

## CABI EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

### Minutes of the 20th CABI Review Conference

(including closed session on Governance)

Held on 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> September 2019

At the Runnymede Hotel, Egham, Surrey, United Kingdom

#### PRESENT:

#### Liaison Officers, Executive Council members and Member Country Representatives

Mr. M.Hanif Ahmadzai	Afghanistan
Mr. Hamdullah Hamdard	Afghanistan
Mrs Fiona Lynn (by teleconference)	Australia
Mr. Wilfred Adderley	The Bahamas
Mr. Christopher Worrell	The Bahamas
Mr. S M Jakaria Huq	Bangladesh
Dr. Pharoah Mosupi	Botswana
Dr. Lekgari Aatshwaelwe Lekgari	Botswana
Ms. Faith Daniel	Botswana
Mr. Ernest Ndabashinze	Burundi
Dr. Niyongere Célestin	Burundi
Dr. Caroline Martin	Canada
Dr. Michele Marcotte	Canada
Mr Taylor Hladik	Canada
Dr Andres France	Chile
Mrs. Karin Concha	Chile
Mr. Sunan Jiang	China
Ms. Xiaoxia Wu	China
Mr. Weiping Hao	China
Mr. He Huang	China
Mr. Louis Tsangarides	Cyprus
Mr. Costas Dafos	Cyprus
Mrs. Joyce Asamoah-Koranteng	Ghana
Prof. Victor Kwame Agyeman	Ghana
Mr. Daniel Lewis	Grenada
Dr. Amol Shinde	India

CABI is a not for profit organization

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CABI improves people's lives worldwide by providing information and applying scientific expertise to solve problems in agriculture and the environment.

CABI, the trading name of CAB International, is an international organization recognized by the UK Government under Statutory Instrument 1982 No. 1071

Mrs. Marina Young	Jamaica
Miss Na-Shima Davis	Jamaica
Mrs. Renée Lloyd	Jamaica
Dr. Eliud Kireger	Kenya
Mr. Jesse Quiban	Malaysia
Mr. Muhammad Rudy Khairudin Mohd Nor	Malaysia
Mrs. Eulyn Silcott-Greaves	Montserrat
Ms. Thiri Thandar Lwin	Myanmar
Ms. Khin Mar Oo	Myanmar
Mr. Bas Harbers	Netherlands
Ms. Marielle Karssenberg	Netherlands
Mr. Yarama D. Ndirpaya	Nigeria
Dr. Muhammad Hashim Popalzai	Pakistan
Ms. Judith Silau	Papua New Guinea
Dr. Sergie Bang	Papua New Guinea
Ms. Ana Marie Hernando	The Philippines
Mr. Fidelis Mironko	Rwanda
Dr. Boitshoko Ntshabele	South Africa
Dr. Lakmini Mendis	Sri Lanka
Mr. Senuja Samaraweera	Sri Lanka
Dr. Lutz-Peter Berg	Switzerland
Mr. Michel Evequoz	Switzerland
Dr. Geoffrey Mkamilo	Tanzania
Mr. Alfred Balinda	Uganda
Prof. Joseph Obua	Uganda
Mr. Duncan Barker	UK
Mr. Tran Danh Suu	Vietnam
Mr. Moses Mwale	Zambia
Ms. Irene Chengo	Zambia
Dr. Cames Mguni	Zimbabwe

**Observers**

Ms. Gillian Ormiston	Diplomatic Missions and International Organisations Unit, The Foreign and Commonwealth Office, UK
Mr Jeremy Davies	Campden BRI (CABI Affiliates)
HE Mr Sani Redi	Ethiopia (Prospective Member Country)

**CABI Board**

Mr. Prem Warrior  
Prof. Ruth Oniang'o  
Dr. Paulus Verschuren  
Dr. Lutz-Peter Berg  
Dr. Ismahane Elouafi  
Mr. Roger Horton  
Mr. Andrew Jack  
Mr. Akhter Mateen  
Dr. Trevor Nicholls  
Mr. Robert Sloley

In total, **56** representatives representing **36** member countries were present (the UK also represented five UK overseas territories, i.e. Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Montserrat and St Helena) while Australia joined by teleconference. In addition, around 20 invited observers, guests and speakers attended most sessions of the Review Conference, and over 40 CABI Staff were in attendance during the whole or part of the event in order to give presentations, man exhibitions, interact with representatives of member countries or to support the running of the Conference.

**APOLOGIES:**

Barbados, Brunei, Colombia, Cote D'Ivoire, Gambia, DPR Korea, Sierra Leone and Trinidad & Tobago.

## Minutes of the Governance and associated sessions of CABI 20th Review Conference

Day 1: 12th September 2019

At the Runnymede Hotel, Egham, Surrey, United Kingdom

1. Opening Remarks by The Chair of Executive Council
  - 1.1. **The Chair (Dr. Lutz-Peter Berg, Switzerland)** welcomed all delegates from CABI member countries, prospective member countries and CABI Affiliates, and invited guests, observers and speakers, particularly those Liaison Officers and Executive Council members attending the Review Conference for the first time and representatives from Afghanistan, which joined CABI after the last Review Conference. He also noted that 4 delegates could not attend due to visa problems.
  - 1.2. **The Chair** expressed sympathy to the representatives of The Bahamas for the loss and devastation to their country, caused by hurricane Dorian.
  - 1.3. **The Chair** invited **Mr. Wilfred Adderley** of the Bahamas High Commission to update the meeting on the current situation in his country. **Mr. Adderley** explained that many areas of the country had been totally devastated and the clean-up operation will take a long time with searches ongoing for those that were still missing. **Mr. Adderley** provided two locations where donations towards the rescue efforts could be made at [www.bahamas.com/relief](http://www.bahamas.com/relief) or via the High commission website <http://www.bahamashclondon.net/>.
  - 1.4. **The Chair** explained that this Review Conference has been informed by the outputs from CABI's Regional Consultations held in the Americas and Caribbean, Asia-Pacific and Africa, during 2018-2019, and noted that the theme of this Review Conference would be "Building an inclusive and sustainable future". He added that during the coming two days, CABI would show how it will use its knowledge and expertise to help tackle global challenges from such as climate change, poverty, food security and improving gender equality, to help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.
  - 1.5. Reflecting on progress made since the last Review Conference in July 2016, **the Chair** was pleased to note that, the International Development team had made good progress against its impact goals with the prominent Plantwise programme having demonstrated significant benefits to farmers. The Knowledge Business had continued to deliver both knowledge and income, with surplus being reinvested back in to development work, while also developing smart ways to future proof itself.
  - 1.6. There have also been challenges, and despite CABI's efforts to mitigate the effects of the legacy UK Defined Benefit pension deficit it had become a pressing matter which had brought into focus both CABI's potential and impact and the acute threat to its work from this issue.
  - 1.7. He concluded that the Conference came at a critical time and would allow CABI to take stock of both threats and opportunities and provide a chance to take action to safeguard the other. As the Conference will show there is a lot to be safeguarded as CABI continues to build an inclusive and sustainable future.
  - 1.8. **The Chair** declared the 20th CABI Review Conference open and welcomed **HE Mme Josefa Sacko**, Commissioner for Rural Economy & Agriculture, African Union to give the keynote speech.
  - 1.9. **The Chair** thanked HE Mme Josefa Sacko for her positive comments and her support to CABI and invited **Dr. Trevor Nicholls (Chief Executive Officer, CABI)** to present a Review of Progress for the Medium Term Strategy 2017-2019.

