

**SUMMARY REPORT OF THE STDF WORKING GROUP MEETING
20-21 OCTOBER 2016
WTO, GENEVA**

1 ADOPTION OF AGENDA

1. The meeting was chaired by Ms Sun Biney (Sweden). She informed members that Canada, Chile, CITES, EIF, GFSI, IICA, ITC, OIRSA, UK and UNCTAD were granted observer status for the meeting. The agenda was adopted with no amendments. A list of participants is provided in **Annex 1**.

2 OPERATION OF THE FACILITY

2.1 Decisions of STDF Policy Committee

2. The Secretariat informed members that in May 2016 the STDF Policy Committee had adopted a number of amendments to the STDF Operational Rules. The revised Operational Rules (document STDF 139 rev.4) are available on the [STDF website](#). The amendments address the remaining outstanding recommendations of the STDF mid-term review, and were also discussed and agreed by the Working Group at its meeting in March 2016.

2.2 Selection of Working Group vice-chair for 2017

3. Members agreed that the European Commission will become the vice-chair of the Working Group in 2017 (and hence chair in 2018).¹

2.3 Selection of SPS experts from developing countries (2017-2018)

4. Members expressed appreciation for the service of the three outgoing developing country experts whose two-year term was coming to an end, i.e. Ms Talei Fidow-Moors (Samoa), Ms Lisette Gomez Rodriguez (Dominican Republic) and Ms Maputa Kamulete (Zambia).

5. The Secretariat invited members to submit names and CVs of potential candidates to serve as new experts in 2017-2018, for selection by the incoming Working Group chairperson in accordance with the STDF Operational Rules. The deadline for submission of candidates was set at 11 November 2016.

2.4 Staffing and financial situation

6. The Secretariat thanked Ms Valerie Brockman who assisted the STDF as an intern from April to October 2016. The Secretariat informed members that the WTO contracted Ms Elena Von Essen as a consultant to assist the STDF in strengthening its communications work.

7. The Secretariat reported on the financial situation of the Facility. As of 30 September 2016, eight donors contributed to the STDF, totalling US\$2,797,633. Additional contributions were expected in 2016 from France, the Netherlands and Chinese Taipei. Total expenditures in 2016 amounted to CHF 3,667,953. Taking into account contracted and uncontracted commitments, the STDF trust fund showed a negative balance of US\$161,289. The Secretariat informed members that it is diligently following up with existing and new donors. Canada announced that it will shortly make a new contribution to the STDF. Members welcomed Canada's renewed engagement in the STDF.

2.5 STDF Communications Plan

8. The STDF consultant, Ms Elena von Essen, introduced the proposed STDF Communications Plan. The core objective is to "promote awareness and uptake of STDF knowledge, tools and project support and raise the visibility of the STDF" to reach developing country governments and

¹ The EC subsequently informed the Secretariat that Mr Paolo Garzotti, Deputy Head of the Permanent Mission of the EU to the WTO will serve as vice-chairperson in 2017 (and hence chairperson in 2018).

the trade and development community more broadly. The plan includes quick-win opportunities to develop and refresh a number of practical products and channels as further defined in STDF's work plan for 2017-2018. Preparation of the new Communications Plan benefitted from discussions with partners, donors, developing country experts and the Secretariat and includes a checklist on how the broader STDF partnership can support dissemination.

9. The US suggested including more social media, such as Facebook, Twitter and a blog to share information. Sweden flagged communications as an important issue and pointed out the value of focusing on qualitative as well as quantitative data to measure the uptake of information. The WTO noted that the materials produced by the STDF are very useful and that its SPS unit has incorporated these into its trainings and workshops. The FAO highlighted the importance of focusing on selected products while emphasizing the core message that the STDF is a partnership. Several members stressed the need to simplify project guidelines to help countries with the application process.

