

Update on GRiSP (February 17, 2011) – by Marco Wopereis

The GRiSP proposal was submitted to the CGIAR Consortium Board (CB) on May 10, 2010 and subsequently reviewed by three external reviewers and the CB. A significantly revised proposal was developed during a writing workshop at IRRI and submitted to the CB on June 25. The CB evaluated and approved it, followed by submission to the Fund Council (FC) / all donors and the interim Science and Partnership Council (ISPC) around July 10. GRiSP became the only full Mega Proposal (subsequently renamed as Consortium Research Program, CRP) that was ready for discussion during the Funders' Forum & FC meeting held on July 15 and 16, 2010 in Rome. Comments from the ISPC and donors were received in August. The GRiSP document was revised during the IRRI Annual Science days in the last week of August. More work was still done in September and the document was then resubmitted on September 20 to the Consortium Board. GRiSP was again reviewed by the ISPC, the Fund Council and the Consortium Board and an unconditional approval was obtained at the highest funding scenario in October. GRiSP was officially launched during the International Rice Congress in Hanoi on November 9, 2010. Achim Dobermann is interim GRiSP Program Director.

Meetings of the program planning and management team (PPMT) are held at least monthly since November 2010 using the WebEx internet tool. The Global Rice Science Scholarship call is expected to be launched by the end of February. A GRiSP M&E workshop will be held March 23-25, 2011 at IRRI to develop a framework that will allow measuring and reporting progress against milestones and impact indicators in an efficient and transparent manner, and set an example that can be used for other CRPs. The first GRiSP Phenotyping workshop will be held in Montpellier, March 28-30, 2011, organized by Cirad.

Whereas all non-GRiSP Centers have received transition funding budgets for 2011, IRRI and AfricaRice were left 'hanging' because GRiSP was not included in the transition budget. Hence, AfricaRice and IRRI are the only 2 centers with no confirmed budget for the first half of 2011. The message received is that we have to wait until the new Strategic Results Framework (SRF) document is approved because only then will it be possible to issue funding through the new Windows 1 and 2. The earliest that approval can take place is at the FC meeting in April, in Montpellier.