## 2. CABI progress against Medium Term Strategy (2017-2019)

02/RC19

- 2.1. **Dr. Nicholls** welcomed all delegates to the 20th CABI Review Conference and extended particular thanks to Her Excellency, Commissioner Josepha Sacko for her opening remarks and for her support to CABI over the years.
- 2.2. He reported that good progress had been made against the 2017-2019 Medium Term Strategy, demonstrated by the fact that 79% of CABI's 116 milestones are either on track or have been delivered. The priorities of the strategy revolved around 6 outputs that had been derived from the Regional Consultations held in 2015-16, these were to improve livelihoods; increase food and nutrition security; put know-how into people's hands; enhance sustainability and climate; support sustainable utilization and conservation; strengthen capacity of agricultural innovation systems.
- 2.3. However, CABI had fallen short in its generation of revenue during the period, largely due to the funding climate becoming more demanding and competitive. Support from core donors for the Plantwise and Action on Invasives initiatives had been invaluable and much appreciated. However, the shortfalls in revenue had translated into reduced profitability while increased contributions to the pension scheme recovery plan had also had the effect of reducing operating profits.
- 2.4. Despite a challenging funding environment, CABI had been successful in winning around 50 new projects per year, with gross revenues of approximately £10m-£18m per year. The organisation had also maintained a high number of peer reviewed scientific publications, with over 150 published annually. These publications are critical in ensuring that CABI's work is accessible for others to read and use. More papers were being published in journals with impact factors greater than 2 and with an increasing number being published via open access.
- 2.5. **International Development** programmes and projects continue to have positive impacts in CABI Member Countries, with the award-winning Plantwise programme continuing to be very successful. The programme has trained over 10,700 plant doctors working in >3000 plant clinics, operating in 34 countries and has reached an estimated cumulative total of 31 million farmers. Furthermore, an independent 5-year Randomised Control Trial (RCT) impact study on Plantwise in Kenya demonstrated improved crop yields and increased incomes for individual farmers with an overall benefit to cost ratio of 3:1.
- 2.6. **Dr. Nicholls** observed that the early detection of pests is crucial when it comes to protecting crops, an example being when the banana skipper pest was detected at a plant clinic in Sri Lanka. The Plantwise team, working with the Sri Lankan government, were able to put into place a control programme which limited the damage caused by this pest. Had this control programme not been put in place the disease could have affected over 60% of the production area and the rapid response, supported by Plantwise, helped to prevent crop losses that could have been up to 12,900 metric tonnes, with a market value of US\$23 million.
- 2.7. Going forward, the Plantwise programme will aim to provide a stronger trade and value chain focus by giving farmers advice, not just on pests and diseases, but also on ways that they can increase their use of biocontrol mechanisms as well as providing better surveillance and preparedness thereby moving into the prevention rather than cure model.
- 2.8. Priorities are increasingly shifting towards predicting outbreaks of pests and diseases and CABI is working with partners with funding from the UK Space Agency's International Partnerships Programme to develop a data driven early warning system, initially focusing on several key pests in five countries (Kenya, Ghana, Zambia, Rwanda and Malawi). The Pest Risk Information Service for Africa (PRISE) programme compliments the farmer facing and systems transformation work already underway in the Plantwise and Action on Invasives programmes. The project combines satellite data with real-time field observations from the subscribers of the service and from the Plantwise plant clinics, to model the pest populations in the areas where CABI is working and provide alerts so that farmers can take early action to reduce their crop losses.

- 2.9. The Action on Invasives programme has continued to grow, with the programme's chief purpose being to defend, detect and defeat invasive species at national borders. The programme had already been crucial in reducing the spread of Fall Armyworm (FAW) in Africa and Asia.
- 2.10. **Dr. Nicholls** was delighted to announce that CABI, working in collaboration with IITA, ICRISAT, ICIPE and others had identified a potentially suitable biocontrol agent for FAW in Africa, the egg parasitoid *Telenomus remus*, adding that the next steps will be to develop mass rearing technologies and make sure it can be delivered economically and in an approved fashion.
- 2.11. CABI had also established its first Action on Invasives quarantine laboratory in Pakistan which would not only enable CABI to help Pakistan eradicate invasive species but would also assist in the development of new bio-control agents which could be used worldwide.
- 2.12. CABI's projects are increasingly focusing on value chains, with projects covering a range of crops, particularly in the horticulture and cash crop areas. The focus is no longer simply about pest management but on making sure that farmers who adopt these techniques can gain access to higher value markets as well as being given assistance with financing and marketing. This is a significant development in CABI's approach to projects and by taking a more holistic view of the value chain, it also helps to focus on creating greater roles for women within those value chains as well as identifying opportunities for youth employment.
- 2.13. CABI is a partner in a five year £30million DFID-funded programme, Commercial Agriculture for Smallholders and Agribusiness (CASA), which aims to increase investment in agribusinesses which trade with smallholders and to increase the smallholder engagement and benefits from agribusiness investments. The programme, covering Uganda, Nepal and Malawi, aims to improve the livelihoods of over half a million smallholder farmers and their families. Working with other five centres, CABI's share of the funding amounts to £3million.
- 2.14. **Dr. Nicholls** moved on to looking at the developments in **CABI's Knowledge Business** over the last 3 year: observing that there has been a slowing rate of growth in the core publishing business. Users were demanding faster access to information while other search technologies, such as Google Scholar, were becoming more popular amongst academic researchers. CABI's products need to evolve to meet these demands and the business continues to invest in product development, in order to future proof against the trend away from print into electronic media but recognised there is still a place for the comprehensive nature and high quality of the abstract databases and books that CABI produces.
- 2.15. He introduced **Dr Andy Robinson**, who joined CABI in July 2018 as Managing Director, Publishing. Dr Robinson and his Knowledge Business Management Team are working to stabilize revenues for core products and looking at how best to deliver efficiency and cost effectiveness by adopting new systems for book and database production.
- 2.16. Existing products are being relaunched and upgraded while horizon scanning and pest risk analysis tools have been added to the Invasive Species Compendium. A new Plantwise data collection app has been launched and has received positive feedback from all regions. CABI is also developing its own open access journal in the areas of agriculture and bioscience.
- 2.17. E-Learning is increasingly important for continuing professional development in all spheres and 2018 saw the launch of a PestSmart Diagnostics eLearning package by CABI. This draws upon the plant doctor training materials that were developed for Plantwise but incorporates a broader range of pest and disease content from CABI. This product is already on the market and being sold. As a companion to the PestSmart diagnostics module, CABI is now developing PestSmart Management which focuses on how to deal with these pests once they have been identified.

