

**DRAFT SANREM CRSP Board of Directors Teleconference Minutes**  
**1:00-3:00 PM, October 2, 2006**

**Participants**

Bob Bates, Provost and Academic Vice President, Washington State University  
Jess Lowenberg-Deboer, Interim Associate Dean and Director of International Programs  
in Agriculture, Purdue University  
Tom Payne, Vice Chancellor and Dean College of Agriculture, Food and Natural  
Resources, University of Missouri  
Alice Pell, Director Cornell International Institute for Food, Agriculture and  
Development  
Sharron Quisenberry, Dean of College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Virginia Tech  
Mark Rosegrant, Division Director, Environment and Production Technology,  
International Food Policy Research Institute  
Alton Thompson, Dean of School of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, North  
Carolina A & T State University  
Chris Kosnik, USAID CTO (ex officio, voting)  
S.K. De Datta, Director, Office of International Research, Education and Development  
(OIRE); and Associate Provost for International Affairs, Virginia Tech (ex  
officio, non-voting)  
Theo Dillaha, Program Director SANREM CRSP, Virginia Tech (ex officio, non-voting)  
Ralph Cavaleri, Washington State University (guest)  
Rachel Judy, SANREM ME staff (minutes)

**Welcoming Remarks and Introductions**

S.K. De Datta, the Administrative PI SANREM CRSP called the annual meeting of the Board of Directors of SANREM CRSP to order at October 2, 2006 at 1:00 p.m. In his opening remarks, Dr. De Datta welcomed the board members, including chairman Alton Thompson. He provided an overview of SANREM's activities over the last year and discussed the long-term research awards, which have all been awarded. Dr. De Datta thanked USAID for their support on the biodiversity symposium in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic and declared the symposium a successful collaboration between the SANREM and IPM CRSPs. After establishing that SANREM's reports to USAID are up to date, he concluded his remarks by asking for the board's input on the policy considerations that would be presented during the course of the meeting.

Board of Directors Chair Alton Thompson also welcomed the Board members and pointed out several items in the briefing booklet, including the quarterly reports, website samples, and newsletter. He extended compliments to SANREM for the good quality of its products and efforts in keeping everyone informed. Dr. Thompson offered congratulations to Theo on his appointment as the president of the Soil and Water Conservation Society and stressed that this appointment would provide good exposure for SANREM.

He also welcomed new board members Tom Payne and Alice Pell to the teleconference and used this opportunity to review the Policy and Procedures (POP) Manual statement on the role of the board of directors. He concluded his remarks by

asking for a motion to approve the agenda items as presented. Sharon Quisenberry moved for approval and Mark Rosegrant seconded the motion. The motion passed.

### **SANREM Overview and Progress Report**, Theo Dillaha, Program Director SANREM CRSP

Theo Dillaha began his overview of SANREM's activities by highlighting all partnerships with universities and various policy organizations and NGOs. While most partnerships are held in good standing, he called attention to the University of Colorado and explained that the partnership with University of Colorado had not been productive and would be allowed to expire on Sept. 30, 2006.

Dr. Dillaha continued his presentation with a discussion of the long-term research awards announced in December 2005. Funding became effective January 1, 2006 and all awards were in place by March 2006. He highlighted these five projects by describing the PI, the project location, and its research focus. S.K. De Datta noted a decision not to follow through on funding for an additional project in Africa because of pending significant budget cuts. Each long-term research (LTR) project is receiving approximately \$1.2 million over 3.75 years and they have been warned of potential budget cuts on the order of 20 to 25% in FY2008 and FY2009.

Dr. Dillaha then highlighted SANREM's first associate award from USAID/EGAT, Global Assessment of Best Practices in Payments for Ecosystem Services Programs, which is funded from October 1, 2006 until September 30, 2007. The award amount was \$180,000 and initial partners include: Purdue University, Ohio State University, and Georgia State University. This award will provide a state-of-the-art review of Payments for Environmental Services (PES) in Asia, Latin America, and Africa. SANREM will collaborate with the BASIS CRSP on this project. BASIS will terminate in June 2007. BASIS is being replaced by the new Assets and Market Access CRSP, which will be managed by the University of Wisconsin, which was also the ME for the BASIS CRSP. The two CRSPs are working out the details of SANREM's role in this endeavor. It has been determined, however, that the PES review will result in publishable papers, case studies and projects, an expansion of the SANREM knowledge base and search capabilities, and a PES primer/training manual that will be developed for USAID personnel. This primer is tentatively scheduled to be presented to USAID at a Washington Policy Seminar in June 2007. This deadline falls near the SANREM CRSP annual meeting in Bolivia and SANREM may request a delay in the Washington Policy Seminar.

