

**STDF WORKING GROUP
12-13 MARCH 2019
WTO, GENEVA**

1 ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

1. The chairperson of the Working Group, Ms Loraine Ronchi from the WBG, welcomed participants. Members adopted the agenda with two amendments: (i) agenda item 7 "External Evaluation of the STDF" was removed; and (ii) item 8 "Other Business" was re-numbered as item 7. The chairperson informed participants that the workshop on the development of a new strategy for the STDF would be held immediately after the meeting on 13 (afternoon) and 14 March.

2. All presentations and other information documents circulated to the Working Group are available on the [STDF website](#). A list of participants is provided in Annex 1.

2 OPERATION OF THE FACILITY

2.1 New developing country experts (2019-2020)

3. The chairperson informed members that she had selected three new developing country experts, in accordance with the STDF Operational Rules, to serve the STDF in 2019-2020: (i) Mr Sanjay Dave; (ii) Mr Rogério Pereira Da Silva; and (iii) Dr Ameha Sebsibe Woldemariam. STDF's current experts, Dr Benoit Gnonlonfin, Ms Merriam Toalak and Ms Sanniel Wilson will continue to serve the STDF in 2019. She also noted that unfortunately two experts, Ms Wilson and Mr Da Silva, were unable to attend the meeting due to personal circumstances. Short bios of STDF's new developing country experts are available on the STDF [website](#).

2.2 Selection of vice-chairperson (2019) of STDF Working Group

4. Members selected Ms Julie Emond (First Secretary at the Permanent Mission of Canada to the WTO) as vice-chairperson of the Working Group in 2019 (and hence chairperson in 2020).

2.3 Staffing and financial situation

5. Members were informed that the procedure to fill the external vacancy in the STDF (at grade 6) is nearing completion and that information on the new appointment will be circulated shortly. The Secretariat thanked Ms Ece Yalavaç (former intern and temporary staff), Ms Nora Dei-Anang (former intern) and Ms Onon Sukhbaatar (former WTO Young Professional) for their excellent contributions to the work of the STDF, and informed members that a new intern, Mr Joaquin Landazuri, will join the Secretariat in April 2019. The Secretariat also recognized the excellent support provided by Ms Elena Immambocus (STDF communications consultant) and welcomed Ms Johanna Polvi from DFID's SITFA program who will provide M&E support to the STDF in 2019.

6. The Secretariat briefly summarized the financial situation of the STDF. Taking into account donor contributions already received in 2019, several un-contracted commitments, and including on-going staffing commitments until the end of the year, the STDF trust fund showed a positive balance of US\$408,462 (as of 20 February 2019). In 2019, additional contributions under multi-annual agreements were expected from Denmark, the European Commission, France, the Netherlands, Norway, the United Kingdom and the United States.

7. Australia informed that it will shortly enter into a new contribution agreement for 2019 and 2020. It welcomed the development of the new STDF strategy and highlighted STDF's projects in the Pacific, as well the increased attention to gender and M&E aspects in STDF's work. Ireland announced a new contribution of 150,000 euros for 2019. The European Commission reminded that its current multi-annual contribution agreement for the STDF ends in 2020 and considered that the work on the new STDF strategy will be useful in preparing for a new multi-annual agreement. The Secretariat thanked all donors for their generous contributions.

2.4 Implementation of STDF communication plan

8. Ms Immambocus (STDF communications consultant) reported on ongoing and upcoming communication and outreach activities. She reminded participants that STDF's communication plan seeks to raise awareness and promote uptake of STDF's knowledge tools and encouraged participants to continue communicating STDF's results at national and regional levels, and on social media. She drew attention to two new STDF briefing notes on [P-IMA](#) and [environmental impacts](#) of STDF work. A third new briefing note on spill-over effects of trade-related food safety projects/interventions on domestic health was being developed and would be released shortly. Two [STDF news items](#) were distributed since the last Working Group meeting. She drew attention to the new STDF banner and noted that French and Spanish versions would be available shortly. Participants were invited to express their interest to participate in short interviews on the STDF (as part of an online video series) later in the year.

9. Australia highlighted the importance of connecting to regional and national stakeholders to enhance coordination and uptake of STDF knowledge products and funding opportunities. Dr Gnonlonfin (developing country expert) encouraged to disseminate information on [P-IMA](#) to the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in Africa. The Secretariat recalled that the use of P-IMA depends on demand from developing countries and could be requested through a PPG. It welcomed opportunities to further raise awareness on P-IMA.

