



Evaluation of the Independent Science and Partnership Council (ISPC)

Inception Report

June 2017



Independent
Evaluation
Arrangement

Evaluation Team

Mar O’Kane

Eija Pehu

This evaluation has been commissioned by the Independent Evaluation Arrangement (IEA) of CGIAR.

The Independent Evaluation Arrangement (IEA) of CGIAR encourages fair use of this material provided proper citation is made.

Correct citation: CGIAR - IEA (2017), Inception Report of the Evaluation of the Independent Science and Partnership Council (ISPC). Rome, Italy: Independent Evaluation Arrangement (IEA) of CGIAR <http://iea.cgiar.org/>

Table of Contents

Abbreviations.....	i
Executive Summary.....	ii
Introduction.....	ii
Background, objectives and scope.....	ii
Evaluation approach and questions	iii
1 Introduction.....	1
1.1 Origins, purpose and users of the evaluation.....	1
1.2 Stakeholders and primary users of the evaluation.....	1
1.3 Purpose and structure of the inception report.....	2
2 Background.....	3
2.1 Overview of ISPC as an entity.....	3
2.2 Current operations of ISPC and Theory of Change.....	5
3 Scope of the Evaluation.....	6
3.1 From the terms of reference	6
3.2 Particular emphasis in the evaluation arising from first phase investigations	6
4 Evaluation approach and methods.....	8
4.1 Evaluation approach.....	8
4.2 Evaluation methods and tools.....	9
4.3 Bringing it all together	12
4.4 Main limitations of the evaluation.....	13
4.5 Challenges of the counterfactual question of not having an ISPC	13
5 Organization and timing of the evaluation	14
5.1 Team composition and responsibilities.....	14
5.2 Management and governance of the evaluation.....	14
5.3 Timeline.....	14
5.4 Deliverables and Dissemination Plans.....	15
Annex A: Evaluation Matrix	16
Annex B: List of people interviewed.....	27
Annex C: Short Bios of Evaluation Team Members	28

Abbreviations

CRP	CGIAR Research Program
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
EMBRAPA	Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IEA	Independent Evaluation Arrangement of CGIAR
ISPC	Independent Science and Partnership Council
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
MTR	Mid-Term Review
PoWB	Program of Work and Budget
SPIA	Standing Panel on Impact Assessment
SRF	Strategy and Results Framework
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture

Executive Summary

Introduction

This is an evaluation of the Independent Science and Partnership Council (ISPC), an independent scientific advisory body of CGIAR.

The evaluation has been commissioned and is financed by the Independent Evaluation Arrangement of CGIAR (IEA) which is responsible for external evaluations that “aim to provide accountability, support to decision making, and lessons for improving quality and effectiveness of agricultural research for development outcomes”¹. The ISPC evaluation forms part of the 2017 IEA work plan which has been approved by the System Council at its 3rd meeting in November 2016.

The aim of this inception report is to set out the evaluation team’s understanding of the evaluation’s purpose, objectives, scope and evaluation criteria, and describe the team’s proposed evaluation approach and methods, and organization and timing. It has been developed using extensive document review and interviews with selected key informants (Annex B).

Background, objectives and scope

This review is happening at a time when the ISPC does not have approved terms of reference under the 2016 CGIAR System Framework, although a set has been in draft since 2015. The evaluation understands that the System Council has asked for the results of this evaluation to be available as an input into its consideration of the draft ISPC terms of reference.

The evaluation’s terms of reference point out that, since CGIAR’s establishment in 1971, it has always included an entity tasked with providing independent scientific and strategic advice, ensuring the quality of the science produced by its Centers. The 2016 CGIAR system framework document states that the role of the ISPC is “to serve as an independent advisor to the System Council on science and research matters, including strategies for effective partnerships along the research for development continuum”².

The 2014 Mid-Term Review of CGIAR recommended that the ISPC’s responsibilities “*be elevated to empower it to be proactive in terms of providing strategic guidance, foresight analyses, and assessing and reporting on quality of research results across the system*”. A consequent 2015 Task Force constituted to strengthen the ISPC made a number of recommendations which were not endorsed, but which were articulated into a draft set of terms of reference by the science working group of the CGIAR Transition Team. As stated above, these terms of reference are currently under discussion at the System Council.

This evaluation has two main objectives:

- i. to provide accountability to the System Council and CGIAR as a whole on the relevance, value-added and overall performance of the ISPC with respect to all dimensions of the ISPC’s functions and work;
- ii. to draw lessons and make recommendations for the future, with a view for the ISPC to best serve the System Council and CGIAR as a whole in the context of the governance reform and the implementation of the Strategy and Results Framework (SRF) 2016-30.

The present ISPC evaluation acknowledges that the CGIAR System governance has undergone a great change since 2010. The ISPC has not been idle throughout this period, and there is clear evidence of considerable work done, especially on the review of the new CRP proposals. However, early interviews in preparation of

¹ Terms of Reference, Team Leader, Evaluation of the ISPC, p.1.

² CGIAR System Framework, Article 2(n).

this Inception Report suggest to the evaluation team that there is some confusion in the System on the ISPC’s role.

Consequently, the evaluation team will be taking into account two strategic issues throughout the evaluation:

- Have ISPC contributions led to and are further contributions likely to lead to improvements in the overall delivery of CGIAR’s vision, mission and goals (reducing poverty, improving food and nutrition security, and improving natural resources and ecosystems)?
- The counterfactual proposition – what would be the effect on the System if the ISPC didn’t exist?

A number of subsidiary questions will also guide the evaluation team.

Evaluation approach and questions

The Terms of Reference set out a series of evaluation questions under the following headings:

1. Relevance
2. Value
3. Functional Performance
4. Operational Performance.

The full set of evaluation questions stemming from the terms of reference is included in an evaluation matrix (see Annex A), in which the evaluation team sets out its proposed approach to answering each question. It does this by articulating: a set of expanded questions to elicit the knowledge required to answer the evaluation questions; the indicators or means of verification; and the information sources.

A variety of methods will be used to answer the evaluation questions, but there will be significant reliance on semi-structured interviews of a wide range of stakeholders, and a desk review of an extensive range of documentation.

The approach to this evaluation will be characterized by the following:

- **methodological frameworks:** systems analysis, organizational analysis, financial analysis, historical analysis;
- **methods of data collection:** comprehensive, targeted interviews; and examination of relevant documents, reports and minutes, relevant financial reports, the skill set and competencies in and accessed by ISPC, and ISPC operating processes;
- **comparative analysis:** examination of what characterizes successful science advisory bodies in other complex, distributed science organizations;
- **analysis and presentation of the results:** triangulation of information from all sources to build robust, comprehensive and contextualized conclusion on ISPC performance (integrated performance analysis).

The evaluation team consists of two evaluators, Emeritus Professor Mary O’Kane and Dr. Eija Pehu, who have been selected for their familiarity with but independence from the CGIAR System. Additional expert/s may be engaged as resource persons for specific tasks during the course of the evaluation. Potential topics under consideration by the team include impact assessment work done in centers/CRPs and their interaction with the Standing Panel on Impact Assessment (SPIA); communication and knowledge sharing strategies and approaches by ISPC; and review of ISPC-like science review entities in other similar organizations.

