representing in the aggregate not less than half of the world production of rice in the crop year 1947/48 as shown by official statistics*”. The IRC became operational on 4 January 1949 after 12 countries registered their acceptance to adhere to the Constitution of the Commission.

The 12 original Members of the IRC were: France, Ecuador, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Italy, India, Thailand, Netherlands, Egypt, Myanmar, Mexico, and the Philippines. The IRC official languages, when it became operational on 4 January 1949 were English and French. Further details of Member Countries are shown in Appendix 2.

The International Rice Commission, from 1949 to 1972

FAO provided in 1949 a Secretariat to provide support to the operation of the IRC. The IRC Secretariat was located at the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok, Thailand.

The IRC membership grew from 12 in 1949, to 42 by 1972: 15 countries from Asia and the Far East, including Oceania; 13 countries from Latin America; 6 countries from Africa; 2 countries from the Near East; and 6 countries from Europe/North America.

The IRC Secretariat organized the first IRC Session in Bangkok, Thailand in 1949. From 1950 to 1972, an additional 11 IRC Sessions were organized in different cities in Asia. The IRC Sessions provided Member Countries and partner institutions opportunities to review the emerging issues and recent achievements in scientific, technical and socio-economic matters relating to sustainable intensification of rice production. During the IRC Sessions the participants provided recommendations to FAO and all member countries on necessary, or desirable national and international actions for the solution of issues and challenges to sustainable intensification of rice production.

The IRC Secretariat published the first volume of its Newsletters in 1952 and a total of 21 volumes of IRC Newsletters have been published from 1952 to 1972. The IRC Newsletters were a major part of the IRC Secretariat’s effort in collection, analysis and dissemination of rice-related information to Member Countries, international institutions who were partners of IRC, and other stakeholders.

The other major achievements of the IRC Secretariat during 1949-1972 were:

- Formulation and implementation of the international collaborative project on *indica x japonica* hybridization, from 1950 to 1959.

- The declaration of the International Rice Year by FAO in 1965 and the implementation of the Year in 1966. The proposal to declare an International Rice Year was made at the 7th Session of the FAO Consultative Sub-Committee on Economic Aspects of Rice in 1963 in Tokyo. The FAO Conference endorsed the proposal and on 1 July 1965, Dr. B.S. Sen, the Director-General of FAO, declared 1966 as an International Rice Year. The objective of the declaration was *“to encourage governments and rice industries to make a concerted effort to promote, where appropriate, production, consumption, marketing and trading as well as economic and technical research on rice; to focus world attention on the role that rice can play in furthering the ends of the Freedom-From-Hunger-Campaign, and to improve international understanding of the rice economy”*.
- Organization of working parties on different aspects of rice production and post-harvest operations; the cataloguing of rice genetic stocks; and organization of training workshops for building up national capacity in member countries.

Among the recommendations made at the 12th IRC Session in Bangkok, Thailand in 1972, the following were most important:

- FAO should call a Special IRC Session in 1973 to consider the future IRC programme of work.
- FAO should pay more attention to countries outside Asia and should intensify cooperation with the West Africa Rice Development Association (WARDA).

The International Rice Commission from 1973 to 1990

The IRC membership grew from 42 in 1972 to 53 by 1990. In November 1973, the Special IRC Session was held in Rome, Italy. Following are the major recommendations made at that Session:

- IRC should convene a regular session at least once every four years, instead of every two years.
- IRC Rules and Procedures may be amended by a two-third majority of the votes cast provided that such a majority is more than one-half of all Members of the Commission.
- IRC should adopt Spanish as an additional working language and IRC Newsletters should be in three languages: English, French and Spanish.
- IRC should re-emphasize the need for action-oriented programmes, through which IRC could exercise a major influence on the Commission's recommendations. It was noted that approximately 200 FAO experts were actively engaged in rice production under FAO/UNDP projects and projects funded by bilateral resources.

In 1973, the seat of the IRC Secretariat was moved from the Regional Office for Asia and the Far East, to the Office of the Department of Agriculture in Rome, Italy. Again in 1983, the seat of the IRC Secretariat was moved to the Crop and Grassland Service of the Plant Production and Protection Division, Department of Agriculture in Rome, Italy.

Also in 1983, the IRC Steering Committee was established, which consisted of technical units from five FAO Departments: AG, ES, FI, NR, and TC. It has coordinated activities related to rice, and the technical assistance provided to Member Countries of the Commission. The AGP Director has been the chairperson of the IRC Steering Committee.

In 1973-1990, in addition to the Special Session, the IRC Secretariat organized four more regular sessions in different cities in the world. The IRC Secretariat also published 23 volumes of IRC Newsletters.

During 1973-1990, in addition to the organization of regular sessions and the publication of

IRC Newsletters, the IRC Secretariat collaborated with Member Countries, other technical services of FAO, UNDP and other international institutions and donors to formulate and implement a large number of field projects to support the wide adoption of high-yielding or modern rice varieties in many countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. This was achieved in various thematic areas, including land-water development and use, fertilizer supply and integrated plant nutrition, integrated pest management, processing, and marketing.

The IRC Secretariat also spent considerable time and effort to collect, analyse and disseminate information related to hybrid rice development and use in China, to Member Countries and partner institutions. Despite the successful development and use of hybrid rice in China, there had been virtually no commercial cultivation of hybrid rice in countries outside China. The 17th IRC Session met in Brazil in 1990; it recommended that FAO and Member Countries should provide enhanced support to the expansion of the technical network for hybrid rice development and use.

The International Rice Commission from 1991 to 2007

Today, the IRC has 62 Member Countries. Among them, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom are not rice producers and major rice consumers, while the remaining Members consist of large and small rice producers as well as major rice consumers.

From 1991-2007, the IRC Secretariat organised four regular sessions. The 21st Session was held in Chiclayo, Peru, from 3-5 May, 2006.