- 2.18. **Dr. Nicholls** reported that the acquisition and integration of SciDev.Net into CABI during the period had been of tremendous value to the organisation and had added breadth in terms of science communication and donor base, and gained skills to maximise impact and reach of regional/national communications initiatives.
- 2.19. **Dr. Nicholls** also informed the meeting that construction began on the new office building in Wallingford in October 2018 and is on track and budget for delivery of new Head Office in the middle of 2020.
- 2.20. He concluded by saying that that CABI remained in good health: the Medium Term Strategy is on track and delivering positive impact, while the Plantwise and Action on Invasive Species programmes continue to enhance CABI's presence and reputation worldwide as a reliable implementing partner who can deliver positive results on the ground. Short term financing through donors is secure but remains a long term challenge and that the UK Pension Regulator's demands are also difficult to meet but overall, there are a large number of positive, exciting opportunities that CABI and its Member Countries can address for the benefit of everyone worldwide.
- 2.21. **Dr. Nicholls** thanked the delegates for their support in everything that had been achieved over the last 3 years and looked forward to continuing to work in partnership with the Member Countries as we move forward to address these exciting new opportunities.
- 2.22. **The Chair** thanked **Dr. Nicholls** for his presentation and invited questions from the delegates.
- 2.23. **Dr. Lekgari Aatshwaelwe Lekgari (Botswana)** whether, with regard to Fall Armyworm (FAW), and looking at the country of origin, there are any countries that have identified how it progresses where there are no hosts (food plants) available throughout the year. **Dr Lekgari** also queried if the name of the pest was relevant in Africa, given the name represents a description of seasonality in America? **Dr Nicholls** responded that one of the key challenges with FAW is that as it develops into a moth it can fly significant distances and therefore jump over areas where there is no host. In the Americas it does not move fast as it does not survive winter well, whereas in Africa there is no such temperature control so biocontrol will be a key weapon in tackling this pest.
- 2.24. **Dr. Geoffrey Mkamilo (Tanzania)** noted that in his experience governments expect instant responses and want immediate solutions so they do not react well to 'awareness creation' only. He added that ideally there would be a shorter term response and asked if CABI and partners have some solutions to FAW that work now. **Dr Nicholls** replied that there has been a short term imperative to defeat it and though impacts have been mitigated, these solutions have not been able to stop it. He added that the long term focus needed to be on prevention rather than treatment but recognised that this approach can be unattractive politically as it is hard to demonstrate impacts.
- 2.25. **Mr. Yarama Ndirpaya (Nigeria)** commented that FAW and *Tutu absoluta* are devastating pests that do not honour borders, therefore, isolated in-country approaches do not work given lack of border control, and asked what efforts are needed to make preventive efforts more effective. **Dr. Nicholls** replied that CABI has been stimulating and supporting regional actions and had developed regional action plans. However, individual countries would still need to develop and own their national plans, and ideally all countries should do similar things. Horizon scanning and risk assessment tools are also important in planning and preparation and CABI is making these available for free to less developed countries.

3. **Plenary panel discussions – how the issues identified at the regional consultations relate to the global challenges** **03/RC19 (a) & (b)**
- 3.1. **The Session Chair, Mrs. Caroline McNamara (Chief Commercial Officer, CABI)** welcomed the delegates to the 1st plenary session – *how the issues identified at the regional consultations relate to the global challenges* and noted that the purpose of this session was to review and discuss the outcomes of the individual Regional Consultations. **Mrs. McNamara** reminded the delegates that Paper 03 (a) and 03 (b) were covered by this session.

The panel consisted of:-

- Dr. Dennis Rangi, CABI Director General, Development
  - Dr. Michèle Marcotte, Director of Research, Development and Technology, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
  - Professor Hao Weiping, Deputy Director General of International Cooperation, Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences
  - Dr. Pharoah Mosupi, Director of Agricultural Research, Common Service Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Botswana
  - Mr. Paulus Verschuren, CABI Non-Executive Director and Founder of WorldFed
- 3.2. **Mrs. McNamara** observed that the session is an important bridge between the individual Consultations that had taken place and to ensure that the Member Country priorities remain key to CABI's strategy in tackling the global challenges. She introduced the panellists and thanked them, for not only for hosting the meetings in their beautiful countries but for also agreeing to represent the views that came out of those discussions on behalf of the member countries in their regions.
  - 3.3. **Dr. Dennis Rangi (Director-General Development, CABI)** began by adding his thanks to the host countries and noted that it had been exciting to see such high level representation at each of the Regional Consultations and that he was equally pleased to see several senior figures from CABI's Member Countries also attending this Review Conference. **Dr Rangi** commented that he believed that this high level support demonstrated the faith our Member Countries have in the organisation, stressing that CABI can only succeed in the work it does with the help and participation of its Member Countries.
  - 3.4. **Dr. Rangi** observed that the Regional Consultations give CABI the opportunity to reconnect and re-engage with its Member Countries, adding that one of the things that makes CABI a unique organisation, is that it does not come to these Consultations with its own agenda – priorities and objectives are developed together. He presented an overview of the outcomes of the three Regional Consultations that had taken place in Canada, Botswana and China during 2018 and 2019 and reported that it had been agreed at each Consultation that the 9 priority areas, identified in 2015-16, were still relevant but with increasing emphasis on the issues below:
    - Value chains/market access with a focus on small holder farmers
    - Climate smart agriculture in practice
    - Integrated approaches to crop and livestock production, protection and processing – roles for women and youth
    - Digital development, language and data literacy
    - Invasive pathways
    - Use of microbial resources, and enabling biological control through ABS in line with Nagoya protocol
    - The support for farmer based organisations
    - Evidence-based agricultural practice and policies

- Knowledge management advice and consultancy for national systems including advisory on livestock diseases and zoonoses
- 3.5. **Dr. Rangi** noted that with regard to gender, CABI had hired a gender specialist who would be looking at how CABI's work feeds into global gender activities and added that the success which Plantwise has had over the years as a programme had also been a subject for discussion, especially the need to help the sustainability of PW and see it become embedded in national systems and policies. He thanked the delegates for their attention and handed over to his fellow panellists.
  - 3.6. The Panellists, representing the host countries discussed the key outcomes of their respective regional consultations in relation to the Value Chains, Climate Smart Agriculture and Invasive Species Management, and how these issues related to the global challenges of climate change, gender, youth, and economic development.
  - 3.7. **Mrs. McNamara** thanked the panel and opened the floor to questions from the delegates.
  - 3.8. **Dr. Sergie Bang (Papua New Guinea)** asked that regarding climate change mitigation, we know cutting trees is a problem so what could CABI do to stimulate tree planting – e.g. tree crops such as fruit trees, highlighting that we need to replant deforested areas with commercial trees. In Papua New Guinea we could encourage planting of more fruit trees if markets existed.
  - 3.9. **Dr Arne Witt (CABI)** replied that CABI already does quite a bit in this area and that many GEF projects are around restoring degraded lands to make them productive. He noted that CABI would like the UNFCCC to consider invaded land as degraded since we cannot afford to have unproductive land if we are to feed a growing global population. Together, we could and should do more particularly in the area of invasive and restoring degraded land.
  - 3.10. **Dr. Boitshoko Ntshabele (South Africa)** commented that 75% of inter Africa trade is horticulture but we know that 30% of produced food is wasted so asked what the opportunities are to involve youth and women in addressing this issue.
  - 3.11. **Dr. Pharoah Mosupi (Botswana)** responded that the figure is closer to 40% in terms of waste and loss caused by pests and proposed that member countries need to come up with policy instruments, regulations and strategies to encourage support. Policies are needed for gender equality and youth empowerment but a bottom up system of policy development is required and not one imposed from outside. Focus also needs to be on more effective post-harvest management, distribution systems and waste management.
  - 3.12. **Dr Dennis Rangi (CABI)** agreed that we need to look at how we can influence policy as the role of government is crucial to ensure smallholder farmers have the right physical and political infrastructure to reach markets. As long as they have right tools they will do what is needed but we need to demonstrate that the market exists.
  - 3.13. **Dr. Muhammad Hashim Popalzai (Pakistan)** commented that Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) is an important theme of this meeting but it is a fancy word – easier said than done. In one year, Pakistan had expected a bumper harvest of wheat crop but it was destroyed by hailstorms and led to 1.5 billion tonne shortfall. Rust free varieties exist but we need to address and resolve climate challenges.
  - 3.14. **Mr. Luca Heeb (CABI)** responded that CSA is not well defined, as a concept it is a success story but for implementation it is more difficult. Members and non-members have committed strategies under the Paris Agreement that outline what countries understand in terms of adaptation and mitigation. Mitigation is less clear for developing countries while countries that contribute least are most affected.