10. The Secretariat offered to explore the possibility of setting up a blog and welcomed an increased use of social media platforms managed by STDF's partners to reach a wider audience. Ms von Essen thanked the members for their useful comments, which will be taken into account as the plan is progressively being implemented. Reference was made to the new [STDF factsheet](#) and [project results stories](#) available on the STDF website, as well as to upcoming changes to the website to help users accessing key information more easily. The Working Group approved the [Communications Plan](#).

2.6 STDF Work Plan (2017-2018)

11. The Secretariat introduced the draft Work Plan for 2017-2018, which follows the structure and outputs of STDF's medium term strategy (2015-2019) and includes an estimated budget and a monitoring and evaluation plan.

12. Sweden stressed the need to allocate an appropriate budget for monitoring and evaluation work and noted that capturing results is essential to sustain donor interest in the STDF. Canada sought additional information on how the STDF plans to participate and feed into the 6th Global Review of Aid for Trade in July 2016. The FAO informed members of several streams of work in the sphere of electronic certification. Germany noted the importance of continuing support to LDCs. The EC underlined the importance of STDF's coordination role.

13. The Secretariat noted that the STDF has a target that at least 40% of project resources should benefit LDCs and OLICs. Currently, approximately 60% of STDF's project resources are benefiting LDCs. The Working Group approved the [STDF Work Plan for 2017-2018](#).

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

3.1 Keynote presentation on One Health (by Dr Alan Reilly)

14. Dr Alan Reilly made a presentation on "One Health" and provided an overview of various activities undertaken in this area by FAO, OIE and WHO. The concept of One Health is recognition of the interdependency of mankind-environment-animals in the context of food safety. Protection of consumer health is at the heart of the concept. In the farm-to-fork continuum, different sectors of government work independently, and therefore coordinating a unified approach to protect consumer health is a challenge. Dr Reilly noted that there are very few examples of the private sector embracing One Health. He recommended the STDF to consider developing a protocol on how to implement One Health at a national level. Dr Reilly's presentation is available on the [STDF Website](#).

15. The World Bank noted that One Health is the future and there are a number of lessons that can be learned from trade facilitation activities that have occurred over many years. The US reported on the "One Health Systems Mapping Analysis Resource Toolkit" (OSMART), developed by USDA and the University of Minnesota. OSMART allows local and national governments to come together and work on multi-disciplinary approaches to deal with emerging issues like avian influenza, etc.

16. The FAO, OIE and WHO each made presentations on practical examples of One Health in action. Ms Amina Benyahia Chaieb (WHO) provided an overview of the WHO/OIE/FAO tripartite collaboration on zoonotic tuberculosis. Ms Mary Kenny (FAO) presented on "Developing the fisheries sector sustainably - one health in action". She noted how the use of the One Health approach brings benefits to communities and the overall fisheries sector. Dr Susan Corning (OIE) presented on "One Health: OIE Perspective" and explained how the joint use of the outputs of the WHO IHR Monitoring Framework and of the OIE PVS Pathway by Member Countries enables a detailed assessment of the existing national authorities, bridges gaps in human and animal health coordination and supports the development of joint national strategies. The presentations can be accessed [here](#).

3.2 Interventions by STDF partners, donors, developing country experts and observer organizations

17. Ms Maputa Kamulete, one of STDF's outgoing developing country experts, shared the experiences and made some recommendations, based on their participation in the STDF in 2015-2016.

18. The Secretariat shared the results of an independent evaluation of project [STDF/PG/155 \(Market-Oriented Training Service on Standards Application - MOTSSA - in Nicaragua\)](#). The evaluation concluded that the project had been implemented successfully and had broadly met its original objectives. The project was found to have made a significant difference in raising awareness and strengthening the application of Good Agriculture Practices (GAP) and Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) in the country, in a cost effective and practical manner. Overall, the evaluation concluded that the project was successful in aligning primary producers with good practices increasingly required by importing markets, through empowered farmers and cooperatives. The impact of the project had expanded into other crops not initially covered by the project. The evaluation recommended that continuation should be given to further dissemination of good practices to new geographic locations and agribusiness areas in the country following the same methodology.