In addition, the IRC Secretariat in collaboration with international, regional and national agricultural research and development institutes helped to establish the following rice networks:

- Inter-Regional Collaborative Research Network on Rice in the Mediterranean Climate Area to promote research and development on *japonica* rice.
- Wetland Development and Management Network/Inland Valley Swamps in Sub-Saharan Africa to promote the development of wetland/inland valley swamps for rice and food crop production.
- International Task-Force on Hybrid Rice to expedite the development and use of hybrid rice all over the world. The area planted to hybrid rice outside China was about 1.5 million hectares in 2004, and is about 3 million hectares in 2008.

In 1999, FAO and IRRI signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen the collaborative action aimed at promoting wider adoption of hybrid rice technology outside China, and in 2000, FAO and WARDA signed an MoU to support the Rapid Rice Technology Diffusion in West Africa (RARIDWA). The Secretariat of the Commission is a member of the Organizing Committee of the Africa Rice Initiative, spearheaded by WARDA and UNDP.

From 1991-2007, the IRC Secretariat published 17 volumes of IRC Newsletters and three volumes of FAO Rice Information, in addition to a number of technical manuals on rice and rice-based production systems. In addition, the IRC formulated and implemented 30 cooperative projects to build capacity of national rice programmes, especially on (a) crop management to close the yield gap in rice production; (b) development and use of hybrid rice in countries outside China for higher rice yield, and (c) development and use of NERICA rice in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Observing the declining trend of yield growth, the IRC Secretariat convened in Rome, Italy, an Expert Consultation on "Yield Gap and Productivity Decline in Rice Production" to sensitize policy makers of the difficulties in ensuring food security through rice, and to find appropriate solutions to these productivity issues. Indeed global rice output decreased

sharply after 1999, and the trend was only reversed after 2002.

The IRC 20th Session held in July 2002 in Bangkok, Thailand, recommended that FAO and Member Countries should work for a Declaration of an International Year of Rice (IYR) by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). The concerted efforts of the IRC Secretariat, its partners and its Member Countries led to the declaration of IYR 2004 by UNGA, in December 2002. In its resolution A/Res/57/162 to declare IYR 2004, UNGA noted that, “*rice is the staple food of more than half the world’s population and affirmed the need to focus world attention on the role that rice can play in providing food security and poverty reduction*”.

From 2003 to 2005, the IRC Secretariat devoted most of its resources and efforts to the preparation and implementation of IYR, which took place in 68 countries worldwide during 2004.

International Rice Commission – Situation Analysis

As the basis of the analytical framework for this options development Working Paper the consultant drew on a comprehensive range of information and inputs. The sources of these included face-to-face and telephone interviews with a number of key experts on rice production and related issues, both within and outside FAO; written submissions from international rice specialists (Appendices 3 and 4); and published reports and other documents concerning the IRC, including its Constitution; the PBE Evaluation Report 2005/6; Proceedings of its meetings; and various sections of the FAO IEE. These inputs provided a range of views and opinions on various aspects of the IRC. A number of frameworks could have been used to analyse this information, but given the nature of the information received and the Terms of Reference for this options paper, a SWOT analysis was considered to be the most appropriate approach.

SWOT Analysis of the International Rice Commission

Strengths

The International Rice Commission is unique in that it is the only Intergovernmental Commission established by FAO to deal with a single food crop. One expert respondent who was consulted stated, “*The mere existence of the Rice Commission is essential in my opinion... considering the Commission’s role in promoting various aspects of rice production beyond research.*”

A broadly agreed strength of the IRC is its role as a neutral intergovernmental forum where Member Countries can discuss and evaluate technologies together with other issues impacting on rice production, and formulate appropriate policies and strategies in an objective manner. Proponents of the IRC strongly emphasized the development significance of the Commission, with its focus on sustainable intensification of rice production for food security and poverty reduction. Such a focus gains even greater significance at a time when global food security is again on the ‘radar screen’ of national leaders both in developing, and industrialized countries. Increased rice production is vital to underpin food security in many of these countries but the land and water resources for this increased production are reducing in many regions due to population growth, and competition for their use between rural, urban, industrial and/or environmental purposes. At the same time, the rates of rice productivity increases have declined in recent decades and are now well below those required to produce the productivity increases necessary for ongoing food security. The potential strength of the IRC to help address these concerns is very clear.

A number of other perceived strengths of the IRC were mentioned by key stakeholders, not least the IRC’s past achievements in the very successful conduct of global events such as

the International Year of Rice (IYR) in 2004. Others noted however that, for a range of reasons – including resource availability – there had been little follow-up to IYR.

Overall, there is a universal belief that the IRC has not been able to harness and utilize its unique strengths in recent years. Whilst much of this may have been due to forces beyond the control of the Secretariat – it is an issue that should not be ignored.

Weaknesses

The current weaknesses of the IRC identified by many, relate to the present interpretation of its mission, the nature and content of its agenda and activities; and the ability to implement its decisions in a timely and effective manner. These concerns are not new and were first identified by the member countries in their responses to the auto-evaluation of Programme Entity 212P5 – FAO’s technical and secretarial support to the IRC – and were only reinforced by respondents to this current study. In considering the auto-evaluation conducted in 2005/6, it is pertinent to note that only 16 responses were received to the questionnaires sent to all Member Countries, and many other key stakeholders. As the IEE report noted, the low number of respondents was probably symptomatic of the dissatisfaction amongst Members with the effectiveness of the IRC. Explicitly the respondents to the auto-evaluation made a number of comments and recommendations, including:

- the initiation of serious discussion of what needed to be done to revive the work of the Commission
- the Secretariat needed to be strengthened
- the lack of emphasis by the Commission on human and institutional dimensions of rice production was a continuing concern
- the Commission is not evolving to tackle new challenges and demands
- the Commission needs to be more dynamic and more pro-active in helping countries to prepare policies on areas of major national and global interest

(Report of auto-evaluation 2006)

All of the above are still seen as weaknesses for the IRC. In relation to the current interpretation of the IRC’s mission, there is a perception amongst key stakeholders that the IRC has become a purely on-farm production technology forum with little attention to the overarching global issues impacting rice production, including competition for land and water resources; climate change; carbon emission schemes; energy and input costs; human and institutional capacity building; and conservation of biodiversity, that many believe should be the focus of the IRC. The ‘gap’ perceived by many, in relation to sustaining rice production into the future, is a high-level forum where such issues can be discussed and debated in ways that advise policy formulation in Member Countries.