- 3.15. **Dr. Amol Shinde (India)** commented that in terms of climate resilience (CR) projects, India have a programme with CABI, which has been successful. However, it requires a long-term strategy, and working together by governments.
- 3.16. **Dr. Geoffrey Mkamilo (Tanzania)** commented that the regional consultations had rightly identified value chains and market access as priorities for working together since trade barriers hinder farmers' access to markets, and asked how we, working together can harmonise and rationalise to allow movement of value added products. CABI is global and its Members Countries need to understand what CABI is doing and where. Without visibility of CABI activities countries do not believe in spill over and need to see contribution IN their and other countries.
- 3.17. **Mr. Daniel Lewis (Grenada)** noted that countries need a strong policy framework to ensure women's contribution is more prominent, and asked how CABI can interface with governments to ensure some of these things can be really be addressed.
- 3.18. **Dr. Michele Marcotte (Canada)** responded that Canada have recently approved the launch of a food policy under which there are elements of a gender-based strategy for the sector. Canada also has a problem in attracting young women into agriculture who are doing well in education. There are a lot more women involved in the whole agri-food chain but fewer in certain sectors. There is a disparity and we do not yet understand the issues - it seems that there are some things women do and do not want to do.
- 3.19. **Dr. Paulus Verschuren (CABI Board)** noted that in some funding situations there is often a series of requirements for funding, one being gender, but this could often be just a 'ticking boxes' exercise, in which case it simply would not work since specific expertise is needed to make the right decisions.
- 3.20. **Ms. Frances Williams (CABI)** agreed and confirmed that this is something that CABI is now really trying to change. Before we can design or implement any project or before any programme can make a real difference we need to understand what is happening on the ground and talk to the people directly affected. Once the real needs of farmers are understood programmes can be adapted accordingly and, in that way, achieve a much better impact. Women need to be encouraged to become more involved in value chain development in areas where they feel they can make the most difference and where they want to be involved and not in roles that we assume are suitable for them.
- 3.21. **Mr. Yarama D. Ndirpaya (Nigeria)** commented that on the reality of youth engagement, we can look at what percentage of youth are engaged. Some situations do not encourage youth uptake as many of them do not have land, and many have no formal education. For example, in the north of Nigeria hardly anybody is willing to work in these environments. As long as there is a focus on operating in safe zones only 'privileged sons' will have opportunity so how can we reach majority that are outside the safe zones?
- 3.22. **Dr. Rangi** responded that before we can make any real difference we need to know the specific needs of particular regions and then look at appropriate interventions. He added that the roles of governments and policy-makers are crucial as we cannot make a difference in isolation.

## Minutes of the Governance and associated sessions of CABI 20th Review Conference

Day 2 : 13th September 2019

At the Runnymede Hotel, Egham, Surrey, United Kingdom

4. **CABI governance and resolutions** (Member countries only) - Roll call, apologies for absence and approval of the agenda
  - 4.1. **The Secretary (Dr. Qiaoqiao Zhang, CABI Director of Membership)** was invited to report on attendance and apologies: **56** representatives representing **36** member countries were present as the UK also represented five UK overseas territories, i.e. Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Montserrat and St Helena. Australia joined by teleconference. Apologies were received from Barbados, Brunei, Colombia, Cote D'Ivoire, Gambia, DPR Korea, Sierra Leone and Trinidad & Tobago.
  - 4.2. **The Chair (Dr. Lutz-Peter Berg)** welcomed the Member Country representatives to this governance session, and invited **Dr Trevor Nicholls (CEO, CABI)** to make a brief statement before officially declaring the opening of the session.
  - 4.3. **Dr. Nicholls** also thanked everyone for their attendance and announced that, in order to assist the disaster recovery operations in the Bahamas and the broader Caribbean area CABI would be making all its database resources, including the Global Health and the CAB Abstracts packages available for free to the Bahamas and to other Caribbean countries.
  - 4.4. **The Chair** advised the delegates that in order to speed up the process of the governance session that voting would take place via a paper ballot form<sup>1</sup>. A voting station had been set up at the back of the room to collect completed ballot papers. When voting, the delegates were requested to initial every page, and sign in full at the last page. The ballot papers should be deposited in the box at the voting station before 14.00.
  - 4.5. **The Chair** explained that the votes would be counted by the Secretary and her colleagues and the results would be verified by the Chair of the Executive Council (**Dr. Lutz-Peter Berg**) and one of the Member Country Observers to the CABI Board. The ballot papers would be retained and available for inspection by any member country that wished to do so. Results would be announced by e:mail confirmation after the Review Conference along with information on the 'Next Steps'.
  - 4.6. **The Chair** proceeded to declare the Governance Session of the 20<sup>th</sup> Review Conference open, and sought approval of the agenda. The recommendation to approve the agenda was passed, proposed by **Mr. Duncan Barker (UK)** and seconded by **Dr. Michele Marcotte (Canada)**. There were no objections.
5. **Review of Progress with Medium Term Strategy (MTS) 2017-2019** **Paper 02/RC19**
  - 5.1. **The Chair** reminded the delegates that this paper was presented by Dr Trevor Nicholls on the morning of the Day 1, and that the Review Conference is recommended to approve this paper as a summary of CABI's progress against the Medium Term Strategy (2017-2019).
  - 5.2. **The Chair** confirmed that there were no further questions or clarification required before inviting the delegates to cast their votes by marking the ballot paper as appropriate.

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<sup>1</sup> The ballot paper (as attached) includes all motions for approval and the results of the voting by member countries.

**6. Approval of Summary Report of Regional Consultations in Americas, Asia and Africa and Approval of Summary Report of Invasive Species Policy Summit at CABI Regional Consultation in Africa 03/RC19 (a) & (b)**

- 6.1. **The Chair** reminded the delegates that these two papers had been covered at the first Panel Discussions held yesterday (Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> September), and asked if there were further questions or clarifications required. He requested member country delegates to cast their votes by marking the ballot paper as appropriate, noting that there are two separate requests for each paper.