19. The Secretariat then presented the findings of a joint evaluation of **four projects in West Africa, namely: (i) [STDF/PG/283: Support for SPS risk assessment in the mango export sector in Mali](#); (ii) [STDF/PG/255: Regional initiative on the fight against fruit flies in West Africa](#); (iii) [STDF/PG/313: Continuation of the West African Fruit Fly Initiative](#); and (iv) [STDF/PG/287: Information sharing initiative on the actions to control fruit flies in Sub-Saharan Africa](#)**. This evaluation reported beyond the mere assessment of the performance of the four projects individually and focused primarily on the coherence between the various actions carried out by the STDF, as well as the synergies with other donor-funded programmes. The evaluation considered the projects highly relevant and their effectiveness and efficiency were deemed to be good. Overall, the impact on productivity and exports was considered positive although the evaluator could not firmly attribute the impact to the project due to lack of data including the collection of baseline data and the establishment of a built-in data collection system during implementation of the projects. The coherence among the projects, and with the coordination activity carried out by the STDF (in collaboration with the WB and the EU), which eventually led to the formulation of the Regional West African Fruit Fly Action Plan, was found excellent. The sustainability of the actions was judged high as most of the activities initiated are continuing under the EU-funded regional fruit fly programme. The evaluator made a number of recommendations on how to enhance assistance in the area of fruit fly control, mainly in relation to consideration of a continental fruit fly initiative. The reports are available in French on the STDF website and will be translated into English.

20. The Secretariat shared the main results of the evaluation of project [STDF/PG/328 \(Beyond Compliance: Integrated Systems Approach for Pest Risk Management in Southeast Asia\)](#). Members were reminded that the Working Group had decided in October 2015 to evaluate this project in order to inform the decision on another related project submitted for funding to the STDF (which aims to promote the use of the Beyond Compliance tools globally). The evaluation primarily sought to verify whether the set of tools developed under the project have an impact on market access. Interviews and field visits gathered positive feedback on the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the project. The fact that the tools were used in actual market access negotiation cases was viewed as positive, as it promoted the sustainability of the use of the skills acquired. The evaluator reported positive impact on market access and pointed to the need

to train facilitators in other countries on the application of the tools in order to enhance their acceptability and of a "systems approach" in general in pest risk management.

21. Following the presentation by the Secretariat, The FAO and WHO shared information on the new Codex Trust Fund (CTF2), which was launched in July 2016, and will run until 2028. The CTF2 focuses on national capacity building and approximately 100 countries are eligible to apply for project funding. Ghana, Senegal, Madagascar and Kyrgyzstan were selected as beneficiaries in the first round of project support under the CTF2.

22. The IPPC informed that capacity development workshops had been held in seven regions of the world under the theme of "Plant Health and Food Security". In 2017, the theme for these workshops will be "Plant Health and Trade Facilitation". The FAO informed members that work is ongoing on the new FAO/WHO National Food Control Assessment tool. Work is ongoing in Moldova, Zimbabwe and Iran to test the tool, which is expected to become available in the public domain by the end of 2016. The FAO risk based food import manual was published and is available on the FAO website. FAO also informed that a working group was formed in FAO to work with countries on addressing AMR. The group focuses on surveillance, awareness raising and preventative good veterinary practices. The FAO and WTO are jointly developing a paper on trade and food standards, which is expected to be finalized in the first half of 2017.

23. The World Bank brought members up-to-date on its trade facilitation support work. To date, the World Bank has undertaken 33 validation missions to assess gaps in countries wishing to align and implement the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement. As part of this work, there has been considerable focus on assisting government agencies, other than customs, to effectively implement the TFA. Albania, Kosovo, Georgia, The Philippines and Viet Nam were highlighted as specific examples. The 2016 Logistics Performance Index (LPI) was released several months ago. One key message is that constraints faced by government agencies, particularly in the standards and food safety area, can adversely impact the logistics environment. The World Bank is also working in partnership with IPPC and STDF on the e-phyto project (STDF/PG/504).

