Dublin Synthesis

The first meeting of a global consultative process on an international assessment of the role of agricultural science and technology in reducing hunger, improving rural livelihoods and stimulating environmentally sustainable economic growth over the coming decades took place in Dublin, Ireland, from Nov 6-8. The meeting was convened by the World Bank and hosted by the Government of Ireland. Representation was geographically balanced, with about 100 participants from governments, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, farmer and other producer groups, consumers, scientists and international organizations in attendance. Participants included senior technical and policy advisors, cabinet members, CEOs and civil society representatives.

The Minister for Agriculture and Food in Ireland, Joe Walsh, was the keynote speaker at the opening reception. Ian Johnson, Vice President for ESSD, opened the formal meeting, which was co-chaired by Bob Watson (World Bank); Louise Fresco (FAO); Seyfu Ketema (ASARECA-Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in East and Central Africa); Rita Sharma (Ministry of Agriculture, India); and Claudia Martinez Zuleta (former Deputy Minister of Environment, Colombia).

Bob Watson made a short presentation on behalf of the co-chairs, outlining the challenge of feeding a world population whose average wealth is increasing, in the context of significant biophysical constraints. He also outlined the Bank's proposed consultative process, including the composition and terms of reference for the steering committee, and possible governance and organizational structures for the assessment.

The meeting had four goals:
1. Discuss the value of an assessment of agricultural science and technology;
2. Finalize the details of the consultative process and advise on the composition and terms of reference for the steering committee;
3. Discuss a list of key questions for the proposed assessment, i.e., define the scope of the assessment; and
4. Discuss a proposed organizational structure and set of governing principles and procedures for the assessment.

The overall tone and mood of the meeting was very positive and the dialogue constructive. However, a number of stakeholder groups made it quite clear that there were a number of conditions to their continued participation in the consultative process.

- All participants agreed that the assessment should not focus on biotechnology and genetically modified organisms;
- A number of non-governmental organizations noted that the consultative process must be fully inclusive of all producers, e.g., farmers, fishers and pastoralists;
- All agreed that the assessment must be focused and must deliver concrete results within a reasonable time frame;
- A number of industry representatives and the US government stated that the assessment must not interfere with parallel activities taking place at the WTO and in the FAO/WHO CODEX process (the health standard body); and that it must not be used to delay the adoption of new technologies.

There was general agreement that in order to be valuable, the proposed assessment should build upon existing and ongoing activities. Coordination has already begun with the Inter-Academy Council project on Feeding Africa and the Millennium Development Hunger Task Force. Several representatives noted that the value would depend strongly on its affect on end users; a focus on the delivery and communications systems for S&T as well as on traditional and applied

knowledge; the inclusion of producer perspectives; and an assessment of how producer-identified problems can be used to drive research.

The following paragraphs summarize the discussion on each of the four goals.

Goal 1: Discuss the value of an assessment of agricultural science and technology

To the degree that this issue was dealt with, there was general agreement that a broad and diverse potential audience exists for a well-focused assessment of agricultural S&T. This audience includes consumers, producers, governments, the private sector, and foundations, international agencies, and the scientific community. However, all participants did not view the purpose of the assessment similarly. An assessment that targets the key questions decision makers must address concerning the role of agricultural S&T in reducing hunger, improving rural livelihoods and stimulating economic growth in an environmentally and socially sustainable manner is needed, assuming that the scope can be agreed. It was recognized that differentiating and obtaining agreement on what constitutes core S&T issues would be critical; most participants agreed that defining the assessment's focus is essential. In addition, in order to have value, the assessment process must be open, transparent, inclusive, and policy relevant but not policy prescriptive.

Recognizing that assessments are not designed to generate primary data, but to assess and synthesize existing information, participants found value in a meta-analysis of secondary data, which would identify gaps in our knowledge, and in generating practical documents that would make a difference in the field. It was noted that the assessment would need to recognize that the needs, problems and challenges of agricultural S&T change over time and with geographical location. Thus, while the assessment would take the long-term view (up to 50 years), tomorrow's needs are largely based on today's problems and will need to be addressed at the local and regional levels. Therefore, the proposed process presents an excellent opportunity to listen to the needs of producers and to learn from them, e.g., to understand why some existing technologies are not adopted.

There was general agreement that assessments can be used to strengthen national and international science and decision-making structures, and possibly provide the justification for increased public sector funding and improved public-private partnerships given the "global public goods" nature of agricultural S&T.

