

ISC MEETING #6
ROME 27 and 29 JUNE 2017

Item 6

Doc 3a

Subject: Main results of the mini-survey as part of the assessment process of the Independent Steering Committee (ISC) of the CGIAR Program on Forests, Trees and Agroforestry (FTA)

Decision by CIFOR's BoT (April 2017)

The board

- welcomed the self-assessment process launched by FTA's ISC and thanked the ISC for having consulted and included the BoT in the survey,
- took note of the results of the survey, in particular regarding the roles and composition of the ISC,
- requested CIFOR's management to prepare, in consultation with FTA partners, revised ToRs for the ISC, taking into account the results of the survey. Draft revised ToRs should be presented to CIFOR's BoT for finalization and approval at the Board's next face-to-face meeting.

Background

At its meeting in November 2016, the ISC of FTA decided to launch a performance assessment process for itself and its Chair, aiming at addressing the level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the ISC functions and ways of improving the overall functioning of the ISC.

The ISC decided that the process would consist of an annual online self-assessment survey, prepared with CIFOR HR. CIFOR's BoT has also been invited to answer the survey.

The BoT is thereby informed on the results of the mini-survey conducted by CIFOR HR in March 2017, and on the analysis provided by CIFOR HR, and invited to comment.

It is proposed that the BoT requests the ISC to work with CIFOR HR and FTA's MSU towards a revision of its ToRs to take into account the results of the survey.

RESULTS OF MINI-SURVEY (MARCH 2017): ASSESSMENT OF ISC PERFORMANCE

(by CIFOR HR)

I. OVERALL SUMMARY

The majority of respondents (ISC members and CIFOR Board members) have attached high importance to all areas covered by the questionnaire, and, in general, most of the respondents have expressed satisfaction in performance in almost all areas.

Assessment by ISC Members

In the view of ISC members, an area of strength is the effectiveness of the Chairperson's leadership. Interactions and Communications among ISC members also appear to be a strong area, which could be further enhanced.

The areas needing immediate attention are as follows:

- Clarity and consensus with regard to the ISC's role, which may need revision of ISC's Terms of Reference. This will result in:
 - clarity in the size of the Committee (i.e. optimal number of members), and the required competencies (i.e. right blend of skills, expertise, personalities, and other diversity considerations);
 - clarity in representation of constituents; and
 - improvement in ISC's performance in its exercise of strategic planning, oversight and monitoring
- Commitment of members to attend meetings; procedures may need to be established to address non-attendance at meetings. Also in the context of meetings, informal discussions among independent members prior to formal meetings may be agreed;
- A number of members were unsure that ISC receives financial reports timely or on a regular basis, or that these were understandable and accurate. Definite improvement needed in this area.
- The majority of members indicated that ISC could improve on assessing the rate of achievement of the FTA portfolio through progress updates on FTA outcomes (and recommending to the CIFOR BoT corrective actions, if any, on performance weaknesses). This was considered an important area.

Assessment by CIFOR Board Members

In the view of the CIFOR Board, ISC's recommendations and submissions are of high importance, and there appears to be a high level of satisfaction among Board members that these recommendations and submissions are timely, sound and well crafted.

The areas for improvement highlighted are as follows:

- Board members believe that the process and criteria for selecting FTA participating partners could be improved.

- With regard to oversight, strategic planning and monitoring, assessments of Board members echo those of ISC members – i.e.
 - That ISC could improve in taking into account new opportunities and challenges in its strategic plan for CRP-FTA;
 - That ISC could improve in assessing the rate of achievement of the FTA program.
 - That it was not clear about regularly proposing external/audit reviews of FTA and half of the respondents indicated a need for improvement in this area.

A common theme from the comments received from Board members was the wish to understand better, or to know more of, ISC's processes or how ISC operates. The following examples were given as areas in which Board members would appreciate more information:

- Resource allocation mechanism – ISC's role either in the development of the POWB or in science oversight.
- Functional relationship between the FTA Director, the Lead Center DG and the ISC
- ISC's approach to science oversight given the range of partners, the dependence on restricted funding essentially through different partners, the structure of the IMEL that supports such oversight at project, flagship and program level
- The use of external reviews (and how these are interfaced with lead center and partner program reviews and assessments)

II. INTRODUCTION

The Independent Steering Committee of CRP-FTA has now been in operation for about 2 years, and the ISC as a group has considered it timely to assess its own performance. CIFOR-HR has been requested to help in the process in order that this assessment can be done independently, objectively and confidentially.

Two Questionnaires were prepared (one for completion by ISC members, the other by CIFOR Board of Trustees). These questionnaires, the contents of which were agreed by the ISC members, were distributed to the 8 ISC members and 8 CIFOR BoT members for completion during the period 25 March through 3 April 2017. Seven (7) ISC members (out of 8), and seven (7) CIFOR BoT members (out of 8), have submitted their responses – i.e. 88 % participated in the mini-survey.

The areas assessed by ISC members were as follows:

- The ISC Structure
- The Dynamics and Functioning of the ISC
- ISC's Role in FTA Strategic Planning, Oversight and Monitoring
- ISC's Decision-making practices
- ISC's role in Resource Allocation
- Roles of the Chairperson, the FTA Director and of each member

The areas assessed by CIFOR BoT members were as follows:

- Lead Center responsibilities
- ISC recommendations/submissions
- ISC's Performance on Strategic Planning, Oversight and Monitoring
- ISC's Performance on Resource Allocation





The results of the survey are presented below, separately for ISC members and CIFOR BoT members, together with the CIFOR HR Director's initial analyses. In determining areas for improvement, those areas where two or more respondents indicated a level of satisfaction of "average", "low" or "very low" are being highlighted. While the rating "average" may be considered "satisfactory", we could also consider this as indicating some "room for improvement".

This report includes the comments (some in full version, others are extracts) received from respondents in each group, in order to highlight their importance to the area being reviewed. The full narrative comments from the respondents are appended to this report (Annexes 1 and 2). In the Annex 1, comments under 9.1-9.5 have not been given any priority by the ISC members, but comments/suggestions under 10.1-10.9 are those areas that members believed should be improved immediately. For Board members comments, the numbering is 5.1-5.5 (no priority ranking) and 6.1-6.5 (immediate needs) respectively.