24. The EIF Secretariat provided an update on the joint work with the STDF on the coverage of SPS issues in Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies (DTIS). A short [briefing note](#) on this study is available on the STDF and EIF websites. The study itself was finalized and will be made available by the end of the year. The EIF is currently in the process of revising its DTIS Guidelines, which will incorporate the results of the EIF/STDF study. The WTO reminded members about the thematic workshop on Maximum Residue Limits 24-25 October 2016, on the margins of the SPS Committee meeting. The 2016 edition of the SPS Advanced Course in French was being held from 17 October–4 November 2016.

25. The OIE briefed members on its training activities including eight focal point seminars with a focus on veterinary drugs, food safety and communications. The seminars on veterinary drugs, with support of the WHO, included information on AMR monitoring at the national level. The OIE also informed that 130 countries benefited from a PVS evaluation to date and noted that also developed countries, such as Japan and Australia, are now applying the PVS. In 2015, the OIE organized a global conference on veterinary education. One recommendation that emerged from this conference is that the OIE should increase its work to support veterinary paraprofessionals. As a result, the OIE is working to develop a set of core competencies in this area.

26. The EC informed members about a recent EU publication on SPS measures entitled "[Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures: addressing the challenges](#)", which included several references to the STDF. Germany shared information on how several federal institutes are undertaking capacity building, including the Federal Institute for Risk Assessment and the Federal Office of Consumer Protection and Food Safety. These institutes have been involved in the accession of eastern Europe by providing support under twinning projects and are now reaching out to BRIC countries and other advanced developing countries.

27. The US (FDA) reported on funding of a number of alliances to help build capacity in partner countries for new requirements in the US Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA). These include the [Food Safety Preventive Controls Alliance](#) (FSPCA) and the Produce Safety Alliance. The FSPCA offers training on preventative control, including a "train the trainers" program for individuals in industry, government and academia. Similar opportunities are expected to become available under the new Produce Safety Alliance. Lastly, the US informed members about the [Borlaug Fellowship](#)

[Program](#), applications for which will be open until 30 November 2016. Scientists, researchers and policy makers are eligible to apply for this fellowship.

28. IICA shared information on progress in several STDF-funded projects. The SPS project in the Caribbean under the 10th EDF will conclude in March 2017. Accomplishments include model legislation in food safety and animal health, validated throughout the region, and ready for ratification. IICA also assisted countries to establish AMR surveillance programmes in seven countries and has been working actively with the US to support training around FSMA, including the implementation of lead instructor trainings in Jamaica, Trinidad and Barbados. More information on IICA's SPS related activities is available in document G/SPS/GEN/1515 (submitted to the SPS Committee).

29. ITC summarized information on its SPS-related activities contained in a [document](#) prepared for the Working Group. Apart from the information in this document, ITC reported on a recently launched EU-funded project in Afghanistan with a focus on developing a national export strategy (including a component on SPS and quality infrastructure). UNIDO circulated a [document](#) with updates on its SPS-related interventions.

30. OIRSA noted that it has been working with authorities to eradicate classical swine fever in Guatemala. In August 2016, the national authorities made a self-declaration of freedom of classical swine fever. OIRSA's focus on the future will be to work with Dominican Republic to eradicate this disease.

3.3 Future STDF thematic work

31. The Secretariat introduced concept notes on possible future STDF work on the following two topics, as requested by the Working Group in March 2016: (i) implementation of international standards in a public private partnership context, with a particular focus on private certification schemes; and (ii) good regulatory practice (GRP) to support the implementation of international standards. Members of the Working Group thanked the Secretariat and expressed interest in future work on both topics.