Key dates and activities in the evaluation include:

<i>Inquiry, data gathering and analysis phase</i>	<i>June and July</i>	<i>Interviews, desk review etc.</i>
<i>Synthesis phase</i>	<i>August</i>	<i>Bringing together results from all the different analyses</i>
<i>Reporting phase</i>	<i>September 10 Mid-September to October</i>	<i>Draft report Presentation of preliminary findings at ISPC meeting and SC virtual meeting Consultation with major stakeholders</i>
	<i>October 30</i>	<i>Final Evaluation report Management Response by ISPC</i>

1 Introduction

1.1 Origins, purpose and users of the evaluation

This is an evaluation of the Independent Science and Partnership Council (ISPC), an independent scientific advisory body of CGIAR.

The evaluation has been commissioned by the Independent Evaluation Arrangement (IEA) of CGIAR.

The evaluation has two main objectives according to its terms of reference:

- i. to provide accountability to System Council and CGIAR as a whole on the relevance, value-added and overall performance of the ISPC with respect to all dimensions of the ISPC's functions and work. The evaluation will provide an assessment on the extent to which the ISPC is fulfilling the purpose of a science advisory body of a research organization, by reviewing its overall mandate, scope, functions, governance and operational modalities. As reference to assess the performance of the ISPC, the evaluation will use documentation from the 2008 Reform that defined System needs for leadership and advice on science, research and partnership.
- ii. to draw lessons and make recommendations for the future, with a view for the ISPC to best serve the System Council and CGIAR as a whole in the context of the governance reform and the implementation of the Strategy and Results Framework (SRF) 2016-30.

The evaluation will have a **formative dimension**, basing considerations for the future not only on an examination of past performance, but especially by considering emerging challenges and evolving needs of the System in an innovative manner. The evaluation is also expected to provide inputs for the finalization of the ISPC's Terms of Reference, drafted by the science working group of the CGIAR transition team in 2016 and currently under discussion at the System Council.

1.2 Stakeholders and primary users of the evaluation

Ultimate stakeholders are farmers and small land holders in the developing world, but the more immediate stakeholders are the System Council, the donors, the CRPs and centers, and the CGIAR's system entities.

The main stakeholders in the evaluation, as stated in the terms of reference, are in Table 1.

Table 1 - Evaluation Stakeholders³

Type of stakeholder	Role	Interest in evaluation
<i>Donors</i>		
<i>CGIAR level</i>		
CGIAR System Council	Review strategy, mission, impact and continued relevancy of the CGIAR System; Provide resources	Recipient of the ISPC’s independent advice on science, research, and partnership strategies
System Management Board	Strategic direction and effective governance and leadership	Implements the independent scientific advice from the ISPC (on the instruction from SC)
System Management Office	Monitoring and reporting, developing guidelines and research standards	Benefit from the ISPC leadership and guidance on science research, and partnership strategies
ISPC (including SPIA and ISPC Secretariat)	Strategic advice, impact assessment and review of CRP proposals	Lessons learnt and opportunities for increased relevance and effectiveness
Independent Evaluation Arrangement	Evaluation of CGIAR Research Programs, Developing guidelines and standards for Evaluation	User of ISPC products
CGIAR Centers and Boards	Oversight of CRP activities, Program Management	Benefit from the ISPC leadership and guidance on science research, and partnership strategies User of ISPC reviews and products.
CRP Independent Steering Committees and other scientific advisory bodies	Advice on strategic direction and priority-setting for CRPs	
CRPs Management	Management of CRPs	
CGIAR Scientific Community (including DDG Research, Senior Science Leaders, CGIAR Impact Assessment Focal Points, etc.)	Develop and implement research that contributes to CGIAR System-Level Outcomes	
<i>External Stakeholders</i>		
Main suppliers of international agricultural research (non CGIAR scientific centers, universities, etc.)	Partners in CGIAR research	Benefit from the ISPC leadership and guidance on science research, and partnership strategies
GFAR and development partners and agencies	Partners in the implementation and uptake of CGIAR research	

1.3 Purpose and structure of the inception report

The main purpose of the inception phase is for the independent evaluation team to develop and articulate its proposed approach to the evaluation.

For this purpose, the inception report sets out the evaluation team’s:

- understanding of the purpose and objectives of the evaluation (section 2)
- understanding of the evaluation’s scope and evaluation criteria (section 3 and Annex A)
- proposed evaluation approach and methods (section 4), and
- proposed organization and timing of the evaluation (section 5).

³ Source: Evaluation terms of reference.

2 Background

2.1 Overview of ISPC as an entity⁴

Since its establishment in 1971, CGIAR has always included an entity tasked with providing independent scientific and strategic advice and ensuring the quality of the science produced by its centers.

Initially, this was the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) of international experts, which advised on matters such as the CGIAR system’s overall directions and substantive agricultural research issues, as well as the evaluation of CGIAR centers and the allocation of core funding within the system.

In 2001, CGIAR initiated a reform program, which led to the transformation of the TAC into a Science Council. An interim Science Council took over from the TAC in 2002 while a Working Group prepared a detailed proposal for the conceptual and operational aspects of the Science Council. The Science Council officially began its operations in 2004, with the additional responsibility of “helping to mobilize the best global scientific expertise for addressing the goals of the international agricultural research community”⁵.

The Science Council was much smaller than the TAC (see Table 2 below) but, like the TAC, carried out much of its work through four Standing Panels covering its four principal functional areas. Each Standing Panel was chaired by a System Council member (*ex officio* member in the case of the Standing Panel on Impact Assessment) and included two additional, external members.

In 2008, another wave of reforms brought about two major changes in the mandate of CGIAR’s science advisory body: it was given a prominent role in providing strategic guidance on partnerships, and the responsibility for evaluations was removed. The 2008 external review of CGIAR concluded that the Science Council, which provided scientific and programmatic advice, could not also be responsible for evaluating performance arising from its own advice, and thus recommended that a more systematic approach to evaluation be adopted. As a result, in 2010 two separate entities were established – the ISPC, with a similar mandate to its predecessors to provide expert advice to CGIAR governance and to strengthen the quality, relevance and impact of CGIAR research, and the new IEA, responsible for conducting independent evaluations of CGIAR research programs and institutions.

⁴ The information in sections 2.1 and 2.2 is paraphrased from the evaluation’s terms of reference.

⁵ 2002. Report of the Executive Council’s Working Group on the Establishment of a CGIAR Science Council.

Table 2 – CGIAR’s Science Advisory Bodies over time⁶

	Technical Advisory Committee (1971 – 2001)	Science Council (2002⁷- 2010)	ISPC (2011-present)
Main Functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide independent advice and judgements on strategic issues and on the quality of the scientific programs supported by CGIAR • recommend research priorities and strategies to CGIAR • ensure the quality of research supported by the Group and its relevance to the CGIAR’s goals and objectives • recommend the allocation of resources among Centers in the context of CGIAR-approved priorities and strategies • assess the impact of CGIAR research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure the relevance of science conducted in the CGIAR System • enhance the quality of science • assess the System-level impact of CGIAR research • mobilize the global scientific community (+) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contribute to the System strategy and priorities • promote the quality and relevance of science • assessing the impact of CGIAR research • mobilize the global scientific community / convene periodic high-level scientific dialogue on high priority issues • Providing strategic guidance on partnerships (+)
Membership	Up to 14 (and Secretariat)	6 plus Chair (and Secretariat) Each Standing Panel (except SPIA) chaired by an SC member, and included two additional external members	6 (8 from 2016) plus Chair (and Secretariat)
Reporting lines	CGIAR as a whole (through International Centers Week and Mid-term meeting)	Both CGIAR as a whole (through Annual General Meeting) and Executive Committee	Fund Council/System Council

(+) indicates functions that have been added

In 2014, a Mid-Term Review (MTR) was carried out to assess the progress made since the implementation of the reform in delivering the overall objectives of CGIAR. With respect to the ISPC, the MTR concluded that “the reform, replacing the TAC and later the Science Council with the ISPC, somewhat diluted the ability of the internal research review process”. It recommended that the responsibilities of the ISPC “be elevated to empower it to be proactive in terms of providing strategic guidance, foresight analyses, and assessing and reporting on quality of research results across the system”, and that a detailed proposal for the new ISPC functions be prepared.