III. ISC MEMBERS' ASSESSMENT

(1) THE ISC STRUCTURE

The responses to the five questions were as follows:

1.1) ISC has a clear set of objectives				1.2) ISC has the optimal number of members						
Importance	Very Important		3	43%	Importance	Very Important		2	29%	
	Important		4	57%		Important		4	57%	
	Unsure					Unsure		1	14%	
	Unimportant					Unimportant				
	Very Unimportant					Very Unimportant				
Satisfaction	Very High		1	14%	Satisfaction	Very High		1	14%	
	High		4	57%		High		3	43%	
	Average		2	29%		Average		2	29%	
	Low					Low		1	14%	
	Very Low					Very Low				
1.3) ISC has the right blend of skills, expertise, personalities and appropriate degree of diversity				1.4) There are appropriate written terms of reference for the ISC which clearly spell out the responsibilities of its different constituencies						
Importance	Very Important		1	14%	Importance	Very Important		4	57%	
	Important		5	72%		Important		3	43%	
	Unsure		1	14%		Unsure				
	Unimportant					Unimportant				
	Very Unimportant					Very Unimportant				
Satisfaction	Very High		1	14%	Satisfaction	Very High		1	14%	
	High		3	43%		High		3	43%	
	Average		3	43%		Average		3	43%	
	Low					Low				
	Very Low					Very Low				
1.5) ISC membership is appropriately balanced between its constituencies : CG partners, non-CG partners, Lead center, independent scientists										
Importance	Very Important		5	72%	Importance	Very Important				
	Important		1	14%		Important		1	14%	
	Unsure		1	14%		Unsure				
	Unimportant					Unimportant				
	Very Unimportant					Very Unimportant				
Satisfaction	Very High		1	14%	Satisfaction	Very High				
	High		2	29%		High		2	29%	
	Average		4	57%		Average		4	57%	
	Low					Low				
	Very Low					Very Low				

Analysis:

This area appears to be given importance by the majority and clarity for the group needs to be re-affirmed in order that every member understands why the ISC is structured as it is, and why each member is important.

In particular, the ISC can be clearer about its objectives as a group.

There is room for more clarity and a common understanding/agreement of the Committee's optimum size (number of members), the personal and professional competencies needed (in order to ascertain what is the right blend), and the appropriate balance of representation of FTA constituents (is there a better model?) When these have been clarified, the ISC Terms of Reference can be revised.

Here below are extracts from comments received specifically referring to ISC's role (please read the full comments in Annex 1, nos. 9.1a, 10.1a, 10.4a, 10.5c and 10.6a)

"We need to be clear that FTA is a programme and not an "organization". Legally it is under the CIFOR BOT and it is also part of the CGIAR architecture. The ISC has to work within this reality."

"The CGIAR needs to be clear about the role of the independent Steering Committees. There are times when the effectiveness of the ISC is affected by decisions taken by organs of the CGIAR."

"There is a fundamental and existential question that has not been asked so far and I find that very problematic: Is ISC simply a transaction cost? There is no evidence so far that any of the ISC's decisions on the future of the CRP or on allocations have any respect at the level of the CGIAR. So other than being a sounding board - probably a useful one - for the FTA Director and possibly providing an independent view on progress within the CRP to the Lead Centre, I question whether the ISC can play the 'independent' governance role it was supposed to do. Thus the question: is it simply another transaction that incurs costs but brings scant benefits?" (Viewed by the member as an immediate need)

"...Relations between the ISC and the FTA Management team/MT could be clarified (which could in fact lead to a precision of the roles and the composition of the FTA MT as well)..."

In terms of ISC size, here are comments from two members (please see Annex 1, 10.5.b and 10.7a) – viewed as an immediate need.

"Membership of ISC could be open to 2 more independent members of high profile. ISC members could play a bigger role in being "ambassadors" of FTA in their overall other endeavours, as per the opportunities. ISC could play a role in defining a partnership strategy and strengthening FTA's partnerships beyond the CGIAR".

"Increase the number of independent members at the very least by 1 person, for greater diversity and greater balance among all members."

One comment about the complement of knowledge/skills of independent members: (Annex 1, 9.5f)










































"I also think it is important for the four independent members to work both independently and to function as a team - because we have no stakes involved and all of us collectively want FTA to do well. So a critical question is do the four of us have complementary knowledge and skills, and does that come to surface during the meetings"





















(2) DYNAMICS AND FUNCTIONING OF THE ISC

This area has been broken down into two sections (2a – Meetings; and 2b-Interactions and Communications), and results of each Section are presented separately below.

Meetings:

There were 10 questions for Meetings, and the results are as follows:

2.1) The number of meetings planned for a given year has been optimal				2.2) ISC members are committed to attending meetings of the ISC						
Importance	Very Important		3	43%	Importance	Very Important		5	72%	
	Important		4	57%		Important		2	28%	
	Unsure					Unsure				
	Unimportant					Unimportant				
	Very Unimportant					Very Unimportant				
Satisfaction	Very High		2	28%	Satisfaction	Very High				
	High		5	72%		High		5	72%	
	Average					Average		2	28%	
	Low					Low				
	Very Low					Very Low				
2.3) ISC has procedures for addressing non-attendance of members to scheduled meetings				2.4) ISC members receive clear and succinct agendas and supporting written material sufficiently prior to Committee meetings						
Importance	Very Important		1	16%	Importance	Very Important		5	72%	
	Important		3	52%		Important		2	28%	
	Unsure		2	32%		Unsure				
	Unimportant					Unimportant				
	Very Unimportant					Very Unimportant				
Note: 1 did not answer										
Satisfaction	Very High		1	16%	Satisfaction	Very High		2	28%	
	High		1	16%		High		4	58%	
	Average		3	52%		Average		1	14%	
	Low		1	16%		Low				
	Very Low					Very Low				
Note: 1 did not answer										
2.5) The agendas of ISC meetings focus on substantive issues appropriate for ISC consideration				2.6) ISC members have adequate opportunities to discuss issues and ask questions						
Importance	Very Important		5	72%	Importance	Very Important		5	72%	
	Important		2	28%		Important		2	28%	
	Unsure					Unsure				
	Unimportant					Unimportant				
	Very Unimportant					Very Unimportant				
Satisfaction	Very High		3	43%	Satisfaction	Very High		1	16%	
	High		2	29%		High		2	34%	
	Average		1	14%		Average		2	34%	
	Low		1	14%		Low		1	16%	
	Very Low					Very Low				
				Note: 1 did not answer						
2.7) ISC members' contributions are constructive and bring additional value to the work of the Committee				2.8) ISC uses virtual meetings optimally						
Importance	Very Important		4	67%	Importance	Very Important		1	14%	
	Important		2	33%		Important		6	86%	
	Unsure					Unsure				
	Unimportant					Unimportant				
	Very Unimportant					Very Unimportant				
Note: 1 did not answer										
Satisfaction	Very High		1	14%	Satisfaction	Very High		1	14%	
	High		3	43%		High		3	43%	
	Average		3	43%		Average		1	14%	
	Low					Low		2	29%	
	Very Low					Very Low				

2.9) The ISC Chair facilitates the involvement of the full ISC in discussions and encourages sound and timely decision making				2.10) Records of ISC meetings succinctly and coherently represent the discussions							
Importance	Very Important		5		72%	Importance	Very Important		4		58%
	Important		2		28%		Important		3		42%
	Unsure						Unsure				
	Unimportant						Unimportant				
	Very Unimportant						Very Unimportant				
Satisfaction	Very High		3		43%	Satisfaction	Very High		2		28%
	High		3		43%		High		4		58%
	Average		1		14%		Average		1		14%
	Low						Low				
	Very Low						Very Low				

Analysis:

On meetings:

- 1) It appears that commitment of members to attendance at meetings may need to be reinforced, and procedures for addressing non-attendance may need to be established. **(immediate need)**
- 2) Meeting Agendas could be further improved, focusing more compactly on FTA substantive issues;
- 3) There appears to be a wish for opportunities to discuss issues prior to meetings, as can be seen in responses to Q2.6, and further reflected in some of the comments.
- 4) Perhaps, if 3) above would be satisfied, the improvement in the satisfaction level of Q2.7 could increase – i.e. contributions of members during meetings would be more constructive and bring additional value to ISC's work.

