

SUMMARY REPORT OF THE STDF WORKING GROUP MEETING

27 June 2011

WTO, Geneva

1. Adoption of Agenda

1. The meeting was chaired by Mr Thomas Westcot from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

2. The Secretariat informed participants that in addition to the regular Working Group meeting, two other meetings would be held on 28 June: (i) an STDF strategy session in the morning to discuss and agree on STDF's proposed vision and mission statements and a new medium-term strategy; and (ii) an informal technical meeting for partners and observers in the afternoon to discuss their work on SPS indicators and economic analysis tools.

3. The Secretariat also informed participants that KEPHIS had requested to present information on its SPS activities. The Working Group agreed to include this presentation under agenda item 4g. Members welcomed the revised format of the agenda (i.e. reporting on STDF activities in the context of the five output areas of the logical framework). The agenda was adopted. A list of participants is provided in **Annex 1**.

2. Operation of the Facility

(a) Staffing issues

4. The Secretariat informed the Working Group that Ms Kenza Le Mentec had been selected to fill the post of Economic Affairs Officer (at Grade 8 level) in the STDF, following an external recruitment process. Efforts were made to fill the existing post of Economic Affairs Officer (at Grade 7 level) expeditiously. Ms Anneke Hamilton, currently filling this post, would be leaving the STDF in July to take up a regular post within the WTO Secretariat.

(b) Financial situation

5. The Secretariat reported on the financial situation of the STDF and commented on the information and figures in the annotated agenda ([STDF/WG/Jun11/Annotated agenda](#)). The financial situation of the STDF is currently healthy and there is continued interest among donors to contribute to the STDF.

6. Following a query from the Working Group, the Secretariat clarified that the internal WTO accounts are presented in Swiss Francs and the STDF accounts in US dollars. A WTO official from its Budget and Finance Unit further explained that the current exchange rate situation (i.e. strong Swiss Franc) is working in favour of the STDF and indicated that the bias is to hold as much of the funds in Swiss Francs, although some of the accounts are in US dollars. However, the exact effect of the exchange rate on STDF's accounts could not be quantified at this stage.

(c) Policy Committee meeting 2011

7. The Working Group agreed to hold the next Policy Committee meeting on Friday 9 December 2011 at WHO headquarters in Geneva. The objective of this meeting will be to endorse the new medium-term strategy, work plan and a revised set of STDF Operational Rules. The Secretariat thanked WHO for its interest and availability to host this meeting and thanked WTO for hosting the previous Policy Committee meeting in December 2010.

3. High quality tools and information resources (output 1)

(a) Pilot testing work on the development and use of the MCDA methodology

8. The Working Group was briefed on the Multi Criteria Decision Analysis (MCDA) pilot testing work. A draft MCDA guidebook (to apply the MCDA approach in the SPS context) was developed by a consultant, Spencer Henson. The guidebook was used for the first time in Mozambique in April 2011 in collaboration with national stakeholders. The Secretariat provided an overview of the methodology and highlighted the strong participation of government and academics in the workshop activities in Mozambique. Twelve capacity building and investment options were identified and the MCDA framework was used to prioritize these options. A detailed draft of the report was produced and is currently under review by stakeholders in the country. There is a possibility that up to six capacity building needs identified by the report may be funded by USAID.

9. A second pilot testing exercise was scheduled in Zambia in the first week of July 2011. In addition, the World Bank agreed to host a meeting in Zambia to present the preliminary findings of this pilot work to development partners and key government officers. A regional training workshop will be organized in Johannesburg on 16-17 August to: (i) present the MCDA approach and draft guidebook; (ii) share the experiences of the applications in Mozambique and Zambia; and (iii) equip selected SPS experts in Africa with knowledge and skills to apply the MCDA methodology. Thirty-six experts were invited and selected on the basis of interest and recommendations from developing country representatives. The Secretariat highlighted that it faced some difficulties due to recent changes in WTO's travel policy and that it is exploring the cost implications of this policy change.

