

Highlights of the Year

Change of Guard

The year 2006 marked a transition in the governance and leadership of ICARDA. The transition took place on the Center's Presentation Day, held on 7 May and attended by several ministers, ambassadors and other senior diplomats, donor representatives, leaders of national agricultural research systems, former ICARDA Board Chairs and Members, former ICARDA Directors General, and media representatives.

Dr Margaret Catley-Carlson formally handed over the office of Board Chair to Dr Guido Gryseels. "Guido has a wealth of knowledge of the CGIAR System – his wide leadership experience in non-profit research and development sectors makes him an ideal candidate to serve in this position," she said.



Dr Margaret Catley-Carlson handed over the office of Board Chair to Dr Guido Gryseels (right). Dr Catley-Carlson served on the ICARDA Board from April 2001 to May 2006. Dr Gryseels joined the Board in 2003. He is the Director General of the Royal Museum for Central Africa in Belgium.



In his farewell address, Prof. Dr Adel El-Beltagy, outgoing Director General, spoke of ICARDA's achievements in the past decade, and his optimism for the future.



Dr Mahmoud Solh, incoming Director General, highlighted the areas that would receive priority.

Dr Gryseels joined ICARDA's Board of Trustees in 2003. Until he took over as Board Chair, he had been serving as a member of the Executive, Nomination and Program Committees of the Board.



The distinguished audience at ICARDA's Presentation Day, held on 7 May 2006.

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Thanking the Board of Trustees and management of ICARDA for their trust in him, Dr Gryseels said he was committed to ICARDA's mission of alleviating poverty and hunger in dry areas of the developing world, and that he looked forward to further contributing to this mission by working with ICARDA and its partners.

On behalf of the management and staff of ICARDA, Prof. Dr Adel El-Beltagy (outgoing Director General) paid tribute to Dr Catley-Carlson for her leadership of the Board of Trustees. "Maggie is a wonderful diplomat, has enormous capacity to absorb knowledge and transmit it, and has held several positions of responsibility including her current position as Chair, Global Water Partnership," he said. He thanked her for taking excellent care of the Center and its staff, and for her active role in fund raising.

Dr Mohamed Zehni, Vice-Chair of the Board, said, "Maggie is endowed with great experience, knowledge, and wisdom. Her human qualities of friendship and her love for the region and its people are all unparalleled."

Dr Catley-Carlson thanked everyone for their support to her. She thanked all those who have been supporting ICARDA, noting that more than 10% of ICARDA's revenue now comes from donors within the region.

The Presentation Day also marked a transition of the Director General from Prof. Dr Adel El-Beltagy to Dr Mahmoud Solh. Paying tribute to Prof. Dr El-Beltagy, who was retiring after having served the Center for more than 11 years, Dr Catley-

Carlson said, "Of all the extraordinary things I will remember when I think about your contribution, I think I will most remember your skill in putting together a global network of people and institutions that really care about changing the outlook for those in dry areas. With your special magic, you turned that into a network of friends who laughed together, studied together, talked together and worked together. Thank you Adel for your immense contribution to ICARDA, for the quality of caring you brought to the Center's beautiful headquarters at Tel Hadya, and for your passionate conviction that life can be better for those in the world's dry-land areas."

Responding to the tributes paid to him, Prof. Dr El-Beltagy said, "I am overwhelmed by your generosity. I have done nothing more than what I should have done, and indeed I should have done more." He thanked everyone for their support to him and to ICARDA. He thanked the past and present Board Chairs and Members and the former DGs for leading ICARDA to become a dynamic and forward-looking Center. He concluded by urging everyone present to contribute to peace and stability in the world.

Dr Catley-Carlson then introduced Dr Mahmoud Solh as the new Director General. Welcoming Dr Solh, Dr Catley-Carlson said: "Dr Solh is no stranger to ICARDA and therefore I hardly need to introduce him to you. Being a Lebanese, he is a son of the soil, knowing the ICARDA region and its challenges well. He has been associated with international agricul-

tural research and development in the dry areas since 1972 when he joined the Arid Land Agricultural Development (ALAD) Program in the Near East, the predecessor of ICARDA."

Dr Solh returns to ICARDA after serving as Director of the Plant Production and Protection Division at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) for four years. Prior to that he had served ICARDA with distinction for nearly 16 years in various capacities – as Lentil Breeder, Regional Food Legume Breeder in North Africa, Regional Coordinator of the Nile Valley and Red Sea Regional Program, and Assistant Director General for International Cooperation.