The concerns expressed by respondents to the auto-evaluation of the IRC, and reinforced in the current study, regarding the nature and content of IRC’s meeting agendas relate to the points made in the previous paragraph. Whilst the technology focus of IRC meetings invariably results in discussion of important topics (e.g., for the 21st Session of the Commission, these included rice genetic improvement, and integrated rice management systems) many believe that such topics are more fully, and more appropriately dealt with in other fora, including at international, national and regional rice congresses; in regional rice networks; and at other specific gatherings organized by CGIAR centres and others.

The third general concern expressed by key stakeholders relates to technical support for the Commission, in order to effectively progress issues between the four-yearly meetings.

Whilst the current Secretariat works extremely hard and effectively, it is clear that for the IRC to significantly impact on sustainable rice intensification it requires much greater technical support. In this regard the important role of the FAO IRC Steering Committee in providing guidance and support to the IRC is critical. Without additional resources it is highly unlikely that the IRC can function effectively, and indeed many would question its future viability in a rapidly changing operating environment.

Opportunities

Rice is the single most important crop underpinning food security in many countries of the world. Its increasing production in more intensive, but more sustainable systems is vital to global food security. But to achieve increased productivity in a land, water, energy and carbon (emissions) constrained world is a more complex challenge than rice-producers have ever faced in the past. Against this background important decisions are being made, or influenced, in other high level arenas that could have substantial impacts on the future of rice production. These 'arenas' include international fora such as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change; the Convention on Biological Diversity; the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture etc., together with major policy decisions being made at the national level in many countries, on water, energy/biofuels, carbon pollution reduction schemes, ecosystem management, and other environmental issues. The need for an intergovernmental commission to chart the future of sustainable rice intensification has arguably never been greater.

The critical opportunity is for the IRC to rejuvenate, and to operate, as a high-level intergovernmental policy forum, effectively engaging with other key international and national bodies to ensure that rice continues to feed around half of the world's, still rapidly growing, population. This opportunity would only be achieved through a renewal process involving changes in representation, agenda, programs and technical support. It is an opportunity that requires strong consideration, as the threats to the IRC in its current mode are significant.

Threats

Threats to the IRC in its current mode have been identified by country members, by other key stakeholders and by the IEE review team. Members have explicitly or implicitly 'voted with their feet' – participation levels at IRC meetings have progressively declined; for the last four meetings of the Commission the numbers of Member Countries attending have been 38, 30, 21 and 19 respectively. There is a serious threat that if the status quo were to be maintained the IRC would effectively cease to function; as it stands, according to Article V, Section 2, of the Constitution and Rules of Procedure of the IRC there was not a quorum of members at the 21st Meeting, at least. (*"The presence of delegates representing a majority of the Members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum".*)

The continuing relevance of the IRC, given its current technological focus, is threatened by the (very welcome) upsurge in international, national and regional rice fora focussed on new technology development, evaluation and adoption. Notable examples of these include:

- International Rice Congress

There have been two of these gatherings so far, with attendances of thousands of delegates representing scientists, industry specialists, policy makers, and others. The Third Congress, IRC 2010, will be held in Vietnam and incorporate the 28th International Rice Research Conference, the 3rd World Rice Commerce Conference, and the 3rd International Rice Technology and Cultural expo. A feature of the Congress is a half-day Round Table of the Agriculture Ministers from the key rice-producing countries of the world. This activity is planned to be repeated in 2010, but with Ministers from rice-consuming nations, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, also participating.

- Africa Rice Congress
Last held in Tanzania, 2006. This meeting attracted a range of delegates to discuss technology and related issues for rice production in SSA.
- Regional Rice Networks
 - o ROCARIZ:ECARRN (Africa)
 - o FLAR (Latin America)
 - o CORRA; Asian Biotechnology Network (Asia)

All of the above provide opportunities for support, collaboration, coordination and implementation of rice technologies in all of the major rice-producing nations of the world. In addition, the International Rice Congress in particular, provides a platform for intergovernmental discussions, and considerations of issues relating to rice commerce and related issues. This plethora of rice platforms has mainly emerged in the past decade or so, and comprises a substantial threat to the continued relevance of the IRC, if the Commission remains focused on rice production technologies.

Situation Analysis of the IRC – Overall Conclusions

The SWOT analysis of the IRC, based on consideration of past assessments, including the 2006 auto-evaluation by Members, and the more recent IEE report; on written submissions from key international rice experts and stakeholders; on information gathered from discussions with experts both within and outside FAO; and on desktop research, clearly identified some major issues around which there was a broad consensus for change. These findings have been considered in detail as the basis for the development of options for the future directions of the IRC. These options will be a resource for further consultation between FAO and IRC Members. The general conclusions are:

- **Core strengths of the IRC** arise from its Constitution as an Commission of FAO, thereby providing an intergovernmental ‘neutral’ forum for discussion and evaluation of issues pertaining to the world’s most important food crop. The IRC is unique, as a single commodity Intergovernmental Commission, and should not be discarded without serious deliberation on its future.
- **The potential of the IRC** as a high-level forum to debate and advise policy formulation in Member Countries is not being fully realized. The agenda in recent times has been mainly focused towards on-farm technologies.
- **There are many international, national, and regional fora** focused on rice technologies and related issues that have much larger, and in many cases, higher level participation than the IRC. For example, the International Rice Congress includes a Ministerial Round Table, comprising Agriculture Ministers from rice-producing and rice-consuming countries.
- **There are significant opportunities** however for a rejuvenated IRC to complement the activities of others by shifting its attention from a farm technology focus (better done by others) to a high-level policy discussion forum focusing on the overarching, and cross-cutting issues that are critical to sustainable rice production into the future.