32. Several members noted that guidance on GRPs would be of considerable benefit to developing countries to support their SPS regulatory agencies. Reference was made to the recommendation in the STDF regional research on facilitating safe trade to develop future guidance on GRP in the SPS area. Members noted that such work would be aligned with other ongoing work of STDF partners. Synergies were highlighted inter alia to the World Bank's support for Enabling the Business of Agriculture, work on reviews of SPS legislation in developing countries linked to trade facilitation, and the Global Indicators of Regulatory Governance project.

33. Members highlighted how new work on PPPs would build on previous STDF work and support the development of SPS-related PPPs, which offer great potential to enhance results. Despite substantial past work on PPPs, members recognized that PPPs remain very topical and that more needs to be done to move from talk to action. There was agreement that additional dialogue on how to strengthen collaboration between regulatory authorities and the private sector, facilitated by the STDF, would be useful notwithstanding certain sensitivities. Given the recent introduction of the Food Safety Modernization Act, the US indicated that it may be too early to draw lessons from this. Reference was made to a well-received STDF workshop on private certification schemes on the margins of an SPS Committee meeting in 2008.

34. Some members proposed alternative topics, notably how to strengthen national food safety systems (Germany) and the practice of monitoring/reporting on the use of international standards (Canada), which could complement the proposed GRP work. Following a lively discussion, there was agreement for the Secretariat to draft a new note focused on GRP, which would incorporate relevant aspects related to PPPs (including public-private collaboration and the role of private certification schemes) and pay attention to inclusiveness and poverty impacts, for discussion by the Working Group in March 2017. Members were encouraged to share additional relevant information with the Secretariat by the deadline of end 31 December 2016.

4 IDENTIFICATION AND DISSEMINATION OF GOOD PRACTICE TO SUPPORT SPS CAPACITY BUILDING (OUTPUT 2)

4.1 STDF seminar on E-certification in the SPS area (28 June 2016)

35. The Secretariat informed members on the results of the successful and well-received [STDF e-certification seminar](#), which took place on 28 June 2016, on the margins of the SPS Committee. Conclusions presented in the Working Group related mainly to the capacity building needs of developing countries in order to implement automation of SPS cross-border procedures. Areas where most guidance is needed include: decision support tools for implementation of e-cert (such as cost/benefit analysis), business process analysis and re-engineering, business planning and cost-recovery mechanisms, etc. The Secretariat informed members that a background paper explaining the concept of electronic certification as part of other trade-related border procedures is being finalized. Following the release of this paper, the Secretariat will work on a briefing note summarizing the topics discussed during the seminar.

36. In discussing possible follow-up activities, the Secretariat informed members that the next Aid for Trade Global Review will take place in July 2017 (back-to-back with the SPS Committee) under the theme of "Promoting Connectivity". It suggested that the STDF submits a case story on SPS e-cert to be published as part of the Aid for Trade background documents for the Global Review. It also suggested organizing session(s) on SPS e-cert and on new information technologies and their possible impact on the way SPS procedures are implemented (e.g. block chain and mobile payment). Members welcomed these ideas and requested the Secretariat to prepare concept notes for discussion at the next meeting in March 2017.

4.2 Prioritizing SPS Investments for Market Access (P-IMA)

37. The Secretariat provided an update on ongoing efforts to disseminate the [P-IMA User Guide](#) and promote its uptake, including as part of general STDF presentations to external audiences. Focused presentations on P-IMA were also provided to participants at WTO's SPS Advanced Course (July) and Advanced LDC Training Course (October), as well as the Trade Academy of the Swedish National Board of Trade (September). The Secretariat expressed appreciation to the National Board of Trade for financing the Secretariat's travel and hotel in Stockholm and noted that this event was particularly useful to pilot a longer P-IMA training session, which could be offered as part of future WTO national SPS workshops. The Working Group was requested to provide suggestions on additional opportunities to disseminate information on the P-IMA framework.