10. Further to the work in Africa, based on expressions of interest received, and following a targeted discussion in the Working Group in October 2011, additional pilot testing activities may be organized in Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean, in 2012.

11. Members raised several issues related to: (i) the knowledge of participants providing the information and by extension the quality and creditability of the outputs; (ii) improving the technical quality of the outputs; (iii) using indicators which provide a good assessment of compliance; (iv) provision of support for updating the Mozambique study; (v) short training sessions (i.e. two-day workshop in Johannesburg); and (vi) follow-up training activities to ensure continuity. Members highlighted that the report required further editing. One member raised a query in relation to the arguments provided on mycotoxin control and protection.

12. The Secretariat reminded participants that the process in Mozambique was a first pilot exercise and that there are definitely areas for further improvement. Members were encouraged to submit more specific comments in this regard. The consultant, Spencer Henson, who attended part of the Working Group meeting, further clarified the purpose of the methodology and highlighted that the intention is not to produce reports but to develop a practical process and produce a tool that countries can use themselves.

(b) Planned global level event on international trade and invasive alien species (in 2012)

13. Following discussions in the Working Group in March 2011, the Secretariat introduced a revised concept note ([STDF/Coord/340/Concept](#)) on the proposed global level seminar on International Trade and Invasive Alien Species (IAS), prepared in close collaboration with the IPPC, OIE and WTO Secretariats. The note had also been circulated to the members of the Inter-Agency Liaison Group on IAS to collect their comments and input. The Working Group unanimously supported the proposal and agreed to organize this seminar in June/July 2012 on the margins of the SPS Committee meeting. A draft agenda will be developed for discussion at the next Working Group meeting in October 2011.

(c) STDF studies / publications

14. The Secretariat briefed participants on the status of four outstanding STDF studies/publications. The second edition of the *SPS-Related Capacity Evaluation Tools: An Overview of Tools Developed by International Organizations* (English version) was finalized and published. The Spanish and French versions of this publication will follow shortly. The study on *Climate Change and SPS Risks* was in the process of being finalized in collaboration with the World Bank. Due to the STDF's workload, planned studies on *Public-Private Partnerships* and *National SPS Coordination Mechanisms* faced some delay. STDF partners will be given an opportunity to review the revised edition of the latter study which should be ready for the WTO Workshop on National and Regional SPS Coordination in October 2011.

(d) Development of STDF film in Arabic, Chinese and Russian

15. The Secretariat reported that the STDF film was now available in Chinese and Russian. Final edits were made to the subtitles of the Arabic version, which will be posted on the STDF website shortly. The Secretariat also indicated that hard copies of the DVD containing all three languages will be made available once the Arabic version is finalized. The Working Group was invited to make suggestions on possible distribution channels for the new language versions.

4. Dissemination of experiences and good practices (output 2)**(a) STDF website / development of STDF Virtual Library**

16. The revised STDF website was made available in French and Spanish. A search tool was included that allows users to search through the website and find specific documents. Donor pages with references to their SPS-related programmes, links to relevant webpages and possible contact persons will be developed. To this end, a template will be prepared and circulated to donors and partners for comments. The website will be updated regularly as new relevant information becomes available. Comments and suggestions on the website can be sent to the STDF Secretariat.

17. The Secretariat also introduced a two-page background document on the STDF Virtual Library. It was highlighted that the Virtual Library would not be a database of projects and would only contain documents to complement existing information systems developed by STDF partners and donors. The Virtual Library would help the Secretariat to manage its documentation more effectively and assist providers of SPS assistance by sharing relevant information and hence improving coordination. STDF partners and members will be expected to share information on relevant programmes and their latest publications on a regular basis. Some members suggested that mechanisms to link the STDF Virtual Library with their resource pages could be explored at a later stage.

(b) Preparation of STDF newsletter

18. In December 2009, the Working Group agreed to circulate a survey to assess the usefulness of the STDF newsletter. The Secretariat proposed circulating an electronic survey to the recipients of the newsletter in August/September 2011 and to discuss the results of the survey at the next meeting in October 2011. The Working Group agreed with the Secretariat's proposal. It was suggested that in the future the newsletter could be made available in an electronic user-friendly format.