- **There was a consensus** that the focus for a renewed IRC should include discussion, debate and policy influence around the impacts on rice production of:
 - o Water and land availability
 - o Climate change
 - o Carbon pollution reduction schemes
 - o Energy/biofuel policies
 - o High input costs
 - o Trade and markets
 - o Biodiversity and Ecosystem services
 - o Human and institutional capacity building
- **Mechanisms and resources needed** to be put in place to ensure that the programs and decisions of the IRC can be effectively implemented in a timely manner, with a substantial part of this implementation occurring between meetings.
- **Perhaps the strongest consensus** was that the vast majority believed that the *status quo* for the IRC is not viable, and without significant change it should be wound up, in accordance with the FAO IEE recommendation.

Ways Forward – Possible Options for the Future Directions of the International Rice Commission

These options are neither mutually exclusive nor, of course, the only options available. They do however address the concerns identified by IRC Members, and other key stakeholders. Importantly also, the options recognize the dramatically changing environment in which the IRC operates. To quote the Director General of FAO in relation to the whole Organization:

“... we will also need to demonstrate to Members that we have taken into account the capacities of partner organizations working in the same or related fields.”

Director General, FAO 2008

This principle can equally be applied to the future role of the IRC.

Option 1 – Status quo

This is not considered to be viable given the declining participation of Members at meetings; the lack of mechanisms and resourcing to implement programs; the plethora of other organizations, networks and bodies that more effectively deal with rice technologies, and their adoption for development; and the recommendation by the FAO IEE review team that the Commission should be wound up.

Advantages: No changes would be needed to current procedures and activities and there would be no additional resources required.

Disadvantages: Takes no account of major relevance problems identified by Members and other key stakeholders. It would have a questionable impact on major issues confronting sustainable intensification of rice production. May struggle to retain current resourcing in the FAO renewal process, given the IEE recommendation and is likely to result in the IRC being wound up.

Option 2 – Transfer of some functions to the CGIAR

The Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), established in 1971, is a strategic partnership, whose 64 Members support 15 international Centers, working in collaboration with many hundreds of government and civil society organizations as well as private businesses around the world. CGIAR Members include 21 developing and 26 industrialized countries, four co-sponsors as well as 13 other international organizations. Today, more than 8,000 CGIAR scientists and staff are active in over 100 countries throughout the world.

The CGIAR generates cutting-edge science to foster sustainable agricultural growth that benefits the poor through stronger food security, better human nutrition and health, higher incomes and improved management of natural resources. The new crop varieties, knowledge and other products resulting from the CGIAR's collaborative research are made widely available to individuals and organizations working for sustainable agricultural development throughout the world.

The priorities of CGIAR research are:

- *Reducing hunger and malnutrition by producing more and better food through genetic improvement*
- *Sustaining agriculture biodiversity both in situ and ex situ*
- *Promoting opportunities for economic development and through agricultural diversification and high-value commodities and products*
- *Ensuring sustainable management and conservation of water, land and forests*
- *Improving policies and facilitating institutional innovation*

A critical task for 11 of the CGIAR Centers is to maintain international genebanks, which preserve and make readily available the plant genetic resources that form the basis of food security worldwide.

Many would argue that the transfer of some functions from the IRC to the CGIAR, has already happened by default, given the work of the three CGIAR Centres focusing on rice, with their partners in Asia, Africa and Latin America. There are flourishing rice technology networks in each of these continents, with substantial support from both countries and the donor community. If this option was implemented it is likely that issues currently addressed by the IRC would be subsumed into the normative activities of the Centres, and their networks with partner countries. There would need to be negotiation between the IRC and the CGIAR to ensure that no key issues were overlooked.

Advantages: The attention to technology-focussed issues characteristic of IRC activities would be continued by a wider range of partners, through projects, networks and specialized meetings including the International Rice Congress. Resources currently devoted to the IRC could be redeployed to other high priority areas in FAO, and member organizations.

Disadvantages: An FAO Commission, with all of its intergovernmental convening and informing powers, would be lost, together with the potential to address major issues impacting on rice production.

By definition of its mandate, the CGIAR would only carry out research for development aspects of rice production. Other fora would be required to consider the high level policy issues that the IRC has the potential to deal with. Rice production could be

adversely impacted by policy decisions in other sectors such as water, environment, and energy, where there are powerful influences at play.

Option 3 – Combine IRC with the Intergovernmental Working Group on Rice (IGG) to form a single Rice Value Chain Forum

The FAO Intergovernmental Group (IGG) on Rice represents a forum for intergovernmental consultation and exchange of trends in production, consumption, trade, stocks and prices of rice, including regular appraisal of the world rice situation and short-term outlook. The Group, under FAO auspices, considers changes in national rice policies and examines their international effects as pertaining to the current and prospective rice situation. The group meets once in each biennium. Recent sessions have been held jointly with the IGG on Grains. The last Joint Session was held in May 2007 in Istanbul with the collaboration of the Government of Turkey.

Membership of the IGG is open to all Member Nations and Associate Members of FAO, including Observers from international organizations and institutions. Nearly all rice-importing and exporting countries are Members of the IGG on Rice.

The IGG on Rice has as its parent body, the FAO's Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP), that comprises the 191 FAO Member Nations, although not all participate at the IGG on Rice. The reputation of the IGG on Rice amongst the key stakeholders contacted for this current study was very high. Quite a few respondents contacted regarding the IRC, praised the work of the IGG and valued highly the commodity data and information that it supplied.

Several benefits could arise from strategic combination of the IRC and the IGG on Rice. From the IRC viewpoint, combined meetings with IGG would result in some sensible complementarity with a combined forum covering both production-related and consumption/trade aspects of rice. The combining of IRC and IGG roles and activities could be achieved in two ways – joint meetings as mentioned, or the formation of one FAO intergovernmental forum on rice covering all aspects of the rice value-chain. In any transitional period the first could segue into the second combination. The IGG meets each biennium – there were 24 Member Nations at its last meeting – and initially the IRC could meet at the same time, thereby increasing the frequency of IRC meetings, and its potential effectiveness. Concerns have been rightfully raised that if the IRC and IGG had joint meetings there would be issues of dual agendas and differing expertise required by participants. Whilst this could initially be an issue, it is envisaged that joint agenda development would result in high priority topics around rice production and trade.