USAID CTO Chris Kosnik highlighted the USAID perspective on the PES award and provided some background on its inception. He stressed meeting the core goal of bringing knowledge to research community and practitioners focusing on rural communities. He stressed that it is a wonderful opportunity for organizations to work together and was confident that the details of collaboration would be worked out and deadlines modified as needed to make the end product successful.

Dr. De Datta asked if USAID viewed the primer as a joint venture or sole responsibility of SANREM. Chris responded that this is unclear at this time. USAID, BASIS and SANREM are still trying to develop a joint work plan. Dr. De Datta also inquired about the PES research from Doug Southgate, Bob Rhoades, and Jerry Shively

in the earlier phases of SANREM. Dr. Dillaha emphasized that the PES products of the first two phases are going to be significant elements of this primer. Dr. Dillaha went on to add that the PES associate award will focus on watershed services and water resources. SANREM and BASIS CRSP PIs will be participating in a PES workshop in Lombok, Indonesia on January 22 and 23, 2007. The workshop will be in conjunction with an ICRAF sponsored RUPES (Rural Community Payments for Environmental Services) conference.

Dr. Dillaha provided an overview of the Biodiversity Conservation in Agriculture Symposium held May 30-June 2, 2006 in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic. This symposium was a joint effort of the SANREM and IPM CRSPs with support from USAID. Participants included CRSP directors, SANREM and IPM PIs, USAID personnel, scientists, and NGO representatives (85 participants). The goals of this conference were to explore the:

- Definition of biodiversity;
- Integration of biodiversity into agricultural development activities; and
- Role of USAID Biodiversity Conservation earmark requirements in the design of agricultural development projects.

Dr. De Datta highlighted the challenges of reconciling varying definitions of biodiversity as evidenced by discussion at the symposium. He stressed the need for widespread understanding of USAID's definition of biodiversity to provide consistency and make it possible to meet USAID's earmark requirements.

Dr. Dillaha also outlined SANREM's annual meeting, held April 18-20, 2006 in Blacksburg, Virginia with fifty LTR partners attending. This meeting stressed the importance of demonstrating and documenting impacts and the importance of engaging USAID missions. The meeting highlighted SANREM's need to better engage USAID Missions with long-term research projects and better address Mission needs. The meeting featured presentations from each PI that highlighted their project activities and work plans. All of this information provided the basis for a discussion of cross-cutting themes. The partners approved a theme that provides resources to assist the LTR activities with remote sensing and modeling to project future results/water resources impacts at various levels of implementation. During the two day meeting, there was also a technical committee meeting to discuss POP manual changes.

SANREM Systems coordinators are working on a book titled *Innovating for Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resource Management: The Science of Adaptive Management*. This book describes how adaptive management techniques can be combined with the SANREM landscape systems approach to improve the effectiveness of NRM activities. The book is approximately 50 percent complete.

Bridging Awards ended September 30, 2006. All projects have been completed and numerous journal articles will be coming out in the near future documenting these projects. Other outputs include: two books, videos, and final reports. Dr. De Datta suggested that these outputs be compiled into a short report for posterity. Discussion of this option followed. Speaking for USAID, Chris Kosnik thought it would be good to capture and communicate results and inform other CRSPs concerned with losing institutional connections. He also felt that it was important to capture and communicate experiences and lessons learned. Dr. Dillaha suggested that these results might be

presented in the form of a small paper for BIFAD. Sharon Quisenberry spoke for BIFAD and said such a report would be beneficial. Dr. De Datta articulated that any and all documentation of results will help with the review in 2008.

Dr. Dillaha introduced Maria Elisa Christie, SANREM's new Gender Equity Coordinator. Twenty percent of Dr. Christie's time will be devoted to SANREM activities. He pointed out that she has already played a significant role in a variety of projects. Dr. De Datta pointed out the rarity of this position among land grant institutions and said that it shows that SANREM is serious about the gender equity issue.