**7. The CABI UK Defined Benefit Pension Scheme 04/RC19 & Addendum**

- 7.1. **The Chair** introduced the relevant Paper for discussion - *The CABI UK Defined Benefit Pension Scheme*, and presented recommendations from the Sub-committee of the Executive Council.
- 7.2. He noted that the deficit in the legacy CABI UK Defined Benefit Pension Scheme posed serious financial risk for CABI's future survival as well as the organisation's ability to continue to deliver activities and benefits for all of the its Members, stakeholders, customers and beneficiaries, particularly poor smallholder farmers.
- 7.3. Paper 04/RC19 and the separate Addendum to that Paper provided further detailed information on the issue. The matter would be familiar to most Member Countries as CABI had provided information on it to Executive Council annually since 2013 via specific papers or through the CEO's annual report. There was also a major session on at the 2016 Review Conference.
- 7.4. **The Chair** noted that it was important to understand that this is a legacy issue that only affects CABI in the UK and arises from historic pension arrangements put in place when the CABI Treaty was established. Nevertheless, it is a significant commitment since nearly one thousand current, former and retired staff rely on this Scheme for some, or all, of their pensions.
- 7.5. The deficit is caused by a combination of the UK Regulatory framework and economic conditions, both of which factors are outside of CABI's control and affect many similar UK pension schemes. In particular, **the Chair noted** that this is not a case of mis-management – CABI and the Trustees of the scheme have taken professional advice and have already taken a number of actions to mitigate the deficit. The CABI Board has also been watching the issue carefully. All actions taken have helped reduce the deficit by £7-8M. An agreed recovery plan is in place which will allow the Scheme to recover gradually over the next 40 years. This has seen CABI make cash contributions of nearly £12M so far from operating costs and committing to forward contributions of approximately £100M over the next 40 years. All staff are now covered by a Defined Contribution Scheme which does not create any financial liability for the organisation.
- 7.6. Unfortunately, this has not proved sufficient to satisfy the UK Pension Regulator (TPR). The urgency to address this matter was suddenly increased at the end of 2018 when TPR approached CABI, the Trustees of the Scheme and UK's Department for International Development (DFID) to say that it considers the Scheme to be seriously under-funded and at high risk of being unable to meet its future liabilities. This created a significant risk that TPR would order a wind-up of the Scheme unless a significant cash injection could be secured in the short term, over and above the CABI annual deficit recovery plan payments. Given that CABI's financial capacity is stretched to the limit by the contributions it is already making then this would likely result in the dissolution of CABI, unless significant financial support from Member Countries could be agreed.
- 7.7. In order to respond to this threat, the Executive Council Meeting, of February 20<sup>th</sup> 2019, mandated the formation of a sub-committee, to evaluate options for securing the long-term financial security of the organisation and to make recommendations to the 2019 Review Conference as to the support required from Member Countries. The Sub-Committee was comprised of the CEO, CFO, Member

Country representatives from the UK, Canada and Zambia and the Chair of Executive Council also representing Switzerland. The committee met 3 times between April and August.

- 7.8. The Sub-Committee considered various options to address the issue but concluded that fund-raising of significant lump sum payments from Member Countries was the only viable option and agreed on a target of £35M which would substantially reduce the risk in the Scheme. It was agreed to apportion this amount on the basis of the cumulative membership fee contributions of each Member Country since it joined CABI. The proposals for this, together with a substantial amount of background information were circulated to all Member Countries as **Paper 04/RC19** early in July to allow maximum time for consultation before this meeting.
- 7.9. The paper was followed up by phone calls and visits to individual Member Countries by the CEO, Director of Memberships and CABI Regional Directors. As a result of this, the UK, through DFID, had agreed to provide £12M, staged in 3 tranches over the next 18 months, to support CABI. However, it was important to note that this funding was provided with the condition that other Member Countries would also provide additional financial support.
- 7.10. **The Chair** explained that feedback from many other Member Countries had indicated a preference to provide extra financial support for CABI over the longer term through increased annual membership fees. While this route was initially insufficient to address the immediate threat posed by the deficit, the early and substantial contribution from the UK will now allow CABI to accommodate this option more easily.
- 7.11. As a result, the Sub-Committee had updated its advice, through an **Addendum to Paper 04/RC19**, to recommend the adoption of an increase in membership fees by doubling of the current 2019 level for Member Countries that do not provide any lump sum funding. Countries who have made a lump sum contribution will receive a discount against these new fee levels. The combined impact of CABI and Member Country payments, along with the staged lump sum from DFID, gives a very similar reduction in risk to the original proposal to raise £35M in lump sum payments. By providing the requested levels of support now Member Countries would substantially reduce their risk of having to pay a much larger amount on the dissolution of CABI if the UK Pension Scheme were wound up.
- 7.12. **The Chair** advised that at this stage CABI was seeking Review Conference's *in-principle* approval for the extra financial support by way of lump sum payments or a doubling of fees from Member Countries. Subject to a vote in favour of this approach by the Review Conference, CABI and the Executive Council Sub-Committee would put forward detailed governance proposals for final approval by Executive Council. Such a proposal would include discounted fees for those countries contributing lump sum payments together with mechanisms for regular review of the deficit situation, linked to the UK regulatory requirement for a valuation to be carried out every 3 years, and a re-adjustment of fees back down again once the deficit was brought under control or eliminated.
- 7.13. **The Chair** thanked the delegates for their attention to this important but complex and rather dry issue and handed over to **Dr. Trevor Nicholls** for further comments and to take questions from the floor.
- 7.14. **Dr. Nicholls** thanked **the Chair** for a comprehensive review and summary of the situation adding that it is deeply uncomfortable for CABI to be asking its Member Countries for this additional financial support. He noted that discussions on day one of the Conference had shown how much value CABI brings to its member countries and to the smallholder farmers within those Member Countries. CABI had been going for 110 years and was committed to continuing delivery of high quality service, advice and information to farmers to help promote the economic development and the improvement of livelihoods within member countries. Therefore continued and additional support from CABI's Member Countries was being requested in this matter.
- 7.15. **The Chair** thanked **Dr. Nicholls** and asked if the UK, as a Member Country of CABI and host of CABI would like to add anything. **Mr. Duncan Barker (UK)** was pleased to confirm that DFID had received ministerial approval for the lump sum contribution in the near future and hoped that this

would encourage other member countries to contribute and trusted that it would also go a long way in helping to tackle the financial issues that CABI was facing.