Whilst joint meetings could bring some economies in relation to organization, and participation, this option may well not be optimum at a time of major renewal, and constrained resources. A single FAO intergovernmental forum on the whole value-chain of rice would appear to be a more desirable option in terms of programs, participation, and resourcing. The FAO IRC Steering Committee could be reorganized to be the FAO Rice Steering Committee and oversee the agenda development and technical support to the new rice value-chain forum. In order to progress programmatic work between meetings, working groups on production, and on trade-related matters could be established. Member Nations would need to consider the nature of the amalgamation between these two groups, and the subsequent status and constitution of the new forum; would it continue as the IRC with its Commission status and constitution, or as an IGG, or have some other organizational status? Such a decision could only be made by Member Nations.

- Advantages: The IRC would gain greater relevance through the combination of both production and trade issues in its programs. There could also be some economies in relation to meeting organization and participation for a combined forum. The greatest efficiencies and impacts would however arise from the formation of a single FAO intergovernmental forum on the whole rice value-chain. This would address some of the issues of efficiency and participation raised by stakeholders.
- Disadvantages: This combination, or amalgamation would not necessarily address the key issues of IRC relevance raised by many, unless there were also significant changes in the programs and activities of the forum. If the combination was restricted to joint meetings of the IRC and IGG, there would, initially at least, be concerns about the agenda, participant expertise, and resourcing. This option does not clearly address complementarity with the work and activities of other partners, especially in relation to rice production issues.

Option 4. Combine the IRC with the Committee on Agriculture (COAG)

The Committee on Agriculture (COAG) conducts periodic reviews and appraisals of agricultural and nutritional problems in order to propose concerted action by Member Nations and the Organization. It also reviews the agriculture and food and nutrition work programs of the Organization and their implementation, with emphasis on the integration of all social, technical, economic, institutional and structural aspects in promoting agricultural and rural development.

COAG has 107 Member Nations, many of whom have common membership with the IRC, although there are 13 Members of IRC who are not COAG Members. The meetings of COAG are held each biennium, with a very full and busy agenda, and it does not have a specific commodity focus. There are however some potential approaches to incorporating the IRC into COAG, in ways that would address many of the issues of relevance and participation identified by IRC's Members, and other stakeholders.

Two ways of incorporating IRC's activities into COAG could include:

- i. IRC's establishment as a subsidiary of COAG
- ii. IRC's inclusion as a Standing Item on COAG's agenda

Whilst COAG does not have a commodity focus it is vitally concerned with food security, for which rice is the single most important crop. In addition at its recent meetings, COAG's agenda has included such topics such as "Environment and Agriculture"; and "Agriculture and Water Scarcity". Both of these crosscutting issues are very much in accord with the topics IRC partners and stakeholders see as highly relevant to the future of rice production. So inclusion of the IRC in COAG's business could address issues of relevance and complementarity raised in regard to IRC's current activities.

Inclusion of the IRC could potentially be as a subsidiary body of COAG according to Rule VII: "*Under Rule XXXII.12 of the General Rules of the Organization, the Committee may, on an exceptional basis, establish subsidiary or ad hoc bodies where it considers that such action is conducive to facilitating its own work and will not adversely affect the multidisciplinary consideration of questions submitted to the Committee for examination.*"

Members could consider whether the IRC could be an appropriate subsidiary of COAG. In addition, Rule VII of COAG goes on to state: "*The Committee may include in the*

membership of such subsidiary or ad hoc bodies Member Nations that are not Members of the Committee and Associate Members”. This provision could be used to address the differences in membership of IRC and COAG.

A second way in which IRC could be included as part of COAG's business is its adoption as a Standing Agenda Item of COAG. In this way, one session of each COAG meeting would focus on IRC/rice-related topics, but within COAG's framework of broader considerations such as environment, water, climate change, bioenergy, etc. The FAO IEE has also recommended that COAG be reformed, perhaps providing an opportunity to consider inclusion of IRC.

Advantages: The inclusion of IRC into COAG would provide greater, higher level consideration of the important issues affecting the sustainable intensification of rice production. In so doing, it would address the concerns of IRC stakeholders with regard to relevance and participation. It would also provide some resource savings in terms of meeting organization and travel costs. Given the standing of COAG and its focus on high level, overarching aspects of agriculture, IRC would complement the roles and activities of partner organizations involved with rice production.

Disadvantages: COAG has a very full and busy agenda and given its Rules, may not be prepared to focus some of its time on one commodity, albeit an extremely important one. Even if the IRC was incorporated into COAG, much less meeting time would be devoted to rice business than is currently the case with a 'separate' IRC.

Option 5 – ‘Reform with Growth’

Just as the whole of FAO is seeking to ‘Reform with Growth’ in response to the IEE recommendations, a similar case for reform with growth can appropriately be made for IRC. Reform is required if IRC is to meet the new global challenges facing rice production, and to complement the role of partner organizations in what has been, and remains, a significantly changing operating environment. Reform and growth are required if the expectations of Member Nations – as experienced in the auto-evaluation – and other key stakeholders, are to be satisfied. Many believe, as did the IEE review team, that the status quo for IRC is unviable. This ‘Reform with Growth’ option seeks to establish a rejuvenated and dynamic Commission well equipped to steer the complex path for sustainable rice production intensification, an outcome vital to many developing countries.

Adoption of this option by Member Nations would address the following:

- Agenda and programmatic changes.
- Complementarity with partner organizations and other fora
- Ability to conduct work between meetings
- Resourcing issues
- Overall efficiency and effectiveness

Under this proposal the agenda and programs for IRC would change to address those issues where it is considered that IRC deliberations have a comparative advantage in the global rice scenario. Member Nations at the Twenty-first Session of the Commission captured this intent in their recommendations 1.4.2, and 1.4.3:

- Rec. 1.4.2 *“Given that rice is a strategic commodity in many countries, subject to considerable policy interactions, governments should minimize as far as possible interventions that could destabilize the world rice market and they must act in accordance with their international obligations”.*
- Rec. 1.4.3 *“Given the declining resources, the Commission should limit the number of recommendations and focus on areas where intervention could lead to an effective increase in rice production, enhancing human nutrition and environmental conservation”.*

As previously stated other key stakeholders contacted for this current study clearly stated the need for IRC to more effectively complement the role of others. One distinguished expert stated this regarding the IRC:

“If it is going to be reinvigorated, then its role vis-à-vis these other organizations or fora should be reviewed. The IRC should be a high-level policy forum that will tackle issues not normally tackled by the other fora or make more decisive consensus on policy issues. This can include as suggested ‘a truly global policy dialogue on rice production, consumption and trade’.