Several participants noted the need for the assessment to be both practical and visionary and suggested that the articulation of plausible futures would provide a useful framework. This articulation of competing visions and the possible evolution of science and technology would enable policymakers to gain a more nuanced understanding of the complexities.

Those familiar with assessments said they provided a useful mechanism for advancing global action on complex problems by creating broader understanding of the issues, identifying needs and linking policy needs with research priorities. For the assessment to have value, it was also recognized that communication with all stakeholders throughout and beyond the assessment process would be essential.

One of the concerns expressed by most of the NGOs and some other participants was the question of who benefits from a technology. This question arose in several different contexts prompting one participant to suggest that the preamble include a delineation of the intended end users and beneficiaries. The preamble would also situate the assessment within the wider context of other global initiatives currently underway to address sustainable development and poverty alleviation. The introduction to assessment documents was viewed by some as the place to have a frank discussion of competing visions, to add to the integrity of the assessment. The point was

made that ignoring the presence of different visions could undermine the value of the assessment.

Goal 2: Finalize the details of the consultative process and advise on the composition and terms of reference for the steering committee

A. Consultative process

There was general agreement that the consultative process must be transparent and inclusive with balanced participation--all voices must be heard. Particular attention should be paid to geographical and gender balance. Specialists and generalists, natural scientists and policy experts, experts in traditional and modern knowledge, environmental and health scientists, governments, the private sector, producers, consumers, non-governmental organizations, international organizations, extension workers, foundations, scientific organizations and all relevant stakeholder groups active in the area of agriculture should be included. It was noted that high-level participation, especially of governments, is essential for buy-in to the process.

The basic structure of the consultative process consisting of regional meetings, videoconferences in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Europe and North America, as well as an interactive web site, was endorsed, although some questioned the effectiveness of videoconferences and websites for producers and end users in developing countries. Facilitated regional e-mail conferences and distance learning centers were also suggested to complement the regional meetings and videoconferences. Where possible, regional meetings will leverage meetings planned by other entities.

The scope of the regional meetings must be clear with well-planned agendas – the three goals for each regional meeting would be similar to the Dublin meeting, i.e., discuss:

- the value-added of an assessment;
- the scope of an assessment, identifying core S&T issues and contextual issues; and
- the governance/organization of an assessment.

The regional meetings, which will be chaired by co-chairs from the region with participation from relevant members of the steering committee, must include all stakeholders, but also be manageable (i.e., 50-100 participants); include discussions of issues important to the region; and be conducted, where possible, in the local language.

Each regional meeting could discuss, among other things*:*

- what the region will look like in 2030-2050 (population demographics, natural resource base, and policy environment) in the context of what the world will look like;
- the demand for agricultural products, including non-traditional products;
- how much can be produced and where, assuming existing and improved natural resource management, and existing and improved cultivars and breeds;
- the environmental and social implications of different production technologies;
- what practical knowledge is needed by whom to address problems in production and processing; does such knowledge exist; if so how can it be enhanced;
- what technologies and organizational structures have been effective/ineffective and why;
- the impact of different technologies and institutional infrastructures on rural livelihoods;
- how the R&D agenda can become more demand-driven in terms of producer needs;
- the effectiveness of existing institutions to meet the needs of the poor;
- the driving forces behind agricultural development;
- what shapes the scientific perception of what constitutes a major agricultural problem;
- what promotes and prevents the adoption of technologies; and
- what governance/organizational structure would best ensure an open, transparent, inclusive and legitimate assessment process.

Some participants questioned the value of regional meetings in Europe and North America, but the overall view was that such meetings were needed.

B. Deliberative process

Participants agreed that deliberative processes, or reference groups, within the regions, would be an effective means to support the producers on the steering committee and to broaden participation by grassroots organizations (there must be a clear link between the reference groups and their representation on the steering committee). Some participants noted that the six-month time frame for the consultative process would make it difficult to utilize the existing FAO process and suggested using existing mechanisms (such as the Global Forum on Agricultural Research—GFAR) for guidance on the reference groups. (GFAR has ongoing collaborative programs designed to increase participation by farmers and farmers' organizations in agricultural research for development.) Since Dublin, others have suggested that IFAP could be a focal point for reference groups. Annex I summarizes current ideas concerning the deliberative processes that will be needed to ensure that the voices of producers are heard.

Some participants suggested that reference groups might also be needed for the science and technology community, agro-processing and marketing, and consumers. However, given the limited time and budget for the consultative process, the strongest support was for a deliberative process for producers. TWAS, ICSU, CABI and ICRW can stimulate debate and input from the S&T community. A remaining issue is whether consumers need a reference group.