As a result, a Task Force on ‘Strengthening the ISPC’ was constituted in 2015, at the request of the CGIAR Fund Council. The Task Force made a number of recommendations that, under the evolving governance transition process, were never endorsed. The proposed revised functions of the ISPC suggested by the Task Force were then articulated into a draft set of terms of reference by the Science Working Group of the CGIAR Transition Team. These terms of reference are currently under discussion at the System Council, and this evaluation is expected to provide input to that discussion.

⁶ Source: evaluation terms of reference.

⁷ Interim Science Council (2002-2004).

2.2 Current operations of ISPC and Theory of Change

Until the end of 2016, the ISPC continued to focus on the four principal functional areas that its predecessor focused on:

- Impact Assessment
- Strategy and Trends
- Independent Program Review
- Mobilizing Science and Partnerships.

The evaluation team notes that since 2010: the *Impact Assessment* work stream has been the largest in terms of expenditure; under *Strategy and Trends*, the ISPC has been involved in the development of the Strategic and Results Framework 2016-30, a prioritization exercise to help guide the review of the second round of CRP proposals, and several strategic studies and white papers (e.g. a stripe review on NRM research, foresight study on trends in urbanization and farm size, white paper on CGIAR SLOs, their impact pathways and inter-linkages, strategic study on biotechnology); under *Independent Program Review*, the ISPC has carried out independent peer reviews for two rounds of CRP proposals as well as several research-related matters (e.g., SPPC proposal on revised portfolio, CGIAR Genebanks Options paper, AATP Virtual Information Platform); under *Mobilizing Science and Partnerships*, three Science Fora have been held focusing on research and partnership issues related to each of the 3 SLOs (two special issues arising from the Fora have been published in peer-reviewed journals and one is currently in preparation) and a strategic study carried out on Good Practice in AR4D partnership

In 2016, the ISPC developed a Theory of Change describing outputs for each of its work streams, and the key assumptions and risks associated with achieving the two key outcomes it had identified:

- an enhanced System Council capacity to make evidence-based decisions in support of effective agricultural programs for development, and
- the development and implementation by CGIAR's scientific community of research that contributes to the System Level Outcomes and achievement of Sustainable Development Goals.

At this time, the *Mobilizing Science and Partnerships* work stream was split (and further developed) into *Science Dialogue* and *Agri-Food System Innovation and Partnerships*.

The ISPC has had an annual budget ranging from USD 3.4 million in 2012 to USD 3.9 million in 2016 (this excludes the funding for impact assessment activities, primarily funded through the *Strengthening Impact Assessment in the CGIAR* project starting end of 2012/early 2013). Expenditures have been below the approved budget every year with the exception of 2015. Until 2015, about 30% of the ISPC budget was financed by FAO. Since 2016, the entire budget is funded from CGIAR funds. The implications of this change in funding sources of the ISPC will be examined during the evaluation using information and data from stakeholder interviews and document review.

In 2016, the ISPC included a Chair and eight Council Members who are eminent scientists from a broad range of disciplines serving in their personal capacity. It is supported by a Secretariat located at FAO headquarters in Rome.

As has been noted above, there is a hiatus between the ISPC's 2011 terms of reference, and the unapproved terms of reference developed in 2015, on which the evaluation will comment.

3 Scope of the Evaluation

3.1 From the terms of reference

As specified in its terms of reference, the evaluation is intended to cover activities of the ISPC since its establishment in 2011, with a view to understanding how the System's needs for scientific advice have evolved over time.

According to the terms of reference, the evaluation will assess the following four criteria:

- the **relevance** and scope of the ISPC's leadership and advisory functions as well as its work, in relation to past and evolving System needs and expectations, distinguishing various stakeholder groups, and in a context of emerging challenges in agriculture research for development;
- the **value** ISPC adds to *the System overall* (including the ISPC's contributions to CGIAR in the development of the latest SRF), to other actors in the System that have similar functions at different levels, and to the general environment in which scientific direction is provided to centers and CRPs.
- the **functional performance** of the ISPC as a whole and in its areas of activity, including its credibility, which depends on the independence and quality of the ISPC's advice, and on the utility and influence of its products and services for the System Council and for the whole CGIAR scientific community.
- the **operational performance** of the ISPC as a whole and in its areas of activity, including the extent to which the governance, management and capacity of the ISPC (including SPIA and the ISPC Secretariat), optimally support the ISPC in delivering on its mandate; and the extent to which the recent changes in CGIAR governance have impacted on the ability of the ISPC to deliver.

In the terms of reference, there are evaluation questions listed under each of these criteria. Based on the terms of reference, a more detailed Evaluation Matrix (see Annex A) has been developed, which contains full details of all the evaluation questions listed by each criterion along with information that needs to be gathered and subsidiary questions that need to be addressed to answer each question.

3.2 Particular emphasis in the evaluation arising from first phase investigations

In the first phase of the evaluation (April-mid-June 2017), the evaluation team:

- discussed the evaluation extensively with the IEA;
- carried out a preliminary survey of the documents provided to the evaluation by the IEA and the ISPC;
- carried out interviews with a diverse array of stakeholders, including from the System Council, the ISPC including its Chair and the Executive Director, and people involved in CGIAR in various roles and over various time periods.

It was clear from these activities that:

- there are considerable tensions and differing understandings within CGIAR of the mandate, role, relevance, and value of the post-MTR ISPC;
- the fact that the ISPC does not have current terms of reference is a problem for the ISPC which, according to its Chair, has to second-guess what is needed and deliver on that. It seems that, from the System Council's point of view, getting the ISPC terms of reference finalized is either not a priority or is too hard to do as it has now been delayed for quite some time. This evaluation will provide inputs to the development of the ISPC terms of reference.

In the light of the insights gathered in the inception phase, it is the evaluation team's view that there are two strategic overarching questions that need to frame the evaluation. They are:

- Have ISPC contributions led to and are further contributions likely to lead to improvements in the overall delivery of CGIAR's vision, mission and goals (reducing poverty, improving food and nutrition security, and improving natural resources and ecosystems)?

- The counterfactual proposition – what would be the effect on the System if the ISPC didn't exist?

In turn, to answer the strategic overarching questions, the following core questions will need to be answered (relevant evaluation criteria noted in bold):

- Does everyone involved in the System have a clear concept of the ISPC's formal role and functions, what it actually does, who it reports to and how it communicates with different stakeholders, and how it assesses the impact of CGIAR research? (**relevance, functional & operational performance**)
- Where is the ISPC very effective and where is it less effective? (**value**)
- Which parts of the System particularly value the ISPC and why, and which parts have reservations and concerns and why? (**value, functional performance**)
- How do we know the ISPC is working, and are the current key performance indicators (KPIs) for measuring effectiveness correct? (**relevance, value, functional & operational performance**)
- What changes could be made to the ISPC and inter-connecting bodies to make it highly effective, who would need to act and over what time frame, and which changes would need to be done quickly and which could be implemented at a longer time-frame?

If these core questions can be satisfactorily answered, they will provide the information and knowledge to respond to the two framing questions.

Both of these sets of questions are also in the Evaluation Matrix (see Annex A).