Responding to Dr Catley-Carlson and addressing the Presentation Day guests, Dr Solh said, "I would like to thank the ICARDA Board of Trustees for their highly-valued confidence placed in me to fill this position. I would also like to express my appreciation to H.E. Dr Adel Safar, Minister of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform, Syria, for his encouragement and continued support to ICARDA and to me personally. Through him, I would like to convey my special thanks to H.E. Dr Bashar Al-Assad, President of Syria, and his government, for their unwavering support to ICARDA since its establishment in 1977. I sincerely hope to be up to the expectations of all stakeholders in meeting the challenges facing ICARDA to contribute effectively to agricultural research and provide quality science and technology necessary for the development of dry areas globally.

"The success of ICARDA in achieving its noble mission of alleviating poverty and hunger depends on the support of all stakeholders. The challenges of agriculture in the harsh environments of dry areas are diverse, and these can only be addressed effectively through strategic partnerships."

Farewell to Departing Board Members

At a dinner reception hosted in honor of the Presentation Day guests on 6 May, Dr Catley-Carlson and Prof. El-Beltagy paid tribute to the following Board Members, who were completing their tenure, for their significant contributions to the growth and development of ICARDA: Dr Gareyth Wyn Jones (U.K.), outgoing Chair, Program Committee and Member, Executive Committee; Dr Seyfu Ketema (Ethiopia), outgoing Vice-Chair, Program Committee and Member, Nomination Committee; Dr Abbas Keshavarz (Iran), outgoing Chair, Nomination Committee and Member, Executive and Program Committees; and Dr Mohamed Bassam Al-Sibai (Syria), outgoing Member, Audit, Program and Executive Committees. Dr Catley-Carlson and Prof. El-Beltagy welcomed two new members to the Board: Dr Henri Carsalade (France), Member, Program Committee; and Prof. (Ms) Aigul Abugaliev (Kazakhstan), in absentia, Member, Program Committee.

Robert Havener Memorial Lecture Series Launched

At a dinner reception for the Presentation Day guests on 6 May, ICARDA launched the "Robert Havener Memorial Lecture" series. Dr Ismail Serageldin, Director, Bibliotheca Alexandrina, Egypt, and former Chair of the CGIAR, delivered the first lecture entitled "From Glorious Past to Brilliant Future: Ten Commandments for Global Agriculture." The lecture was much appreciated by the audience.



Dr Ismail Serageldin delivering the first Robert Havener Memorial Lecture.

Dr Robert (Bob) D. Havener, former Board Chair of ICARDA, passed away on 3 August 2005. He also provided leadership and guidance to other CGIAR centers and international organizations in various capacities with great distinction.

ICARDA Rated 'Superior' in CGIAR Evaluation

ICARDA was rated 'Superior', following a CGIAR evaluation of the 2006 performance of all 15 CGIAR Centers. The rating was based on the results of the performance measurement system developed by the CGIAR and the World Bank, which considered several indicators: research outputs, impact, quality and relevance of research, institutional and financial health, and stakeholder perceptions of each Center's contributions. Also, ICARDA was ranked highest among all CGIAR Centers for its commitment to documenting impacts and building an impact assessment culture of research.

Fifth External Program and Management Review of ICARDA

The Fifth External Program and Management Review (EPMR) of ICARDA took place in two phases: 22-28 April and 10-24 June 2006. Between the two phases, the Panel members visited the Center's collaborative research activities with national partners in several countries in the Central and West Asia and North Africa (CWANA) region.

Chaired by Prof. Dr Elias Fereres, Professor of Agronomy at the University of Cordoba, and Researcher at the Institute of Sustainable Agriculture, Scientific Research Council of Spain (IAS-

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Dr Elias Fereres (center), EPMR Panel Chair, presented the Panel recommendations to the management and staff of ICARDA on 22 June. With him are Dr Guido Gryseels (left), Board Chair, and Dr Mahmoud Solh, Director General of ICARDA.

