

# CGIAR Research Program on Forests, Trees and Agroforestry (FTA)

## 8th Meeting of the Independent Steering Committee (ISC)

27 February 2018

Virtual meeting

### *Meeting minutes approved by the ISC*

#### **Participants**

##### **ISC members:**

Anne-Marie Izac (AMI), ISC Chair, Yemi Katerere (YK), Florencia Montagnini (FM), Robert Nasi (RN), Rene Boot (RB), Stephan Weise (SW), Vincent Gitz (VG) FTA Director (D/FTA)

##### **Absent with apologies:**

Joyeeta Gupta (JG)

##### **MSU observers preparing minutes:**

Monika Kiczakajlo

### **Executive Summary**

The purpose of the meeting was for the ISC to agree on which collective criteria were the most relevant for the selection of 3 new independent ISC members.

FTA's ISC reached a consensus that amongst the collective criteria, the following are especially relevant given FTA's current challenges and opportunities:

- **Gender balance:** at least two out of three new members selected should be women.
- **Regional expertise:** One new member should be coming from an African country and/or have 10-15 years of working experience in Africa. A member from Asia would be a plus.
- International **policy and development experience.**

Next steps: CIFOR HR together with D/FTA and ISC Chair will assess the eight shortlisted candidates against the above criteria in order to make a proposal on the three names. A short narrative feedback will be provided to justify the proposal.

## 1) Introduction and criteria for new ISC membership

The Chair welcomed the participants and explained that the objective of the meeting is to agree on which collective criteria for the selection of 3 new independent ISC members are the most important from FTA's perspective. The collective criteria (see Appendix) cannot all be fully satisfied therefore there will be tradeoffs.

Ahead of the meeting, CIFOR HR staff, the ISC Chair and D/FTA prepared a shortlist for discussion, containing eight names that best matched the individual criteria for selection, and taking into account specific needs of the ISC to ensure a diversity of backgrounds and perspectives, and to aim at balancing gender and technical competency requirements.

AMI explained that three ISC members provided their feedback on this short-list, each proposing three names. There was no full overlap in the names provided. The justification specified in the feedback received included the following: A need for a member from Africa, given Yemi is stepping down; a good gender balance; specific expertise and importance of local engagement of FTA with the universities in Africa.

The Chair invited D/FTA to provide his perspective, taking into consideration the needs of FTA at this specific time within a lifecycle of CGIAR and considering that two current members representing the global South are leaving (one from Africa, and one from South East Asia).

D/FTA expressed his viewpoint on the essential collective criteria, recalling that the criteria result from the new ToR of ISC, agreed by the Lead Center BoT (see Annex). VG emphasized that when deciding on the most important collective criteria, it is crucial to consider the strategic oversight function of the ISC and the need for FTA's business plan to be more demand-driven than supply-driven. The new members should help broaden the perspective of FTA. VG also observed that there is a need to rethink FTA's fundraising and partnership strategy. VG pointed out to concrete collective criteria, the first being gender balance within the ISC. The 6 continuing members are four men and two women. To address gender balance, at least two women should be appointed. As next important criterion, VG proposed that a candidate should have experience with development and policy issues, as well as understanding and involvement in multi-stakeholder processes. The third key criteria would be sectoral and stakeholder experience to broaden the "external" perspectives of ISC. Finally, VG highlighted the importance of ensuring some degree of regional representation among the ISC members, given that two members from the global South are stepping down. VG specified that, to him, given the current configuration of the ISC, these collective criteria are more important than the criterion of scientific expertise, as among continuing members of the ISC there is already a very strong set of solid scientific expertise. Additionally, the ISC can rely on FTA Management Team for inputs in terms of scientific evidence.

Next, the Chair invited other ISC members to provide their comments on Vincent's ranking of the collective criteria.

Stephan emphasized that it is critical to consider FTA's authorizing environment. There is a need to raise resources and show relevance towards impact, also linking to development initiatives programs. According to SW the candidates should be chosen on the basis of their ability to create linkages with the development arena, in order to facilitate access to resources in the future. SW concurred that gender balance in ISC is important and agreed to having at least two women among the three new independent members.

Florencia agreed with the criteria proposed by D/FTA, highlighting the importance of having development experience beyond research.

Rene agreed that broadening ISC's perspective was important to ensure that it would ask good questions about the relevance of FTA. He supported the proposed collective criteria of: gender balance (two women among the three new independent members); regional expertise and stakeholder/sectoral perspective as more important than scientific competence.

Yemi agreed that the most relevant criteria would be regional balance, gender balance as well as strong link to development space and resources.

Robert also supported the three criteria as being the most relevant. He observed that for the regional balance criterion, it is important to consider where a person has network or acquired experience. Additionally, RN emphasized that a candidate should have a good understanding of development issues.

