

**Special Issue**
(28 October-1 November)

Philippines welcomes CGIAR AGM 2002 delegates

The Philippines welcomes the guests, delegates, and participants to the 2002 Annual General Meeting of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). For the first time, this international event is held outside the USA. Previous yearly meetings were conducted only in Washington, D.C.

The invitation to hold the general meeting in the country was granted due to the Philippines' long term support and membership to CGIAR and its well-known reputation in agricultural research and close working relationship with scientists and farmers in the Southeast Asian region.

Starting this year, the hosting of the AGM will be alternated between Washington D.C. and a member country to provide more interaction among CGIAR members and the host country.

CGIAR is an international alliance of 58 countries and private sector members that supports a network of 16 International Agricultural Research

Centers (IARCS), including the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), which is based in Los Baños, Laguna, Philippines.

AGM is a weeklong series of meetings and activities attended by about 500 participants from 58 countries to discuss various strategic concerns that affect the CGIAR and its centers, and eventually, the national systems for agricultural research of member countries.

Participants to AGM 2002 include: the CGIAR Governing Council, representatives of member countries and institutions, heads of CGIAR research centers, donor agencies, international agricultural organizations, members of the local diplomatic corps and international scientists. Also, a total of 100 participants are from the Philippines representing the agriculture and fisheries sectors, the scientific community, and the private sector members. The Philippine



delegation is coordinated by the Department of Agriculture (DA) through the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR).

The AGM 2002 is composed of nine major events, namely: Pre AGM 2002 Meetings, Philippines Day, IRRI Day, Sir John Crawford Memorial Lecture, Philippine Reception, Stakeholders Meeting, Business Meeting, Post AGM Conference, and Post AGM Events.

The Pre AGM 2002 Meetings are gatherings of CGIAR officials to four important activities: Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR), CGIAR Committee of Board Chairs (CBC) Meeting, CGIAR Center Directors' Committee (CDC) Meeting, and CGIAR Executive Committee Meeting.

On 28 October, the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) in coordination with the DA and member

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New members expand CGIAR alliance

Four new members have been welcomed into the Consultative Group on International Agriculture (CGIAR). Malaysia, Morocco, Israel and The Syngenta Foundation are acclaimed as new members at the Annual General Meeting of the CGIAR held in Manila today.

The new members bring the total membership to 62, including 23 developing countries and 23 industrialised countries and 4 foundations.

"I am delighted to see this increase in the membership of the CGIAR," Ian Johnson, Chair of the CGIAR said this decision demonstrates the continuing importance of new institutions like the CGIAR alliance. This interest in membership is further recognition of the value of the world class research work undertaken by

CGIAR Centers and increases our resources available for solving the problems of poverty, hunger and under development, he adds.

According to Mr Johnson: "All new members strengthen the alliance and we are extremely proud to have such a strong developing country membership. It is this membership which ensures that the alliance is completely focused on the issues of most importance in the developing world."

Malaysia is currently host to ICLARM, The World Fish Center. Morocco and Israel's membership will deliver invaluable resources in dry land farming.

Membership of The Syngenta Foundation brings the number of foundation members to four. (From a Media Release)

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Mabuhay!

Welcome to sunny Philippines!
Mabuhay!

Mabuhay is a Filipino term that is replete with meaning. It means 'welcome', 'long live' or 'we wish you success'. And still it could be all of these at one time. So, to our guests, visitors, and partners of the Consultative Group of International Agricultural Research Centers (CGIAR) Annual General Meeting (AGM) 2002, we say, 'Mabuhay'.

Sometimes, words are not enough to eloquently signify what is in the heart and in the mind but we would like you to know that your coming here to our country will, for a long time, be remembered by us for congenial and compelling reasons. We have been your partner for more than two decades, indeed long enough for you to also see us at our home base. The relationship is even longer if we consider that the International Rice

Research Institute (IRRI) has been in our country since the early sixties. To us, Filipinos, to play host has some cultural significance. You honor us by your coming and the country is privileged to be your host.

Maybe, it is immodesty to say that we, Filipinos, are known for our proverbial hospitality. We take pride in the warmth we extend to anyone who comes to us, friend or

otherwise. And we go great lengths to make our visitors feel comfortable.