CSIC), the Panel consisted of the following members: Prof. Dr Stephen Baezinger, University of Nebraska, Lincoln; Prof. Dr Ahmed Goueli, Secretary General of the Council of the Arab Economic Unity and Professor of Agricultural Economics, Cairo University; Dr John Passioura, Division of Plant

Industry, Canberra; and Dr Juliet McKee, an economist based in Wellington, New Zealand. The Panel was assisted by two consultants: Dr Camilla Toulmin, Director, Drylands Program, International Institute for Environment & Development (IIED), London; and Mr Frederick Kalema-Musoke, a financial



The EPMR Panel with ICARDA senior management and scientists. Front row (left to right): Mr Frederick Kalema-Musoke, Consultant to EPMR Panel; Prof. Dr Stephen Baezinger, Panel member; Prof. Dr Adel El-Beltagy, ICARDA Director General; Dr Juliet McKee, Panel member; Prof. Dr Elias Fereres, Panel Chair; Ms Jenny Nasr, from the Science Council Secretariat. Back row: Dr John Passioura (far right), Panel member; and Dr Peter Gardiner (third right), from the Science Council Secretariat.

analyst. There were also two resource persons from the Science Council: Dr Peter Gardiner, Senior Officer; and Ms Jenny Nasr, Agricultural Research Officer.

Dr Fereres presented a preliminary report and recommendations of the Panel to ICARDA management and senior staff on 22 June 2006.

Eighth International Conference on Dryland Development

The International Dryland Development Commission (IDDC) held its 8th International Conference on Dryland Development (ICDD) under the theme "Human and Nature – Working Together for Sustainable Development in the Drylands" in Beijing, China, 25-28 February 2006. The conference was hosted by the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), and cosponsored by the United Nations University (UNU), Tokyo, Japan; Arid Land Research Center (ALRC), Tottori, Japan; Dryland Research Institute (DRI), Nevada, USA; and Cold and Arid Regions Environmental and Engineering Research Institute (CAREERI), Lanzhou, China. The AAAID, CAS, CGIAR, COMSTECH, FAO and ICARDA supported the Commission in organizing the conference. Some 200 delegates from 26 countries and five international organizations participated in the conference.

Prof. Dr Adel El-Beltagy, President of the IDDC and Director General of ICARDA, chaired the inaugural session.

Academician Prof. Dr Li Jiayang, Vice President of CAS, was the chief guest.

The 8th ICDD was the first major event heralding the beginning of the UN Year of Deserts, said Prof. El-Beltagy. He thanked the Chinese Academy of Sciences for hosting the conference in Beijing. On behalf of the cosponsors, statements were made by Prof. Dr Iwao Kobori from UNU, representing Prof. Dr Hans van Ginkel, Rector, UNU; Dr Nouredin Mona, FAO's Resident Representative for China, Korea and Mongolia; Prof. Dr Stephen Wells, Director of DRI; and Prof. Dr Wang Tao, Director of CAREERI. A statement on behalf of the Chairman of the CGIAR, Dr Ian Johnson, Vice-President of the World Bank, expressing his strong support for the conference and wishing the participants success, was read by Dr Mohan Saxena, Executive Secretary of the IDDC.

Academician Prof. Dr Li Jiayang, in his inaugural address, congratulated the IDDC for holding its 8th ICDD at the beginning of the UN Year of Deserts. He underpinned the importance of the development of dry areas for global food security and for sustaining the livelihood of people in the developing world.

The conference included three plenary sessions involving 12 presentations; and seven concurrent sessions, where 115 oral presentations were made on 10 different themes. In addition, there were three poster sessions in which 35 posters were presented.



Prof. Dr Adel El-Beltagy (fourth from left), President of the IDDC and Director General of ICARDA, chaired the inaugural session. Academician Prof. Dr Li Jiayang (fifth from left), Vice President of CAS, was the chief guest. Seated from left to right: Prof. Wang Tao, CAS; Prof. Stephen Wells, DRI, USA; Dr Nouredin Mona, FAO; Prof. Dr Adel El-Beltagy; Prof. Dr Li Jiayang; Prof. Dr Iwao Kobori, UNU; Dr Mohan Saxena, Executive Secretary, IDDC; and Prof. Dr Shinobou Inanaga, JIRCAS, Japan.

CWANA-Plus – a New South-South Partnership

During the conference, at a special plenary session, ICARDA and UNU announced the launching of a new south-south partnership "CWANA-Plus." The objectives of this joint initiative include sharing expertise and facilities, training developing-country scientists, providing opportunities for a Masters' degree program in integrated land management, and promoting best practices across the vast CWANA region and neighboring dry areas in Western China, South Asia, and sub-Saharan Africa.

CWANA-Plus will use the long experience and existing networks of UNU and ICARDA to link centers of excellence in research and capacity building, identify gaps in research and technology transfer, and select appropriate partners to reach out to the poor who stand in need of support to fight desertification and protect their livelihoods.