(c) (Planned) training / information sessions organized by partner

19. The Secretariat provided an overview of its participation in training/information sessions organized by partners. The Secretariat also indicated that it will participate in the WTO/IDB regional SPS seminar for Caribbean countries in July 2011, as well as in the WTO workshop on

Regional and National SPS Coordination Mechanisms (17 October 2011, on the margins of the SPS Committee meeting). The Secretariat was considering its involvement in other regional WTO SPS seminars planned in November 2011 for French-speaking and English-speaking Africa, and Arab and Middle East countries.

20. At the request of some members in March, the Secretariat presented a list of criteria that guides its decisions on whether to accept or decline invitations to participate in external events. The criteria included: (i) relevance to the STDF work programme; (ii) availability of resources; (iii) requests for specific STDF presentations; (iv) participation of STDF partners, observers, etc.; (v) participation of STDF target beneficiaries; and (vi) possibility of linking participation to past/on-going/planned STDF projects/PPGs. The Secretariat further explained that decisions are ultimately taken on a case-by-case basis. The STDF budget for 2011 makes provision for STDF's participation in up to 15 events of partners, donors, observers or related initiatives. The budget also includes a separate provision for STDF's participation in PPG, EIF and regional Aid for Trade missions.

21. One member sought additional information on whether the participation of partners in an event meant that STDF participation was not necessary (and vice versa). The Secretariat informed the Working Group that this depends entirely on the situation. Criteria could be worked out in greater detail, perhaps when revising the STDF Operational Rules, but there was a need to remain flexible. The Secretariat also clarified that its presence at external events is generally geared at disseminating information on STDF's project and coordination work.

(d) Reports to SPS Committee and Codex/OIE/IPPC meetings

22. The Secretariat submitted reports on its activities to the IPPC (CPM) in March 2011 and the OIE (General Session) in May 2011. The Secretariat will report to the WTO SPS Committee on 30 June (G/SPS/GEN/1089) and the Codex Alimentarius Commission (first week of July 2011).

(e) Presentation by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) on its SPS-related activities

23. Ms Juliana Almeida from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) made a presentation on the IDB's SPS-related activities, including its InTRADEBid database. This tool provides useful information on exports from the Latin American region rejected by the European Union and the United States. Ms Almeida provided an overview of the information contained in the database as well as an analysis of the main SPS problems facing the Latin American region in exporting agricultural products to the EU and US. The IDB is also developing a Guide on SPS Import Requirements to Access the Asian Market.

24. The presentation sparked a lively discussion with numerous data-related queries (e.g. source of the data, differences in the type of products refused by the US compared to the EU, geographic coverage of data, data on the quantity of re-shipped products initially refused due to labelling issues, data on refusals related to intra-LAC trade) posed by the Working Group. Members were also interested in finding out whether the data presented will be available in a publication and whether the analysis will be extended to other regions and products. The IDB indicated its intention to produce a regular publication on the most problematic refusals affecting sectors within Latin America and the Caribbean, which would be available on the IDB website, as well as other detailed analysis in the form of a working paper. The data would also be used to inform IDB interventions by focusing on priority issues which are defined by the analysis of the data.

25. In response to queries, the IDB further clarified that an additional detailed analysis would be undertaken for some countries in order to specifically identify the reasons for observed changes in the level of refusals of exported products from one period to the next. The IDB highlighted the difficulties faced in obtaining data on pest-related interceptions and also general data from countries. The IDB is currently in the process of developing indicators to compare data across regions and

products. Members were invited to provide input on indicators that would be useful to include in the database. Members indicated that they would liaise with regional offices to provide feedback.

