

IAASTD Workshop

13.05.08

Workshop minutes

Hans Herren – The content of the IAASTD

See presentation from Hans Herren (IAASTD Planet Diversity Bonn full.ppt)

The IAASTD participants needed to look at the questions before hand.

World was receptive to the IAASTD due to the food crisis.

Need a change in whole food system as opposed to just in production.

Food production is down in the areas where we really need it.

Water use in crisis in areas which will be affected by climate change. Also, no insurance in these areas.

We don't have 4 scenarios for the IAASTD, only a business as usual and some variants. Would be nice to have a model that people can play scenarios on their own and see what may happen under different policy options, including impact and consequences.

Ag research should be in the public domain to produce international public goods, not controlled by companies from field to fork with patents.

Need growth in agriculture, but sustainable.

Growth – needs work with farmers , i.e., more education, access to information, access to markets and inclusion of the rural population in the value adding chain for ag products

The elephant in the room is population growth - this must be spoken about.

Land policy (slide) – biofuels.

Angelika – Transgenics and Biotechnology in the IAASTD

More expertise was needed on transgenics in the process. The definition was then widened to include all biotech (more than transgenics).

Process started in Cape Town. Worked on global chapters and then Synthesis report.

A Syngenta representative (Deborah Keith) had the right of first draft of the report.

However she sent that draft only with a delay of 3 weeks after the deadline. Deborah's draft did not capture the spirit nor diversity of science put forward in the global and subglobal chapters – therefore it was rewritten, and after this a favourable response was received from all, including even DK, but later DK pulled out. There was no reason given to us, her fellow co-authors, for her pulling out.

Later in the process, the biotech industry pulled out, again without any constructive input or prior discussion.

The report was then further developed in Tunis and eventually accepted by most except 2 countries in the Johannesburg plenary without any significant discussions.

Benny – Introduction and the Process of the IAASTD

Process has been going on since late 2002.

The World Bank approached Greenpeace and asked whether possible for consensus on the biotech issue.

The World Bank was approached first by the biotech industry and later by NGOs.

NGOs said it was silly to try and get involved due to low funding etc. Many opted out, but none said that it should not go ahead.

Greenpeace also worked with Pesticide Action Network (PAN), and Marcia (from PAN) headed up NGOs, and worked with some sympathetic authors.

The two main goals of NGOs was to ensure no straight forward endorsement of GMOs in agriculture, and to have food sovereignty in agriculture included an official document – the IAASTD report.

Both were achieved.

There was agreement with all the initiators of the IAASTD that the whole process would not be driven by solutions, but rather problem driven – what are the problems and how do we solve them.

Once we had this agreement – it was the end of GMOs

30 governments + 30 Civil Society Organisations (CSOs - NGOs + Industry + Scientists) in Bureau – decided on authors and questions.

Everybody agreed on the questions which was very important – it is harder for special interests to shape answers when you have the right question.

Not only authors selected, but also review editors – who were brilliant. NGOs agreed on list of 14 editors to suggest – 11 of the 14 were selected – very important in the process!

Not fully inclusive process, but shows with right stability to maintain the process it is possible to achieve something – we have now achieved it and it is sound science and legitimate (as it is under the UN agencies and World Bank) – we now have to exploit it and use it, not only amongst ourselves but in wider circles.

Jannice Jiggins – Social Content

I am a Social scientist – resource and population issues.

Multifunctionality (MF).

Agriculture is a context dependent activity. Many diverse options, opinions and circumstances.

How do we deal with issues of meaning in a scientific report?

Agriculture is intertwined in many other aspects of life.

MF is a “code word” to try and show the interconnectedness of agriculture with life.

Many including the chair thought trying to get MF in was not likely – it did work and we got it in with the OECD definition.

MF contentious in terms of trade issue – may undermine trade efficiency.

Well, we need to address the imbalance.

At what scale are we addressing MF? How do we maintain human integrity biodiversity and landscape? How do we cope with claims on land water etc? How do we ensure that agriculture is providing sustainable livelihoods?

Participatory breeding.

If we are to deal with Climate Change we need maximum flexibility – being constrained by International Property Rights (IPR) and Patents.

Transitions in IPR very hard!

IAASTD did better on participatory breeding than the World bank world development report.

Need new standards in registration for sale of seed. EU technical committee to look at this, but all countries and NGOs need to work with their technical committees to look at these issues.

Every innovators right – how do we respect innovation to ensure it is correctly rewarded even within communities who are developing solutions.

Q&A to all previous speakers.

Could we have more info on biotech in the reports?

Biotech is NOT short hand for transgenic plants – it is all biotech. GE is therefore not a solution (doesn't say this explicitly, but shows that there are other solutions and doesn't say it is!).

The statements are balanced – sometimes higher yields sometimes lower.

Some countries can't just talk about farmers, we must look at the agro food industry?

To what extent is the agro industrial complex mentioned and to what extent did it not appear as a solution?

Is there any obligation on governments to respond to the report?

Report is addressed to the decision makers (therefore the SDM).

In challenges all issues addressed, whole system, including agro industrial complex.

Concentration in supermarkets also addressed – how what will be funded in future.

Not legally binding (like IPCC). Our task to bring it to the attention of Decision Makers – we are bound to use it.

Are their resources to sell the document/report to the media?

Access to land and resources/reform mentioned?

Is population growth mentioned?

Private sector will continue business as usual. Govt research has been privatized or broke – so what are they going to change? Real actors (farmer to farmer networks, via campesina etc) how are they going to do it? Must convince them to change – need money to mobilize peasants.

Land use mentioned in regional reports.