Dr. Dillaha then presented board members with SANREM's financial report. He noted that SANREM is roughly \$1/2 million behind in terms of funding initially requested from USAID and that potentially significant budget cuts (20 to 25%) are Possible in FY 2008 and FY2009. Currently, nineteen percent of expenses go to the Management Entity; eighteen percent goes to the Technical Committee, EEP, and VT program; and sixty-three percent goes for competitive grants. This amount for the competitive grants will increase as time goes on and other expenses decline. Chris Kosnik added that funding at less than proposed amounts is not unusual as CRSPs are rarely funded at 100 percent. Mr. Kosnik reiterated that SANREM needs to prepare for potential cuts of 20-25 percent.

The 2007 Annual Meeting is scheduled to be held in Cochabamba, Bolivia on June 25-27, 2007, baring political problems. Theo Dillaha invited board members to participate in the meeting. The meeting will include PI presentations and written progress reports to be reviewed in advance by the EEP, which will prepare an independent critique of each project and lead a discussion about each project at the meeting. This will keep the EEP engaged so that when they perform the major project external evaluation in 2008; they will be better prepared.

During the 2007 annual meeting, there will be a discussion of cross-cutting themes, a technical committee meeting, a review of policies and procedures, and a visit to SANREM field sites close to Cochabamba. Dr. De Datta requested a face-to-face board meeting if SANREM could provide the funding to get all the board members to the meeting site. Each board member was asked to mark their calendars for the meeting and look into their funding options and see if they would need funding from SANREM or if they could pay their own way. If all of the board members could attend, they could have their annual meeting face-to-face. Members were asked to e-mail or call Theo about their interest in attending the meeting and funding needs for travel.

Mark Rosegrant questioned why SANREM was planning on having the meeting in Bolivia when there is a chance that plans would change with political problems. Theo explained that three LTR projects are working in Bolivia, more than in any other country, and that Bolivia thus seemed like an ideal location. He also added that Bolivia is inexpensive, travel is relatively easy, and the facilities are good (minimal problems with altitude). If the meeting cannot be held in Bolivia, the meeting will be held somewhere in the U.S.

Alton Thompson ended Theo Dillaha's presentation by opening up the floor for questions. Tom Payne asked about the targeted amount for the ME in the budget. He was told that there is a 20 percent cap. Mark Rosegrant asked for an overview of expenditures and wondered if there were any issues. Dr. Dillaha replied that expenditures are in line with what was planned and SANREM is keeping the lines of communication open. There

is an increasing emphasis on projects increasing their spending and reducing their pipeline. This year SANREM is allowing projects to carryover substantially more funding than the 10% allowed in their contracts. This was allowed because some of the LTR awards were not in place until March 2006. Researchers were allowed to request increased carryover this year and all did. In FY2007, we expect expenditure to increase and for the pipeline to diminish if the LTR awardees follow their work plans. SANREM instituted policies last year that highlight its focus on making sure people are keeping track of their spending. This is a key component to successful management because it allows SANREM to reduce pipeline, which if excessive could reduce future funding from USAID.

### **SANREM Renewal Issues, Future Funding Outlook, and CRSP Changes, S.K. De Datta**

After noting that some of these issues were discussed earlier, Dr. De Datta stressed the importance of having solid, definable impacts. It is important for the ME to anticipate problems with potential budget cuts. Dr. De Datta encouraged the board to think twice before cutting face-to-face meetings in the face of limited funding. He pointed out that these meetings promote program coherence.

Dr. De Datta also addressed concern about the SANREM and IPM CRSPs being treated differently than other CRSPs. He asked for comments from Chris Kosnik about this problem. Mr. Kosnik stated that he had nothing additional to add; however SANREM and IPM will be reviewed according to standard practice and SANREM should carry on with its current practices. Sharon Quisenberry echoed Mr. Kosnik's suggestions that SANREM remain confident in its current activities and operations. Alton Thompson asked about the effectiveness of letters sent to congressmen. Mr. Kosnik replied that they he was not involved in this endeavor, so he does not know the specific impacts. He concluded by asking SANREM to continue to effectively document its short- and long-term impacts.

Dr. De Datta also led a short discussion about the annual report format and carryover policy. Due out in November, a more formal and scholarly format may put more pressure on the PIs to produce. Dr. De Datta asked if it would be helpful for Dr. Dillaha to alert PIs to potential budget cuts, and stress the importance of documenting results and impacts per suggestion from the board. Chris noted that Long-Term Research PIs are just getting started so this communication should communicate the understanding that SANREM recognizes that impact indicators take time to establish. SANREM needs to demonstrate that it is on a clear path to achieving results; however, SANREM needs to be sensitive to timing. Dr. De Datta asked that the CRSP simply stress results before the 2008 review and in light of budget cuts. It would be helpful to demonstrate progress in quarterly reports.