4 Evaluation approach and methods

4.1 Evaluation approach

The evaluation approach is fundamentally one of building a multilayered evidence base consisting of different ‘views’ (ways of analyzing the problem) and then triangulating between the different views to obtain an understanding of where the views are consistent and where they are divergent.

From this, along with an analysis of what constitutes best practice in scientific advisory boards for large, heterogeneous international organizations we will:

- identify major themes, concerns and suggestions for change, including the alignment and harmonizing of ISPC activities with CGIAR’s key purposes and its messaging and, ultimately, with its delivery on its vision, mission and goals.

The different views include the following:

- systems analysis – how ISPC functions as part of the CGIAR System, and to what extent its advice, as an independent scientific advisory body, enables CGIAR to be more relevant and effective as a whole in reaching the system goals
- organizational analysis of ISPC (different pillars of work; effectiveness, relative weights, gaps?) and examination of ISPC operating processes
- historical analysis
- financial analysis
- comparative analysis of similar scientific advisory bodies/boards in other organizations.

These are discussed in more detail below.

4.1.1 Systems analysis - ISPC as a part of the CGIAR system

A fundamental framework for this evaluation is systems analysis. This includes:

- considering the ISPC itself as a system (a committee with a Secretariat answering to the System Council but serving a range of stakeholders within CGIAR)
- looking at how the ISPC fits into the wider CGIAR System, particularly to what extent the ISPC, as the prime CGIAR scientific advisory body, drives the System’s performance against its mission and enables it to be effective in reaching the system goals investigating the extent to which ISPC’s contributions are used by various entities in the System.

The system analysis will involve construction of an outline map of ISPC-relevant contributions and dependencies across the CGIAR System and then another map(s) of the stakeholder-expected contributions and dependencies (based on information emerging from the interviews, document analysis, etc.), allowing for discrepancy analysis.

The first map will show how the system that ISPC is embedded in works theoretically according to system documents etc., including key dependencies such as time, communication and finance flows.

The evaluation will also investigate how this theoretical map has evolved from the TAC’s time, through the Science Council, to various versions of the ISPC (pre and post Mid-Term Report).

The map of the system’s current reality will include actual dependencies, as of mid-2017. There might also be a need to map some immediate past realities. The evaluation notes that there might be several versions of “reality”, depending on whom you ask; and that there might be some parts of the map that cannot be filled in because of widespread uncertainty.

The evaluation will then note discrepancies between theory and reality and the nature of these discrepancies. Are they serious? Is the system under-specified? Has it evolved to good practice or bad practice? Is it redundant in terms of science advice roles? What are the major gaps?

These system dependency charts will show how ISPC advice actively delivers (or doesn't deliver) advice, guidance and principles to CGIAR system entities to support its delivery of CGIAR system goals. The evaluation will investigate how well these charts correlate or do not correlate with the ISPC's Theory of Change.

4.1.2 *Examine operating and organizational processes of ISPC*

The evaluation team will examine the operating processes of the ISPC and seek to answer the following questions:

- How does it work?
 - How does it interact with the System Council, and other CGIAR stakeholders? How does the ISPC assess its own performance?
 - How does the ISPC communicate its work to others in the CGIAR System?
- How much time is devoted to what (by the Council and by the individual members)?
- How does it set its work plan?
- How does it interact with its secretariat?
- How does the Chair participate in meetings where she is an active observer?
- How does ISPC manage quality control?

4.1.3 *Historical analysis*

The historical analysis overlaps with aspects of the systems analysis but will also include investigation of relevant historical events that have led to changes in the nature of how scientific advice is sourced within the CGIAR System. This analysis will also investigate differences in how ISPC worked in its first and second phases and how effectively it incorporated the new 'pillars' of work.

4.1.4 *Financial analysis*

The evaluation team will ensure it understands the financial underpinning of the System, and the different purposes and constraints associated with Windows 1, 2, and 3 funding, so that it can evaluate how the size of the Fund (of total CGIAR funding), and the relative weights of the different windows of the Fund impact on ISPC's performance and effectiveness. In addition, the evaluation will examine how the way the ISPC itself is funded impacts on its effectiveness, stakeholder perceptions and expectations of the ISPC.

It will also evaluate how ISPC advice has affected resource allocation to various parts of the system, especially across CRPs and different Centers.

Another analysis will be carried out on the ISPC budget and its expenditures; and how the funds are allocated across the ISPC functions.

4.1.5 *Examination of what characterizes successful science advisory bodies in other complex, distributed science organizations*

The evaluation team will also compare the design and operational model of the ISPC to that of similar scientific advisory bodies of international organizations. Possible comparisons may include: Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) in Australia, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) in Canada and the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (EMBRAPA). A paper will be prepared by the team on what constitutes best practice in scientific advisory boards for large, heterogeneous international organizations.

4.2 Evaluation methods and tools

To build up the different views the evaluation team will use the following methods and tools:

- comprehensive, targeted resource person and stakeholder interviews;
- analysis of relevant documents, reports, minutes, etc.;

- data management and analysis;
- the evaluation matrix;
- a survey;
- examination of relevant financial information;
- examination of ISPC appointment processes;
- specific commissioned work.

These are discussed in more detail below.

4.2.1 Comprehensive, targeted interviews

Interviews will provide a vital source of information for this evaluation. They will be carried out with people throughout the CGIAR System and with donors who are not represented on System committees. This will include stakeholders listed in Section 1.2 above, as well as a sample of representatives from the following groups: Center Directors and Deputy Directors along with Chairs of Center Boards; heads of CRPs; secretariats to various system bodies; former CGIAR officers; heads of science advisory bodies to Centers and CRPs; and other reviewers of parts of the CGIAR system, e.g. John Beddington.

Semi-structured interviews will be carried out with stakeholders. The evaluation team is using the Evaluation Matrix (see Annex A) to guide questioning during interviews. The evaluation team expects to identify other interviewees as it progresses through the interviews. Due to geographic and time constraints, many of the interviews will be conducted by telephone, Skype or similar technology.

Records of all interviews will be maintained confidentially, with only the evaluators able to access them.

To enable comparison between what works and what doesn't work, the evaluation team will also interview people in other complex science systems, e.g., CSIRO in Australia, IDRC in Canada, USDA in USA and EMBRAPA in Brazil.

4.2.2 Review of relevant documents, reports, minutes, etc.

The IEA has provided the evaluation team with over 1 000 pieces of background and current documentation through a shared Dropbox; the evaluation team will request access to any additional documentation that it identifies to be needed.

Documentation that will be reviewed includes i) background documents; ii) past reviews; iii) Fund Council/System Council meeting minutes, iv) ISPC meeting reports; v) Programs of Work and Budgets (PoWB)/Activity Reports; vi) outputs.

From these documents, the evaluation team will derive narratives (e.g. roles, interactions, influence) about the ISPC from the perspectives of the following:

- the System Council;
- the System Management Board;
- the ISPC and ISPC Chair;
- Secretariat of the Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR);
- IEA;
- big donors and smaller donors;
- the Centers;
- CGIAR scientists.

It will then see how these narratives line up with narratives emerging from the interviews.

4.2.3 *Data management and analysis*

Templates, checklists, coding and scoring schemes and guidelines will be used for all document reviews and interviews. All data and documents collected, including interview notes, are being filed by the evaluation team and held in an invitation-only online Dropbox.

The team will communicate frequently to resolve any emerging methodological questions, and to discuss emerging conclusions. Initial findings expressed in the narratives and illustrated in system maps which will be shared with sub-groups of stakeholders for verification.

The final report will reference sources and indicate any known limitations of the evidence used for the analysis.