Member Nations would need to decide what these issues are but they, and others, have in recent times identified dwindling land and water resources, climate change, energy, genetic resources, biodiversity and ecosystem services, trade policies, and capacity-building as potential areas for attention.

Another important aspect of complementarity, is for IRC to sequence its meetings in ways that add value to the global ‘rice timetable’ and in so doing also maximise the flow-on of these other fora to IRC business and impacts. A potential ‘win-win’ opportunity for such complementarity is in relation to the International Rice Congress, the world largest gathering of rice specialists, from both developing and industrialized countries. The Congress is held every four years and covers all aspects of rice production from ‘field to plate’. In addition it features a half-day Round Table meeting of Agriculture Ministers from major rice-producing countries (and for 2010 this will also include Ministers from major rice-consuming nations).

In this ‘Reform with Growth’ option for the IRC it is proposed that IRC meetings are held two years after each Congress, thereby creating the opportunity for a high level rice forum each two years: IRC – Congress – IRC - Congress, etc. Given that there is a Ministerial ‘round table’ meeting at each Congress, the IRC could seek to organize a similar meeting as part of its agenda. Such an initiative would ensure a high-level forum with an appropriate agenda for the IRC, and provide a continual focus on rice production by key decision-makers. There may also be the opportunity to have a smaller ‘satellite’ meeting of the IRC at each International Rice Congress, involving those Members who were attending the Congress.

It is proposed that this option would also encompass the concept proposed in Option 3, of a single FAO intergovernmental forum on rice focussing on the whole value-chain of rice from ‘field to plate’. To provide technical support to this reformed IRC, it is proposed that there would be two Working Groups to conduct the work of the IRC between meetings – one focused on production-related issues including ecosystems and biodiversity, and one on trade, consumption and market-related issues. A possible third group could focus on capacity building, or this aspect could be mainstreamed into the work of the other two groups – either way, it should receive high priority attention.

Of course, the adoption of this option by Member Countries would require negotiation with partner organizations, not least the ‘round table’ Ministers, the CGIAR, the regional rice networks, and the International Rice Congress organizers would also need to be consulted. FAO management and Member Nations would need to agree on the technical and

secretarial support to a 'whole of value chain' IRC. However, it is suggested that much more use could be made of contracting CGIAR Centres (and others) to carry out key studies and other tasks as part of the Working Group. IRRI, WARDA (Africa Rice Centre), CIAT, IFPRI, Bioversity International and IWMI, could all be useful contributors. Such an approach could not only be more cost-effective for FAO, but would also help to ensure a stronger partnership with the CGIAR, and other organizations. (The Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture makes significant use of Bioversity International in a similar role).

The Constitution and Rules of the IRC would also need to be modified for this option, and also some of the other options for the future directions of IRC.

Advantages: This option would address all of the issues raised by Members and other stakeholders, including the IEE reviewers. It would also complement the activities of partner organizations in ways that would be of great benefit to sustainable intensification of rice production.

Disadvantages: There are few, if any, significant disadvantages for this option. Additional resources would be required to support the Working Groups. Participation at the meetings may also need to change to reflect the nature and content of the reformed constitution and agenda. Timing of meetings would need to be in sequence with the International Rice Congress. In addition the Constitution and Rules of the IRC would require modification.

Conclusions

The IRC has a proud history of significant achievements for rice production in developing countries. When it was established it was the only international forum focussed on rice. This was the case for many years to come, and the Commission was also influential in the initiation of other rice-focussed institutions including IRRI. Whilst there have been significant achievements in more recent times including the leading role in the International Year of Rice, the IRC has struggled to retain its relevance, and its standing as a front-line influence to the sustainable intensification of rice production in developing countries. There is much greater recognition now by partner organizations of FAO's technical work on rice production and trade than there is of anything that the IRC is doing. Member Nations have 'voted with their feet', reflected in the dwindling participation at the past four IRC Sessions. In a 'spiralling down' process the IRC has seen dwindling participation, dwindling resources, and dwindling influence, all at a time when other rice fora – international and regional – are thriving. The IRC would be at a 'crossroads' anyway, but is now facing a potential 'Stop' sign in light of the FAO IEE recommendation to wind it up. There has not been one voice that has said the *status quo* for the IRC is viable; some have said the IRC should finish, but there have been many who believe that with substantial reform, the IRC – as the only global intergovernmental rice forum – could still have an important future role to play for the rice industry in developing countries.

The reform options proposed in this study were developed following detailed analysis of comprehensive data and information arising from Member Nations (auto evaluation and Session Reports) and from consultation with partner organizations, and key stakeholder individuals. The options are developed in such a way that they are generally not mutually exclusive, but rather incremental in nature. Option 5, 'Reform with Growth' combines elements from Options 2, 3 and 4 and is seen as a potential model for a vibrant IRC as an integral part of a global rice network. All of these options seek to realize the full potential of

an Intergovernmental Commission of the FAO, for the benefit of both rice producers and consumers.

Lastly, the options also seek to recognize the context of the whole FAO renewal process. A revitalized IRC under Option 5, or similar, would – for rice-related business – fulfil all of the new Core Functions of FAO:

- Providing long-term perspectives and leadership in monitoring and assessing trends in food security...;
- Stimulating the generation, dissemination and application of information and knowledge, including statistics;
- Negotiating international instruments, setting norms, standards and voluntary guidelines, supporting the development of national legal instruments and promoting their implementation;
- Articulating policy and strategy options and advice;
- Providing technical support to:
 - o promote technology transfer,
 - o catalyse change,
 - o build capacity, particularly for rural institutions,
- Undertaking advocacy and communication, to mobilize political will and promote global recognition of required actions in areas of FAO's mandate;
- Bringing integrated interdisciplinary and innovative approaches to bear on the Organization's technical work and support services;
- Working through strong partnerships and alliances where joint action is needed.