One foreigner who regularly travels to the country once commented that as soon as he enters the Philippine Air Lines, is met with warm and cheery smiles by the crew, sees Filipino faces and hears their conversations until he sets foot on Philippine soils, he knows he is in a friendly territory. He longs for this warmth. And he keeps coming just for it.

But try as we did, to be meticulous in every detail, there may still be some that we miss. We assure you that, that is a sin of omission never a commission.

The post-AGM activities include tours to educational and recreational sites near the venue and may not be to the tourist and historical areas that our country is proud of. We are an archipelago of more than 7000 islands and this information alone can conjure warm and crystal waters, beautiful sceneries and a flora and fauna that are uniquely ours. Try to stay and savor them. Or better still, come again some other time, minus a CGIAR-AGM note. And the Filipino hospitality will still be there.

It is indeed an honor for the Philippines to host the CGIAR AGM 2002. We wish you a pleasant and fruitful stay.

MABUHAY!

Philippine welcomes CGIAR...

institutions of the Los Baños Science Community (LBSC) hosts the Philippine Day. The event features exhibits, cultural presentations and site visits focusing on the Philippines' agricultural and forestry research, on: 1) crops, livestock, and fisheries; and 2) forestry, natural resources management, and biodiversity.

October 29 is the IRRI Day. Participants are toured around the IRRI experiments and facilities. CGIAR's programs on biodiversity, environmental protection, better nutrition, new breeding, and new training and information sharing approaches are discussed. At night, participants proceed to the Shangri-La Hotel, Makati City for the Sir John Crawford Memorial Lecture.

Every year, CGIAR invites a distinguished speaker to lecture on an issue that needs to be addressed globally. This event is in honor of Sir John Crawford who was one of the founders of CGIAR. This year's lecturer is Dr. Mohamed El-Ashry, chairman and chief executive officer of the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

The Stakeholders Meeting is scheduled on 30-31 October at the Makati Shangri-La Hotel. The agenda to be discussed include: Implications of 2002 Summit, Centers' Forum, 2002 CGIAR Excellence in Science Awards, CGIAR's Reform and Challenge Programs.

On the night of 30 October, is the Philippine Reception to honor the participants. The dinner is sponsored by DA through BAR. On 1 November, participants gather for the Business Meeting to discuss various agenda, namely: progress in implementing the CGIAR reform program, evaluation of system-wide programs, discussion of information Strategy Co-ordinator (ISC), CGIAR financing plans, and perspectives from the Centers.

During the Post AGM Conference, the CGIAR Chairman Ian Johnson spends time with the members of the media, both local and international to make important announcements. Ending the AGM are educational and recreational tours to various sites in the country. After the tour, the AGM participants proceed to ICLARM (The World Fish Center) Headquarters in Penang, Malaysia for a symposium on, "Fish for all initiative." (Rita T. dela Cruz)

BAR lends a hand for smooth AGM

As the host for the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) 2002 Annual General Meeting (AGM), the Department of Agriculture (DA) has designated BAR to lead in the preparations for the said international event. About 500 foreign participants come to the country for the 2002 AGM. Most of them are heads and representatives of CGIAR research centers, representatives of international organizations, representatives of donor

countries, and foreign scientists.

To ensure smooth and orderly hosting of the AGM in Manila and Los Baños, Laguna, BAR has been coordinating with the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB), Department of Tourism (DOT), International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), and the national research, development and extension (RDE) networks for the Philippine/IRRI days on October 28-

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Philippine Day features R&D highlights

October 28 is the Philippine Day. It is our chance to present to the world our achievements in agriculture research and development.

The University of the Philippines Los Banos (UPLB), in coordination with the Department of Agriculture- Bureau of Agricultural Research (DA- BAR) and the Los Banos Science Community, hosts this event.

In the short program, the delegates and the dignitaries are welcomed by UPLB Chancellor Wilfredo David and Laguna Governor Teresita Lazaro. BAR Director Eliseo Ponce talks on Philippine R&D and the country's partnership with CGIAR while Ms. Angeline Kamba, member of IRRI Board of Trustees, expounds on IRRI's partnership.