(f) Presentation by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) on the Trade Standards Compliance report 2010

26. On behalf of UNIDO, Mr Spencer Henson made a presentation on UNIDO's Trade Standards Compliance Report 2010, funded by NORAD. The report provides a systematic way of examining border compliance issues and estimates export losses from the same rejection data as used by the IDB's InTRADEBid database. The Standard Compliance Capacity Index (SCCI) was presented, which provides a snapshot of compliance across six areas: Standards, Metrology, Accreditation, Testing, Inspection and Certification. UNIDO also intended to develop indicators related to rejections of exports. More detailed analysis of the rejections will be undertaken and subsequently published. The vision for 2012 is to publish a second edition of the report which will include a buyer's survey with a focus on fresh produce.

27. Members highlighted the similarities in IDB's and UNIDO's work. The IDB indicated its previous efforts and continued willingness to collaborate with UNIDO in this area, particularly in the Latin America and Caribbean region. Queries from the Working Group focused on how the indicators work in assessing capacity, the process surrounding their selection and the data used in developing the index. It was suggested to examine the SCCI in relation to the MCDA methodology and see how best to use both methodologies to identify capacity needs for a particular country. The IPPC highlighted its concerns with specific sections of the report, in particular Chapter 3, as well as the ISO-driven nature of the report, and mentioned that it had been discussing these concerns with UNIDO. UNIDO clarified that the SCCI is more food safety oriented, and does not focus on phytosanitary or animal health capacity, and further explained the procedure surrounding the development of the SCCI.

28. The Secretariat highlighted the importance of sharing information about on-going and planned SPS activities at an early stage to avoid duplication and the need for closer collaboration among providers of SPS assistance. He mentioned that both presentations will be made available on the STDF website.

(g) Presentation by the Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS)

29. Dr James Onsando, Managing Director at the Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS), made a presentation on its SPS-related technical assistance activities. The Centre of Phytosanitary Excellence (COPE), launched in October 2010, with start-up funding from the STDF, was presented as a success story. COPE's current and planned activities were presented together with other SPS-related technical assistance programmes such as the Phytosanitary Electronic Export Certification project (CLIENT), the HORTICAP – Lab Construction and the COPE Phase II. Awareness creation amongst private sector players on the role of standards (international and private) in market access was highlighted as a potential area of support.

(h) Presentation of other initiatives of partners, donors and observer organizations

30. The Secretariat introduced document [STDF/WG/Jun11/Compilation](#) and provided a brief overview of information submitted by Working Group members on their specific on-going and planned SPS-related capacity building activities. The ITC provided additional information on its work under the non-tariff measures (NTM) project. A project proposal is currently being prepared for submission to the STDF based on the priority actions identified through a survey that was conducted.

5. SPS issues and priorities in other programmes (output 3)

(a) Coordination with and contribution to related initiatives and programmes

31. The Secretariat provided an overview of its coordination activities with the EIF and under Aid for Trade (contained in STDF/WG/Jun11/Annotated agenda). This included consultations with the EIF Secretariat and UNOPS (i.e. the EIF trust fund manager) about co-financing possibilities and practical procedures for SPS-related Tier 2 proposals. As a result, a framework between UNOPS and FAO was being developed to assist in FAO implementation of Tier 2 projects in the area of SPS and agriculture. The Secretariat also intended to participate in the 3rd Global Aid for Trade Review in July.

32. The Secretariat briefed the Working Group on its interaction with various other programmes and initiatives including the Trade Facilitation Facility (TFF), the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Michigan State University (MSU), and the EU-funded EDES and PAN-SPSO programmes. Consultations with the TFF centred on identifying possible areas of common interest. The Secretariat highlighted the possibility of TFF-funded projects developed by the STDF. The World Bank commented that the Guinea Bissau project (STDF/PG/309) should be used as a pilot in this regard. Other potential synergies included SPS border management and invasive alien species.