AMI speaking (not as ISC Chair) also agreed with the three criteria of gender balance, regional diversity, and policy and development perspective. She observed that familiarity with policy and development is especially important as among existing ISC members such experience is not widespread.

Then the Chair invited ISC to discuss more in depth each of the selected collective criteria, since these criteria were unanimously supported by ISC.

### **Regional representation criterion**

VG said that with Florencia continuing as member, a Latin America representation remains within the ISC. However, with Yemi leaving the ISC, a new member should be selected with African expertise. This criterion can be viewed from a citizenship perspective, but if not possible to be met, a candidate should possess some working experience in Africa. Having a member from Asia would be a plus, however, maintaining representation from Africa would be the most strategic approach.

RB observed that the development agenda is largely focused on African countries, therefore he would prefer to have a member from Africa on board.

AMI agreed that actual geographic origin is important but it was agreed that 10-15 years of experience working in Africa would be acceptable. SW added that the person should be currently active in an African context and be able to bring broaden African linkages. Yemi and Florencia endorsed the remark.

RN reminded he has a long experience in Asia, therefore he agreed that selecting a candidate from Africa would be a priority, adding that such a person should have a good understanding of the whole continent, not just one context.

### **Policy and development experience dimension**

VG clarified what is understood by this dimension in the context of a research for development (R4D) program like FTA. It is the capacity to understand a wide range of policy and development issues and demands, and to understand the specific role of R4D to help addressing these needs. VG explained that development demands are multifold and come from the international level and the national level (as SDGs are country-led). These are strongly linked with policy issues. A program as FTA should be able both to generate international public goods, and at the same time to show how they can be translated and implemented in local/national contexts.

YK seconded that a good understanding of policy linkages is important as this is critical to influence particular outcomes.

SW added that the policy aspect becomes important for our authorizing environment, so he endorsed it as an important criterion. The other members also agree that policy dimensions are important when discussing development perspectives.

## **Next Steps:**

In view of the ISC members' agreement on the way to deal with the collective criteria, and agreement on their relative importance in the current context, the Chair proposed that CIFOR HR together with D/FTA and her to re-assess the eight shortlisted candidates against these criteria, and to come back to the ISC with three names. A short narrative feedback on each of the eight candidates will be provided to justify the proposal. It is expected that ISC would make its decisions based on consensus at its next virtual meeting on 20 March.

## **Annex 1**

### **Selection Criteria for the Independent members of the ISC of FTA**

#### **Approved by the ISC and BoT (3 October 2017)**

*From the revised ISC RoPs (approved by the CIFOR BoT), Article 1.2*

*(Independent members) must have no conflict of interest. They are selected in their individual capacity and are not representatives of their respective governments, institutions or organizations. Independent ISC members bring recognized, state-of-the-art scientific expertise in fields relevant to FTA, and insights from diverse sectors (such as national agricultural research systems, development agencies, the private sector, civil society, farmer organizations, etc.), and broaden the perspectives and views about FTA.*

#### **Individual Selection Criteria** (\*denotes compulsory criteria, eliminatory if not met)

##### **Individual capacity, expertise and professional experience**

- 1\*) Advanced university degree
- 2\*) Scientific expertise in fields relevant to FTA.
- 3\*) At least 15 years of relevant experience with cross-disciplinary R4D processes, past or present insertion in cross-disciplinary scientific initiatives, scientific networks, development networks or policy processes.
- 4) Internationally (at least regionally) recognized in their field related to FTA.

##### **Absence of conflict of interest**

- 5\*) Not employed by, or members of boards of a CGIAR center or an organization that is a strategic partner of FTA (CIRAD, INBAR, TropenBos, CATIE).
- 6\*) Not personally and directly involved in a project that is linked to FTA at the time of appointment

##### **Bringing broadened perspectives and views about FTA**

- 7) Broad vision of research for development issues in fields related to FTA
- 8) Demonstrated past and present experience in national or international agricultural research systems, development agencies, the private sector, civil society, or farmer or organizations, etc.

## **Collective Selection Criteria**

In addition to the individual selection criteria above, the following “collective” criteria will be considered, taking into account the whole set of ISC members, including continuing members:

- I) 3 new members are to be appointed in 2018: one additional member, and two as replacement of Prof. Joyeeta Gupta and Dr. Remy Katerere, current independent members who will leave the ISC by 1<sup>st</sup> May 2018.
- II) ISC composition should reflect an assortment of main technical expertise related to the very broad spectrum of disciplines and areas of expertise that the FTA program calls upon.
- III) ISC composition should reflect an assortment of regional expertise, ensuring the ISC covers appropriately Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia expertise.
- IV) ISC composition should reflect an assortment from diverse sectors and sectoral or stakeholder perspectives.
- V) The ISC strives to achieve gender balance in its membership.