This day is highlighted by the message of Philippine Department of Agriculture (DA) Secretary Leonardo Montemayor. CGIAR Chairman Ian Johnson gives the response.

After the program, the AGM delegates view the simultaneous exhibits at the College of Forestry and Natural Resources and at the Institute of Plant Breeding. The theme, "Towards a Food-Secure Philippines," is given meaning through exhibits, video presentations, interactive computer program and publications.

The exhibit is participated in by the different units of UPLB, the RDE networks in agriculture and fisheries, Environmental Research and Development Bureau (ERDB), Philippine Council for Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCARRD), Philippine Council for Aquatic and Marine Resources Research and Development (PCAMRD), SEAMEO Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA), Philippine Carabao Center (PCC), Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), and CGIAR centers that have local offices in the country.

The exhibits showcase the country's research capacities and technologies in food and industrial crops, fisheries and livestock, engineering and post harvest technologies, biodiversity and the social sciences. There are also exhibits of other agencies involved in research and development in agriculture.

Dr. Candida Adalla, dean of the College of Agriculture, UPLB and one of the coordinators of the exhibit, believes that the eight modules that comprise the exhibits will catch the interests of the AGM delegates. "We will have the chance to show our research activities and capabilities, the quality of our researches and staff and our programs in research, extension and instruction."

Dr. Enrico Supangco, national team leader for Livestock RDE Network, disclosed that there are live exhibits of cross breed carabao and chickens, products using new post production processing technologies for carabeef and buffalo and for goat skin. Some vaccines from the National Institute of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology-UPLB and kits for the improvement of nutrition and feeding systems of livestock are also displayed.

The Legumes RDE Network presents the improved varieties of legumes while the Rubber RDE Network shows the six clones of rubber. The Fiber Network presents the technology for somatic embryogenesis and propagation of fiber crops planting materials. Microorganisms that act as biological control agents for abaca aphids are also shown.

The importance of conserving biodiversity in the Philippines is also emphasized. Prof. Teresita Borromeo of the National Plant Genetic Resources Laboratory (NPGRL) hopes that through their exhibits in biodiversity, they are able to communicate to the viewers the Philippines' program on biodiversity conservation. According to her, "the exhibit is a good venue to make the people aware of the value of conservation in ensuring that the next generation to come after us are food-secure."

Technologies such as the propagation of dragon fruit and organic eggplant are also showcased. According



UPLB, the premier state university of the country, hosts the Philippine Day.

to Dr. Rodel Maghirang, one of the scientists from the Institute of Plant Breeding, "we also present how we do hydroponics here in the country."

These are some of the many exhibits on the Philippine Day. UPLB Vice Chancellor for Research and Extension, Jezie Acorda, expressed that, "this is a great opportunity for the country to interact, form linkages and explore partnerships with international research centers."

After the opening program, the delegates are grouped into two with the first group proceeding to the Agricultural Sciences Research Complex, College of Agriculture. The exhibits are on crops, livestock and fisheries. The second group proceeds to the other venue at the Makiling Botanical Garden, College of Forestry campus. The exhibits are on forestry, natural resources management, fisheries and biodiversity.

The exhibits are open to the public the next day. (Maria Rowena S.A. Briones)

IRRI Day

IRRI highlights research agenda

by Thea Kristina M. Pabuayon and Junelyn S. de la Rosa

Rice science for a better world is the theme of the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) Day, according to Dr. Michael Jackson, IRRI's director for Program Planning and Coordination.

Centering on its theme, IRRI showcases highlights of its research agenda by focusing on programs on education and knowledge, water, breeding for poverty and nutrition, cutting-edge science, and the environment.

About 500 visitors from 60-80 countries tour IRRI's facilities and experimental farms on-board tractor-drawn trailers. Each specially-designed trailer seats 50 people and resembles a grandstand with three layers of seats, a canopy and its own sound system and is manned by one or two tour guides.

A lunch picnic for the visitors is served in the front lawn of the main building.