4.3 New STDF briefing notes

38. The Secretariat brought members up-to-date on the production of new STDF briefing notes on "STDF and women", on "Involvement of the private sector in STDF projects" and on "SPS capacity evaluation tools". The first briefing note will be issued in 2016, while the other notes will follow shortly in 2017.

4.4 Liaison with other relevant initiatives/participation in selected external events

39. The Secretariat reported on meetings and events it had attended since the last Working Group meeting in March 2016. A brief overview, including the reasons for participation and the number and type of stakeholders reached, was attached to the annotated agenda. Participants also watched and welcomed STDF's new film "Cocoa, a sweet value chain", which was launched in May 2016 and is now widely used as training material.

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

5.1 Overview of ongoing and completed PPGs

40. The Secretariat referred to document STDF/WG/Oct16/Overview, which provides an overview of the implementation status of all on-going PPGs.

5.2 Presentation of new PPG applications not accepted for consideration

41. The Secretariat introduced the PPG applications not tabled for consideration by the Working Group. The applications and the reasons for not tabling them were listed in Table 2 in document STDF/WG/Oct16/Review.

5.3 Consideration of PPG applications

STDF/PPG/461: Development of a Sanitary Phytosanitary Centre of Excellence (SPSCOE) for Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs)

42. The Working Group approved this PPG and recommended that the Secretariat works in collaboration with the implementing agency (the SPC) to develop Terms of Reference (TORs) for the implementation of the PPG and address the comments made by members, including the following: (i) define the scope of the Centre of Excellence, its mandate and objectives (ToRs should clarify the consultation process that will be carried out during the implementation of the PPG to ensure that the countries involved agree on the scope of the Centre); (ii) take into account previous relevant experience, mainly through consultation with the Centre of Phytosanitary Excellence (COPE) in Kenya; (iii) ensure that the implementation structure and challenges are considered during the design including the financial sustainability of the Centre and possible donor support, and; (iv) need to detail the budget and to consider potential opportunities to convene a regional consultation meeting back-to-back with another meeting in the region, to discuss the results of field-work and validate the project document.

STDF/PPG/543: Enhancing the capacity of the fruits and Vegetable Sector in Uganda to comply with European Phytosanitary requirements

43. The Working Group approved this PPG application, submitted by the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries. The IPPC Secretariat supported Uganda's willingness to strengthen its phytosanitary system to maintain access to EU markets as well as help prevent the spread of pests and diseases. It suggested that the resulting project could include an application of the PCE tool to help Uganda understand their strengths and weaknesses and to strategically plan for enhancement of the plant health system.

STDF/PPG/548: Strengthening the Lao PDR National Sanitary and Phytosanitary Capacity to Support Market Access of Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Produce to the EU and other Potential Markets

44. The Working Group approved this PPG application, subject to some conditions. Members of noted that the application would benefit from additional clarity and revision of the budget and activities foreseen. In addition, the IPPC suggested incorporating an update of the application of the PCE tool as part of the resulting project. The Working Group agreed that the Terms of Reference (TORs) for the PPG, to be developed by the STDF Secretariat in cooperation with the applicant prior to contracting, should address all the comments received, and include a clearer and revised budget.

STDF/PPG/561: Preparation for a project proposal to increase market access by strengthen the capacity of phytosanitary inspection and diagnostic of the State Service on Phytosanitary Inspection and Plant Quarantine of the Republic of Tajikistan

45. The Working Group approved this PPG subject to certain conditions. Members recommended that the Secretariat works in collaboration with the implementing agency (FAO) to develop ToRs for the implementation of the PPG that address the comments made by members at the meeting, including the following: (i) clarification of the implementation plan mainly with regard to identification of value-chains of export interest and evaluation of market opportunities and consultation with stakeholders; (ii) identification of an expert in the area of market potential assessment and revision of the budget (including increasing STDF's contribution up to US\$50,000) to cover for this additional expertise; (iii) seeking convergence between this PPG and the other STDF funded PPG in Tajikistan (STDF/PPG/447) mainly with regard to the selection of value-chains with high export potential; and (iv) actively exploring potential funding (co-funding) sources for the resulting project.