Some participants strongly advocated direct and adapted forms of consultations and deliberations in citizens' panels and working groups in order to enhance the voices of ordinary farmers and other producers in the process.

C. Composition of steering committee

There was a lively debate over the number of representatives from each stakeholder group who would comprise the steering committee, which will oversee the consultative process. Suggested changes to the composition initially proposed by the Bank included an increase in the number of producers; separation of producers and consumers; the inclusion of regional development banks; the addition of UNCCD; the inclusion of governments from countries with transitional economies and the Pacific/Oceania region; the inclusion of CAB International; the addition of more scientists or scientific institutions; and the exclusion of the Inter-Academy Council. In addition, some participants suggested that foundations be welcomed as observers, but not explicitly involved in oversight of the consultative process.

There was broad consensus that there must be balanced high-level representation on the steering committee: (i) between industrialized countries and developing countries; (ii) within the private sector, with representation from all facets of the agricultural chain; and (iii) among advocacy and service delivery NGOs. Participants also stated that, given the critical role of women in agricultural production (e.g., women perform 80% of the agricultural work in Africa), women should be well represented on the steering committee. However, given the predominance of governments on the steering committee, it may be difficult to obtain gender balance if the governments nominate mostly male representatives.

D. Final selection of steering committee membership

There was agreement that the Bank would finalize the composition of the steering committee after further consultations and reflection. Based on the discussion in Dublin, the following composition is suggested – feedback is strongly encouraged:

- Co-chairs (5)
- Governments (12) – balanced among developed, developing and transitional economies (large and small)

- Private sector entities (5) – balanced across the agricultural chain
- Non-governmental organizations (5) – balanced among advocacy and delivery NGOs
- Producers (5) – 2 international and 3 regional
- Consumer groups (2)
- At-large scientists (3) – natural and social
- Scientific institutions (5) – CGIAR, TWAS, ICSU, ICRW and CABI
- International agencies (4) – IFAD, UNDP, WHO and UNEP
- UN Conventions (3) – CBD, CCD and UNFCCC
- Foundations (2) – possibly as observers

E. Terms of Reference for the steering committee

The proposed terms of reference for the steering committee were endorsed and expanded, i.e., the steering committee will also be held responsible for ensuring the inclusiveness of the consultative process. The steering committee will:

- Oversee the consultation process, in particular ensure that the process is inclusive of all stakeholder groups, particularly producers;
- Participate in the consultation process: a representative set of members shall be involved in each regional consultation, which will be chaired by the co-chair from the region;
- Elicit feedback on the proposed assessment process from the stakeholder group they represent;
- Be responsible for final recommendation to all stakeholder groups on the need for an international assessment on agricultural S&T; and
- If the recommendation is to proceed, then the steering committee will recommend:
  - Governance (i.e., intergovernmental, non-governmental or a hybrid);
  - Management, including the location of the secretariat;
  - Principles and procedures (nomination/selection process for authors and reviewers, design and management of the peer-review process, broad structure of the report and final approval process);
  - The scope of the assessment, including key questions;
  - Time frame of assessment; and
  - A funding strategy.

F. Longevity of steering committee and the deliberative process

A number of participants suggested that the steering committee and the deliberative process should continue past the end of the consultative process and continue throughout the assessment phase. This should be discussed during the consultative process, but will ultimately depend upon the governance/organizational structure of the assessment process. The steering committee and deliberative process could possibly act as reference groups to the final agreed structure for the assessment, advising on issues such as peer review.

G. Role of co-chairs

The co-chairs will chair the regional meetings and videoconferences, and will chair the meeting(s) of the steering committee. They will also advise the World Bank, after consultation with the steering committee, if any adjustments are needed in the composition of the steering committee.

H. Funding the consultative process

Participants noted that the consultative process must not be captured by any single set of stakeholders; hence funding for the consultative process must be transparent. Participants also agreed that substantial funding would be needed to achieve the breadth of inclusion an open process requires.

Goal 3: Discuss a list of key questions for the proposed assessment, i.e., define the scope of the assessment

A. General definition

The discussion on the scope of the proposed assessment was broad and far-ranging, identifying a comprehensive list of possible topics rather than generating a prioritized set of topics. However, many participants felt it was important to put all issues on the table before focusing on the core S&T issues to be addressed in the proposed assessment and identifying the key contextual issues. It is clear that the greatest challenge during the consultative process will be to sharpen the focus in a manner satisfactory to all stakeholders, especially agreeing on which issues are core and which are contextual, and the degree to which the contextual issues are assessed.