2.5 Secretariat participation in external events

10. The Secretariat provided a brief update on its participation in external events and meetings since the last meeting in October (annexed to the annotated agenda in a list, including information on objective and the audience reached). The Secretariat reminded members that for reasons of transparency it effectively reports on all events and meetings that are not "STDF-organized events", including WTO training workshops and meetings. The Secretariat participated in a number of events in Geneva, at no additional cost to the STDF trust fund. Participation in some other events was funded externally. Participation in some events was linked to implementation of specific STDF projects, while in other events the Secretariat's participation was requested by STDF partners.

11. The Secretariat specifically drew attention to the following events: (i) the first [Border Agency Cooperation Workshop](#), held in Cape Town in November 2018 (which brought together SPS and customs officials from 13 Southern African countries), facilitated by the STDF; (ii) the [first African Forum for National Trade Facilitation Committees](#) (NTFCs), held in Addis Ababa in November 2018 (in the margins, the Secretariat organized meetings with staff from the African Union Commission and FAO's regional office); and (iii) the [GFSI Global Food Safety Conference](#), held in Nice in February 2019 (including the preceding Government to Government (G2G) and Government to Business (G2B) meetings).

2.6 Preparation of STDF 2018 Annual Report

12. The Secretariat briefed members on preparations for the 2018 Annual Report, which will build on the [2017 Annual Report](#) in terms of length, reporting on results, as well as STDF's contribution to selected SDGs. The production and design of the 2018 edition was outsourced to an external company, in accordance with STDF's 2019 work plan and WTO procurement rules. The 2018 report will be available in both a print and web version. Some members cautioned that outsourcing this work still requires time and resources and suggested to review this experience after completion of the report. The Secretariat welcomed further ideas and examples of case stories from members for inclusion in the report. The final version will be ready for distribution by early June.

3 INFORMATION EXCHANGE AMONG PROVIDERS OF SPS CAPACITY BUILDING AND DIALOGUE AMONG RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS (OUTPUT 1)

3.1 Structured exchanges between WG members and observers

3.1.1 Information about new/emerging SPS initiatives and issues - STDF partners, donors, developing country experts and observer organizations

13. The [IPPC](#) Secretariat considered that its participation in the [Border Agency Cooperation Workshop](#) in Cape Town in November 2018 was a valuable and eye-opening experience. It also

reported on the 3rd Meeting of IPPC's Implementation and Capacity Development Committee in November 2018 in Rome, in which the STDF Secretariat, Imperial College, CABI, IICA and many FAO regional offices participated. The IPPC Secretariat informed that the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM-14) meeting will meet in April 2019 in Rome and that the STDF Secretariat, WBG, WTO and several other partners will participate to share their experiences in building plant health capacity. The ex-post evaluation of project [STDF PG 350](#) ("IPPC manuals"), implemented by the IPPC Secretariat, was completed and the IPPC Secretariat is exchanging information with the STDF Secretariat on how to improve its M&E process.

14. The [WTO](#) informed that two side-events will take place in the margins of the SPS Committee meeting in March 2019, i.e. an [STDF information session on strengthening the control of transboundary animal diseases](#) and an EU information session on EU Animal Health Law. Also, in the context of the 5th Review of the SPS Agreement, two thematic sessions were scheduled on Equivalence and Fall Armyworm, respectively. In the margins of the Committee meetings in July and October 2019, thematic sessions will be organized on Transparency and Coordination, and on Approval Procedures (building on the 2018 Annex C workshop), respectively. It reported that a regional SPS training workshop for Central and Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus (CEECAC) will be held in Vienna in September 2019. Reference was made to the high-level [International Forum on Food Safety and Trade](#), to be held at the WTO on 23-24 April, co-organized with FAO and WHO. The WTO also informed participants that SPS compliance issues emerge strongly from WTO research on [Trade and Natural Disasters](#). A symposium will be held in May 2019 to present and discuss this research, for which, *inter alia*, the IPPC Secretariat had provided input. Finally, the WTO provided an update on [ePing](#). It reported on an increasing number of technical assistance requests, welcomed partnerships with other organizations to promote the use of ePing, and encouraged Members to register on ePing, and refer to ePing in their activities (basic slides can be provided upon request).