4.2.4 *The evaluation matrix*

The evaluation matrix (see Annex A) is a key tool in many aspects of the evaluation. It is constructed by setting out for each evaluation question:

- the expanded questions from the terms of reference, section 4;
- prior knowledge needed to answer main questions, in italics in the Evaluation Matrix;
- the issues to examine for each; and
- the proposed sources of information.

4.2.5 *A survey*

It will be impossible to interview everyone we would like to reach. Accordingly, a survey will be sent to stakeholders across CGIAR and possibly some stakeholders outside CGIAR (e.g. research providers in affiliated universities, donors, other close stakeholders and partners). The survey will include the following three fundamental questions:

- What is your understanding of the role of the ISPC?
- What is the major impact of ISPC on CGIAR?
- If you could change one thing about ISPC and how it operates, what would that be? And why?

4.2.6 *Examination of ISPC appointment process*

An important issue emerging from early interviews has been the composition of the ISPC and the appointment of members to it. The evaluation team will describe how members are appointed and how this process has evolved over time with a view to answering the following questions:

- How sound, thought through and effective is the appointment process of council members?
- Are the best people recruited?
- Is there the right skills/disciplinary mix and the right diversity mix?
- Is the duration of terms of office appropriate and are appointments appropriately staggered so there is always some continuity of membership and, hence, corporate memory?
- Are remuneration processes appropriate?

The evaluation team will also explore whether the ISPC conducts self-evaluation of its own performance and, how it seeks and responds to external feedback.

4.2.7 *Specific commissioned work*

The evaluation team believes that there will be at least a few issues which will arise in the course of various analyses which will need more in-depth analysis. These will be tackled by working with IEA to commission specific pieces of work from appropriate experts. Some topics being considered by the team include impact analysis work done in the centers and CRPs (following the recommendation from the SIAC evaluation report

2016)⁸; review of science advisory entities in complex institutions like CGIAR; and knowledge sharing and communication efforts and strategy of the ISPC.

4.3 Bringing it all together

4.3.1 *Triangulation of information from all sources to build a robust and comprehensive conclusion*

The evaluation will then triangulate the interview, document analysis and mapping material, and add in learnings from special analyses (financial, appointment, operational, etc.), to identify major themes, strengths, concerns and suggestions for change, including the alignment and harmonizing of ISPC activities with its key purposes, its Theory of Change and its messaging.

The evaluation team expects the interviews and the documentation together to help it work out how, and how effectively, ISPC interacts with other parts of the System and supports the System's ultimate goals and mission. A particular attribute of the evaluation will be to look at the ISPC's role and functions in this broader sense and setting in the entire CGIAR system.

This analysis of performance will provide a detailed picture of ISPC's strengths and weaknesses.

The triangulation process is expected to provide comprehensive answers to the questions in the Evaluation Matrix.

4.3.2 *Formulate recommendations based on system needs and integrated performance analysis*

The analysis of the performance of ISPC along with key stakeholders' enunciation of what they want from the ISPC will provide the basis of formative recommendations.

4.3.3 *Preliminary report*

The evaluation team will incorporate performance analysis and recommendations in the preliminary report and submit it to IEA for transmission to System Council and ISPC for feedback.

In parallel the evaluation team will test the draft conclusions and recommendations (as contained in the preliminary report) on selected stakeholders.

4.3.4 *Final report*

The evaluation team will then complete the final report, taking into account feedback on the preliminary report.

⁸ IEA is currently collecting evaluative studies, including outcome and impact studies carried out by centers and CRPs over the first cycle of CRPs and beyond with the purpose of mapping them against CGIAR areas. The work will also involve characterization and looking at the quality of a sample of outcome/impact studies. The study should be completed by end of July.

4.4 Main limitations of the evaluation

Some of the main limitations for this review are:

- given that CGIAR is a very large, complex and evolving organization, to be relevant and helpful, the evaluation team needs to understand this complex context ISPC sits in. There is a risk that some of these nuances be missed. *Mitigation:* ISPC is a system within the larger CGIAR system, therefore the evaluation framework itself chosen rests on systems analysis. To capture the various nuances, the team is carrying out several interviews with a range of resource persons and stakeholders to gain understanding of these nuances and their influence on ISPC;
- there are many sources of scientific advice in various parts of CGIAR. While they need to be generically figured in the evaluation, covering all of these and understanding in depth how they interact is beyond the scope of this evaluation. *Mitigation:* the team will pursue understanding the main instruments of science reviews and advice in the system (peer reviews of papers; reviews of center programs and CRPs; reviews of bilaterally funded programs, center board program committees; advisory groups of CRPs, etc.) and use the systems analysis framework to find their role and relative weight in science advice and quality assurance;
- there are many cultures within and across CGIAR, including cultures associated with many countries where CGIAR operates in and cultures associated with many scientific disciplines. It is possible that the evaluation will not tune in adequately to these various cultures. *Mitigation:* The evaluation team has expertise in systems and institutional analysis and biological sciences, which can help in understanding different disciplinary cultures. ISPC Secretariat can support the team in reflecting on cultural differences and pointing to center reviews, which can illuminate these issues;
- that most of the interviews will have to be conducted remotely. *Mitigation:* The team is making sure that all key informants and stakeholders will be interviewed in person, and is also taking advantage of a few ISPC meetings to be able to make several face-to-face interviews.
- the evaluation team will have only limited exposure to the main system level meetings e.g., of the System Council, the System Management Board and the ISPC itself. *Mitigation:* This is a serious constraint given that the ISPC is accountable to the SC, making it important for the team to understand what their guidance and main concerns would be. The team will have in-depth interviews with the Chair of the SC, and with several of the members. Many will also be included at the verification stage.

4.5 Challenges of the counterfactual question of not having an ISPC

There are methodological challenges associated with this question. The main source of information will come from key informants in the system. The team will bring this up in some of the interviews to explore anticipated effects and impacts. The system analysis will implicitly inform this question by showing which functions will not be there in the absence of an ISPC, and how those might be filled in, or whether it is likely that critical gaps will remain. Some qualitative scenarios will be developed to envision the dynamic of the system in the absence of a central science advisory body. Lastly, reviews of science advisory bodies and their evolution in other similar organizations is likely to bring in interesting experience, challenges and coping strategies of such bodies and their functions.

5 Organization and timing of the evaluation

5.1 Team composition and responsibilities

The team is composed of two independent, external consultants: Emeritus Professor Mary O’Kane (team leader, based in Australia) and Dr Eija Pehu. Professor O’Kane is widely involved in science policy and program evaluation for international organizations and national governments around the world. She has had no interaction with CGIAR since her brief involvement with a seminar in 2008. Dr Pehu is a former science advisor in agriculture and rural development at the World Bank, and former Professor of Agronomy and Head of the Department of Plant Production at the University of Helsinki. Both have declared no conflict of interests.

During the Inquiry and Analysis phase, until mid-August, Dr Pehu will focus on interviews and, being located in Europe, will attend significant CGIAR events such as the June annual meeting of CRP leaders and DDGs in Montpellier. Professor O’Kane will particularly focus on a desk review of documentation including financial information, textual analysis and triangulation of interview content, and mapping of the characteristics of successful science advisory bodies. She will also undertake interviews, particularly those that are based in the eastern hemisphere. All information and outputs will be shared between the team members through frequent calls and email exchanges.

In the second half of August and first part of September, the evaluation team will formulate findings and recommendations, and apply a quality assurance process to its findings. If, in that time, any special issues arise, specialist consultants will be engaged to write reports or provide advice on specific topics.

Professor O’Kane, as evaluation team leader, has final responsibility for the evaluation report and all the findings and recommendations.