- 7.16. **The Chair** then invited comments and questions or points of clarification from the floor.
- 7.17. **Dr. Pharoah Mosupi (Botswana)** observed that while in support of the proposals regarding the financial assistance he would suggest that there needed to be some form of governance procedure in place for informing the member country governments. For example, in Botswana, in a situation such as this, it would be the Minister responsible that would take the request to the Cabinet and if/when they approved only then the contribution can be made. The Liaison Officer cannot bring the request to Government.
- 7.18. **Dr. Nicholls** replied that CABI would look at how engagement could be improved in this process. There had been a degree of urgency which had forced CABI to work at a pace that is uncomfortable in an international organisation, adding that, although our regulator is a government body it did not necessarily appreciate government decision making principles in other countries. For this reason, CABI was looking for commitment in principle at this meeting and recognised that each country would need to go through its own due process to get agreement to increase financial support. CABI was committed to working with each Member Country to give as much support as necessary in making the case in order to expedite the process as quickly as possible.
- 7.19. **Prof. Victor Kwame Agyeman (Ghana)** noted that the first letter and the approach could have been better managed as the initial letter caused some reluctance to pay. **Prof. Agyeman** explained that when he presented it to his Ministers they asked *'why should we pay for something because UK government has made changes to its pensions regulations?*, adding that if the approach had been made in the way it has been today, and explaining that there was a need to increase membership fees then there would not have been a problem. Consulting representatives first will go a long way in getting Member Country support.
- 7.20. **Dr. Nicholls** thanked Ghana for their comments and noted that, had CABI been in a position earlier in this process to address the deficit with only a fee increase CABI it would have done so. However, at the outset, CABI did not have the commitment of support from the UK. The original letter had only been intended as a draft to be circulated for feedback and that feedback did enable the switch to the 'fee increase' approach. He apologised for any misunderstanding if the approach had seemed a bit heavy handed.
- 7.21. **Mr. Muhammad Rudy Khairudin Mohd Nor (Malaysia)** expressed Malaysia's support to CABI and noted that Malaysia did not see the dissolution of CABI as an option at this time. He thanked DFID for its crucial contribution of £12m and the commitment of CABI of a further £5m from the possible sale of Egham, which Malaysia had hoped would narrow the deficit. However, with this new development, Malaysia is not clear how much the deficit has been narrowed and feels that it would be useful for the Member Countries to know. He proposed that CABI continued its effort to narrow the deficit gap by identifying further voluntary contribution through donors etc. as well as efficiency savings in its day to day operation. It would be helpful if CABI could recalculate how much further the gap had been narrowed before presenting the Member Countries with an idea of the fee increase required. At the moment the ballot paper only offers 3 options, namely *Lump sum payment, lump sum spread over 3-5 years and doubling of membership fees* but Malaysia had been hoping for only an incremental increase of annual membership fees.
- 7.22. **Dr. Nicholls** thanked Malaysia and noted that the points raised would be addressed by a paper to Executive Council to follow on from the review Conference that will include recommendations for a Governance review and which will also look at whether there are additional ways that CABI can find financial support from its own resources to go into the scheme. To give Member Countries a rough idea of the required changes, the scheme actuaries have modelled the impact of increased contribution from member countries to show that the fee increase reduces the length of the recovery plan from 40 years to 23 years and significantly reduces the risk of under performance of the

investments, giving the scheme more robustness to future financial shocks, which will allay some of the concerns of the UK Pensions Regulator.

- 7.23. **Mr. Yarama D. Ndirpaya (Nigeria)** commented that 2019 has been an election year in Nigeria with a new Cabinet only recently elected. This had added further complications in trying to get a commitment of support for CABI. Nigeria agreed with Botswana that there needs to be a better way of approaching governments with this request. He looked forward to further discussions with CABI on the best way forward, adding that Nigeria will always be supportive but would like to see more activities by CABI in Nigeria.
- 7.24. **Dr. Boitshoko Ntshabele (South Africa)** noted that South Africa also has a newly elected government and that departments are currently undergoing reorganisation. South Africa had studied the suggested options and felt that none appear to allow South Africa a way of providing the requested support so he would not be able to make a commitment at this meeting.
- 7.25. **Mr. Taylor Hladik (Canada)** commented that while supportive of the approach Canada would appreciate a review of process going forward. **Mr. Hladik** noted a discrepancy between the addendum paper and the ballot paper and was keen to ensure that the final record reflected what is in the ballot and not what was in the shared document.
- 7.26. **Dr. Nicholls** thanked Canada for highlighting the difference and, to clarify, noted that the wording on the ballot reflected the wording that was included in the original paper. In the addendum the wording was slightly different. For the record the wording on the ballot was the wording that had been included in the original Paper 04/RC19.
- 7.27. **Dr. Geoffrey Mkamilo (Tanzania)** remarked that he had an opportunity to raise the request with the Permanent Secretary and was told that the government needs to check on how the current contributions are made and what impact there has been; based on these findings they will decide whether to continue to contribute. **Dr. Mkamilo** noted that CABI needed to go to Tanzania and engage directly as well as providing evidence of impact in the country.
- 7.28. **Dr. Nicholls** responded that CABI would be happy to help each country make its case as appropriate.
- 7.29. **Mrs. Karin Concha (Chile)** noted that although Chile recognised CABI's work she had come to the meeting with instructions that Chile could not support any method of contribution. However, there was no suitable option on ballot paper to reflect this response so how could this be noted?
- 7.30. **Dr. Nicholls** reminded the delegates that this was an '*in principle*' vote. He recommended that if any country could not agree to any of the suggested options then it should leave the boxes unticked but add a comment.
- 7.31. **Mr. Christopher Worrell (The Bahamas)** agreed that the Bahamas would also look to CABI to support the Liaison Officer in bringing the request to his government but requested that this include future plans within the region and what could the Bahamas expect to see by way of improved productivity of agriculture in member countries? These facts may help to sway his government's position.
- 7.32. **Mr. Louis Tsangarides (Cyprus)** noted that this is an issue that required immediate action to minimise financial burden on member countries, adding that while the obligation of support is clearly defined and Cyprus also acknowledges the moral obligation, Cyprus agreed with Malaysia and South Africa that it would also like to see CABI mobilising its own resources toward finding a solution.
- 7.33. **Mr. Roger Horton (Chair of the CABI Board)** noted that the context of breadth and coverage of the work done by CABI and its member countries is amazing. As Board Chair, he felt that it was his duty to approach this issue on the basis of sound financial governance, stressing that CABI does

amazing work that makes a real difference in the regions and that this threat to CABI must not be allowed to happen.