15. The [WBG](#) reiterated the success of the Border Agency Cooperation workshop in Cape Town and found it to be a model that should be replicated in other regions, including South East Asia and the Pacific. It also informed about plans to bring SPS, customs and trade delegates from WBG's client countries to a peer to peer learning event on 6 July at the WTO, in the margins of the Global Aid for Trade Review. The WBG will participate in the Quarantine Regulators Meeting (QRM) in Panama in April 2019, where a joint presentation on Facilitating Safe Trade will be held with the STDF Secretariat. The WBG also reported that it is holding a second workshop on 15 March (immediately after the STDF strategy workshop) with the objective of developing an assessment toolkit to measure SPS compliance at borders, in collaboration with STDF partners. The IPPC Secretariat is working with the WBG to partner in continuing the implementation of ePhyto (in particular the GeNS system), following the expected completion of this STDF project ([STDF PG 504](#)) in December 2019. The WBG also drew attention to the 2019 [Enabling the Business of Agriculture \(EBA\)](#) report, to be launched in April 2019, which will showcase new regulatory reforms since the 2017 report and highlight examples of good regulatory practice, including in the SPS area.

16. The [OIE](#) also highlighted the relevance and value of the Border Agency Cooperation workshop in Cape Town, particularly at the regional level. Regarding the STDF project on electronic veterinary certification ([STDF PG 609](#)), a questionnaire was developed and circulated to participating OIE member countries. The OIE is also recruiting a consultant to review the survey and conduct a desktop review of activities of other agencies on [SPS-e-cert](#). OIE's first Strategic Advisory Committee to the OIE WAHIS project and OIE's World Fund Advisory Committee, which supports several programmes including the PVS Pathway, met in December 2018. On this occasion, a brainstorming meeting was organized involving various partners (including the STDF Secretariat) to inform the development of OIE's 7th Strategic Plan (2021-2026). The OIE Observatory project was endorsed at the OIE General Session in May 2018 and a reference group was created for this project including the STDF, WTO, Codex and IPPC Secretariats. The OECD was developing a report (due in April 2019) to review existing mechanisms and make recommendations on the design of the Observatory project. At the OIE General Session in May 2019 side events will take place on the Observatory project and on OIE's work on public-private partnerships. From 2 to 4 April 2019, the OIE Global Conference on Aquatic Animal Health will be held in Santiago, Chile.

17. The [FAO](#) informed that over 630 participants from 125 countries participated in the high-level [WHO/FAO/AU International Food Safety Conference](#) in Addis Ababa on 12-13 February 2019. The [Chairperson's concluding summary](#) received strong support from participants. Several issues discussed in Addis related to trade and will be further explored at the WTO/WHO/FAO [International Forum on Food Safety and Trade](#) on 23-24 April. The FAO also informed that the [FAO/WHO National](#)

[Food Control Systems Assessment tool](#) had been tested in many countries with good results. It also highlighted collaboration with UNIDO under the [Arab Food Safety Initiative for Trade Facilitation \(SAFE\)](#), funded by SIDA. The FAO also informed, on behalf of the Codex Secretariat, that the upcoming cycle of Regional Codex Coordinating Committees will be held from September to November 2019. Finally, the FAO referred to a new publication, entitled "[Sustainable Food and Agriculture: an Integrated Approach](#)" which considers three dimensions of sustainability (economic, social and environmental) and how sustainable food and agriculture can contribute to the SDGs.

18. The [African Union Commission \(AUC\)](#) reported on the first intra-African trade fair in Cairo in 2018, organized in partnership with the Government of Egypt. The event provided an opportunity to engage the private sector, civil society and consumers on the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) and featured panel sessions on trade facilitation. The AUC noted its continued intention to establish a pan-African food safety agency and highlighted the 15th annual Africa-Agriculture Development Partnership Platform meeting from 10 to 14 June in Nairobi, Kenya. This event will focus on enhancing regional trade and include an inaugural presentation on the AUC's new Food Safety Index (developed to help reporting on Malabo declaration targets). A meeting of the AU continental SPS Committee will be held next week in Geneva, in the margins of the SPS Committee meeting and focus, *inter alia*, on coordination and guiding implementation of SPS matters in Africa and ensuring that SPS issues are mainstreamed into CAADP and other regional frameworks. The AUC will present on its coordinating role in controlling Fall Armyworm at the SPS Committee thematic workshop.