In general, participants agreed to a broad definition of agriculture, i.e., crops, livestock, aquaculture, forestry, commodities and biomass, and that the full spectrum of current and new technologies, including production, small-scale processing and storage, should be addressed, as well as technologies from outside the agricultural sector, such as information and communication technologies. While some participants argued for a broad assessment, i.e., one that includes contextual issues such as subsidies, most argued for a well-focused assessment of the role of agricultural S&T.

Although the greatest challenge is primarily to increase the production and diversification of agriculture in developing countries, where most of the increased demand will occur over the next 50 years, there are many agricultural S&T issues of direct relevance to developed countries. Hence, the proposed assessment will have relevance for stakeholders in developed and developing countries.

B. Focus: core scientific and technical issues with policy implications

There was broad agreement that the assessment should avoid a long shopping list of issues, concentrate on a few well-defined areas where it would complement other ongoing activities, and make a real difference in the field.

Since this assessment cannot engage the full rural development agenda, the challenge will be to assess areas where agricultural S&T knowledge is likely to inform producers and consumers and have policy implications and stimulate sustainable development, i.e., agricultural production that is environmentally and socially sustainable. In other words, we need to identify the core scientific and technical issues (including knowledge management and delivery) to be assessed in depth, whilst recognizing the contextual issues (e.g., regulatory regimes) that will either not be dealt with at all, or will be addressed only to the degree that they influence or provide context for agricultural S&T.

There was general agreement that the assessment should focus on understanding the needs of producers and consumers and on an analysis of existing knowledge, including indigenous knowledge, and identification of critical gaps in knowledge. This focus would make it useful as a basis for policy guidance and for making decisions about research resource allocation. Thus the assessment should include an assessment of gaps from the perspective of producers, as well as from the perspective of those who develop technologies. Some thought an inventory of existing technologies and an assessment of the institutional and policy barriers to their adoption would point to where improvements, or new technologies altogether, are needed.

The issue of an overarching framework for the assessment was discussed, but no single recommendation evolved. Ideas included livelihoods, natural resource management, agro-ecosystems, sustainability, and several others. One group suggested that the assessment could be sub-divided into three pillars: knowledge generation, knowledge access and contemporary issues.

Several participants noted that the assessment should be visionary – any assessment of current technologies, policies and institutional issues should be complemented by a vision for the future

of agriculture. This could stimulate individual scientists and national and international research institutions.

Core S&T issues could include a critical evaluation of:

- the potential of current and future technologies, by region, to produce crops, livestock, fish, forests, biomass (biofuels for energy) and commodities, with the required nutritional value, in an environmentally and socially sustainable manner;
- the potential to reduce post-harvest losses and minimize waste;
- the potential to improve crop traits e.g., drought, pest, salinity and temperature tolerance;
- the potential to increase productivity in rain fed, drought prone and marginalized areas where production is low, suffers from instability, is highly risk prone and where the bulk of the rural poor live;
- whether animal protein is part of the solution or part of the problem;
- the biophysical constraints (e.g., water quantity and quality, soil quality) of agricultural production, and how indigenous knowledge can help improve our approach to them;
- how much energy and water will be needed as agriculture expands to meet demand, and what the potential is to improve energy and water efficiency in agriculture;
- how we conserve biodiversity;
- how information and space technologies can be used to assist producers;
- the limiting factors of present production systems in meeting producers' needs;
- the potential of holistic and trans-disciplinary approaches for addressing problems;
- the potential to reduce external and energy-intensive inputs;
- the potential to reduce environmental and health risks;
- how we create an environment for all stakeholders to share technology success stories, and what is needed to eliminate ICT gaps, in terms of technical and human capacity.

The assessment should be policy relevant but should not be policy prescriptive, i.e., the assessment should assess the implications of different policy choices, but should not try and prescribe what policies should be adopted. Hence, it cannot, as one participant requested, define the overall policy environment necessary to deliver technologies. However, an assessment can describe where and when policies have resulted in effective delivery of technologies and alleviation of poverty and hunger. On this note, it was suggested that a retrospective examination of the contribution of agricultural S&T to the current state of food, agriculture, agro-ecosystems and livelihoods might provide a useful element of the assessment.