33. The Secretariat participated in the SPS Sub-Committee of COMESA where the following issues were discussed: the Tripartite Free Trade Agreement (with a draft SPS annex that is to be further negotiated), the COMESA Green Pass and CAADP issues related to SPS. The Secretariat disseminated information on the application of MCDA in Mozambique and Zambia and the regional workshop in Johannesburg. On the margins, the Secretariat discussed the possibility of organizing a joint event with the African Union Commission (AUC) in 2012 (potentially in Addis Ababa) on the SPS roles and functions of the AUC, its technical agencies and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs). Working Group members expressed support for such an event. The Secretariat indicated that it would further discuss the options with the AUC and report to the Working Group in October.

34. The Secretariat highlighted (with reference to the "criteria" on STDF participation in external events) that it had not participated in the CAADP Partnership Platform meeting organized in Yaoundé in March this year. However, the EU had assisted with the dissemination of STDF materials. Informally, the Secretariat is also working with the AUC to promote a broader inclusion of SPS issues in the CAADP programme.

35. In May 2011, the Secretariat made a presentation to a selected group of Chinese high level food safety officers at the WTO (organized by Michigan State University). An invitation to attend the PAN-SPSO Steering Committee in August 2011 was also received. Reportedly, an evaluation of the PAN-SPSO project will be conducted soon which provides an opportunity for partners to submit comments and make recommendations.

36. The World Bank informed the Working Group of a five-year MoU between the World Bank and APEC signed in Big Sky, Montana, on 18 May 2011. The key priority of this MoU is capacity building in the area of food safety. The World Bank highlighted possible funding options for the future as a result of this MoU and indicated that a further update would be provided at the next Working Group meeting.

6. Improved capacity of PPG beneficiaries (output 4)

(a) Joint EIF/STDF training on project design and results-based management tools

37. The Secretariat reported to the Working Group on STDF's participation in the joint EIF/STDF training workshops on project design. One of the outcomes of the training workshop in

Nepal in March was the submission of project STDF/PG/329 to the STDF for funding (under agenda item 7e). The Secretariat informed the Working Group that a similar workshop will be held in other LDCs, notably Rwanda (first week of July) and Central African Republic (August). The Secretariat decided not to participate in the Rwanda workshop, since the identified projects by Rwanda did not include sufficient SPS-related components, in addition to staffing constraints faced by the Secretariat. Participation by the STDF in the workshop in Central African Republic is considered. This workshop will provide the STDF an opportunity to support implementation of STDF/PPG/308 (approved by the Working Group in October 2010) which focuses on the preparation of a project aimed at developing an SPS strategy and action plan for the country.

(b) Overview of implementation of on-going PPGs

38. The Secretariat introduced the overview document [STDF/WG/Jun11/Overview](#) which provides an overview of the implementation status of on-going PPGs. No comments were received from the Working Group.

(c) Discussion of PPG applications

STDF/PPG/346 – Project to support implementation of COMESA Green Pass Certification Scheme for aflatoxin control in Maize

STDF/PPG/347 – Project to support COMESA develop commodity based trade in beef

STDF/PPG/348 – Development of Protocols for trade in fresh fruit products within COMESA

39. The Secretariat introduced all three PPGs together, as the recommendations by the Secretariat were the same, i.e. a feasibility study to clarify the concept of the Green Pass and address technical/legal issues as well as the economic/commercial viability of the concept. The Secretariat suggested that for this study the three PPG requests should be combined with a total budget of up to US\$ 90,000 to hire a team of consultants, one in each of the three areas (food safety, animal and plant health). The TOR would be drafted in collaboration with COMESA and STDF's partners.

40. The Working Group discussed the three requests and highlighted some concerns in relation to the Green Pass concept and its compatibility with international standards and obligations, other technical issues, and the scope of application of the concept in the context of inter-regional and international trade. Some Members indicated a preference to undertake a legal study first before looking at technical and other issues. Other members were of the view that the sole focus on aflatoxin for the maize-related PPG may not be the best approach.

41. After lengthy discussions, the Working Group agreed to approve the feasibility study as suggested by the Secretariat, provided that a legal study would be carried out as a first step. A suggestion was made that FAO could lead the conduct of this study given its legal expertise in the area (unless COMESA would provide names of other acceptable candidates).