ICARDA-CIMMYT Partnership: The Global Rust Initiative

The Global Rust Initiative (GRI) held its first workshop on 9-11 October at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina in Alexandria, Egypt. The GRI is an international R&D consortium led by ICARDA and CIMMYT, in partnership with the NARS of over 30 countries. It was launched in September 2005, following the disastrous outbreak of a new strain of wheat stem rust, Ug99, first identified in Uganda in 1999. GRI is currently supported by USAID, Canada and India.

Wheat stem rust, caused by the fungus *Puccinia graminis*, caused huge losses and even famines in the first half of the 20th century. In 1950 it destroyed nearly 70% of wheat plantations in North America. The latest outbreak caused heavy losses in East Africa; small-scale farmers in Kenya lost half their crop. Scientists fear the disease could spread to the Middle East, Asia and the Americas, because the pathogen spores can be trans-

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Dr Abdelsalam Gomaa (second left), representing the Minister of Agriculture and Land Reclamation, Egypt, inaugurated the GRI meeting. Dr Mahmoud Solh (left), Director General of ICARDA; Dr Masa Iwanaga (second right), Director General of CIMMYT; and Dr Scott Christiansen, USAID representative, made opening statements.

ported over long distances by wind.

Dr Abdelsalam Gomaa, representing the Minister of Agriculture and Land Reclamation, Egypt, inaugurated the meeting. In their opening statements, Dr Mahmoud Solh, ICARDA Director General and Dr Masa Iwanaga, CIMMYT Director General, emphasized the importance of partnerships in controlling wheat stem rust. "The risk of a stem rust epidemic in wheat in Africa, Asia and the Americas is real, and must be averted before untold damage and human suffering is caused," said Dr Solh. ICARDA, CIMMYT, USDA-

ARS, Agriculture and Agri-Foods Canada, the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, the Kenya Agricultural Research Institute and the Ethiopian Agricultural Research Organization are already actively involved in the GRI. CIDA, FAO, USAID and the World Bank are now fully aware of the potential threat from Ug99. Strong links with all the NARS in the CWANA region already exist.

The workshop was attended by 56 participants from 21 countries.

Participants agreed to carry out field surveys in all threatened countries, identify genetic

resources with resistance to stem rust, develop new resistant varieties, identify suitable fungicides and methods for their optimal use, multiply seed of resistant varieties, and develop NARS capacity in rust research.

Director General of OPEC Fund Visits ICARDA

H.E. Suleiman J. Al-Herbish, Director General of the OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID), visited ICARDA on 22–23 June. He was accompanied by Mrs Ikhlass Najib, Head of the Grants Unit, OFID. The objective of the visit was to obtain first-hand information on ICARDA's programs and facilities, and discuss the Center's ongoing and future collaboration with OFID.

Dr Mahmoud Solh, Director General, briefed the visitors on the Center's activities. After the briefing, H.E. Al-Herbish addressed ICARDA's senior management and scientific staff.

OFID was the first donor to come forward with a US\$4 million support to ICARDA in 1980 for the construction of its new headquarters buildings. This funding helped ICARDA construct its Lab 1 and Lab 2, which have been serving not only ICARDA scientists but also a large number of trainees and graduate students. OFID has also supported ICARDA's research programs in cereal improvement, participatory barley breeding, natural resource management, wind erosion, community-based seed production in



Participants of the First Workshop of the Global Rust Initiative, held in Alexandria, Egypt, 9-11 October.

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H.E. Suleiman Al-Herbish and Dr Mahmoud Solh at the entrance of Lab 1. The plaque in the background is inscribed with ICARDA's acknowledgment of OFID's support to construct Lab 1 and Lab 2 buildings.

Afghanistan, livestock improvement (jointly with ILRI), the Arabian Peninsula Regional Program (jointly with IFAD and the Arab Fund), and sustainable management of scarce water resources in WANA.

H.E. Al-Herbish then presented an overview of OFID's programs and objectives. OFID has provided grants and aid for a variety of projects and activities in developing countries, including assistance to member countries following natural disasters. The Fund contributes actively to HIV/AIDS interventions, in collaboration with UNESCO, WHO, and other organizations. He assured that the Fund would continue to support ICARDA's programs in the future.

Honors and Awards

Prof. Dr Adel El-Beltagy, ICARDA Director General (until 7 May) was elected Chair of the Global Forum on Agricultural Research, and a Fellow of the Academy of

Sciences for the Developing Countries.

Dr Raj Paroda, Regional Coordinator, ICARDA-CAC and Head, PFU-CGIAR, received a gold medal and a certificate from the Government of Armenia in recognition of "the outstanding contribution of the CGIAR Consortium in CAC towards the development of sustainable agriculture in Armenia."