19. [IICA](#) reported on its participation in a [Regional Trade Facilitation workshop in Saint Lucia](#), organized by the WTO and other partners, and commended the initiative. IICA also participated in the GFSI conference and co-organized the G2B workshop in Nice, in February 2019, in close collaboration with the STDF Secretariat. IICA is following up on the [10th EDF](#), with a focus on strengthening SPS capacity in CARIFORUM countries, and on the STDF MRL project ([STDF PG 436](#)), which was being evaluated. In preparation for the OIE General Assembly in May 2019, IICA is coordinating a review of proposed new OIE standards. Regarding ePhyto, IICA informed that it is exploring the adoption of the GeNS in a number of Eastern Caribbean States. IICA is also developing a new food safety training programme, in collaboration with US-FDA, to help countries in the region to maintain access to the US market. IICA is working with USDA to implement a new "SPS leadership" programme, building on a similar programme held in 2018.

20. [COLEACP](#) informed participants that it will implement a new [EU-funded support programme](#), launched in January 2019, until 2022, with 15 million Euros in EDF funding. The programme will focus on enhancing the capacity of public authorities to manage and enforce SPS rules and regulations and include a focus on prioritizing SPS needs and priorities. COLEACP is considering using the P-IMA framework to support this process. The programme will not only focus on promoting exports, but also target local and regional trade. COLEACP also made reference to a series of earlier SPS-related programmes, funded by the EU under the 9th and [10th EDF](#), including [PIP](#), [EDES](#) and [FFM](#).

21. The [ITC](#) informed that more than 90 Myanmar oilseed value chain stakeholders participated in the final STDF project workshop ([STDF PG 486](#)) in Yangon, to share achievements, challenges, lessons learned and recommendations for sustainability. It noted that ITC's new "ARISE plus" project in Myanmar will build on the achievements of [STDF PG 486](#). In support of Sudan's accession to the WTO, the ITC is supporting the operationalization of Sudan's SPS National Notification Authority and National Enquiry Point. An ongoing ITC project in Afghanistan is strengthening human and institutional capacities in trade policy, strategy formulation and implementation, including quality management and SPS measures. In Tajikistan, the ITC and FAO are implementing an [STDF project](#) to improve the export competitiveness of Tajik SMEs through better use of agri-chemicals and veterinary medicines, with a focus on the honey and apricot sectors. The ITC has started implementation of a new project in Thailand and Lao PDR, aiming to improve food safety governance.

22. Canada informed that it will fund a joint FAO/WHO meeting on pesticide residues in Ottawa in April 2019 and that it will also be organizing a training session for toxicologists. It recently held a training session for new pesticide residue evaluators, in collaboration with IICA and the US (resulting in seven trained evaluators from developing countries).

23. Dr Gnonlonfin (developing country expert) reported on a meeting in West Africa on Fall Armyworm in February 2019 and on a new pesticide registration scheme in ECOWAS to avoid the use of unregistered pesticides in preventing the spread of this pest. He also briefed members that

the STDF project in Burkina Faso, focusing on reducing aflatoxin contamination in maize (STDF PG 566), is set to begin in May 2019.

24. Mr Dave (developing country expert) informed that many countries in Asia are not familiar with SPS reporting obligations, and the role of national enquiry points and national notification authorities. He also welcomed WTO's upcoming thematic session on equivalence and noted that many countries need further support in this area.

25. Members considered how to improve the structure of the session on information exchange in the Working Group. The Secretariat encouraged members to send overviews of their SPS activities well in advance of the meeting to better inform the discussions and allow for oral interventions to focus on key issues. The chairperson suggested that the Secretariat could prepare and maintain a calendar to highlight upcoming events. The Secretariat noted that the summary report of the meeting will include relevant links, where available, and encouraged members to share SPS documents for inclusion in the [STDF Library](#).

26. Finally, the Secretariat drew attention to a document entitled "Global to Local Food Safety Strategy: an Action Plan" which was prepared under the aegis of a new LinkedIn Group, and shared with the Working Group for initial views. The idea is to develop a conceptual framework for different actors in the food safety area to better coordinate their activities. Members sought clarity on the value-added and complementarity of this initiative to STDF and other existing mechanisms, such as the Global Food Safety Partnership.