There was general agreement that the assessment must address national and regional challenges, as well as the global context, because S&T is not developed or disseminated in a vacuum. Therefore, several participants suggested that the assessment conduct locale-specific analyses (editorial note: these have proved invaluable in climate assessments (IPCC) and are a key element in the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment). For example, the assessment could assess 5-7 locations in the world, gauging the environmental and social effects of different technological mixes on the specific locality as well as the region and the globe. This information would then provide a template for other communities to examine their own palette of solutions.

C. Contextual issues

It was generally agreed that a discussion of the context in which the core S&T questions would be asked would need to be included in the assessment – as noted before, the key question is the degree to which these contextual issues should be assessed. Recognition of contextual realities was evident in questions such as the following crosscutting issues. How do regulatory and trade regimes influence both the generation and diffusion of technology? How do national and international regulatory and trade regimes influence production? What are the implications for producers when the private sector dominates investment in agriculture? Can public-private partnerships address the need to increase productivity in non-commercial crops? How does access to land, water, seeds and knowledge shape the potential for improvement?

Framing questions could include an analysis of the relationship between technology and patterns of consumption; and the relationship between the right to food and farmers' rights to access, technology and land – some noted that "rights" issues are contentious and not currently accepted by all governments. Some participants maintained that intellectual property rights and other currently negotiated issues should be discussed only to the extent to which they frame agricultural S&T questions.

Contextual issues could include*, inter-alia*: trade, subsidies, tariffs, privatization, technology transfer/intellectual property rights, financial services, land tenure, access to markets, access to germplasm, rural education and financing.

As noted earlier, the key question is to what degree these issues are addressed in detail. One suggestion is to address them if they directly affect agricultural S&T.

D. Institutional issues

Many institutional issues were raised. Questions included: What guides the formulation of science agendas? What is the relationship between institutions that develop technologies and those that adapt technologies? What are the institutional barriers to technology diffusion? What are the institutional challenges to maintaining vibrant public breeding programs for both plants and livestock? How can we enhance technological and organizational capacity? What are the implications for marginal producers when the private sector dominates the research agenda? Do innovative public-private partnerships exist that can benefit the marginal producer? Do we have the most appropriate national and international S&T institutions to meet the needs of poor producers over the next 20-50 years? Is the current level of public sector funding adequate to meet the needs of developing countries?

E. Gender

Gender was acknowledged as a major crosscutting issue. Women are key to food and commodity production in developing countries. Women are also the household nutritionists. What are the constraints that prevent improvements in household nutrition? How can agricultural S&T reduce those constraints?

F. Time frame

There was some debate about the time frame under consideration during the assessment. This time frame will need to be identified during the consultative process. For example, will the assessment address short-term goals, such as the identification and utilization of available appropriate technologies, as well as long-term goals, such as providing accurate information for investment in research and stimulating vision on future technological possibilities? Some participants argued that identifying where information is missing; where technologies are missing or under funded; and where we need advances could reduce the time frame and hence the scope and cost of the assessment. Others argued that the near-term problems are being addressed by other entities and that the value of this assessment was in a long-term approach.

Goal 4: Discuss a proposed organizational structure and set of governing principles and procedures for the assessment

A. General

There was limited discussion, due to time constraints, of issues associated with the organizational and governance structure of the proposed assessment. Some of these are whether the assessment should be intergovernmental or non-governmental, who will determine the scope, who selects the authors and peer-reviewers, who approves it, and who funds it. Some participants even queried whether a discussion of governance was hypothetical and

presumptuous, given that it is unclear if there is support for an assessment and what shape it will take if there is one. Many participants noted that successful assessments are those that closely fit into existing policy formulation processes. A number of participants requested that the appropriateness of a wide range of governance structures be examined, not only those presented, i.e., the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Millennium Assessment, International Ozone Assessments, and Global Biodiversity Assessment. Examples of other processes that should be considered include the Large Dams Commission.

The initial reaction was that the likely preferred approach would be a hybrid intergovernmental process that involves all stakeholders in each phase of the assessment process.

B. Government participation

There was some discussion devoted to what constitutes government buy-in to the process. Many viewed government buy-in as important given that many agricultural S&T policies are controlled by governments, although some questioned whether governments have a lasting commitment to small farmers – therefore, a key issue is how to get government buy-in without losing other key stakeholders. Another question in this area was how to keep traditional UN processes from spoiling the multi-stakeholder aspect.

C. Time frame

The issue of the time required to conduct the assessment was raised, albeit superficially, but it was recognized that time is of the essence and that an assessment should be conducted in the least time consistent with a high quality peer-reviewed product - intermediate assessment products would be encouraged.