With regard to “Meetings” and members’ commitment, here are extracts of comments received from members (please see comments 9.3b, 9.4a, 9.5a, 10.2a, 10.5c, 10.8a, 10.9a and 10.9b and 10.9d in Annex1)

“... availability of independent members is critical. An independent member should not be appointed in case there is no guarantee s/he cannot honour the commitment to be reactive when needed.”

“I think that the non-chair independent members are not sufficiently involved, intellectually, in ISC. One in particular always has timetable conflicts and most hardly read the documents ahead of meetings.”

“...I think we should make it a rule that independent members meet before the full meeting at least for an hour so that we can clarify our doubts and discuss openly amongst each other the issues that worry us...”

Improvements viewed by members as immediate need:

“Planning for ISC activities: for example, often we do not know well in advance when do we need to have a meeting”

“Agenda of work of ISC could involve more scientific substantial issues (as compared with CG bureaucracy matters)...”
 (“Agenda” in this case could refer to the broader “ISC role” also - Liza)

“In seeking a new person insist on availability of time and need for intellectual engagement. Reiterate this need to existing independent members.”
































“Meeting between independent members prior to full meeting even if only for an hour.”

“More regular skype calls between the independent members, just to keep a finger on the pulse of what is happening”

"If meetings are planned, it would be nice if there are few options provided, so that we can pick a date that suits all."

b) Interactions and Communications:

The responses to the 6 questions under 2b – Interaction and Communications were as follows:

2.11) ISC works effectively and harmoniously				2.12) ISC members practice open, honest communication and share information among themselves							
Importance	Very Important		4		58%	Importance	Very Important		5		72%
	Important		3		42%		Important		2		28%
	Unsure						Unsure				
	Unimportant						Unimportant				
	Very Unimportant						Very Unimportant				
Satisfaction	Very High		1		14%	Satisfaction	Very High		1		14%
	High		5		72%		High		6		86%
	Average		1		14%		Average				
	Low						Low				
	Very Low						Very Low				
2.13) There is a culture of trust among ISC members				2.14) There is a good team-spirit within the ISC							
Importance	Very Important		4		58%	Importance	Very Important		4		58%
	Important		3		42%		Important		3		42%
	Unsure						Unsure				
	Unimportant						Unimportant				
	Very Unimportant						Very Unimportant				
Satisfaction	Very High		1		14%	Satisfaction	Very High				
	High		3		43%		High		4		58%
	Average		3		43%		Average		3		42%
	Low						Low				
	Very Low						Very Low				
2.15) The independent ISC members serve in their personal capacity and do not act as an official representative of any government or organization.				2.16) ISC has a code of conduct that members are committed to follow, including an effective conflict of interest policy							
Importance	Very Important		5		72%	Importance	Very Important		3		42%
	Important		2		28%		Important		4		58%
	Unsure						Unsure				
	Unimportant						Unimportant				
	Very Unimportant						Very Unimportant				
Satisfaction	Very High		3		42%	Satisfaction	Very High		1		14%
	High		4		58%		High		4		58%
	Average						Average		2		28%
	Low						Low				
	Very Low						Very Low				

Analysis:

1. This is an important area for all respondents. While the ISC appears to generally work harmoniously and effectively, also practice open and honest communication and share information with each other, trust among the members as well as team spirit could be improved.

Here are the comments received relating to Interaction and Communications (Annex 1, 9.1c, 9.5d and 9.5e)

“We should avoid becoming too bureaucratic in how we operate as a committee. Don't believe we need a code of conduct. We should be guided by established principles for governance of organizations. We do have a conflict of interest policy.”






























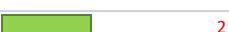
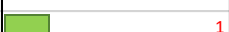




“Participating partner members are supposed to represent FTA interests and not the interests of their own institutes, but this is sometimes difficult for me to gauge; at the same time I can quite imagine that the others think that the independent members don't quite know what is happening as we only engage with FTA a couple of times in a year.”

“I think we all get along quite well; but if there were major problems, then there would be issues of trust - do we all trust each other; did we all work with good will; were there issues that we were not well informed about? And so on. So building trust is a critical issue.”

(3) ISC's ROLE IN FTA STRATEGIC PLANNING, OVERSIGHT AND MONITORING

The responses to the 10 questions are as follows:

3.1) ISC is clear in its goals and targets for each year				3.2) ISC has a strategic vision of how the FTA should be evolving over the next 3 years					
Importance	Very Important		4	58%	Importance	Very Important		5	72%
	Important		2	28%		Important		1	14%
	Unsure		1	14%		Unsure		1	14%
	Unimportant					Unimportant			
	Very Unimportant					Very Unimportant			
Satisfaction	Very High				Satisfaction	Very High		1	17%
	High		3	50%		High			
	Average		2	33%		Average		5	83%
	Low		1	17%		Low			
	Very Low					Very Low			
Note: 1 did not answer				Note: 1 did not answer					
3.3) ISC engages in sufficient strategic planning about new opportunities and challenges				3.4) ISC is effective in giving strategic guidance to the FTA Director in developing and updating the FTA research strategy including program priorities					
Importance	Very Important		4	58%	Importance	Very Important		5	83%
	Important					Important			
	Unsure		2	28%		Unsure			
	Unimportant		1	14%		Unimportant		1	17%
	Very Unimportant					Very Unimportant			
				Note: 1 did not answer					
Satisfaction	Very High				Satisfaction	Very High		1	14%
	High		1	14%		High		4	58%
	Average		5	72%		Average		2	28%
	Low		1	14%		Low			
	Very Low					Very Low			