"This event is very significant because this is our first real opportunity in 40 years to have CGIAR members and donors come here," Duncan Macintosh, IRRI Head of Visitors and Information Services explains. "Believe it or not, some of these donors who give lots of money to rice research and Philippine agriculture have never been here, so we want to show them what IRRI has accomplished, we want to show them achievements," he says.

"An institute such as IRRI that has a history going back 40 years is doing a lot of work. And it's doing work from the molecule up to the watershed. That is the scope of IRRI's research agenda. We plan to show our visitors elements of our research program that are at the cutting-edge of science and are showing impact in the field with farmers right now," Jackson adds.

Knowledge equals empowerment

"The latest electronic technology can be used to insure that knowledge is in the hands of the people at the right time so they can make the right decisions, Jackson explains". This is the reason behind IRRI's "Rice Knowledge Bank", the world's first comprehensive digital rice production library. The knowledge bank is an impressive repository of information on rice that has been accumulated in the last

40 years. It is in electronic digital form and can be deployed in paper, CD-Rom, or through the Internet. The Rice Knowledge Bank is now available on the Internet.

Increasing water efficiency

Last year, IRRI launched a project on the transfer and adoption of water-saving technologies in water-scarce areas in the Philippines. Aptly called "More Crop Per Drop", the project aims to increase the efficient use of water in irrigation. This project is done in collaboration with the National Irrigation Authority (NIA) and the Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice)."

The benefits of the technologies are "sustained yields during water shortage, reduced water costs, and more equitable distribution of the benefits of irrigation."

Breeding for yield, breeding for nutrition

IRRI's approaches to raising the yield potential of modern high-yielding varieties of rice include the new plant type (NPT), wide crosses with wild rice species, and hybrids. IRRI has developed and shared many diverse parental lines and together with national agricultural research extension systems (NARES) have improved yields by 1-1.5 t/ha in farmers' fields in India, Philippines, Vietnam, Bangladesh and Indonesia.

To improve the quality of rice, IRRI is also working with the University of Adelaide in Australia, the Plant, Soil, and Nutrition Laboratory of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) to enhance the micronutrient content of rice by producing zinc-rich, iron-rich and vitamin A-rich rice varieties.

Cutting-edge science or Genomics

Dr. Jackson cited the enormous progress that has been done to understand the diversity of rice using



The new trailer in action.

information on molecular biology of rice or rice genomics. Rice is the first crop whose genome sequence has been published. There will be a series of discussions and demonstrations to look at why rice is the model for genomics and how certain genes can be added to rice to make it more productive and make existing land more productive. Since 1993, NARES and IRRI have developed varieties resistant to bacterial blight in India, Indonesia and the Philippines and salt tolerance in Bangladesh.

Integrated pest management and the mass media

According to Dr. Jackson, their project on integrated pest management (IPM) and the mass media has recently won the St. Andrews International Environmental Prize in London. The project tries to reduce pesticide misuse by using the mass media to get the message across to the farmers. "And there's more good news, the Center just received great news that the Rockefeller Foundation will donate \$300,000 for the education and entertainment program or the E&E program," Dr. Jackson said. This project is headed by Dr. K.L. Heong, senior entomologist at IRRI and Dr. Monina Escalada- a Filipino communication expert, from Leyte State University.

Environment

For the environment, Dr. Jackson said that IRRI is collaborating with some scientists in the Yunnan province of Southern China in studying the impact of growing mixed lines of rice to slow down the spread of fungal disease blast epidemic in huge areas in Southern China. "The idea behind this is to grow inter-mixtures of modern varieties which are highly productive and traditional varieties which have other qualities which farmers like, Dr. Jackson explains." With this project, farmers can continue to grow traditional varieties. Recognized in the scientific publication called Nature- this project made big headlines in the New York Times and was recognized by the CGIAR as an outstanding piece of science.



Dr. El-Ashry is 2002 Sir John Crawford Memorial Lecturer

Dr. Mohamed T. El-Ashry, chief executive officer and chairman of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) is this year's Sir John Crawford Memorial Lecturer.

Scheduled on 29 October 2002, 6:00 pm at the Shangri-La Hotel, Makati City, the Sir John Crawford Memorial Lecture is one of the highlights of the 2002 Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) Annual General Meeting (AGM). This event is in honor of Sir John Crawford, a distinguished civil servant, educator, and agriculturist. He was one of the founders of CGIAR.