D. Funding

Funding was also discussed. Several participants stated that if the assessment was non-governmental, then funding criteria should be established. Some assumed that a hybrid intergovernmental process would be funded solely by governments, although this is not necessarily so. Several stated that intergovernmental processes would have more credibility and be easier to fund.

Annex 1

Deliberative process: providing a mechanism for engaging the voices of all producers

Goal

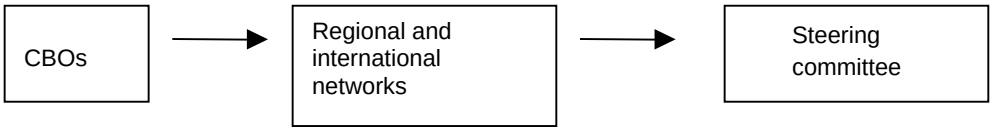
To engage all producers in the consultative process, particularly those who are usually marginalized, e.g., landless farmers, fishers and pastoralists. To reflect their concerns about issues related to agricultural science and technology in the questions that frame the assessment.

Mechanism

- Identify regional networks with (1) outstanding credibility with the stakeholders they profess to represent; (2) solid connections to community-based organizations (CBOs); and (3) a reputation for constructive engagement.
- These networks will facilitate the input of the CBOs into the consultative process. We will provide the networks with a template to use in determining the key questions and concerns of local producers.
- Input from the CBOs will be channeled into the regional meetings via representatives from the networks.

Representation of producers on the steering committee

In Dublin, participants generally agreed that the steering committees should include four members from producer groups. Since regions differ in their level of development and needs, and since international organizations may not adequately reflect the grassroots, we suggest five members with a member from a producer group in each region: Africa, Central and South America, and Asia, and two representatives from international producers' organizations, such as International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP) and International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM). The representatives would be charged with transparently and energetically representing the input from the CBOs.



The question is what the relevant networks are for each of the regions. For example, VECO, PELUM and INADES-Formation are listed below as possible organizations to work with in Africa. It was suggested in Dublin that we contact the Global Forum on Agricultural Research, for guidance on the reference groups, since GFAR is conducting ongoing collaborative programs designed to increase participation by farmers and farmers' organizations in agricultural research for development. Since Dublin, others have suggested that IFAP could be a focal point for reference groups.

Please let us know as soon as possible, from your perspective, which group you would recommend we work with to organize the reference groups in each region.

Annex 2

Regional consultative processes
If you want to suggest other CBOs and networks in the following regions, or if you know about other meetings that we could potentially leverage, please send the contact information to Beverly McIntyre (bmcintyre@worldbank.org).

Latin America
Co-chair Claudia Martinez Zuleta suggested that we target four regional videoconferences:
(1) Mercusor (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay);
(2) Andes (Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela);
(3) Caribbean (including Guyana and Trinidad/Tobago); and
(4) Central America and Mexico.

Ruben Echeverria, Inter-American Development Bank, will assist in identifying a regional entity to organize and host the videoconferences. Possibilities include the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (Costa Rica) and REMISP, a Chilean NGO that organizes agricultural conferences. The five regional Cooperative Programs (PROSICs); IFOAM; Latin American Agroecological Movement (MADELA); FAO in Chile; AS-PTA; PAHO; and Via Campesina affiliates within the region will be contacted to obtain further information about other networks and contacts.

CIP and CIAT are holding a regional workshop in Lima in late March. We plan to add two days to their meeting for a consultative workshop. We may also need to augment their participants to ensure that producers and CBOs are well represented.

East, Southern and Central Africa

VECO, Participatory Ecological Land Use Management (PELUM) and INADES-Formation comprise the regional groups suggested thus far.

Asia
We are investigating the possibility of holding a regional workshop in New Delhi in connection with a regional extension conference scheduled for February 6-8. We should have more information on this by the mid-December. If you have suggestions for groups within West Asia that should be invited, please send us the contact information.

Eastern Europe
The Agricultural Research Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences has offered to arrange a meeting in Budapest. Currently we have no funds for this workshop, but we plan to ask the European Commission and others if they can assist in funding it.

Western Europe
At this time, we are considering an event in Paris. More details will follow.

North Africa/Middle East
The meeting in Amman, which was originally scheduled for December, has been changed to February 26-27. ICARDA is hosting this event; they are putting together a list of organizations within the region to invite.

North America
We are investigating several meetings, but as yet have no concrete plans.