3.5) ISC has a transparent and effective practice in ensuring that advice and direction from the Systems Council and ISPC are considered in FTA planning and implementation			3.6) ISC discusses thoroughly with the FTA Director the proposed FTA Annual Program of Work and Budget before approving it		
Importance	Very Important	 4 58%	Importance	Very Important	 5 72%
	Important	 2 28%		Important	 1 14%
	Unsure			Unsure	 1 14%
	Unimportant	 1 14%		Unimportant	
	Very Unimportant			Very Unimportant	
Satisfaction	Very High		Satisfaction	Very High	 3 43%
	High	 5 72%		High	 1 14%
	Average	 2 28%		Average	 3 43%
	Low			Low	
	Very Low			Very Low	
3.7) ISC actively oversees the overall FTA portfolio to ensure overall coherence with the strategic directions, CRP guidelines on CRP governance			3.8) ISC regularly assesses the rate of achievement of the FTA portfolio through updates on progress of FTA outcomes, and takes or recommends to the Lead Center Board the necessary corrective action for weaknesses in performance		
Importance	Very Important	 4 67%	Importance	Very Important	 4 57%
	Important	 2 33%		Important	 3 43%
	Unsure			Unsure	
	Unimportant			Unimportant	
	Very Unimportant			Very Unimportant	
Note: 1 did not answer					
Satisfaction	Very High	 1 14%	Satisfaction	Very High	 2 29%
	High	 3 43%		High	 1 14%
	Average	 3 43%		Average	 3 43%
	Low			Low	 1 14%
	Very Low			Very Low	
3.9) ISC receives financial reports on a regular basis that are understandable, accurate and timely			3.10) ISC requires a regular audit and considers all recommendations in the independent auditor's report and management response		
Importance	Very Important	 3 43%	Importance	Very Important	 1 14%
	Important	 1 14%		Important	 3 43%
	Unsure	 3 43%		Unsure	 2 29%
	Unimportant			Unimportant	 1 14%
	Very Unimportant			Very Unimportant	
Satisfaction	Very High		Satisfaction	Very High	
	High	 2 28%		High	 1 14%
	Average	 5 72%		Average	 4 58%
	Low			Low	 1 14%
	Very Low			Very Low	 1 14%

Analysis:

1. Regarding clarity of vision, goals, and targets, strategic planning (as well as sufficiency in engagement in strategic planning) and ISC's role in providing strategic guidance to the FTA Director (questions 3.1-3.4), the importance given by the Members in these areas indicate a lack of cohesion. While more than half consider these areas important, a few were unsure or considered at least one area unimportant.
2. The satisfaction levels indicated by members' responses to questions 3.1-3.4 show a definite need for improvement (i.e. consensus and awareness) in these areas, including

clarity about ISC's annual goals and targets, its role in setting 3-year strategies and adapting such strategies to changing opportunities and challenges.

3. Questions 3.4 and 3.6 both relate to ISC's interaction with the FTA Director – i.e. providing strategic guidance and discussing (before approving) the FTA Annual Programme of Work and Budget. There is room for improvement in these areas.
4. Question 3.5 may not be worth a mention, although I do it here for completeness. The majority of members considered this area important (but one member considered it unimportant), and the majority expressed a high degree of satisfaction. However, there is also some room for improvement
5. Coherence of FTA with CRP guidelines on CRP governance is considered important by all, but satisfaction level by almost half of the members is only average. There is room for betterment.
6. **A number of members are unsure that ISC receives financial reports timely or on a regular basis, or that these are understandable and accurate. Definite improvement needed in this area.**
7. **The majority of members indicate that ISC can improve on assessing the rate of achievement of the FTA portfolio (question 3.8), and that this was an important area.**
8. There was no consistency among members in the importance given to ISC requiring a regular audit and to whether ISC considers all audit recommendations. At this time, the responses indicate that the majority perceive that ISC is not performing well in this area (question 3.10).

Here are the comments received relating to ISC's role in FTA strategic planning, oversight and monitoring, which can also be found in Annex 1,9.1b, 9.2a, 9.4a, 9.5c, 10.1b, 10.3a, 10.5a, 10.9c.

"New opportunities happen when we review progress and from the monitoring of the programme."

"The performance can be more consistent if we knew more in advance what will be needed of us in the next six months or so."

"Financial information from CIFOR is presented in very difficult to understand ways!"

"The financial allocation advice is more complex especially when states cut down their funds and now when the US is threatening with its America First budget to cut down all global climate change related programmes. I think this calls for more proactive thinking about the future of such programmes and perhaps we need to discuss more often what exactly is happening."

These are the improvement areas viewed by some members as immediate need:

"Perhaps we need to clarify whether the ISC can request an audit or if this should be done by the CIFOR BOT."












"The key task for the ISC is to guide change and redirection of FTA which may involve tough negotiations between partners. This role is not yet well developed."






"The ISC could establish an annual plan with its main roles and objectives (in the framework of the program's work plan and objectives, and of the broader CGIAR calendar)."

"...the US is proposing a 30% cut on state department budgets including a full reduction on global climate change related programmes, programmes on Africa and only wants to help where it is strategically relevant for the US; they are also proposing cuts in science. This can have an impact on CGIAR's future - and perhaps we need to discuss this to develop scenarios and possible reactions."

(4) DECISION-MAKING

The responses to the 3 questions were as follows:

4.1) ISC makes decisions in a timely manner				4.2) ISC has established practice in monitoring the implementation of decisions						
Importance	Very Important		6	86%	Importance	Very Important		5	72%	
	Important					Important				
	Unsure		1	14%		Unsure		2	28%	
	Unimportant					Unimportant				
	Very Unimportant					Very Unimportant				
Satisfaction	Very High		2	28%	Satisfaction	Very High		1	14%	
	High		3	44%		High		3	43%	
	Average		2	28%		Average		2	29%	
	Low					Low		1	14%	
	Very Low					Very Low				

4.3) ISC's approach in decision-making is participatory. All contributions by ISC members are taken into account				
Importance	Very Important		5	72%
	Important		2	28%
	Unsure			
	Unimportant			
	Very Unimportant			
Satisfaction	Very High		4	58%
	High		2	28%
	Average		1	14%
	Low			
	Very Low			

Analysis:





















1. There is slight room for improvement in timeliness of decisions (4.1), and all (except one unsure) members believe this is very important.
2. The majority of members also believe that an established practice in monitoring the implementation of decisions is very important (although two were unsure), and that ISC could further improve performance in this area.

There are no specific comments received with regard to ISC's decision-making. However, I repeat here an extract of comment 10.4a:

"... There is no evidence so far that any of the ISC's decisions on the future of the CRP or on allocations have any respect at the level of the CGIAR...."

(5) ISC'S ROLE IN RESOURCE ALLOCATION

The responses to the two questions were as follows:

5.1) ISC members understand the resource mobilization strategy for FTA				5.2) ISC takes advantage of the budget process to consider the most effective allocation of resources								
Importance	Very Important		5		83%	Importance	Very Important		4		66%	
	Important		1		17%		Important		1		17%	
	Unsure						Unsure					
	Unimportant						Unimportant		1		17%	
	Very Unimportant						Very Unimportant					
Note: 1 did not answer				Note: 1 did not answer								
Satisfaction	Very High		1		17%	Satisfaction	Very High		2		33%	
	High		2		33%		High		4		67%	
	Average		3		50%		Average					
	Low						Low					
	Very Low						Very Low					
Note: 1 did not answer				Note: 1 did not answer								

Analysis:

Although the notes show that one person did not answer the questions, different members skipped answering the specific question.