Considered a world leader on global environment issues, Dr. El-Ashry is an expert in the field of water

resource management, environmental management, energy policy, geomorphology and coastal geology.

Before joining the World Bank, he was the Bank Group President chief environment adviser and the Environment Department director. In the early 1990s, he served as chairman of GEF before its full implementation.

GEF is a chief financial mechanism that supports developing countries by providing grants and concessional funds for projects and activities with goals of protecting the environment. The GEF was launched in 1991 to specifically address four critical threats to the global environment, namely, 1) biodiversity loss, 2) climate change, 3) degradation of international waters, and 4) ozone depletion. Managing the GEF projects are World Bank, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and United Nations Environment Program (UNEP).

Dr. El-Ashry was the former vice president of the World Resources Institute, an organization that goes beyond research to provide solutions to global environmental problems, and was the director of environmental quality with the Tennessee Valley Authority. Also, he served as senior environmental adviser to UNDP and once a special adviser of the Secretary General of

the United Nation Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED).

Dr. El-Ashry received his B.S. degree with honors in 1959 from Cairo University, and his Ph.D. degree in Geology in 1966 from the University of Illinois. Aside from taking various positions in the field of environmental management, he held teaching and research positions at Cairo University, Pan-American-U.A.R. Oil Company, Illinois Geological Survey, Wilkes University and the Environmental Defense Fund. He is a fellow of the Geological Society of America (GSA) and the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS).

He has received various accolades one of which is the 1992 Egyptian-American Outstanding Achievement Award, awarded to him by the Secretary General of UNCED for his wide contributions to the Earth Summit. His award as the Air Conservationist of the Year (1983) was given by the Tennessee Conservation League. He was also cited in the American Men and Women of Science and the Men of Achievement. He has published and presented more than a 120 papers and four books.

The Australian Government sponsors this year's Sir John Crawford Memorial Lecture. (*Rita T. dela Cruz*)

Stakeholders fine tune reform program

This year's Stakeholder Meeting at Shangri-la on October 30-31, 2002 is tinged with a sense of urgency and "a spirit of reform" as over 500 participants from the CGIAR alliance discuss and fine-tune CGIAR's new reform program initiated during the first Annual General Meeting in Washington DC, last year.

CGIAR participants discuss updates on its four pillars of reform- Executive Council, Challenge Programs, Science Council and System Office with an integrated communications strategy.

The pilot process and the regular process of challenge programs are also discussed as well as updates on regional priority setting, representation of civil society institutions in the CGIAR, combating soil degradation, capacity building/strengthening

education and lessons from evaluation of the World Bank's involvement with global public policies.

At the top of the agenda, stakeholders evaluate a report on the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Monterrey, Rome, and Johannesburg. The participants discuss the agreements reached during these summits, their implications for agricultural research and possible courses of action. Foremost issues raised in Johannesburg are: the need for quality growth, that is growth with environmental and social responsibility; the need for broad based multi-stakeholder partnerships, the need for investment in agriculture and the elimination of agricultural subsidies.

Next in the agenda is the

announcement of this year's winners of the CGIAR Science Awards by CGIAR Chairman Ian Johnson. Established in 1996, these awards are given to research teams or individuals who showed excellence and outstanding achievements in research. Winners for Promising Young Scientist, Outstanding Scientist and Outstanding Communications receive a cash prize of \$5,000 each. The winner of the Outstanding Journalism Award receives a grant of up to \$5,000 to cover travel including a visit to a Future Harvest Center. Finally, winners of the King Baudouin Award and the team awards (Outstanding Scientific Support Team, Outstanding Partnership, Outstanding Scientific Article) receive each a cash prize of \$10,000. (*Junelyn S. de la Rosa*)

Business Meeting focuses on reform programs

Javier noted that "the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act is in place with a lot of promises for its funding. Unfortunately, because of our budgetary crunch, the government is tightening its belt. We have many initiatives that need funding. This is the reality but hopefully, with the AGM, we might just be able to receive funding for our research and

The progress of the implementation of the CGIAR Reform Program is the main focus of the Business Meeting of CGIAR member-institutions. The program was the result of the change design and management initiative undertaken in October 2000 and formally launched during the 1st Annual General Meeting (AGM) last year.