3.1.2 Border Agency Collaboration - managing risks at the border

- **Informal discussion among STDF partners and other members**

27. In November 2018, the Secretariat facilitated the organization of a regional workshop on Border Agency Cooperation in Cape Town for customs officials and SPS border agencies from 13 Southern African countries. One of the findings that emerged from this and other - similar - workshops in [St Lucia](#) and Azerbaijan ([STDF PG 316](#)) is that there is a need for common guidance on how to manage SPS risks at the border.

28. WBG noted that it increasingly works with SPS border agencies to facilitate safe trade and noted that until now there has been more focus on risk assessment and risk management at the policy level than the implementation of risk-based measures at the border. It is specifically interested in information on indicators and baselines that can be used to measure improvements in SPS compliance at borders. The OIE acknowledged the importance of providing guidance in this area but reminded that the three standard-setting bodies have different processes and questioned whether this topic could be approached through a single project. The STDF is facilitating further discussions on developing guidance in this area. IICA highlighted the need to focus on coordination/communication issues affecting cooperation. The AUC noted that common language on SPS risk management is relevant in the context of the AfCFTA and expressed its interest to participate in future Border Agency Cooperation workshops on the African continent. Food Industry Asia (FIA) also welcomed additional guidance in this area, in particular in the context of its work with the Asian Development Bank in the Mekong Region.

29. Members tasked the Secretariat to prepare a short concept note for further discussion at the next Working Group meeting in October. Several Members took the floor to express their support for this work and offer technical inputs.

4 IDENTIFICATION AND DISSEMINATION OF GOOD PRACTICE (OUTPUT 2)

4.1 New STDF film 2019

30. The Secretariat briefed members on the development of a new STDF film, which will showcase the importance of investing in SPS capacity at the national level. In telling this story, the film intends to incorporate references to other STDF work, for instance on public-private partnerships, using evidence-based approaches to inform SPS investments, trade facilitation, etc. While the idea is to focus on the broader context of SPS capacity building, the spotlight will be on three countries that have benefited from STDF funding: Guatemala, Sri Lanka and Uganda. The Secretariat issued a call for bids through the WTO procurement system and received 10 proposals from various countries.

The proposals will be reviewed based on technical and financial criteria and one company will be selected for this work. The intention is to launch the new film during the 2019 Global Aid for Trade Review.

4.2 STDF participation in Global Aid for Trade Review (3-5 July)

31. The Secretariat introduced a proposal to organize an STDF side-event during the [2019 Global Aid for Trade Review](#), themed "Supporting Economic Diversification and Empowerment for Inclusive, Sustainable Development Through Aid for Trade", at the WTO in Geneva. Members suggested modifying the panel composition, to include national-level beneficiaries of STDF support. It was also suggested to focus on downstream benefits in terms of poverty reduction and other SDGs, thus appealing to participants at the Global Aid for Trade Review.

4.3 Presentation/discussion on ongoing/future STDF work

- [Prioritizing SPS Investment for Market Access \(P-IMA\)](#)

32. The Secretariat made reference to a new [STDF briefing note on P-IMA](#) which had been issued in December 2018 and shared at a high-level stakeholder dialogue in Uganda to launch the STDF regional project to prioritize SPS investments in selected COMESA member states ([STDF PG 606](#)), in partnership with the EIF. This workshop included public and private stakeholders as well as donor partners, including Trademark East Africa which is planning to apply P-IMA in the EAC, with synergies to the STDF/COMESA project. COMESA is planning similar stakeholder workshops on P-IMA in Malawi, Kenya, Ethiopia and Rwanda. The Secretariat presented P-IMA at an event organized by the FAO office in Ethiopia in November 2018. In April 2019, the Secretariat will deliver a half-day training session on P-IMA at the Trade Academy, organised by the Swedish National Board of Trade in Stockholm.

33. Dr Gnonlonfin (developing country expert) welcomed more information on P-IMA and would like to explore how to promote its uptake in other RECs in Africa. COLEACP noted that Mr Babacar Samb (former STDF developing country expert) had shared information on P-IMA during a meeting in Brussels and reiterated that it was interested to explore options to use P-IMA in its work. The Secretariat welcomed these suggestions and reminded Members that developing countries and RECs can apply for a PPG to apply P-IMA.