### **Action Items, Alton Thompson**

As the next item of business, Alton Thompson sought approval of the minutes for the 2005 board of directors meeting. Sharon Quisenberry moved for the acceptance of these minutes as written. Chris Kosnik seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved.

The board moved on to discuss revisions to the SANREM POP manual. The major changes included: updating the names on page 8; updating the responsibilities of Associate Program Director, Keith Moore; and expanding the technical committee (noted on page 14). This sparked a discussion about the Gender Equity Coordinator voting rights in light of the fact that Maria Elisa Christie would be a member of the technical committee and committee rules state that there shall be no more than two voting representatives on the technical committee from the same institution. It was suggested that the Gender Equity Coordinator either be established as a non-voting, ex-officio member or be retained as a separate entity and voting member because of the position's significant role.

There was also discussion about representation for host-country partners on the Technical Committee. Dropping the host country TC representative was recommended by the TC at their April 2006 meeting as a cost-cutting measure. Jess Lowenberg-Deboer pointed out that these representatives are normally a very important part of a technical committee. The Board agreed that they need more information about the budget implications before making a decision about including a host-country representative on the TC. Sharon Quisenberry suggested working out the details over e-mail so that the Board would thoroughly understand the budget implications before making a decision on this issue. Chris suggested rotating TC members based on the location of the annual meeting. The discussion ended with the ME agreeing to prepare an analysis on the costs of including a host country representative on the TC.

The Board then returned to a discussion of the gender equity voting issue. The ME was instructed to either change the voting limit to three representatives per institution, or consider the Gender Equity coordinator as a standing member of the Technical Committee, separate from institution with full voting privileges.

The only other notable change to the POP manual was the update on the USAID branding and marketing requirements. Dr. Dillaha introduced a new USAID attribution that will be included on all future SANREM documents. It was noted that this will not be a problem with acknowledging funding from multiple sources in projects.

Alton Thompson asked for a vote on the POP manual changes. Sharon Quisenberry made the motion; Tom seconded the motion. Final approval will be done via email after the Board members have the opportunity to review the cost analysis and MEs final recommendation concerning host country representation on the TC.

Theo Dillaha asked the Board to consider Ed Price for the SANREM EEP. S.K. De Datta provided an overview of Ed Price's qualifications. Sharon Quisenberry made the motion to recommend Ed Price for the EEP; Mark Rosegrant seconded the motion; and all approved Ed Price's appointment to the EEP.

#### **USAID Perspective and Comments, Chris Kosnik**

Much of Chris's information was emphasized earlier in the discussion. Mr. Kosnik reiterated the need to capture successes and diligently document results. He also emphasized the need to clearly communicate the SANREM experience in areas where people are concerned about the results and successes of SANREM/USAID projects.

Chris Kosnik touched on the Foreign Assistance Framework and the challenges and opportunities it presents to SANREM. Dr. De Datta asked for an update on the

adjustments within the USAID framework. With the closer integration of USAID and the State Department there is a trend away from past practices dealing with the budget process. The Foreign Assistance Framework is moving ahead and continues to look at the specific development needs in specific countries and understanding U.S. strategic needs in moving forward with that. At this time, the end result is unclear. SANREM can provide analysis and forward thinking as part of this process. SANREM should be thinking about what intellectual capital (value) it can provide to help USAID Missions struggling with the new foreign assistance framework. SANREM should be thinking ahead and be familiar with the framework and where the agency appears to be going.

Theo Dillaha provided an overview of his recent conversation with Robyn Burnham considering her capacity to participate on the EEP over the next two years. While Robyn is available to participate through 2007, she is unsure of her ability to commit to the EEP in 2008. Theo offered the option of either keeping her on without guarantee of her time or finding a replacement for the 2008 year. Dr. De Datta pointed out that because 2008 is such a crucial year, it would be hard to bring in a new person at that time and he suggested that SANREM begin to look for a replacement now so that Robyn Burnham's replacement would have experience with SANREM before the review process begins in 2008. Chris Kosnik echoed the importance of having someone familiar with SANREM during the evaluation process. The others were in agreement and Mark Rosegrant suggested Steve Carpenter from the University of Wisconsin.

The meeting was formally adjourned by Alton Thompson at 3:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Theo Dillaha, Program Director SANREM CRSP