- 7.34. **Dr. Sergie Bang (Papua New Guinea)** agreed that Papua New Guinea (PNG) has benefited in the area of pest control etc. but would like to see more engagement and direct projects, adding that PNG gives its support in general and can agree to an increase in fees but not a lump sum.
- 7.35. **Mr. Akhter Mateen (Chair of Finance and Auditing Committee, the CABI Board)** remarked that this subject had been top of the agenda since he first joined the Board and asked the delegates to be reassured that CABI had looked into this regularly so the current situation is not down to poor management. CABI is a 'not-for-profit' organisation so access to funds is challenging. All increased fee contributions would go directly towards addressing the deficit.
- 7.36. **Mr. Michel Evequoz (Switzerland)** commented that Switzerland is a great supporter of CABI as CABI's impacts are very high and it is a strategic partner when it comes to supporting smallholder farmers. Unfortunately, Switzerland could not formally support the proposal at this meeting as the money of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) is for international development. However, Switzerland will do its best to provide support in other ways.
- 7.37. **Ms. Xiaoxia Wu (China)** noted that China fully understands the difficulty CABI faces and appreciates the contributions CABI makes around the world. However, China is also unable to make any firm commitment today as several governmental agencies would be involved in the decision making process (e.g. the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Finance). China therefore cannot commit until further internal discussions have taken place but, in the meantime, would like to continue the dialogue with CABI and added that CABI should listen to the voices of its member countries.
- 7.38. **Dr. Muhammad Hashim Popalzai (Pakistan)** noted that CABI had supported Pakistan for many years with significant benefits for farmers in his country – now it was time for Members to return the commitment by agreeing to win the support of relevant bodies in their countries.
- 7.39. **Ms. Ana MarieHernando (Philippines)** commented that the 3 options need more detailed information before any commitment can be made. The Philippines recognises that delay will not help so CABI had the Philippines's full support but there needed to be more detailed information presented first.
- 7.40. **Dr Nicholls** explained that if Item 4C (see attached Ballot Paper) gets a positive vote then CABI will bring forward a detailed paper to the Executive Council.
- 7.41. **Mr Christopher Worrell (The Bahamas)** commented that the Bahamas offered full support for an increase in fees but CABI would need to provide a more details to report back upon the request, adding that The Bahamas were concerned about the wording of the ballot document and proposed that the wording needed to be clear/non-binding and that the change needed to be made before votes were cast.
- 7.42. To be clear on the amount, **Dr. Nicholls** noted that CABI needs to be contributing an extra £1m per year to the pension deficit recovery as well as the £12m from DFID. Current membership fees total £1.4 m/ year. Taking allowance for non-payment and discounts means that the fees need to be doubled in order to raise this extra £1m. However, the member countries had CABI's commitment to work on flexible basis. At this meeting CABI was looking for a positive vote on 4C so that even if member country representative left the mechanism of payment blank this could be worked through later.
- 7.43. **Prof. Victor KwameAgyeman (Ghana)** noted that doubling of the fees would be an issue for Ghana so this would need further discussion.

- 7.44. **Mrs. Fiona Lynn (Australia)**, joining by conference call) noted that Australia thanked DFID for its contribution and acknowledged the steps already taken by CABI to resolve the deficit, adding that Australia supported, in principle, an increase in contributions in order to help CABI to continue providing its vital work.
- 7.45. **Mr. Christopher Worrell (The Bahamas)** raised the issue of membership fee arrears, noting that while some member countries are giving extra commitment, some are not paying, and that there was also the possibility that some may commit but will not or cannot pay. Therefore, he wanted to know what steps CABI would take to increase its productivity and to deliver additional services to its members.
- 7.46. **Dr. Nicholls** explained that the recovery plan already sees an increase in CABI's contributions of 5% per year which will require CABI to increase productivity by 2.5% per annum, even without any payment from Member Countries member countries. Selling properties is an option but it would be unrealistic to promise increases in services and in productivity. CABI was fully committed to doing everything it could to minimise the burden on member countries.
- 7.47. **Dr. Pharoah Mosupi (Botswana)** wondered whether, in the future, issues of these magnitude could be tabled at Regional Consultations in order to allow more time for discussions and possible solutions from the Member Countries. **The Chair** apologised and added that the process had been taken out of CABI's hands and that the timetable had been driven by the Pensions Regulator.
- 7.48. **Dr Nicholls** and **The Chair** took a few moments to discuss how to proceed after which **The Chair** suggested that a Member Country might put forward a motion to change the word 'doubling' on the ballot to 'increasing'.
- 7.49. **Prof. Victor Kwame Agyeman (Ghana)** stated that subject to Member Countries' consideration he would like the governance session to resolve to '*increasing of annual membership fees*' instead of '*doubling of annual membership fees*'. With the caveat that the Member Countries have a say in the % increase.
- 7.50. **Ms. Ana Marie Hernando (The Philippines)** observed that page 59 of the paper says increasing will not be enough, and queried what the effect of changing word would be.
- 7.51. **Mr. Taylor Hladik (Canada)** noted that the change of wording was not an issue however, he urged Member Countries to recognise that doubling was the objective.
- 7.52. **Mr. Christopher Worrell (The Bahamas)** agreed that the ballot paper needed to make it explicitly clear that the votes cast were '*in principle*' and requested a change of wording on the ballot paper to say: - '***Resolves 'in principle' to make 'increased' contributions' in line with the recommendations of the Sub-committee.*** **Dr. Nicholls** thanked the Bahamas for their recommendation and noted that, post this meeting, the Sub-Committee were likely to bring forward detailed recommendations as to why it felt that doubling was the right level. This would then be open for discussion and voting.
- 7.53. **Mrs. Karin Concha (Chile)** commented that Chile could still not support any changes in Chile's contributions no matter the wording on the ballot paper.
- 7.54. **Mrs. Eulyn Silcott-Greaves (Montserrat)** asked for clarification on how a lump sum contribution would impact the incremental income. Would this mean that doubling would not be required? **Dr. Nicholls** explained that both would still be needed but any Member Country that made a lump sum contribution would get a discount on the annual membership contribution. **Mrs Silcott-Greaves** acknowledged that, in principle Montserrat recognised and supported the need for an increase but requested that CABI provide a list of scenarios which could be used by Liaison Officers to help them 'sell the case to their governments'. **The Chair** responded that a paper laying out these scenarios would be provided by Christmas.

- 7.55. **Mrs. Renee Lloyd (Jamaica)** supported The Bahamas' suggestion to amend the ballot paper by inserting the phrase 'in principle' before votes were cast.
- 7.56. **The Chair** suggested that a motion be put forward to change the wording on ballot paper 4C to read: *'Resolves in principal to makes increased contributions...'*
- 7.57. The motion was proposed by **the Bahamas** and seconded by **Kenya. South Africa, Montserrat and India** abstained. **Chile** voted against. The motion to change the wording on ballot paper 4C passed.
- 7.58. **The Chair** suggested that a motion be put forward to change the wording on the ballot paper 4C to replace the word *'doubling'* with the word *'increasing'*.
- 7.59. The motion was proposed by **Ghana**, and seconded by **Malaysia. South Africa** abstained. **Chile** voted against. The motion to change the wording on ballot paper item 4C passed.
- 7.60. **The Chair** closed the session and informed the delegates that subject to the outcome of the vote detailed proposals for the governance and oversight of these special contributions, reflecting comments from the Review Conference, will be sent for approval by e:mail vote of Executive Council.

## **8. Approval to complete Medium Term Strategy for 2020 – 2022 05/RC19**

- 8.1. **The Chair** reminded the delegates that the supporting document for this session was circulated to all Member Countries in advance of the meeting (in early August). Those delegates who had read it could vote immediately but those who wished to hear the presentation first should complete their voting forms and then deliver them to the voting station before 14.00.
- 8.2. **The Chair** thanked the delegates for their participation and closed the Governance Session.