- [Good Regulatory Practice](#)

34. The Secretariat updated members on the progress in STDF's work on Good Regulatory Practice (GRP) to improve the quality and effectiveness of SPS measures in developing countries. Members were reminded that a consultant was contracted to develop practical guidance on the use of GRPs to improve the development and implementation of SPS measures. A peer review group, comprised of interested STDF partners, donors and the OECD, has been created to support and guide this. It is expected that a draft document will be ready to share with and discuss in the Working Group in October. More information on STDF's GRP work, including a more detailed concept note, is available [here](#).

- [Public Private Partnerships \(PPPs\)](#)

35. The Secretariat provided an update on its work on PPPs, including its plans to distribute an online survey to collect new examples of PPPs, document and analyse these examples, and organize a regional or global event on PPPs focused on SPS capacity in 2020 to share this work more widely based on the STDF 2019 Work Plan. Members were also informed that previous work on a survey related to the use of voluntary third-party assurance (TPA) programmes had been put on hold to take stock of and ensure alignment to ongoing work in two new PPGs ([STDF PPG 665](#) and [STDF PPG 682](#)). The Secretariat noted that both PPGs have been contracted and were the subject of significant interest at the G2G and G2B meetings, prior to the Global Food Safety Conference in Nice in February 2019.

36. The Secretariat noted that it organized and co-led a thematic workshop on "Building food safety capacity in SMEs" as part of the G2B meeting, which was attended by representatives of countries (Belize, Honduras, Senegal and Uganda) involved in the two PPGs, as well as STDF members (e.g. Codex, WBG, IICA) and the private sector. Overall, there was a great deal of interest in the STDF's work on PPPs and these two STDF PPGs during the G2G and G2B meetings.

37. The Secretariat took advantage of participation in the [Global Food Safety Conference in Nice](#) to organize a meeting between the PPG representatives, the PPG implementing partners (IICA and Mr Jean Kamanzi), GFSI Secretariat and GFSI Board Members, as well as other interested organizations (UK Food Standards Agency, Canadian Food Inspection Agency, US FDA, Chair of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, UNIDO, COMESA, etc.) to discuss the PPGs and planned work. These organizations expressed interest to be part of a technical group to support the two PPGs and promote synergies with other ongoing work (including in CCFICS).

38. Several members provided comments on the PPP work and appreciated the linkages to the ongoing work in CCFICS. Some members provided examples of PPPs in Asia and the Pacific (e.g. FIA train the trainer programmes in the Mekong Region, in collaboration with the Asian Development Bank; public-private train the trainers programme in India to increase the number of certified food safety inspectors; PHAMA project supported by Australia and New Zealand to promote public-private dialogue in the Pacific). Food Industry Asia (FIA) highlighted the need for food agencies to improve their knowledge on private certification and self-monitoring systems and expressed interest to have a similar PPG/project in South East Asia. COLEACP suggested linkages to the GFSI Global Markets Programme which has been developing checklists and protocols for emerging companies in low- and middle-income countries. The IPPC Secretariat informed that a draft ISPM on third party accreditation was circulated in 2018 to IPPC contracting parties who remain divided on the topic.

- [SPS e-cert](#)

39. The Secretariat informed that it facilitated the organization of the 4th meeting of the ePhyto Project Advisory Committee (PAC) at the WTO in Geneva on 29 January 2019. Members of the PAC recommended the creation of an "eCert advisory group", under the auspices of the STDF, to continue the dialogue among the relevant international organizations (including with Codex and OIE) and ensure ongoing and sustained collaboration on eCert initiatives, after completion of the [STDF project](#) in December 2019. While some members supported this idea, other members considered that more information was needed and requested the PAC (which includes WBG, Codex, IPPC, CITES, OIE, Codex, WTO, WCO) to prepare a detailed concept note (including rationale, justification, scope, mandate, governance etc. of the advisory group), for discussion at the next Working Group meeting in October.

5 SPS CAPACITY BUILDING PROJECTS IN SPECIFIC AREAS (OUTPUT 4)

5.1 Evaluation of STDF projects

5.1.1 Overview and Selection

40. The Secretariat informed that the following evaluations are ongoing and should be completed shortly: (i) [STDF/PG/298](#): Mitigating the harmful effects of pesticide residues in cocoa in Africa; and (ii) [STDF/PG/344](#): Improving food inspection through a virtual school in Central America. One single evaluation for the following three projects will also be completed shortly: (i) [STDF/PG/337](#): Strengthening capacity in ASEAN to meet pesticide export requirements; (ii) [STDF/PG/359](#): African Pesticide Residue Data Generation Project; and [STDF/PG/436](#); and (iii) Strengthening capacity in Latin America to meet pesticide export requirements. The Secretariat informed that there is one outstanding ex-post evaluation for project [STDF/PG/401](#): Developing a network of PCE facilitators, which will be contracted in the coming months.