The area for improvement is the understanding of the resource mobilization strategy for FTA, as indicated in responses to 3.1.

































There was one comment received (Annex 1, 9.5b) which touches on resource allocation, but which also touches upon the roles of individual members and issues of trust:

"we seem to have a combination of responsibilities - both scientific and in terms of financial allocation. Some of us have a stake in the allocation, the independent members don't. The scientific advice is somewhat easier to give because the stakes are less high. It is here where mutual trust, clear rules, and independent advice become critical and I think our Chair does a good job; but this is a more difficult job to do well."

(6) THE CHAIRPERSON'S ROLE

The responses to the 6 questions were as follows:

6.1) The Chair provides effective leadership of the ISC				6.2) The Chair effectively facilitates agreement among FTA partners on equitable mechanisms, processes and decision criteria for funding allocations among FTA participating centers							
Importance	Very Important		6		100%	Importance	Very Important		5		83%
	Important						Important		1		17%
	Unsure						Unsure				
	Unimportant						Unimportant				
	Very Unimportant						Very Unimportant				
Note: 1 did not answer				Note: 1 did not answer							
Satisfaction	Very High		4		57%	Satisfaction	Very High		5		72%
	High		3		43%		High		2		28%
	Average						Average				
	Low						Low				
	Very Low						Very Low				

6.3) The Chair leads meetings well, with clear focus on the issues				6.4) The Chair leads meetings well, with clear focus on the issues							
Importance	Very Important		5		83%	Importance	Very Important		4		80%
	Important		1		17%		Important		1		20%
	Unsure						Unsure				
	Unimportant						Unimportant				
	Very Unimportant						Very Unimportant				
Note: 1 did not answer				Note: 2 did not answer							
Satisfaction	Very High		5		72%	Satisfaction	Very High		5		83%
	High		2		28%		High		1		17%
	Average						Average				
	Low						Low				
	Very Low						Very Low				
Note: 1 did not answer				Note: 1 did not answer							
6.5) The Chair communicates well with CIFOR's Board				6.6) The Chair works effectively with the FTA Director when required, outside of meetings							
Importance	Very Important		3		43%	Importance	Very Important		4		57%
	Important		4		57%		Important		3		43%
	Unsure						Unsure				
	Unimportant						Unimportant				
	Very Unimportant						Very Unimportant				
Note: 1 did not answer				Note: 1 did not answer							
Satisfaction	Very High		1		17%	Satisfaction	Very High		3		50%
	High		5		83%		High		3		50%
	Average						Average				
	Low						Low				
	Very Low						Very Low				
Note: 1 did not answer				Note: 1 did not answer							

Analysis:

There appears to be no improvement areas. The members believe the Chairperson's role is highly important and all are all highly satisfied with the Chair's performance.

One comment regarding the Chairperson's Role: (Annex 1, 9.3a)

"The role of the ISC Chair is critical to the overall strategic oversight of FTA, especially between meetings when decisions need to be taken swiftly but in an open, transparent and consultative manner. Currently the Chair is highly committed and responsive. This is extremely important to be taken into account in the future."

(7) THE FTA DIRECTOR'S ROLE AS EX OFFICIO MEMBER

The responses to the only question were as follows:

7.1) The FTA director provides adequate (relevant, useful, precise, staying within his/her role) inputs and value added to the ISC discussions			
Importance	Very Important		4 57%
	Important		3 43%
	Unsure		
	Unimportant		
	Very Unimportant		
Satisfaction	Very High		2 28%
	High		3 44%
	Average		2 28%
	Low		
	Very Low		








Analysis:

The area is given high importance by the members, and some room for improvement is possible.

(8) ISC MEMBERS' SELF-ASSESSMENT

The responses to the 5 questions were as follows:

8.1) My role allows me to make good use of my skills and experience				8.2) My role is well defined and I am clear about my accountabilities and the objectives I need to achieve			
Importance	Very Important		2 28%	Importance	Very Important		4 57%
	Important		5 72%		Important		3 43%
	Unsure				Unsure		
	Unimportant				Unimportant		
	Very Unimportant				Very Unimportant		
Satisfaction	Very High			Satisfaction	Very High		1 14%
	High		6 86%		High		5 72%
	Average		1 14%		Average		1 14%
	Low				Low		
	Very Low				Very Low		
8.3) I make constructive suggestions to the ISC for continuous improvement of the ISC				8.4) The role that I play in ISC gives me a feeling of achievement			
Importance	Very Important		3 43%	Importance	Very Important		2 29%
	Important		4 57%		Important		4 57%
	Unsure				Unsure		
	Unimportant				Unimportant		1 14%
	Very Unimportant				Very Unimportant		
Satisfaction	Very High			Satisfaction	Very High		1 14%
	High		4 67%		High		3 43%
	Average		2 33%		Average		2 29%
	Low				Low		1 14%
	Very Low				Very Low		

8.5) I would willingly put in extra effort in order to advance the FTA portfolio				
Importance	Very Important		3	43%
	Important		3	43%
	Unsure		1	14%
	Unimportant			
	Very Unimportant			
Satisfaction	Very High		2	28%
	High		2	28%
	Average		2	28%
	Low			
	Very Low		1	14%

Analysis:

1. All members agree that it is important for their skills and experience to be used in a well-defined role, and almost all of them believe that this is being realized (8.1 and 8.2).
2. It would appear that member’s contributions could still be maximized (8.3) (i.e. there is room for improvement), and that maximally utilizing their capabilities could increase their feeling of achievement (8.4).
3. It would also appear that some incentives may need to be given to members, noting responses to 8.5, to encourage extra efforts to advance the FTA portfolio.

IV. CIFOR BOT MEMBERS' ASSESSMENT

(1) BOT'S ASSESSMENT OF LEAD CENTER RESPONSIBILITIES

The responses to the four (4) questions were as follows:

















1.1 The responsibilities of CIFOR as the Lead Center for CRP-FTA are clear to me.			1.2 The responsibilities of the CIFOR Board of Trustees with regard to the CRP-FTA are clear to me.		
Importance	Very Important	3 60%	Importance	Very Important	6 86%
	Important	2 40%		Important	1 14%
	Unsure			Unsure	
	Unimportant			Unimportant	
	Very Unimportant			Very Unimportant	
Note: 2 did not answer					
Satisfaction	Very High	2 40%	Satisfaction	Very High	3 43%
	High	3 60%		High	3 43%
	Average			Average	
	Low			Low	1 14%
	Very Low			Very Low	
Note: 2 did not answer					
1.3 Selection of participating partners to the CRP-FTA is made based on sound process and criteria.			1.4 The procedures for selection and recruitment of the FTA Director and members of the ISC are		
Importance	Very Important	2 28%	Importance	Very Important	4 58%
	Important	5 72%		Important	3 42%
	Unsure			Unsure	
	Unimportant			Unimportant	
	Very Unimportant			Very Unimportant	
Satisfaction	Very High		Satisfaction	Very High	4 58%
	High	4 58%		High	3 42%
	Average	3 42%		Average	
	Low			Low	
	Very Low			Very Low	

Analysis:

It appears that Board members believe that the process and criteria for selecting FTA participating partners could be improved.