## **9. Presentation and feedback of CABI's Medium Term Strategy 2020-2022**

- 9.1. **Dr. Trevor Nicholls** gave a comprehensive presentation on the draft of CABI's Medium Term Strategy (MTS) 2020-2022, and noted that CABI's strategy now supports delivery of 8 SDGs (SDGs 1, 2, 4, 5, 12, 13, 15 and 17), with Gender Equality and Climate Action driving CABI's approach to other SDGs.
- 9.2. He informed the Review Conference that CABI's strategic goals for the period 2020-2022 will be to improve market access for smallholder farmers to sustainable value chains; build capacity for delivery of climate resilient food and nutrition security; help women and young people gain new opportunities from access to targeted, context-specific agricultural information and technology; and to promote the balanced use and conservation of biodiversity and ecosystems.
- 9.3. CABI's new strategic goals will be delivered through activities carried out within six thematic areas, which are Value Chains and Trade; Crop Health; Development, Communication and Extension; Invasive Species Management; Digital Development; and Science Publishing and Journalism.
- 9.4. **Dr. Nicholls** concluded that this strategy was built on the achievements of CABI's previous MTS, and will move CABI further towards its long-term vision of being the "go to place" for knowledge about agriculture and the environment.
- 9.5. **Dr. Nicholls** invited questions, comments and feedback from the delegates.
- 9.6. **Dr. Leonard Mizzi (DG DEVCO, European Commission)** commented that he felt the issue of nutrition was not covered sufficiently in the presentation, highlighting the need to tackle malnutrition, work on diverse diets and change food supply systems. He felt these issues were linked to public

health budgets which were under strain so we need a strategic way of working on nutrition (obesity etc as well as malnutrition). As commodity prices decline public health budgets will be squeezed in many countries.

- 9.7. **Dr. Mizzi** also felt that the issue of working with the private sector was not adequately addressed. For example, how does CABI envisage working with the private sector? What types of private sector to work with? NGOs often want to work only with ones they like – not big companies. The presentation did not mention blended finance and how to use this approach to unlock funding for the strategy. Foundations are mentioned – but beyond this – how can we look at blended finance to deliver funding needed for change. In his view, financial institutions were still risk averse to fund projects within the agriculture sector and more funding will come from blended finance in the next five years.
- 9.8. **Dr. Nicholls** replied that the point on nutrition regarding the presentation was fair, but in the draft Medium Term Strategy document it was given higher prominence. He noted CABI's experience of this issue through the GAPAD<sup>2</sup> initiative and through the DFID funded mNutrition programme. The former is driven by fact that there is an overly high degree of reliance on starchy staple crops – rice, maize, wheat and soy, when there are many crops with better nutrition and climate resilience. The GAPAD initiative that will look at both supply and demand, building awareness of benefits for consumers and encouraging farmers to grow crops that fulfil the demand for healthy and nutritious food.
- 9.9. Regarding the private sector he noted that this means many things to many people - from large companies such as Nestle to smallholder traders and agro-input suppliers who will be essential to CABI's work in delivering environmentally sensitive pest management products. It was not just about the financing but also about getting the right partnerships. CABI was just starting to work on a programme called CASA (Commercial Agriculture for Smallholders and Agribusiness) which was focused on how to encourage finance into the smallholder sector. This would give CABI some good insights as it moves forward.
- 9.10. **Mr. Jiang Sunan (China)** noted that during the past year the UN office for outer space affairs has made an offer that any UN member country that wants to use space station data to help achievement of the SGD's can submit proposals to the UN office of outer space affairs using the China funded space station which will be operational in 2022. Already 9 projects for 17 countries have been submitted.
- 9.11. **Dr. Nicholls** responded that CABI has worked closely with China, through the Chinese MARA-CABI Joint Lab with UK Newton programme funding to look at locust and other pest risk forecasting using earth observation data .
- 9.12. **Mr. Christopher Worrell (The Bahamas)** expressed thanks to CABI for being an exceptional partner especially for SPS and extension. **Mr. Worrell** was interested in how the changing climate would affect the Caribbean as climate resilience interventions are especially important for Caribbean. This was of great importance due to how terrible the consequences can be and asked if CABI could find projects with a Caribbean focus e.g. coastal issues as Climate Change affects the Caribbean differently, or if projects like PRISE could be adapted for the Caribbean.
- 9.13. **Dr. Nicholls** said that CABI had the capabilities and technology to help the recovery of the Caribbean's agriculture and biodiversity but cannot do much on infrastructure. One little appreciated impact of climate change will be changing pest distributions and invasive species spread. CABI can help through work to tackle invasive species and through plant clinics, helping provide advice to farmers on what might be better crops for the future e.g. shorter stem crops. He noted that invasives can be hidden thieves of water, and he was sure that the world had the knowledge to grow enough food to feed 9-10 billion people, but would there be enough water to grow sufficient food as woody invasive weeds threatened large areas of Africa and Asia.

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<sup>2</sup> GAPAD: Global Action Plan for Agricultural Diversification

- 9.14. **Mrs. Renée Lloyd (Jamaica)** highlighted the interesting breakout on climate change and found this encouraging. Although CABI was perhaps late to the it could not be more opportune and she asked if it was possible to put the full force of CABI behind this focus on climate change in its work e.g. initiatives to mitigate and adapt to climate change impacts. She understood that it was not within CABI's remit to help communities to recover from disasters but asked if CABI could think how it can be innovative in what it is empowered to do to address these issues. It would be appreciated if the commitment was there to take action and there is a need to be in contact with climate change focal points in capitals including agriculture, finance and environment. Jamaica would be grateful for more dialogue on this.
- 9.15. **Dr. Geoffrey Mkamilo (Tanzania)** commented that the presentation had highlighted the organisation's strategic goals, but was concerned that the thematic areas did not say anything about women and youth and might have been forgotten.
- 9.16. **Dr. Nicholls** pointed out that these were cross cutting issues that were relevant to all that CABI does and in each thematic area the organisation would focus on how to make its projects inclusive and gender sensitive.

## 10. Close and next steps

- 10.1. **The Chair** congratulated CABI for a successful Review Conference and thanked all delegates for their active participation as well as all those who had organised the conference, and invited **Dr. Trevor Nicholls** to provide a conference summary, entitled *Together we can make change happen!*
- 10.2. **Dr. Nicholls** reiterated that taking considerations of the political, economic and social environment, donor priorities, member country needs and CABI core skills, CABI's Medium Term Strategy 2020 will help CABI to move closer to its Vision. CABI will seek member country approval on the final version at the next Executive Council meeting.
- 10.3. **Dr. Nicholls** informed the delegates that linked to the UN's International Year of Plant Health, a Plant Health conference, organised by CABI in collaboration with the Netherlands Ministry of Agriculture, Wageningen University and Koppert Biological Systems, will be held on 9-11 September 2020 in the Hague, the Netherlands, and invited the delegates to save the date.
- 10.4. **Dr. Nicholls** announced that 20<sup>th</sup> Review Conference would be his last one as he is due to retire at the end of 2020. As a token of appreciation, **the Chair** presented him with a gift (an illuminated globe) on behalf of Member Countries, and thanked him for his valuable contributions to the organisation. **Malaysia** and **China** also presented gifts to Dr. Nicholls to express their appreciation.
- 10.5. Before the Review Conference drew to a close, **the Chair** announced that all the motions were approved by a substantial majority, with Item 4C receiving 20 votes in favour of, 4 votes against and 8 abstentions.
- 10.6. **The Chair** reminded delegates that the next Executive Council Meeting will be held on Wednesday, 4th March, 2020, in London (Hallam Conference Centre), and declared the close of the 20<sup>th</sup> Review Conference.
- 10.7. **Post-Meeting Note:** On 16 September, a summary of votes on each of the resolutions was shared with all Liaison Officers, Executive Council members and their delegates. The summary is attached as mentioned by the footnote on page 11.