Dr John Ryan, Consultant Soil Fertility Scientist, won the 2006 International Fertilizer Association Award. He was also re-elected as Chairman of Commission 3.3 (Soil Fertility and Plant Nutrition) of the International Union of Soil Sciences.

Dr R.S. Malhotra, Senior Chickpea Breeder, received an honorary doctorate degree in agricultural science from the Tajik Academy of Agricultural Sciences, Tajikistan; and an honorary professorship from the

Gulistan State University, Uzbekistan.

Dr Mustapha El Bouhssini, Entomologist, was appointed as an Adjunct Faculty Member in the Department of Entomology at Kansas State University, USA.

Dr Jan Valkoun, Head of Genetic Resources Unit, received an award from CIMMYT for his contributions to world wheat conservation and utilization.

Dr Ahmed Amri, Regional Coordinator, West Asia Regional Program; Dr Theib Oweis, Director, Management of Scarce Water Resources and Mitigation of Drought; and Dr Salvatore Ceccarelli, Barley Breeder, received awards from the Government of Jordan for their contributions to strengthening partnership between Jordan and ICARDA.

Dr Khaled Makkouk, Regional Coordinator, Nile Valley and Red Sea Regional Program, was



H.E. Suleiman Al-Herbish (third right, front row), Director General of OFID; Mrs Ikhlass Najib (second right, front row), Director of the Grants Unit, OFID; and Ms Rana Naimeh (third left) of OFID, with ICARDA Director General Dr Mahmoud Solh (center, front row) and other senior staff of the Center.

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elected President of the Mediterranean Phytopathological Union for a 3-year term.

ICARDA's collaborative research on integrated management of Sunn pest in West and Central Asia won the CGIAR Award for Innovative Partnership. Dr Mustapha El-Bouhssini, ICARDA entomologist, and Drs Bruce Parker and Margaret Skinner, from the University of Vermont, who have been leading the partnership for over a decade in collaboration with scientists from

national agricultural research systems (NARS) as well as specialists worldwide, received the award.

A poster on "Protected Agriculture in Yemen: More Income for Farmers from Less Water" by Dr Ahmed Moustafa, Regional Coordinator, Arabian Peninsula Regional Program; and Abdul Wahed Mukred, Amin Al-Kirshi, Mohammad Al-Sadi and Mohammad Al-Dhubani of the Agricultural Research and Extension

Authority, Yemen, won the best poster award at the Second Triennial Conference of the Global Forum on Agricultural Research.

Dr Mohammed El Mourid, Regional Coordinator of ICARDA's North Africa Regional Program, was honored by the Ministry of Scientific Research, Technology and Capacity Building of Tunisia for his contribution to science and technology in Tunisia.

Varieties Released in 2006

Variety	Country of release	Features
Barley		
Moronera INIA	Peru	Resistant to rust; adapted to high elevation, shallow soils; grain quality for processing
INIA 411 San Cristobal	Peru	Resistant to yellow rust, moderately resistant to leaf rust
Faba bean		
Wadi-1	Egypt	Early maturity, high yield, adapted to intensive cropping
Gebelcho	Ethiopia	Large seeded
Moti	Ethiopia	Large seeded
Lentil		
Cagil	Turkey	Wilt-resistant red lentil, suitable for mechanized harvesting
Alfin toprak	Turkey	Wilt-resistant red lentil, suitable for mechanized harvesting
VL Masoor 507	India	Bold seeded, good wilt resistance
Masoor 2006	Pakistan	High yield red lentil, resistant to rust and wilt complex
BARI Masur-5	Bangladesh	Combined resistance to rust and <i>Stemphylium</i> blight, suitable for mix- and intercropping
BARI Masur-6	Bangladesh	Combined resistance to rust and <i>Stemphylium</i> blight, suitable for mix- and intercropping
Winter and facultative wheat*		
Armcim	Armenia	High yield, resistance to yellow rust
Gobustan	Azerbaijan	High yield, resistance to yellow rust
Chickpea		
Ejere	Ethiopia	Wilt-resistant, bold-seeded kabuli
Teji	Ethiopia	Wilt-resistant, bold-seeded kabuli
Grass pea (<i>Lathyrus</i>)		
Ali Bar	Kazakhstan	High yield, low neurotoxin in seed
Gürbüz	Turkey	High yield, low neurotoxin in seed
Hassyly	Turkmenistan	High yield, low neurotoxin in seed

*in collaboration with CIMMYT