STDF/PPG/564: Regional Consultation on Strengthening Feed Safety and Quality Standards in Asia through South-South Cooperation

46. The Working Group acknowledged the importance of working on strengthening feed safety in the region but agreed that the application required further clarification in several instances. It recommended that the application be revised and resubmitted for consideration at a future Working Group meeting.

47. The main issues raised by the members include: (i) further consultation with existing initiatives and mechanisms in the field of animal feed, in particular the OIE collaborating centre for feed safety and the multi stakeholder feed platform; (ii) consultation with the regional blocks in order to explore opportunities for future collaboration and resource mobilization for the resultant project; (iii) clarification of how the envisaged South-South cooperation will operate in practice and in particular the role of China and India in the project; and (iv) receipt of letters of support from the key stakeholders of all beneficiary countries.

STDF/PPG/565: Organization of continental fruit fly stakeholders' workshop

48. The Working Group did not approve this PPG for funding. It acknowledged the urgent need to coordinate the various fruit fly control initiatives carried out across the African continent. It regretted however that the PPG application did not provide any evidence of buy-in from African National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs) and did not clearly outline the scope of the work and its implementation plan. In addition, members agreed to several other shortcomings that should be addressed by the applicant, and that are captured in the Secretariat's review of the application.

49. Members also discussed the feasibility of the proposed work within the scope of funding of a PPG that is limited to US\$50,000. They concluded that the PPG funding allocation would not be sufficient to convene a continental consultative meeting involving a representative set of African NPPOs nor would it be sufficient to carry out the comprehensive preparatory work for such a meeting. As a result, the PPG should not be resubmitted - unless additional funding is secured from other sources.

STDF/PPG/567: Proposal development on establishment and maintenance of fruit production areas free and under low prevalence of fruit fly pests in southern Africa

50. The Working Group approved this PPG for funding. It concurred with the Secretariat's review of the application and recommended that due attention be paid to addressing the comments therein.

STDF/PPG/569: Preparation of a project proposal to promote compliance with international SPS requirements in Kyrgyz Republic

51. The Working Group concurred with the analysis in the Secretariat's review and decided to approve this PPG. There was agreement that the PPG should focus on developing a project to strengthen capacity to implement improved food safety management systems based on Codex standards, and that needs related to international phytosanitary standards would be best addressed outside the scope of this PPG. The Working Group concurred on the need to: (i) actively consult representatives of STDF partners, donors and others (including EU, FAO, GIZ, Switzerland, World Bank, USAID, etc.) involved in similar activities to build on their experiences and ensure complementarities; and (ii) review the budget estimate prior to contracting. The Working Group agreed that the ToRs should address the comments received, and include a revised budget (which could be increased to US\$50,000, as considered appropriate by the Secretariat).

STDF/PPG/577: Mitigation and Remediation of Cadmium Contamination in Cocoa Beans in Latin America and the Caribbean

52. This PPG was approved by the Working Group, subject to certain conditions. Firstly, members recognized the need to carry out a comprehensive review of existing research and literature on cadmium contamination in cocoa and possible methods to mitigate its impacts through agricultural practices. However, they noted that the collection of scattered research results beyond the requesting countries is a major task that requires allocation of additional time to the expert during

implementation of the PPG. The STDF Secretariat will consider expanding the time allocated to the field work and adjusting the budget of the PPG accordingly.

53. Secondly, the Working Group recommended that special attention be paid during the implementation of this PPG by the applicants and the lead implementing agency (ICCO) to engaging donors, private sector, national and regional decision-makers to ensure funding for the partnership to be established. Finally, Members recommended that the PPG be implemented in close collaboration with the national authorities involved in the electronic Working Group of Codex Committee on Contaminants in Food to ensure convergence between the standard-setting process and mitigation measures.

