

## **8.1. Consultancy work for the Challenge Program on Water and Food (CPWF)**

The CGIAR CPWF is an ambitious research, extension, and capacity building program that will significantly increase the productivity of water used for agriculture. It is an 18-member consortium composed of five CG/Future Harvest centers, six National Agricultural Research and Extension Systems (NARES), four Agricultural Research Institutes (ARIs), and three international NGOs.

The program's aim is to allow more food to be produced, with the same amount of water that is used in agriculture today, as populations expand over the coming 20 years. This is to be done in a way that decreases malnourishment and rural poverty, improves people's health, and maintains environmental sustainability.

The CPWF has a minimum core budget of US\$82 million for a first 5-year phase, and it is expected that projects will attract a further US\$50 million. There are clearly defined roles for each consortium member. CG centers lead thematic groups. The Program consists of 5 themes and at 12 benchmark sites. CIAT has been nominated to lead Theme 2: Multiple Use of Upper Catchments, with Simon Cook of PE-4 nominated coordinator. We are hoping to promote our work in benchmark basins in the Andes, Honduras, and the Mekong. The program starts officially on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2002 with a 12-month inception phase during which competitively bid proposals will be organized.

We are in the process of conducting preliminary workshops to enable scientists at CIAT to identify contributions that have the ultimate objective of improving the ability of the water resource to support sustainable livelihoods. This would be building on CIAT's earlier work in watersheds in Colombia and elsewhere.

Jorge Rubiano joined the team in June 2002 to support PE-4 in preparation for the CPWF, and has been developing the science behind Theme 2 and will be involved in competitive projects as the program moves from the initiation phase to the project implementation phase. He has been amassing data, making literature reviews, and organizing internal workshops.

A watershed-focused database is being organized to identify the similarities and differences between the currently selected CPWF catchments and the rest of the catchments in South America. Secondary information produced by the unit during recent years is being used together with freely available continental databases on the Internet.

In collaboration with the Stockholm Environmental Institute (SEI), a vulnerability study in Honduras started activities. The project will focus on three local communities seeking to understand the relationships between their local ecological and socioeconomic conditions and their vulnerability to natural hazards such as floods and droughts.

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