"CGIAR is trying to keep up with the times," Dr. Emil Javier, Chairperson of the CGIAR Science Council, explained. "The funds for agriculture, specifically for agricultural research, is declining all over the world. Thus, the need to be more visible," he further remarked.

Part of the reforms is the establishment of CGIAR System Office and CGIAR Science Council. The System Office is the first step in creating a more integrated and cohesive system as "the different units of the CGIAR-- (the Secretariat, Science Council Secretariat) operates in a virtual office configuration. There will be more transparency in terms of the budget and expected outputs," explained Javier.

The System Office will serve the entire CGIAR System as it will help in making all the Centers of CGIAR and the Future Harvest Foundation function in an integrated and responsive manner.

If the System Office integrates the activities of the Centers, the Science Council, chaired by Dr. Emil Javier, a Filipino scientist and academician, serves as guardian of the relevance and quality of the science in the CGIAR, and adviser on the strategic scientific issues relevant to CGIAR's goals and mission.

The Science Council identifies which among the proposals for research will be one of the Challenge Programs that CGIAR will implement. The Challenge Programs respond directly to major concerns of the global development agenda based on the CGIAR Centers' core competencies.

Dr. Javier elaborates that "it is a way of raising the visibility of CGIAR and being able to partner with more agencies, institutions and in the process become more effective

and efficient." The Science Council has already endorsed the first set of Challenge Programs to the Executive Council. The proposals pertain to genomics, water and agriculture and bio-fortification of food crops.

One of the major agenda in the Business Meeting in the AGM this year is the discussion and approval of the Challenge Programs by the CGIAR members as endorsed by the CGIAR Executive Council. Dr. Javier says that, "these projects are to be approved formally."

He thinks "that the Philippines should take a very firm position on the genomics issue because it is to our interest if we make a move to put the enabling and strategic genomics technologies in the public domain so that it is not any more appropriated by the private sector. Hence, developing countries like the Philippines can go to the CGIAR instead of procuring these technologies from private companies."

It is up to Dr. Eliseo Ponce, director of the Bureau of Agricultural Research, and Hon. Leonardo Montemayor, secretary of the Department of Agriculture who will represent the Philippines in the Business Meeting to gain the support for the position.

Dr. Javier hopes that "the Agriculture Secretary, as he will talk to key donors, to signal that from a developing country perspective, putting genomics in the public domain will greatly improve our accessibility to it."

As host to AGM 2002, the Philippines will be able to link with the global community, improve our image as a country and project our capabilities and the importance that we give to agriculture and agriculture research. "Filipino participants will be exposed in the discussions, get to know people and establish contacts and connections."

Indeed, as a country, Dr.



development efforts. With the onset of trade liberalization, the only way to cope is to improve our efficiency. And the only way to improve our efficiency is research."

During the AGM Business Meeting, as the Challenge Programs are approved by the CGIAR members and the "hunting license for funding is issued", the roles and involvement of the CGIAR-member institution in the implementation of the Challenge Programs will also be clarified.

"The story does not end during the Business Meeting," Dr. Javier remarked. There is the hope that the AGM this year take to heart the common people that are at the receiving end of decisions and their implications. (Maria Rowena S.A. Briones) ☎

BAR lends a...

29 and the Philippine Reception on October 30. BAR coordinated with the Philippine Convention and Visitors Corporation (PCVC) of DOT for the orderly and comfortable arrival and check-in of the delegates at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) and at the Bureau of Immigration. BAR, in cooperation with various DA agencies and PCVC, has assigned and trained tour guides, ushers and usherettes for the delegates during the trips from Manila to Los Baños. Security has been arranged with the National Capital Region (NCR) and Laguna Philippine National Police (PNP). Buses are chartered for the delegates for their trip to UPLB.