5.2 Management and governance of the evaluation

The evaluation team understands that IEA will work with the evaluation team and ISPC Secretariat to ensure any further documents requested by the evaluation team are accessible.

The IEA is responsible for commissioning the evaluation, facilitating introductions to parts of the system, identifying and providing access to key documents by way of Dropbox, reviewing drafts against evaluation standards; disseminating the preliminary report, and sharing it with the ISPC and the System Council.

The evaluation team, as a fully independent team, is responsible for quality and probity control, and maintaining an independent and unbiased outlook throughout the evaluation.

The Chair of ISPC, in consultation with ISPC members and ISPC Secretariat, will be responsible for preparing a Management Response.

5.3 Timeline

The evaluation timeline is as follows:

Inquiry and analysis phase	June & July	Interviews, desk review etc.
Synthesis phase	August	Bringing together results from all the different analyses
	Mid-September to October	Presentation of preliminary findings at ISPC meeting and SC virtual meeting Consultation with major stakeholders
	October 15	Final Evaluation report
	October 30	ISPC Management Response

5.4 Deliverables and Dissemination Plans

A preliminary report, containing the main findings and proposed recommendations, will be presented at the ISPC meeting in mid-September, and at the System Council virtual meeting in late September. It will also be shared with major stakeholders so that feedback can be provided.

The final report (maximum 60 pages without annexes) will be the main output of the evaluation, and will describe findings, conclusions and recommendations that are clearly articulated, and with guidance on their implementation. It will take into account the feedback received on the preliminary report, and be submitted by the end of October to IEA, which will manage its dissemination, request the preparation of a management response by ISPC, and submit the report and the management response to the System Council for its November session.

Annex A: Evaluation Matrix

	EVALUATION QUESTIONS from evaluation terms of reference and from evaluation team’s preliminary analysis	Expanded questions (<i>prior knowledge needed to answer question in italics</i>)	Indicators (where relevant) or means of verification	Proposed information sources
	Strategic overarching questions			
	Do ISPC contributions lead to improvements in the overall delivery of CGIAR’s vision, mission and goals (reducing poverty, improving food and nutrition security and improving natural resources and ecosystems)?			<i>Interviews and answers to questions below</i>
	The counterfactual proposition – what would be the effect on the System if the ISPC didn’t exist?	<i>Understanding of what ISPC mandate and its work. (?)</i>		<i>Interviews and answers to questions below</i>
0.	Core questions			
a.	Does everyone involved in the System have a clear concept of the ISPC’s formal role and functions, what it actually does, how it reports to and communicates with different stakeholders, and how it assesses impact?			<i>interviews</i>
b.	Where is the ISPC very effective and where is it less effective?			<i>interviews</i>

Evaluation of ISPC – Inception Report

	EVALUATION QUESTIONS from evaluation terms of reference and from evaluation team’s preliminary analysis	Expanded questions (<i>prior knowledge needed to answer question in italics</i>)	Indicators (where relevant) or means of verification	Proposed information sources
c.	Which parts of the System particularly value the ISPC and why, and which parts have reservations and concerns and why?			<i>Interviews, other evaluations</i>
d.	How do we know the ISPC is working, and are the current KPIs for measuring effectiveness correct?			<i>Interviews, other evaluations</i>
e.	What changes could be made to the ISPC and inter-connecting bodies to make it highly effective, who would need to act and over what time frame, and which changes would need to be done quickly and which would be of lower priority?			<i>Interview, best-practice comparisons</i>
1.	Relevance, value-added and adequacy			
a.	Are the mandate, functions, and scope of the ISPC relevant and adequate, in particular in the context of the CGIAR goals, vision & mission; reform of CGIAR; and of the evolving challenges in agriculture research for development?	<p><i>What are the mandate, functions, and scope of the ISPC?</i></p> <p><i>How is there a line of sight from them to CGIAR goals, vision & mission?</i></p> <p><i>[Note changes to them that were part of CGIAR reforms]</i></p> <p><i>What are the main evolving challenges in agriculture research for development?</i></p>	<i>Coherence of expectations by different stakeholders</i>	<p><i>Charters of System Council (SC), Management Board, ISPC, Centers & CRPs</i></p> <p><i>Theories of Change associated with various System bodies</i></p> <p><i>Mid-term Review</i></p>

Evaluation of ISPC – Inception Report

	EVALUATION QUESTIONS from evaluation terms of reference and from evaluation team’s preliminary analysis	Expanded questions (<i>prior knowledge needed to answer question in italics</i>)	Indicators (where relevant) or means of verification	Proposed information sources
		Are they: i. relevant and ii. adequate in the context of: 1. the CGIAR goals, vision & mission 2. reform of CGIAR 3. the evolving challenges in agriculture research for development?	Aligned theories of change that are working in practice ISPC actions cause delivery on reform KPIs ISPC actions cause System to focus & deliver better on evolving challenges	<i>Interviews with CGIAR & recognized agricultural experts</i> <i>Major statements by CGIAR, MLDBs, foundations such as BMGF</i> Interviews Minutes of and reports to/from SC, SMB, centers & CRPs highlighting influence of ISPC or problems getting what is needed from ISP
b.	Is the new Theory of Change appropriate and fit for purpose in light of evolving system needs?	<i>How has ISPC ToC changed and why?</i> <i>What are the evolving system needs?</i> <i>Assumptions about how we know a ToC is appropriate fit for purpose?</i> Is ToC appropriate and fit for purpose?	All relevant stakeholders understand ISPC sufficiently & consider it fits in with their theories of change & help them deliver	<i>ISPC papers re changes to ToC</i> <i>SC, SMB, Centre & CRP minutes; Mid-term review ToC theory</i>
c.	Was the balance of efforts among the four strategic pillars of the ISPC appropriate at the time they were in	<i>What was the balance of efforts among the four strategic pillars of the ISPC? Did it evolve over time? By what mechanism?</i>	All relevant stakeholders, and the System Council in	<i>Historical documents</i> <i>Interviews</i>

Evaluation of ISPC – Inception Report

	EVALUATION QUESTIONS from evaluation terms of reference and from evaluation team’s preliminary analysis	Expanded questions (prior knowledge needed to answer question in italics)	Indicators (where relevant) or means of verification	Proposed information sources
	place - and is the current structure appropriate for the changing conditions?	<p><i>What is the current structure? How will it be revisited & assessed by ISPC?</i></p> <p>Was the balance of efforts among the four strategic pillars of the ISPC appropriate at the time?</p> <p>Is the current structure appropriate for the changing conditions?</p>	particular, see the effort as balanced	<p><i>Current ISPC structure</i></p> <p><i>ISPC minutes</i></p> <p><i>Interviews</i></p> <p>Interviews</p> <p>SC, SMB & ISPC interviews & comment</p>
d.	<p>What is the relevance, value-added and adequacy of the ISPC roles and activities with respect to: strategies for partnerships along the research for development continuum, strategy and trends, science leadership, and <i>ex post</i> impact assessment vis-à-vis other CGIAR stakeholders involved in these activities? Are there gaps or redundancies?</p>	<p><i>ISPC roles and activities with respect to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>strategies for partnerships along the research for development continuum</i> • <i>strategy and trends</i> • <i>science leadership</i> • <i>Impact assessment?</i> <p>What is the relevance, value-added and adequacy of the ISPC roles and activities with respect to these factors?</p> <p>Are there gaps or redundancies?</p> <p>How has the total investment in ISPC (and associated bodies) evolved over time in relationship with having a minimum but</p>	<p>Interviews show widespread stakeholder satisfaction with engagement & delivery on these factors</p> <p>Gaps & redundancies showing up in desktop analysis and in interviews</p>	<p>Interviews and maybe survey providing <i>ex post</i> assessment vis-à-vis other CGIAR stakeholders involved in these activities</p> <p>Interviews & charters of other science advisory bodies across the system</p>