(2) BOT'S ASSESSMENT OF ISC RECOMMENDATIONS / SUBMISSIONS

The responses to the four (4) questions were as follows:

2.1 ISC makes recommendations in a timely manner				2.2 The Chair of the ISC provides comprehensive reports to the CIFOR BoT on substantive issues regarding FTA appropriate for Lead Center Board consideration.						
Importance	Very Important		5	86%	Importance	Very Important		5	86%	
	Important		1	14%		Important		1	14%	
	Unsure					Unsure				
	Unimportant					Unimportant				
	Very Unimportant					Very Unimportant				
Satisfaction	Very High		2	28%	Satisfaction	Very High		5	72%	
	High		5	72%		High		2	28%	
	Average					Average				
	Low					Low				
	Very Low					Very Low				
2.3 The CIFOR Board of Trustees is confident that ISC recommendations have been crafted following a sound process and are presented in a balanced way.				2.4 ISC submits well-prepared and comprehensive FTA Annual Program of Work and Budget						
Importance	Very Important		5	72%	Importance	Very Important		5	72%	
	Important		2	28%		Important		2	28%	
	Unsure					Unsure				
	Unimportant					Unimportant				
	Very Unimportant					Very Unimportant				
Satisfaction	Very High		4	58%	Satisfaction	Very High				
	High		3	42%		High		6	86%	
	Average					Average		1	14%	
	Low					Low				
	Very Low					Very Low				

Analysis:











ISC's recommendations and submissions to the CIFOR BoT are given high importance by Board members, and there is also a high level of satisfaction among Board members that these recommendations and submissions are timely and well-crafted.

Comments received from BoT members relating to ISC's recommendations/submissions to the CIFOR Board: (Annex 2, 5.3, 5.5)

"ISC provides timely and well considered suggestions to the lead board. Well thought through."

"I would be interested in seeing the ISC's self assessment as well as the perspective of others. The board only gets periodic presentations but those we have received have been very thorough but it is only one lens. I wrote "unsure" in the margins for those areas where I did not have insight in to the ISC's work with partners or FTA director. "

(3) BOT'S ASSESSMENT OF ISC'S PERFORMANCE ON STRATEIC PLANNING, OVERSIGHT AND MONITORING (8 questions)

3.1 ISC has a strategic vision of how the FTA should be evolving over the next 3 years				3.2 ISC has taken into account new opportunities and challenges in its strategic plan for CRP-FTA						
Importance	Very Important		4	58%	Importance	Very Important		3	43%	
	Important		3	42%		Important		3	43%	
	Unsure					Unsure				
	Unimportant					Unimportant		1	14%	
	Very Unimportant					Very Unimportant				
Satisfaction	Very High		1	14%	Satisfaction	Very High				
	High		5	72%		High		3	42%	
	Average					Average		4	58%	
	Low		1	14%		Low				
	Very Low					Very Low				
3.3 ISC has a transparent and effective practice in ensuring that advice and direction from the Systems Council and ISPC are considered in FTA planning and implementation.				3.4 ISC is effective in giving strategic guidance to the FTA Director in developing and updating the FTA research strategy including program priorities.						
Importance	Very Important				Importance	Very Important		2	28%	
	Important		6	86%		Important		4	58%	
	Unsure					Unsure				
	Unimportant		1	14%		Unimportant		1	14%	
	Very Unimportant					Very Unimportant				
Satisfaction	Very High		2	28%	Satisfaction	Very High		1	17%	
	High		5	72%		High		4	66%	
	Average					Average		1	17%	
	Low					Low				
	Very Low					Very Low				
3.5 ISC provides adequate oversight on the overall FTA portfolio to ensure overall coherence with the strategic directions and CRP guidelines on CRP governance.				3.6 ISC regularly assesses the rate of achievement of the FTA program through updates on progress of FTA outcomes, and takes or recommends to the Lead Center Board the necessary corrective action for weaknesses in performance.						
Importance	Very Important		4	57%	Importance	Very Important		6	86%	
	Important		3	43%		Important		1	14%	
	Unsure					Unsure				
	Unimportant					Unimportant				
	Very Unimportant					Very Unimportant				
Satisfaction	Very High		3	43%	Satisfaction	Very High		1	14%	
	High		3	43%		High		4	58%	
	Average		1	14%		Average		1	14%	
	Low					Low		1	14%	
	Very Low					Very Low				
3.7 ISC has an established practice for monitoring the implementation of decisions.				3.8 The CIFOR Board of Trustees regularly proposes external/audit reviews of the CRP-FTA.						
Importance	Very Important		1	20%	Importance	Very Important				
	Important		3	60%		Important		4	67%	
	Unsure		1	20%		Unsure		2	33%	
	Unimportant					Unimportant				
	Very Unimportant					Very Unimportant				
Note: 2 did not answer				Note: 1 did not answer						
Satisfaction	Very High		2	40%	Satisfaction	Very High				
	High		3	60%		High		2	40%	
	Average					Average		2	40%	
	Low					Low		1	20%	
	Very Low					Very Low				
Note: 2 did not answer				Note: 2 did not answer						

Analysis:

The Board consider ISC's strategic planning, oversight and monitoring, important areas (with a member considering 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4 unimportant).

Half of the respondents believe that ISC could improve in taking into account new opportunities and challenges in its strategic plan for CRP-FTA. (Q3.2)

Similar to ISC members' assessment, the Board members believe that ISC could improve in assessing the rate of achievement of the FTA program. (Q3.6)

Some members were unsure about regularly proposing external/audit reviews of FTA, and half of the respondents indicated a need for improvement in this area. (Q3.8)

Following are the comments received from CIFOR Board Members relating to ISC's Performance on Strategic Planning, Oversight and Monitoring: (Annex 2, 5.1, 5.2, 5.4)

"Some of the satisfaction answers above reflect my lack of knowledge of ISC's processes rather than dissatisfaction with the work of ISC. It would be useful for ISC to set out in more detail some of these processes. For example, the resource allocation mechanism has been well described to the BOT but ISC's role in either the development of the POWB or in science oversight is less than clear. Also, more detail on the functional relationship between the FTA Director (and the lead center DG) and the ISC would be useful. If the processes were better understood, then the BOT's questions would focus on assurance that these processes were being satisfactorily executed."