Looked at cost of oil and issues around that. 10 or 12 governments who have looked at oil have mentioned rise in oil prices and connection to food. Report does not see continuing concentration of agriculture due to biophysical conditions (no more oil, etc)

This is not something we can leave – we must push it into govt policy – must educate people as they provide the pressure.

Is food sovereignty mentioned?

Definition in SDM and Synthesis report (on page 7). Used a couple of times, defined once.

All the documents are on the internet. The 21 key findings is the best and quickest thing to read. For a more detailed document, read the summary of the Synthesis Report.

LUNCH

Rajeswari Raina – Using the IAASTD reports

See handout from Rajeswari (Rajeshwari Raina print out.doc)

Break into regional groups to discuss options for using the IAASTD reports.

Report back.

NAE

Spreading the word is the most important thing we can do.

Groups to reach: Consumers, farmers, farmers unions, government ministries, universities, political parties, EU parliament, EIARD as well as global forum for agriculture

With regards to the last two – civil society has small role in them, we need to push for bigger.

France has presidency of the EU – they therefore have an interest in MF and their ties between culture and food are big, therefore they can push it.

We need to compare this to the World Development report – look at their different analysis. Try and get an idea of the different paths.

SEED sovereignty should use it as well.

We need stronger coalitions.

LAC

Central ideas – how do we make the documents serve the CSO's needs (turning the document around)

Spreading the word – indigenous people (local level) don't normally get this type of information. Normally it stays in the capital. How do we spread important docs to these groups?

Recognition that documents is useful, and World Bank has supported it, but the World Bank must put their money where their mouth is and support it.

Relevant for World Bank and governments.

Should ask our governments to get out of WTO! We should keep control of grain reserves at national level to reconstruct national sovereignty.

Should also deal with international corporations - tell governments that we have alternatives in these documents.

Make new proposal for Green Revolution 2 to be supported by international organizations (Gates, etc).

The World Bank needs to carry out consultation and then follow up.

Morals in place – Gates assuming they know the answers (but are supporting the green revolution 2) and may fund non-sustainable issues.

SSA

Countries not aware of it need to be made aware and see the reports.

Other African communities like SADAC and the East African community need to be made aware of the reports and the possibilities that come out of them.

NGO's can reach out to grass roots – translating for local groups, making it accessible.

Promoted through Universities (works well in Africa). Can use as reference points.

Alternatives for World Bank etc.

Proposals for funders that are different.

CWANA and ESEAP

Immediate need – spread word through regional meetings.

Need to approach the stakeholder group (IAASTD) who identified the problems.

Take report back to them and ask them how they want to deal with problems using it.

Need to engage other regional actors – health ministries, gender ministries, etc.

Need to increase investments in public sector AKST increased funding for agriculture.

Parallel to creation of formal organisations that can do the research and get funding for it.

IRI etc. to change and prove they have changed their research agenda according to the report.

See how governments can build capacities for long term planning – GFAR could be a platform for this.

Discussion:

World Bank carried out consultation in the US, but reports become useful to create favourable international pressure.

On the ground pressure counts in order to embarrass the Bank/governments/whoever. This report could become a tool to resist Agrofuels/Green revolution 2.

Can we get this into the hands of groups NOW for defence of their agriculture? When aid comes in, it always has strings attached. Can social movements monitor aid and ensure it is not used for the incorrect thing? Regulatory oversight using these documents to see that aid is okay.

It is necessary to link the report to education. Women will play an important role here.

Must get it down from the scientist to the farmers and villagers and young farmers. They produce own seeds and last.

Public approach to R&D is being discouraged through TRIPs, universities. Asking people to look for R&D that finds answers in a narrow way. Connect public researchers.

International treaty on plant resources in food and agriculture. Weak practice regarding farmers rights – most governments have signed. IAASTD can support this.

Use to influence technical assistance programmes – usually shaped in preference of big business/big scale agriculture.

IAASTD must be used as indicators to see if they are operating according to it. Need to make a matrix to show the indicators of what we would like to achieve – is this aid/training/education?

UN bodies need to be involved and taught between them. Lobbying to happen at different levels, lobby govt even those who have signed to follow up and promote and implement.

Link it to the existing UN treaty on food and agriculture. UN rights on indigenous peoples – right to determine how they do agriculture.

Relates to the right of food water seeds etc. Rights questions.

People get info through radio – need to get info out through that. Make a collage of what the speakers did this morning.

Need to identify articulate youngsters who can speak to people on the ground, in festivals for instance. 10 people in each region. Mass mobilisation needed.

Translation of scientific language into easier language.

Would be good to be shown as a consultation amongst people. Until orgs that belong to via campesina get behind the report, it would be hard to use.

Need to understand Via campsina and other orgs/groups reactions to report through consultation.

Hard in countries with government clamp down. We need to work with organisations that we perhaps wouldn't normally – churches, etc.

Raise a global community of farmers in multicultural agriculture. Using an organisation like AVAAS?

Need to spell out things clearly – decolonizing science, but also body mind spirit and seed. Need a holistic look at it. Still using the language of the colonizer. Need re-indigenisation. Need to come back to the indigenous.

Can the report be used to open up a conversation on the dominant paradigm? Maybe small ways to use it.

Popularising the document – we need to pull out the pieces that may challenge the current paradigm.

Diverse buros etc. Spreading the word in a political way – informing people of the choices, and asking them what else they would like to include. These are not findings, but possible solutions to problems. We need it to bring solutions to the local level. We do need our national governments, and they need to be the ones carrying it, and getting them to enforce it.

The process is as important as the findings.

Report gets to the heart of what research and knowledge is. We only have International Property Rights – there are other ways.