Evaluation of ISPC – Inception Report

	EVALUATION QUESTIONS from evaluation terms of reference and from evaluation team’s preliminary analysis	Expanded questions (prior knowledge needed to answer question in italics)	Indicators (where relevant) or means of verification	Proposed information sources
		efficient set of human/scientific capabilities to deliver on the expectations? <i>(sic)</i>		
2.	Functional Performance			
a.	Is the advice that the ISPC provides to the System Council, System Management Board (previously Consortium) and CGIAR scientific community credible and is it used by these entities?	<p><i>What types of advice does ISPC provide to various bodies?</i></p> <p><i>What mechanisms does ISPC use to ensure credibility of this advice?</i></p> <p><i>How do System Council & other bodies test credibility?</i></p> <p><i>How do various system bodies commission, absorb and decide to use ISPC advice?</i></p> <p>Is the advice that the ISPC provides to various system bodies credible and is it used by these entities?</p>	<p>Explicit effective credibility assurance mechanisms in place</p> <p>Multiple reports on the same or similar topics agree</p> <p>Many examples of use of ISPC advice leading to body using advice being effective in delivery of its own outcomes</p>	<p><i>ISPC processes</i></p> <p><i>Processes of other system bodies for commissioning, absorbing and deciding to use ISPC advice?</i></p> <p><i>Interviews</i></p> <p>Reports of reviews & assessments</p> <p>Interviews</p> <p>See results on 3b below and 3c (are results acted upon?) and 1a above where you also document influence of ISPC on actions of others</p>
b.	To what extent have outputs been produced as planned under each activity area? What are the main enabling	<i>What is mechanism for producing plans for outputs under each activity area and having them approved?</i>	<i>ISPC work program & budget reflect</i>	<i>ISPC operational plan</i>

Evaluation of ISPC – Inception Report

	EVALUATION QUESTIONS from evaluation terms of reference and from evaluation team’s preliminary analysis	Expanded questions (<i>prior knowledge needed to answer question in italics</i>)	Indicators (where relevant) or means of verification	Proposed information sources
	factors or constraints that explain the achievement of plans (or lack of)? And, to what extent have the ISPC’s outputs been used by its main stakeholder groups?	<p><i>What is mechanism for checking delivery against plans?</i></p> <p>To what extent have outputs been produced as planned under each activity area?</p> <p>What are enabling factors & constraints? How can constraints be ameliorated?</p> <p>To what extent have the ISPC’s outputs been used by its main stakeholder groups?</p>	<p><i>statements in plans communicated to SC</i></p> <p>Annual reports aligning with plans & budget before year started</p> <p>Perception of delivery by stakeholders</p> <p>Many examples of use of ISPC advice leading to body using advice being effective in delivery of its own outcomes</p>	<p><i>ISPC budget & financial statements over several years</i></p> <p><i>Interviews</i></p> <p>ISPC annual report</p> <p>Interviews</p> <p>See results on 3a above</p>
c.	How effective is the ISPC in communicating and disseminating its products and advice to the System Council and other CGIAR stakeholders it targets	<p><i>How does ISPC communicate and disseminate its products and advice to the System Council and other CGIAR stakeholders it targets?</i></p> <p><i>Are its products used and advice acted on?</i></p> <p>How effective is the ISPC in communicating and disseminating its products and advice to SC & targeted stakeholders?</p>	<p><i>Record of communication & dissemination mechanisms agreed by ISPC & SC</i></p> <p>Stakeholders clear they have received the communications & disseminated results and</p>	<p><i>ISPC process documents</i></p> <p><i>Process documents from other system bodies illustrating how they take on board ISPC advice</i></p> <p>Interviews</p> <p>Examples of good & not-so-good ISPC communications</p>

Evaluation of ISPC – Inception Report

	EVALUATION QUESTIONS from evaluation terms of reference and from evaluation team’s preliminary analysis	Expanded questions (<i>prior knowledge needed to answer question in italics</i>)	Indicators (where relevant) or means of verification	Proposed information sources
			they are in a useful form for them	
d.	To what extent has the ISPC leadership and advice influenced CGIAR strategic directions, learning and decision-making, in particular (but not exclusively) with respect to: research prioritization, approval of CRPs (past and current portfolio), SRF, effective partnership strategies, and <i>ex post</i> impact assessment?	<i>How is ISPC leadership and advice supposed (according to frameworks, charters & formally agreed work plans etc.) to influence CGIAR strategic directions, learning and decision-making, in particular with respect to: research prioritization, approval of CRPs (past and current portfolio), SRF, effective partnership strategies, and ex post impact assessment?</i> Have these expectations been met? Exceeded? Slipped in certain respects?	CGIAR and especially ISPC’s key stakeholders perceive ISPC as influential & helpful	<i>Charters, work plans etc.</i> Interviews
3.	Operational Performance			
a.	Are the institutional set-up, composition, budget, processes and modalities of work of the ISPC, including SPIA and ISPC Secretariat, appropriate for the ISPC to perform its functions effectively and in a timely, cost-effective manner?	<i>What are the institutional set-up, composition, budget, processes and modalities of work of the ISPC, including SPIA and ISPC Secretariat? How often are they reviewed and tweaked?</i> Do they enable ISPC to perform its functions effectively and in a timely, cost-effective manner? How does the design and operational model of the ISPC compare to that of similar scientific advisory bodies of international organizations?	ISPC is and is perceived as administratively efficient & effective. Compares favorably with other research advisory bodies and other CGIAR bodies on	<i>Charters, work plans etc.</i> Interviews

Evaluation of ISPC – Inception Report

	EVALUATION QUESTIONS from evaluation terms of reference and from evaluation team’s preliminary analysis	Expanded questions (<i>prior knowledge needed to answer question in italics</i>)	Indicators (where relevant) or means of verification	Proposed information sources
			efficiency and effectiveness measures	Efficiency and effectiveness measures on ISPC and comparator bodies
b.	<p>Does the Council operate in a manner optimal for it to be able to provide independent advice while being sufficiently informed about the entities and activities its advice concerns?</p> <p>In particular:</p>	<p><i>What do ISPC and its stakeholders regard as optimal operational performance by ISPC?</i></p> <p><i>Does ISPC inform itself sufficiently about the entities and activities its advice concerns?</i></p> <p>Does the Council operate in a manner optimal for it to be able to provide independent advice while being sufficiently informed about the entities and activities its advice concerns?</p>	ISPC is perceived as operating independently, providing high quality appropriate advice	Interviews
i.	<p>Is the selection of the ISPC members congruent with the requirement of independence? Are the roles and functions of its members clear as per their Terms of Reference?</p>	<p><i>According to Article 6.1 of System Framework, the System Council select ISPC Chair and members and ensures process for annual reviews.</i></p> <p><i>How does this work in practice? What is done to ensure independence? When was the last annual review? How does the Selection Panel work? Is it effective in getting a good field of candidates?</i></p> <p>Is the selection of the ISPC members congruent with the requirement of independence? Are the</p>		<p><i>Documents, files or letters relating to ISPC Chair & selection</i></p> <p><i>Selection panel reports</i></p> <p><i>Annual review reports</i></p>