"I have a positive view of the ISC's performance to-date and have no suggestion."

"I commend ISC for undertaking this assessment of its performance. I am generally satisfied with the performance of the ISC. Perhaps frequent (quarterly?) short updates (one-pager) from the ISC Chair to the BoT would help increase understanding and knowledge about FTA and ISC performance."

The following suggestions for improvements were viewed as immediate needs: (Annex 2, 6.1, 6.2, 6.5)

"I need to understand better ISC's approach to science oversight given the range of partners, the dependence on restricted funding essentially through the different partners, the structure of the IMEL that supports such oversight-- at project, flagship and program level--, and the use of external reviews (and how these are interfaced with lead center and partner program reviews and assessments)."

"I am satisfied with FTA and ISC based on the current knowledge I have. However, to better answer some of the questions above, the BoT would need better knowledge about how ISC operates."

"The key task for the ISC is to guide change and redirection of FTA which may involve tough negotiations between partners. This role is not yet well developed."

(4) BOT'S ASSESSMENT OF ISC'S PERFORMANCE ON RESOURCE ALLOCATION

The responses to the three (3) questions were as follows:

4.1 ISC's recommendations on yearly allocation of W1-2 funding across FTA participating institutions appropriately takes into account partners' performance.			4.2 ISC's recommendations on yearly allocation of W1-2 funding across FTA participating institutions is based on sound application of clear priority criteria across the CRP.		
Importance	Very Important	2 40%	Importance	Very Important	2 33%
	Important	3 60%		Important	4 67%
	Unsure			Unsure	
	Unimportant			Unimportant	
	Very Unimportant			Very Unimportant	
Note: 2 did not answer			Note: 1 did not answer		
Satisfaction	Very High	2 50%	Satisfaction	Very High	1 17%
	High	1 25%		High	4 67%
	Average	1 25%		Average	1 17%
	Low			Low	
	Very Low			Very Low	
Note: 3 did not answer			Note: 1 did not answer		
4.3 ISC effectively facilitates agreement among FTA partners on equitable mechanisms, processes and decision criteria for funding allocations.					
Importance	Very Important	3 50%	Importance	Very Important	3 50%
	Important	2 33%		Important	2 33%
	Unsure	1 17%		Unsure	1 17%
	Unimportant			Unimportant	
	Very Unimportant			Very Unimportant	
Note: 2 did not answer					
Satisfaction	Very High	2 40%	Satisfaction	Very High	2 40%
	High	1 20%		High	1 20%
	Average	2 40%		Average	2 40%
	Low			Low	
	Very Low			Very Low	
Note: 2 did not answer					

Analysis:

This area was given high importance by Board members. The response in 4.3 indicated the need to be effective in facilitating agreement among FTA partners on the mechanisms, processes and decision criteria for funding allocations (although one member was unsure whether this was important).

One comment relating to Resource allocation: (Annex 2, 6.2)

“Not an issue of improvement but a suggestion for the ISC to undertake an early assessment of the effect, if any, of the new performance allocation rule on the performance of the FTA partners and if there are any noticeable positive differences from before .” (Viewed as immediate need)

ANNEX 1 (p.1): COMMENTS FROM ISC MEMBERS

ISC Self-Assessment: Questionnaires Themes		
	1) ISC STRUCTURE	
	2) DYNAMICS AND FUNCTIONING OF THE ISC	
	2a) Meetings	
	2b) Interactions and Communications	
	3) ISC'S ROLE IN FTA STRATEGIC PLANNING, OVERSIGHT AND MONITORING	
	4) DECISION MAKING	
	5) ISC'S ROLE IN RESOURCE ALLOCATION	
	6) THE CHAIRPERSON'S ROLE	
	7) THE FTA DIRECTOR'S ROLE AS EX OFFICIO MEMBER	
	8) ISC MEMBERS' SELF-ASSESSMENT	
Open Questions - Responses from ISC Members		
Q9: What other comments or suggestions do you have related to ISC's performance?		Ref. to Questionnaire
9.1 a)	We need to be clear that FTA is a programme and not an "organization". Legally it is under the CIFOR BOT and it is also part of the CGIAR architecture. The ISC has to work within this reality.	Q1.1
9.1 b)	New opportunities happen when we reevaluate progress and from the monitoring of the programme.	Q3.1, 3.3, 3.7, 3.8
9.1 c)	We should avoid becoming too bureaucratic in how we operate as a committee. Don't believe we need a code of conduct. We should be guided by established principles for governance of organizations. We do have a conflict of interest policy.	Q2.16
9.2 a)	The performance can be more consistent if we knew more in advance what will be needed of us in the next six months or so	Q3.1
9.3 a)	The role of the ISC Chair is critical to the overall strategic oversight of FTA, especially between meetings when decisions need to be taken swiftly but in an open, transparent and consultative manner. Currently the Chair is highly committed and responsive. This is extremely important to be taken into account in the future.	Q6.
9.3 b)	Likewise, availability of independent members is critical. An independent member should not be appointed in case there is no guarantee s/he cannot honour the commitment to be reactive when needed.	Q 2.2, Q2.3
9.4 a)	I think that the non-chair independent members are not sufficiently involved, intellectually, in ISC. One in particular always has timetable conflicts and most hardly read the documents ahead of meetings. Financial information from CIFOR is presented in very difficult to understand ways!	Q2.2, Q2.3 Q3.9
9.5 a)	I am on two other boards with equivalent financial resources. And so I have some experience in these matters. But there are a couple of issues that bother me with respect to FTA ISC: (a) The combination of independent and non-independent members makes it difficult to see what plays under the surface. I think we should make it a rule that independent members meet before the full meeting at least for an hour so that we can clarify our doubts and discuss openly amongst each other the issues that worry us. We now try to do that at breakfast, but it should be more structural;	Q1.4, Q2.7, Q2.6
9.5 b)	(b) we seem to have a combination of responsibilities - both scientific and in terms of financial allocation. Some of us have a stake in the allocation, the independent members don't. The scientific advice is somewhat easier to give because the stakes are less high. It is here where mutual trust, clear rules, and independent advice become critical and I think our Chair does a good job; but this is a more difficult job to do well.	Q5.1, Q6.1, Q8.2
9.5 c)	(c) The financial allocation advice is more complex especially when states cut down their funds and now when the US is threatening with its America First budget to cut down all global climate change related programmes. I think this calls for more proactive thinking about the future of such programmes and perhaps we need to discuss more often what exactly is happening.	Q3.3, Q3.4
9.5 d)	(d) Participating partner members are supposed to represent FTA interests and not the interests of their own institutes, but this is sometimes difficult for me to gauge; at the same time I can quite imagine that the others think that the independent members don't quite know what is happening as we only engage with FTA a couple of times in a year;	Q2.15
9.5 e)	(e) I think we all get along quite well; but if there were major problems, then there would be issues of trust - do we all trust each other; did we all work with good will; were there issues that we were not well informed about? and so on. So building trust is a critical issue.	Q2.11, Q2.12, Q2.13
9.5 f)	(f) I also think it is important for the four independent members to work both independently and to function as a team - because we have no stakes involved and all of us collectively want FTA to do well. So a critical question is do the four of us have complementary knowledge and skills, and does that come to surface during the meetings?	Q1.5
9.5 g)	(g) I am now co-chairing UNEP's GEO and if you all have substantive advice that you would like represented in this report, it would be nice to know and I would be happy to channel appropriate knowledge to the author teams. In that way, I could possibly also contribute to FTA's impact.	n/a