☎ see BAR lends a...8

Partnership for a food secure world

by Virginia A. Duldulao and Likha C. Cuevas



What can weaken the strength of 58 partner institutions when they bind themselves together as they battle head on the sneering enemy that is poverty and their sarcastic nemesis that is environmental destruction? Individually, they are weak but collectively they are strong. To be a partner is to share and to receive. Partnership is both an investment and a gain.

In the Consultative Group of International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) director's paper, he defines the Group as a strategic alliance for the twenty first century. Established in the early 70s, it is the largest scientific network that promotes food security, poverty eradication, and the sound management of natural resources. It pursues these objectives through its 16 research and development agencies known as Future Harvest Centers located mostly in developing countries. It mobilizes cutting edge agricultural science to spur agricultural growth, improve human nutrition and health, and protect the environment throughout the developing world.

The Partnership

CGIAR's membership is extensive. It is across the globe, from north to south and east to west. The architects of this world alliance, while preparing its blueprints in the early seventies, may not have anticipated the extent of this global partnership and the mission it has to accomplish today. At the heart of CGIAR's mission is advocating science-based approaches to solve some of the world's most pressing development problems. It focuses on five major research thrusts: increasing productivity, protecting the environment, saving biodiversity, improving policies, and strengthening national research systems.

The CGIAR partnership includes 23 developing and 23 industrialized countries, 4 private foundations, and 12 regional and international organizations that provide financing, technical support,

and strategic directions. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the World Bank serve as cosponsors. The Group has thousands of partner organizations to mobilize cutting edge agricultural science to benefit poor people.

CGIAR addresses its goals through 16 Future Harvest Centers, 13 of which are located in developing countries. More than 8,500 CGIAR scientists and staff in over 100 countries work on all critical components of agriculture, forestry, and fisheries. The benefits derived from all these efforts include developing crops suited to local conditions to better farming systems that reduce agriculture's impact on natural resources to solving some of the larger global problems such as climate change and the decreasing water resource. All these knowledge products are freely available to everyone.

The business meeting and workshop of the Center Directors Committee (CDC) hosted and held at the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI) headquarters recently showed that building of alliances is far from over. Meryl Williams, chair of CDC, outlined the challenges faced by the Future Harvest Centers. She urged them to "forge new alliances, mobilize additional resources, and enhance knowledge sharing- these are essentials for increasing the pace and effectiveness with which we deliver results."

The National Research System (NARS) of each country collaborates with the CGIAR centers to devise policies, conduct research, and ensure that research results move from laboratories to farmers' fields with support from the non-government organizations (NGO). Some 300 NGOs are engaged in collaborative research programs with CGIAR centers.

The NARS is strengthened through side by side working

relationships with colleagues in national programs. Likewise, their skills in research administration and management are honed and manpower capability is enhanced through formal training programs.

At the regional level, CGIAR supports the growth of regional federations of agricultural research institutions, and fora such as the Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI), Association of Agricultural Research Institution in the Near East and North Africa (AARINENA), Forum on Agricultural Research in Africa and Latin America and Caribbean Forum on Agricultural Research.

The experiences, expertise and perspectives of civil society and the corporate sector are engaged in making decisions on food security and related issues at the system's level. Similarly, CGIAR participates in outreach relationships with intergovernmental bodies and institutions that have similar missions.

At the global level, CGIAR serves as catalyst in the establishment of a Global Forum on Agricultural Research to explore, establish, and implement collaborative programs for sustainable food security among all members of an emerging global agricultural research system. This system is composed of NGOs, farmers' organizations, the private sector, local and national governments, national research systems, advanced research organizations, and international centers, among others.

The Philippines as partner

The country became a member of the CGIAR in 1980 but has been hosting IRRI since 1971, a year before the CGIAR was formally formed.

The Philippines and CGIAR partnership is strengthened by the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act (AFMA). It recognizes agricultural research as a global activity and for the country to develop mechanisms for

➤ see *Strength in partnership...* next page



AGM 2002 FACTS

AGM 2002 logo: consists of the sun, the red and blue blades representing the Philippines, and the green blade and monochromatic grayish blue waves symbolizing abundant land and water resources in the Philippines. Overall, the logo symbolizes the

essence of the Philippines-CGIAR partnership and its focus on agriculture, natural resources and the environment.

Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research

(CGIAR): Created in 1971, it is a strategic alliance of 62 members (including 23 developing countries and 23 industrialized countries), four co-sponsors, 16 Future Harvest Centers and civil society partners. It mobilizes cutting-edge science to reduce hunger and poverty, improve human nutrition and health and protect the environment.

CGIAR Annual General Meeting (AGM): is a meeting of the CGIAR alliance every year to review and implement business decisions. This year, it is held in the Philippines on October 28 to November 01.

CGIAR Excellence in Science Awards: awards given to individuals or teams who have done outstanding scientific work. These are: the King Baudouin Award, Promising Young Scientist, Outstanding Scientist, Outstanding Scientific Support Team, Outstanding Partnership, and Outstanding Scientific Article. This year, CGIAR has added two new awards to acknowledge journalists and individuals working in the field of science communication. These are: the CGIAR Science Award for Outstanding Journalism and the CGIAR Science Award for Outstanding Communications.

CGIAR Stakeholder Meeting: is scheduled on October 30-31, this two-day meeting is held to discuss issues and updates in the CGIAR reform agenda. This will be presided by CGIAR Chairman Ian Johnson.

CGIAR Business Meeting: is scheduled on November 1 to decide on recommendations or courses of action that need to be done regarding the issues discussed during the Stakeholder meeting.

Future Harvest Center: is an international agricultural research center supported by the CGIAR. They are: CIAT, CIFOR, CIMMYT, CIP, ICARDA, ICLARM, ICRAF, ICRISAT, IFPRI, IITA, ILRI, IPGRI, IRRI, ISNAR, IWMI and WARDA.

Philippine Day: 1st day of the AGM (October 28), this day is devoted to symposia and exhibits on the Philippines' agricultural and forestry research, under two themes: 1) crops, livestock and fisheries and 2) forestry, natural resources management, and biodiversity.

IRRI Day: 2nd day of the AGM (October 29), participants tour facilities and experiments of the International Rice Research Institute in Los Baños, Laguna and discuss the Center's programs on biodiversity, environmental protection, better nutrition, new breeding and new training and information sharing approaches.

Partnership for a...

effective partnerships with international institutions. This is to accelerate knowledge and technology generation and transfer. The Philippine agricultural research system now maintains linkages with the CGIAR centers and the partnerships with these institutions have grown and expanded from joint research programs to institutional development.

The country benefited from the partnership in terms of institution building, technology development and sharing, varietal development, improved germplasm collection for various crops, natural resource management and manpower capacity building. The benefit flow is a two-way process. The Philippines is recognized for its large and highly qualified pool of science experts who serve in various capacities in the different CGIAR centers.

The partnerships maximize synergies and areas of expertise while saving resources for all those involved in it.

Speaking for the southern members of CGIAR, Bureau of Agricultural Research Director Eliseo Ponce concisely puts it thus: "We look at this membership as an added value in addressing our national objective of food security and in eliminating poverty in the countryside. The country's contribution, although modest, primarily is an investment for its own interest, and secondarily for the world. It is an investment built on the premise that together we can do more to achieve our common goal of a food secure world." 🌱

BAR lends a...

Informational videos about the Philippines and The BAR Story prepared by PCVC and by the Bureau, respectively, are shown during the bus ride.

The preparation for the Philippine Exhibit at the Shangri-La Hotel in Makati is also spearheaded by BAR, with the participation of various research and development (R&D) networks and agencies. The Bureau prepared kits that include newsletters, and publications for the participants.

About a hundred local participants to the AGM have also been invited and these include: national state college and university (SCU) presidents, SCU chancellors and vice presidents or directors for research, directors of non-DA government agencies, Regional Integrated Agricultural Research (RIARC) managers, Regional Integrated Fisheries Research and Development Center (RIFRDC) managers, and directors of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) attached agencies.

The Bureau and CGIAR scheduled media coverage plans for those who cover the AGM. Press conferences before, during, and after the AGM to be given by DA Secretary Leonardo Q. Montemayor and CGIAR Chairman Ian Johnson were arranged and coordinated with other agencies. (Likha C. Cuevas) 🌱

Chronicle

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