Evaluation of ISPC – Inception Report

	EVALUATION QUESTIONS from evaluation terms of reference and from evaluation team’s preliminary analysis	Expanded questions (<i>prior knowledge needed to answer question in italics</i>)	Indicators (where relevant) or means of verification	Proposed information sources
		roles and functions of its members clear as per their Terms of Reference?		Interviews
ii.	Is there clarity (on the part of the ISPC council members, SPIA members and/or others in the CGIAR system) on the respective roles and functions of SPIA and the ISPC?	<i>What are the roles of ISPC & SPIA?</i> Is there clarity on respective roles & functions by bodies themselves & other key bodies in the system?		<i>Charter documents; work plans etc.</i> Interviews
iii.	Is the relationship between the ISPC, SPIA and the ISPC and SPIA Secretariats effective?	<i>What is the nature of the relationship between the ISPC, SPIA and the ISPC and SPIA Secretariats?</i> <i>Does SPIA provides essential information to ISPC for decision making and vice versa?</i> Are the relationships effective?	All parties involved agree it is effective or agree where things could improve	Interviews
iv.	To what extent does the ISPC Council and Secretariat expertise cover research areas and interests relative to aspects of the CGIAR mandate? Is there appropriate use of external expertise?	<i>In what circumstances is external advice used? How are exxternal experts located? What are the commissiong & reporting arrangements?</i> To what extent does the ISPC Council and Secretariat expertise cover research areas and interests relative to aspects of the CGIAR mandate?		<i>Examples of external advice & how it was commissioned/used</i> Interviews

Evaluation of ISPC – Inception Report

	EVALUATION QUESTIONS from evaluation terms of reference and from evaluation team’s preliminary analysis	Expanded questions (<i>prior knowledge needed to answer question in italics</i>)	Indicators (where relevant) or means of verification	Proposed information sources
		Do mechanisms for external advice work well? Is there appropriate use of external expertise?	All parties involved agree external advice is used well	
v.	To what extent has the Fund Council (now System Council) been effective as a mechanism for oversight and guidance?	<i>By what mechanism does the Fund Council (now System Council) provide oversight and guidance?</i> Is it effective?	Expectations and oversight mechanisms are documented (SG) ISPC & key stakeholders including donors all agree System Council provides appropriate oversight and guidance	Charters etc. Interviews
vi.	Are the levels and forms of interaction with CGIAR system units (System Council, System Organization, IEA) adequate for serving the needs of both the ISPC and its CGIAR stakeholders?	<i>What are the levels and forms of interaction with CGIAR system units?</i> Is the information that is exchanged from and to the ISPC from the other system units, and from those units to the CGIAR stakeholders, valuable? Are they adequate for serving the needs of both the ISPC and its CGIAR stakeholders?		Charters etc. Interviews
c.	Secretariat			

	EVALUATION QUESTIONS from evaluation terms of reference and from evaluation team’s preliminary analysis	Expanded questions (<i>prior knowledge needed to answer question in italics</i>)	Indicators (where relevant) or means of verification	Proposed information sources
i.	Is the Secretariat adequately set up and organized to support the mission and the work of the ISPC?	<i>How is the Secretariat set up and organized to support the mission and the work of the ISPC?</i> Is this appropriate?	ISPC, Secretariat & key stakeholders perceive arrangements as good	<i>Work plan, organizational chart</i> Interviews
ii.	How adequate are the Secretariat’s human and financial resources to perform its function?	<i>What are the Secretariat’s human and financial resources?</i> Are they adequate?	ISPC, Secretariat & key stakeholders perceive arrangements as good	<i>Budget, work plan</i> Interviews

Annex B: List of people interviewed

Name	Center/Affiliation	Position
Maggie Gill	ISPC	ISPC Chair
Holger Meinke	ISPC	ISPC Council Member
Leslie Lipper	ISPC	ISPC Secretariat Executive Director
Jeff Sayer	James Cook University	Former ISPC Council Member
Anne-Marie Izac	Independent scientist	Former Chief Science Officer of Consortium Office, Chair of FTA CRP Independent Steering Committee
Tony Cavaleri	Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	Senior Program Officer
Jonathan Wadsworth	World Bank	Former Executive Secretary, CGIAR Fund Council
John McDermott	IFPRI	A4NH CRP Director
Stephen Hall	Avalerion Capital	Former DG WorldFish
Ravi Prabhu	ICRAF	DDG
Tom Randolph	ILRI	Livestock CRP Director
Bas Bouman	IRRI	RICE CRP Director
Karen Brooks	IFPRI	PIM CRP Director
Jacqueline Hughes	IRRI	DDG
Hans Braun	CIMMYT	WHEAT CRP Director
Victor Kommerell	CIMMYT	WHEAT Program Manager
Marianne Banziger	CIMMYT	DDG
Stephan Weise	Bioversity International	DDG
Etienne Duveiller	AfricaRice	DDG
Oscar Ortiz	CIP	DDG
Vincent Gitz	CIFOR	FTA CRP Director
Peter Gardiner	CGIAR System Office	Senior Manager, Program Performance
Philip Chiverton	Senior Research Advisor	SIDA & System Council member

Annex C: Short Bios of Evaluation Team Members

Team Leader - Emeritus Professor Mary O’Kane AC

Mary is a consultant and company director. She is Executive Chairman of O’Kane Associates, advising governments and the private sector on innovation, research, education and development. She is also Chief Scientist & Engineer (3 days/week) for the Government of New South Wales. Mary was Vice-Chancellor and President of the University of Adelaide (one of Australia’s most distinguished performers in agricultural and biological sciences research) from 1996- 2001 and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) from 1994-1996.

Before that she was Dean of the Faculty of Information Sciences and Engineering at the University of Canberra. Her research field was automatic speech recognition. Mary has served on several boards and committees in the public, private and community sectors, especially related to development, research, engineering, ICT, energy, and science. From 2009-15 she was Chair of the Development Gateway, ‘an international nonprofit delivering technology and information solutions for international development’ (<http://www.developmentgateway.org/about/>).

She is currently chair of the Boards of the Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) for Spatial Information, the Space Environment Management CRC, and of the Institute of Marine and Antarctic Studies at the University of Tasmania. She serves on the boards of Business Events Sydney Ltd, Queensland University of Technology, the New Zealand Antarctic Research Institute, the Development Gateway, the Capital Markets CRC and the Innovative Manufacturing CRC. She was Chair of the Australian Centre for Renewable Energy, a Director of FH Faulding & Co Ltd and was a Member of the Australian Research Council, the Cooperative Research Centres Committee and the Boards of the CSIRO and NICTA. Mary is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering and an Honorary Fellow of Engineers Australia. In January 2016 she was awarded the Companion of the Order of Australia (AC), that country’s highest civilian honour.



Team Member – Dr Eija Pehu

Dr Eija Pehu joined the Agriculture Global Practice of the World Bank in 2000 as the Science Advisor. She led the Department's program on agricultural research, extension and innovation interacting with both external partners including the CGIAR and academia as well as national and regional research organizations involved in the field operations supported by the World Bank.

Prior to joining the World Bank, Dr Pehu was a Professor of Agronomy and Head of the Department of Plant Production at the University of Helsinki and the founder and science director of two start-up companies in the Helsinki Science Park. She earned her Ph.D. in Horticulture from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University and her M.Sc. degree from the Department of Crop Production, University of Helsinki with her field work conducted in Tanzania and India.



Dr Pehu has published extensively in cellular biology, physiology and biotechnology of crops, and also in tropical agriculture and international development. Her major interests in development are institutional designs of organizing science and innovation, including public-private partnerships and uptake pathways for new technologies. In all her development work she has an interest to understand and integrate gender.