41. Out of seven projects concluded in 2018, the Working Group selected the following two projects for an independent ex-post evaluation: (i) [STDF/PG/242](#): Strengthening the SPS system in Comoros; and (ii) [STDF/PG/345](#): Regional feed and food safety programme in Latin America.

42. The Secretariat informed that an [information session](#) on the results and lessons learned of project [STDF/PG/336](#): Strengthening the Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases in Cameroon, will be held next week on 20 March 2019, in the margins of the WTO SPS Committee.

5.1.2 Evaluation of project STDF PG 350 (Capacity building tools for IPPC standards) – presentation by the evaluator (Mr Karsten Weitzenegger)

43. Mr Weitzenegger presented the results and lessons learned of the recently completed [ex-post evaluation](#) of [STDF/PG/350](#): Capacity building tools for IPPC standards. Overall, he noted that the project had achieved its immediate outputs and that the development and production process of the

various manuals had been efficient and valuable. In terms of impact, the project theoretically increased access of NPPOs to technical resources (over 20 manuals were published online). However, promoting and monitoring use of the manuals at national level had been lacking and remained difficult, in particular because the capacity development function of the IPPC lacks resources and mandate. He found that the IPPC Secretariat should continue to identify opportunities to promote the use and uptake of manuals through selected partnerships (CABI, FAO, IICA, COLEACP) and to translate technical resources into other languages. In terms of follow up, he suggested that the [STDF Library](#) could feature the manuals and other training materials produced under the project (these are currently available on the project page: [STDF/PG/350](#)). He also recommended that the IPPC Secretariat should set up a "helpdesk" to rapidly respond to issues raised by NPPOs. In terms of lessons learned, he emphasized that web-based learning tools need resources to be maintained and projects should generally consider the risk of website discontinuation (following the end of a project). The IPPC Secretariat recognized the value of the evaluation and mentioned that it will follow up on the recommendations, to the extent possible. Mr Weitzenegger's presentation is available [here](#).

5.2 Overview of ongoing and completed projects

44. The Secretariat referred to document [STDF/WG/Mar19/Overview](#) which provided an overview of the implementation status of ongoing projects.

5.3 Presentations of project applications not accepted for consideration

45. The Secretariat briefly introduced the project applications not accepted for consideration by the Working Group and referred to document [STDF/WG/Mar19/Review](#) which summarized the reasons for not tabling these applications.

5.4 Consideration of PG applications

STDF/PG/681: Improving institutional capacity in Colombia and Ecuador to mitigate trade barriers due to high cadmium levels in cacao

46. The Working Group put on hold a decision on this project application. Though members noted that the proposal aims to address a highly sensitive issue, which calls for an urgent and coordinated solution, the EU informed the Working Group about a recently approved EU project, which aims to support Colombia, Ecuador and Peru to mitigate the impact of EU Regulation No. 1881/2006 on Cadmium (Cd) concentrations in cacao and cocoa products. Members suggested exploring whether the EU project will be able to incorporate activities in this proposal. Based on the information received, the application may be re-considered at the Working Group in October 2019.

STDF/PG/498: Strengthening Guinea's phytosanitary system

47. The Working Group approved this project application and recognized its coherence with the recommendations of Guinea's Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation (PCE). Members made suggestions to clarify the objectives of the budget allocated for infrastructure and to further explain the need for conformity with ISO standards. Members also encouraged the use of IPPC training materials and highlighted the importance of building on previous programs to enhance sustainability.

STDF/PG/593: Improving SPS capacity in the Penja pepper value chain

48. The Working Group approved this project application and recognized its potential for replicability, sustainable development, and its complementarity with the work of the STDF and other organisations. The project will also benefit from an additional financial contribution from COLEACP. Members made suggestions to distinguish between the sanitary and phytosanitary aspects in the value chain, and to include good practices in training materials.

6 NEEDS ASSESSMENTS, FEASIBILITY STUDIES AND PROJECT PROPOSALS (OUTPUT 3)

6.1 Overview of ongoing and completed PPGs

49. The Secretariat referred to document [STDF/WG/Mar19/Overview](#) which provided an overview of the implementation status of ongoing PPGs.