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

6.1 Overview of ongoing and completed projects

54. The Secretariat referred to document STDF/WG/Oct16/Overview, which provides an overview of the implementation status of all on-going projects.

6.2 Presentations of project applications not accepted for consideration

55. The Secretariat introduced the project applications not tabled for consideration by the Working Group. The applications and the reasons for not tabling them were listed in Table 3 in document STDF/WG/Oct16/Review.

6.3 Consideration of project applications

STDF/PG/487: Improving the Capacity of Latin American and Caribbean Countries to Conduct Chemical Monitoring of Food

56. While the Working Group acknowledged the importance of addressing the issue of generating data on food contamination and human dietary exposure in the region, it concluded that it would be premature to approve this project for funding, prior to evaluating the impact of a similar project (STDF/PG/303) currently under implementation in Sub-Saharan Africa. This project is scheduled to be completed in September 2017.

57. In addition, and in light of STDF's limited resources, the Working Group also agreed to strongly encourage the applicant to explore other funding opportunities for the project. Mechanisms such as the World Bank's Global Food Safety Partnership (GFSP), whose aim is to "upscale" existing food safety initiatives, as well as bilateral support (including from Canada, given the involvement of Health Canada in the project) were mentioned.

STDF/PG/435: Upgrading the Sudanese sesame seed value chain

58. The Working Group acknowledged the importance of improving the quality and safety of sesame seed and highlighted the relevance of a value chain approach. However, members agreed that the proposal is currently too ambitious and that the application requires further work and clarification in several areas. Members recommended revising the application, taking into account the comments and suggestions made by the STDF Secretariat in its Review, and by members in the Working Group meeting. In particular: (i) a budget reduction (to scale down project activities to a more appropriate level of funding for this type of project) should be considered; and (ii) an analysis of the main SPS requirements of the targeted importing markets should be included in the project document.

STDF/PG/521: Strengthening the capacity of the National Public Health Laboratory to provide services in support of market access for Solomon Island fish exporters

59. The Working Group concurred with the analysis in the Secretariat's review and agreed to approve this project application. The importance of strengthening the NPHL's capacity to conduct microbiological testing in compliance with international standards to maintain market access was recognized, and it was further noted that the project would enhance the sustainability of previous investments to strengthen food safety capacity in the Solomon Islands. There was acceptance of the Secretariat's suggestion to include an additional budget line (up to US\$20,000) to prepare a

case story documenting the process and experiences of the NPHL in gaining international accreditation, which could be of interest to other developing countries. There was also agreement on the need to review and clarify the project budget, prior to contracting. The FAO representative expressed FAO's commitment to implement this project, in close cooperation with the NPHL.

STDF/PG/503: Beyond Compliance Global - sharing tools for enhanced application of Systems Approach and market negotiation on plant pest risk

60. The Working Group did not approve this project application. Members concurred with the Secretariat's Review, which highlights the potential usefulness of this project in supporting countries to implement an integrated systems approach in pest risk management and acknowledged the positive evaluation received from a related STDF project (STDF/PG/328). Members however also expressed some reservations. In particular, members recommended: (i) strengthening implementation arrangements in the project application through potential collaboration with the IPPC and relevant regional organizations; (ii) providing clear evidence of demand from countries to use the decision tool to assist in obtaining market access for specific plant products; and (iii) incorporating a more cost-efficient budget. The Working Group recommended and welcomed a re-submission of a revised application at a future meeting.

6.4 Decisions on prioritization and funding

61. No decision on prioritization and funding was made.

7 OTHER BUSINESS

62. The Secretariat informed members that the tentative dates for the next meeting of the Working are 20-21 March 2017. Members thanked Ms Sun Biney for chairing the Working Group meeting in an excellent manner.

63. The meeting was closed at 16.30.

ANNEX 1

**STDF WORKING GROUP
20-21 OCTOBER 2016
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