Lastly, it is important to reiterate that the prime purpose of this document is to provide some options on the future directions of the IRC, for consideration by the Member Nations. It is part of a consultative process, and as such there is no recommended option, but rather potential advantages and disadvantages for each option are outlined. The ultimate conclusion of this study is however, that given the changed and changing operating environment, and the activities of partners, the *status quo* for the IRC is not viable, and on current trends would see its steady demise as participation and resources both subside.

Appendix 1. Terms of Reference

Tasks: Under the supervision of the Director of AGP and in close collaboration with the other members of the Management of AGP, the IRC Secretary, and officers of other FAO technical units, the consultant will undertake the following tasks:

- Review and collect information on the Constitution and related documents of the IRC (PBE Evaluation 2005, 21st Session, IEE report, etc.).
- Review and collect information on the functions and objectives, operational aspects, activities and results of IRC and its Secretariat.
- Review and collect information on the operational aspects, and activities and results of the FAO Inter-Governmental Working Group on Rice.
- Review, interview by telephone and collect information on the functions and objectives of the CGIAR institutions working on rice research and development, especially IRRI, WARDA, and CIAT.
- Analyse the collected information, and then prepare and submit to AGP a report that contains the following:
 - o Analysis of contributions of IRC, the Inter-Governmental Working Group on Rice, and other institutions working on rice research and development towards sustainable intensification of rice production (# 15% of the work)
 - o Recommendations on alternative options, at least 5 following options need to be reflected for the future of IRC:
 - IRC should continue to function as it is but with more vigorously, more resources and takes on additional responsibilities
 - IRC will be placed under COAG,
 - IRC will be merged with the Inter-Governmental Working Group on Rice,
 - IRC will be placed under the CGIAR System, and
 - Dissolution of IRC
- Undertake other activities as requested by the Director of AGP and Chairperson of the FAO IRC Steering Committee

**Appendix 2. Member Countries of the International Rice Commission
(as at 2008)**

Australia	Lao People's Democratic Republic
Bangladesh	Liberia
Benin	Madagascar
Brazil	Malaysia
Burkina Faso	Mali
Cambodia	Mauritania
Cameroon	Mexico
Chad	Mozambique
China	Myanmar
Colombia	Nepal
Congo, Democratic Republic of the	Netherlands
Cuba	Nicaragua
Dominican Republic	Nigeria
Ecuador	Pakistan
Egypt	Panama
France	Paraguay
Gambia	Peru
Ghana	Philippines
Greece	Portugal
Guatemala	Rwanda
Guinea	Senegal
Guyana	Sierra Leone
Haiti	Sri Lanka
Hungary	Suriname
India	Thailand
Indonesia	Turkey
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	United Kingdom
Italy	United States of America
Japan	Uruguay
Kenya	Venezuela
Korea, Republic of	Viet Nam

Appendix 3. Letter and Contact List of International Experts

Dear Colleague,

FAO International Rice Commission

I have been asked by FAO to undertake a consultancy to prepare a *Working Paper* on the future of The International Rice Commission. This *Working Paper* will seek to present a range of options for the IRC and would form the basis of further consultation by FAO with Member Countries, and major partners, at a workshop to be held in 2009. This consultation process arises from recommendations of the recent Independent External Evaluation (IEE) of FAO.

It is of vital importance that the views of people, such as yourself, who have extensive experience, have the opportunity to participate in the development of these options for the future of IRC. I believe that this will add to the relevance, robustness and veracity of the options developed. Hence my request for your kind cooperation at this very busy time of the year.

A range of opinions have already been expressed on the future of the IRC; for example, the IEE, in paragraph 621 of its report stated “... *and: there are two CGIAR centres dealing exclusively with rice; trade aspects are addressed by an Inter-Governmental Commodity Group in FAO. The International Rice Commission should be wound up. If the CGIAR system wishes, some of its work may be continued under the CGIAR.*” Conversely, an opinion has also been expressed that given growing concerns by world leaders over the issues surrounding global food security, and the critical role of rice to food security, a truly global policy dialogue on rice production, consumption and trade should be facilitated and that a reinvigorated IRC could have a pivotal role in this. In between these ‘extremes’ are suggestions to place IRC under COAG; or to merge it with the Inter-Governmental Working Group on Rice; or to place aspects of its work in the CGIAR system. In relation to the latter, as you are probable aware, IRRI already sponsors an International Rice Congress every four years, which not only has a large attendance of rice technical specialists from around the world, but also features a half-day Ministerial Round Table where Agriculture Ministers from all of the major rice-producing nations participate.

You may also know that an auto-evaluation of the FAO Programme of Support to the IRC by Member Countries, conducted in 2006, made a number of recommendations on future directions for the IRC. Issues of great importance to rice production, including those associated with environmental matters, including climate change; knowledge management; capacity building, could all be taken up by a strong IRC. There are, of course, many other possibilities for change, but for all options the ‘bottom line’ should be efficiency, effectiveness and impact, achieved in a cost-effective manner.

I would greatly value your wisdom on this important matter, and politely ask that you send me any comments that you may have on future options for the IRC. Given the timing of this project it would be great to receive your comments by the end of this month. I would also be happy to follow up with a phone discussion if you request this.