6.2 Presentation of new PPG applications not accepted for consideration

50. The Secretariat briefly introduced the PPG applications not accepted for consideration by the Working Group and referred to document [STDF/WG/Mar19/Review](#) which summarized the reasons for not tabling these applications. One member expressed an interest in STDF/PPG/671 (Preparation of a project proposal to support market access by strengthening the capacity of phytosanitary inspection and diagnostic in Uzbekistan). The Secretariat informed that this application is likely to be tabled at the next meeting in October, pending clarification on a number of outstanding issues.

6.3 Consideration of new PPG applications

STDF/PPG/672: Strengthening SPS capacity in the shellfish sector in Senegal

51. The Working Group approved this application, subject to conditions. Members noted that the application should be endorsed by the relevant stakeholders through updated support letters, which should include their clear commitment towards implementation of the PPG. The Secretariat was tasked with developing terms of reference, in collaboration with the applicant and relevant stakeholders, in order to address issues related to the budget and implementation arrangements.

STDF/PPG/689: Trade facilitation of and capacitating African SMEs to meet food safety requirements in domestic, regional and international markets

52. The Working Group did not approve this application. While Members recognized the importance of building food safety capacity of SMEs in Africa, it was noted that the scope of the application needed to be better defined. In terms of demand, letters of support were not submitted by the six beneficiary countries. Members raised another concern regarding the application's lack of information on linkages with other national and regional initiatives in the food safety area. Members suggested a stronger stakeholder analysis and more details on synergies with other relevant initiatives.

STDF/PPG/694: Overcoming Barriers to Trade Through Regulatory Harmonization and Related Research with Biopesticides for the SADC Region

53. The Working Group approved this PPG application. Members recognized its value in the context of international trade and biopesticide registration, and its strong synergies with the work of other organizations and the STDF (particularly PPG/634 focused on biopesticides in Asia). Members encouraged cross-regional information exchange and south-south cooperation, including with stakeholders involved in PPG/634 and with COMESA. Members recommended due consideration be given to relevant IPPC standards and the work of FAO. Attention should be given to phytosanitary import regulations in target markets to ensure that use of biopesticides does not create inadvertent challenges for trade. Some Members emphasized clearly defining the work to be carried out under the PPG to ensure the scope of the resulting project is feasible.

STDF/PPG/699: Building capacity for honey export development in Ethiopia

54. The Working Group did not approve this PPG application. Members noted that the PPG application did not identify any complementarity with other on-going work in the honey sector in Ethiopia. There was clear overlap with an EIF project entitled "Scaling up Quality Honey Production and Fair Trade in Ethiopia (2018-2020)". In addition, UNIDO informed members that it will start a new project, with support from Norway, benefiting the honey sector in Ethiopia in June 2019. France reported that it is working to support the Geographical Indication registration for Ethiopian honey. Furthermore, the PPG application lacked reference to relevant aspects of bee health, an OIE veterinary legislation support programme carried out in 2015, and an ongoing PVS training programme in Ethiopia.

STDF/PPG/707: Preparation of a project proposal to improve sanitary standards for Kenyan cattle and beef for export

55. Overall, Members expressed support for the application but noted that the scope was too broad. Specifically, the application does not identify which livestock sector or livestock products are targeted. Members noted that the application lacked information on the OIE Veterinary Legislation Mission (2015) and a PVS follow up mission carried out in January 2019. The application also lacked information on complementarity with past and ongoing World Bank Group and EU supported programmes.

STDF/PPG/709: Applying the P-IMA tool in Ecuador

56. The Working Group approved this application for funding and agreed on its relevance to the STDF. One member suggested adding text to the background section of the proposal to further explain the P-IMA approach and include references to where it has been applied before.

7 OTHER BUSINESS

57. The Secretariat informed that the next Working Group meeting will take place on 16-17 October in Geneva. This meeting will be preceded by the third and final workshop on STDF strategy development on 15 October. The second strategy development workshop will take place on 18-19 June in Geneva. This workshop will be preceded by a half-day meeting of the STDF Policy Committee on 17 June, which will *inter alia* reflect on the conclusions and recommendations of the external evaluation of the STDF.

8 CLOSURE

58. The meeting was closed at 11:15am.

ANNEX 1

STDF WORKING GROUP
12 – 13 MARCH 2019

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