ANNEX 1 (p.2): COMMENTS FROM ISC MEMBERS

Q10. Which areas, in your view, need to be improved immediately?		
10.1 a)	The CGIAR needs to be clear about the role of the independent Steering Committees. There are time when the effectiveness of the ISC is affected by decisions taken by organs of the CGIAR.	Q1.1
10.1 b)	Perhaps we need to clarify whether the ISC can request an audit or if this should be done by the CIFOR BOT.	Q3.10
10.2 a)	Planning for ISC activities: for example, often we do not know well in advance when do we need to have a meeting	Q2.1
10.3 a)	The key task for the ISC is to guide change and redirection of FTA which may involve tough negotiations between partners. This role is not yet well developed.	Q3.1, 3.2, 3.3
10.4 a)	There is a fundamental and existential question that has not been asked so far and I find that very problematic: Is ISC simply a transaction cost? There is no evidence so far that any of the ISC's decisions on the future of the CRP or on allocations have any respect at the level of the CGIAR. So other than being a sounding board - probably a useful one - for the FTA Director and possibly providing an independent view on progress within the CRP to the Lead Centre, I question whether the ISC can play the 'independent' governance role it was supposed to do. Thus the question: is it simply another transaction that incurs costs but brings scant benefits?	Q1.4, Q3.7
10.5 a)	The ISC could establish an annual plan with its main roles and objectives (in the framework of the program's workplan and objectives, and of the broader CGIAR calendar).	Q3.1
10.5 b)	Membership of ISC could be open to 2 more independent members of high profile. ISC members could play a bigger role in being "ambassadors" of FTA in their overall other endeavours, as per the opportunities. ISC could play a role in defining a partnership strategy and strengthening FTA's partnerships beyond the CGIAR.	Q1.2
10.5 c)	Agenda of work of ISC could involve more scientific substantial issues (as compared with CG bureaucracy matters). Relations between the ISC and the FTA Management team/MT could be clarified (which could in fact lead to a precision of the roles, and the composition of the FTA MT as well). ISC could review its ToRs in the light of this assessment.	Q1.4
10.6 a)	Clarification of ISC ToRs	Q1.4
10.7 a)	Increase the number of independent members at the very least by 1 person, for greater diversity and greater balance among all members.	Q1.2
10.8 a)	In seeking a new person insit on availability of time and need for intellectual engagement. Reiterate this need to existing independent members.	Q1.3
10.9 a)	(a) Meeting between independent members prior to full meeting even if only for an hour;	Q2.1
10.9 b)	(b) More regular skype calls between the independent members, just to keep a finger on the pulse of what is happening;	Q2.8
10.9 c)	c) the US is proposing a 30% cut on state department budgets including a full reduction on global climate change related programmes, programmes on Africa and only wants to help where it is strategically relevant for the US; they are also proposing cuts in science. This can have an impact on CGIAR's future - and perhaps we need to discuss this to develop scenarios and possible reactions.	Q2.5, Q2.6
10.9 d)	(d) If meetings are planned, it would be nice if there are few options provided, so that we can pick a date that suits all.	Q2.1

ANNEX 2: CIFOR BOT MEMBERS' COMMENTS

ISC Assessment by CIFOR BOARD: Questionnaires Themes		
	1) BoT's assessment of Lead Center responsibilities	
	2) BoT's assessment of ISC recommendations/submissions	
	3) BoT's Assessment of ISC's Performance on Strategic Planning, Oversight and Monitoring	
	4) BoT's Assessment of ISC's Performance on Resource Allocation	
Open Questions - Responses from BoT members		
5. What other comments or suggestions do you have related to ISC's performance		Ref. to Questionnaire
5.1	Some of the satisfaction answers above reflect my lack of knowledge of ISC's processes rather than disfaction with the work of ISC. It would be useful for ISC to set out in more detail some of these processes. For example, the resource allocation mechanism has been well described to the BOT but ISC's role in either the development of the POWB or in science oversight is less than clear. Also, more detail on the functional relationship between the FTA Director (and the lead center DG) and the ISC would be useful. If the processes were better understood, then the BOT's questions would focus on assurance that these processes were being satisfactorily executed.	Q3.4, Q3.5, Q3.6
5.2	I have a positive view of the ISC's performance to-date and have no suggestion.	Q3
5.3	I would be interested in seeing the ISC's self assessment as well as the perspective of others. The board only gets periodic presentations but those we have received have been very thorough but it is only one lens. I wrote "unsure" in the margins for those areas where I did not have insight in to the ISC's work with partners or FTA director.	Q2
5.4	I commend ISC for undertaking this assessment of its performance. I am generally satisfied with the performance of the ISC. Perhaps frequent (quarterly?) short updates (one-pager) from the ISC Chair to the BoT would help increase understanding and knowledge about FTA and ISC performance.	Q3.6, Q3.7, Q3.8
5.5	ISC, provides timely and well considered suggestions to the lead board. Well thought through.	Q2.1, Q2.2, Q2.4
6. Which areas, in your view, need to be improved immediately?		
6.1	I need to understand better ISC's approach to science oversight given the range of partners, the dependence on restricted funding essentially through the different partners, the structure of the IMEL that supports such oversight-- at project, flagship and program level--, and the use of external reviews (and how these are interfaced with lead center and partner program reviews and assessments).	Q3.3, Q3.8
6.2	Not an issue of improvement but a suggestion for the ISC to undertake an early assessment of the effect, if any, of the new performance allocation rule on the performance of the FTA partners and if there are any noticable positive differences from before .	Q4.1, Q4.2, Q4.3
6.3	I am satisfied with FTA and ISC based on the current knowledge I have. However, to better answer some of the questions above, the BoT would need better knowledge about how ISC operates.	Q3
6.4	None that i can think of at this time.	n/a
6.5	The key task for the iSC is to guide change and redirection of FTA which may involve tough negotiations between partners. This role is not yet well developed.	Q3.1, Q3.2, Q3.5