Yours sincerely,

Timothy Reeves

Professor T.G. Reeves
Consultant (FAO/AGP)

Appendix 3. Cont'd. Letter sent to these contacts

Former AGP Staff

Former Director: Dr. M. Solh

Former Secretary: Dr. D.V. Tran

Country Specialists

Australia	Dr. Warwick Clampett, Rice agronomist NSW
Brazil	Dr. Beatriz Pinheiro Senior scientist and Director CNPAP Mr. Valmir Gaedke Menezes IRGA
Burkina Faso	Dr. Y. Dembele Leader Rice Program INERA
China	Prof. Cheng Shihua Director General China National Rice Research Institute
Colombia	Dr. Néstor Gutiérrez FEDEARROZ
Ecuador	Dr. Jorge Burneo PRONACA First IRC Vice-Chair voted by 21 st IRC Session in 2006
Egypt	Prof. Abdel El Azim El Tantawy B. Hassan President (up to 2007) Agriculture Research Center Egypt Second IRC Vice-Chair voted by 21 st IRC Session in 2006
Ghana	Dr. Richard Twumasi Head Rice Program
Guinea	Dr. Ali Conde Head Rice Program
Indonesia	Dr. Hasil Sembiring Director Indonesian Institute for Rice Research
India	Dr. Viraktamath Project Director Directorate of Rice Research

Madagascar	Ms Jacqueline Rakotoarisoa Head Rice Research Department FOFIFA
Malaysia	Dr. Ariffin Tawang Director Rice Industrial Crops Research Center
Mali	Dr. Yacouba Coumbia Head IER Sikasso
Mozambique	Dr. Carlos Barnabe Zandamela Technical Advisor to the Minister
Nigeria	Dr. Anthony Abel Ochigbo Ag. Director National Cereal Research Institute
Peru	Mr. Nelson Larrea Lora Coordinador Nacional Programa para el Desarrollo de la Amazonia (PROAMAZONIA)
Philippines	Executive Director Philippine Rice Research Institute
Sri Lanka	Dr. Nimal Dissanayake Director Rice Research and Development Institute
Thailand	Dr. Laddawan Kunnot Director Office of Rice Product Development Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives
Viet Nam	Dr. Bui Ba Bong Vice Minister MARD

Other Organizations/Networks

African Rice Initiative (ARI)	Dr. Inoussa Akintayo
CIIFAD	Prof. Norman Uphoff Director Emeritus
CIRAD	Dr. Marc-Henri Chatel CIRAD-CIAT Dr. Nourollah Ahmadi Rice Program Leader
Hybrid Rice Task Force	Prof. Yuan Longping World Food Prize Winner and DG of CHRRDC

MEDIRICE

Prof. A. Ferrero
University of Torino, Italy and
MEDRICE Coordinator

SG 2000

Dr. T. Berhe
Coordinator

Temperate Rice and Rice Technical Group

Prof. James Hill
Plant Sciences
UC Davis

World Wide Fund for Nature

Mr. Philip J. Riddell
Independent Adviser in Water Resources
Policy/Management

International Rice Scientists

Dr. L. Sebastian
Former Executive Director
PHILRICE

Dr. G.S. Khush
World Food Prize Winner

Dr. K. Krishnaiah
Former Project Director
Directorate of Rice Research

Sant S. Virmani
Former IRRI Hybrid rice breeder and
Winner, Indian President's Award

Appendix 4. Itinerary and Consultation Program in FAO, 8-15 December 2008

6-7 December

Travel Melbourne/Rome

8 December

- 08:00-08:20 Arrival at FAO Building, Building pass and other administrative matters
Ventura/Moller/Nguyen
- 08:30-09:00 Meeting with P. Kenmore, as OIC, AGP
- 09:30-12:00 Review IRC documents with Mr. N. Nguyen
- 13:30-15:00 Review IRC documents with Mr. Nguyen
- 15:00-16:00 Meeting and discussion with Mr T. Osborn, Mr. M. Larinde, and Mr. R. Guei
AGPS on rice seed production and distribution
- 16:00-17:00 Meeting and discussion with Mr. R. Labrada/AGPP on weed management in
rice production

9 December

- 09:00-10:00 Meeting and discussion with Ms. C. Calpe/ESTM on Inter-Governmental
Group on Rice and Rice Trade
- 10:30-11:30 Meeting and discussion with Ms. B. Burlingame/AGNA on Rice nutrition
- 13:30-14:30 Meeting and discussion with Ms. L. Collette/AGPS and Ms. C. Licon-
Manzur/AGPC on Sustainable production intensification and on plant nutrient
management in rice
- 15:00-16:00 Meeting and discussion with Mr. W. Settle/AGPP on rice integrated pest
management

10 December

- 09:00-11:00 Teleconference DG, IRRI, Philippines, Dr. Robert Zeigler
- 11:00-12:00 Meeting and discussion with Mr. F. Mazaud and D. Mejia/AGST on rice post-
harvest technologies
- 13:30-14:30 Meeting and discussion with Mr. D. Renault/NRLW on water resources and
development for rice production
- 15:00-15:40 Meeting and discussion with Mr. J. Jorgensen and Mr. M. Hasan, FIMA, on
rice-aquaculture systems

11 December

- 08:30 Other matters, Ventura/Moller/Nguyen
- 09:30-11:00 Teleconference, Advisor to the DG, WARDA, Benin
Dr. Shellemiah Keya
- 11:00 Meeting with Mr. Kobakiwal, Chief, TCOS – National Food Security
Programme
- 12:30-14:30 Meeting with Mr. S. Pandey, Director, AGP.

15:00-16:00 Meeting and discussion with Ms. K. Ghosh/AGPC on ITWG-PGR and IT-PGRFA

16:00 Meeting and discussion with Mr. T. Friedrich/AGPC on conservation agriculture in rice production and SRI

12 December

10:30-11:30 Meeting and discussion with Ms. C. Batello/AGPC on climate change and rice production

13:30-14:30 Open

14:30-15:00 Meeting with Mr. M. Traoré, ADG/AG (accompanied by Mr. Pandey)

15:00-16:00 Open

16:00-17:00 Teleconference Dr. Gonzalo Zorrilla, Executive Director, FLAR, Colombia
Teleconference DG CIAT, Dr. Geoff Hawtin

13 and 14 December

Review IRC documents, report drafting

15 December

Meeting with Mr. Cary Fowler, Global Conservation Trust. Debriefing with AGP Senior Management

16 December

14:30 Departure for Australia