7. Improved capacity of project beneficiaries (output 5)

(a) Evaluation of completed projects

42. The Secretariat reported that the recruitment of consultants is currently underway for the evaluation of projects completed in 2009. A shortlist of potential consultants was circulated for three projects: STDF/PG/69, STDF/PG/133 and STDF/PG/145. The evaluation of two of these projects will start shortly. The Working Group agreed with the Secretariat's proposal to postpone the evaluation of the project in Yemen (STDF/PG/69) until the security situation improves.

43. The Secretariat recalled that the Policy Committee in December 2010 endorsed a Working Group decision to evaluate two out of six STDF projects completed in 2010. The Secretariat proposed using a random selection process in this regard. Some members questioned the use of the random selection process, indicating concerns related to possible regional bias and the absence of other specific criteria. The Secretariat highlighted the inherent transparent nature of the approach and indicated that the majority of STDF's projects are based in Africa, so that some regional bias was inevitable.

44. The Working Group agreed to use the random selection method. Two projects were subsequently selected for evaluation: STDF/PG/134 and STDF/PG/246.

(b) Proposed STDF evaluation of mango-related projects in Mali

45. In March 2011, some members had suggested that the STDF could do work on the impact of several mango-related projects in Mali implemented by a wide range of organizations and development partners. The Secretariat introduced a two-page document with additional information in this regard. The Working Group was requested to consider: (i) whether a "meta-evaluation" would add value to the conclusions highlighted in a recent study of the World Bank on mango projects in Mali; and (ii) whether the STDF should undertake an evaluation that would focus on SPS constraints but that would also have to take into account broader value chain issues, such as transport, infrastructure, marketing, etc.

46. The Working Group expressed some concerns about the STDF conducting this type of evaluation, and suggested to examine the possibility of doing this work jointly with another institution with expertise on issues other than SPS. The Working Group also suggested considering the cost effectiveness of this work and the possibility of working with another country/sector on a pilot basis. The World Bank expressed interest and will explore the possibility of participating in this work jointly with the STDF.

(c) Overview of implementation of on-going projects

47. The Secretariat introduced document [STDF/WG/Jun11/Overview](#) which provides an overview of the implementation status of on-going projects. No comments were received from the Working Group.

Presentation of issues arising by Secretariat

STDF/PG/302 – Support to the cabbage sector in the Niayes Region of Senegal

48. The EIF had indicated to the Secretariat its inability to co-finance the project as agreed in July 2010, *inter alia* as a result of its limited budget. The beneficiary subsequently submitted a letter to the Secretariat requesting funding for the total project (US\$ 524,000). However, the project includes ineligible expenditures (i.e. minor equipment such as fences, boxes, tools) that are necessary for its implementation. These items are not allowed under the STDF Operational Rules. Members indicated that they were not in favour of STDF funding the total project and were of the view that the EIF should honour its previous commitments. No other donor expressed an interest to (co-)fund the project at the meeting. The Secretariat agreed to inform the EIF and the beneficiary accordingly.

STDF/PG/309 – Strengthening SPS capacity in Guinea-Bissau

49. The Secretariat informed the Working Group that concerns had been raised by the World Bank liaison office in Senegal regarding project STDF/PG/309, approved in October 2010 for co-funding with the TFF. The concerns were mostly related to the budget. The Working Group agreed with the Secretariat's proposal to undertake a joint mission with the World Bank in August 2011 to review/reformulate the project document, address the issues raised and align it with a major

agriculture investment programme that the World Bank will start shortly in Guinea-Bissau to complement and maximize impact. The Secretariat agreed to inform the beneficiary accordingly.

(d) Presentation of applications not accepted for consideration

50. The Secretariat noted that three project applications (STDF/PG/165, STDF/PG/352 and STDF/PG/355) were not accepted for consideration as they did not meet the STDF's eligibility criteria. Additional details on the reasons for not tabling these applications were included in [STDF/WG/Jun11/Review](#).

(e) Discussion of project applications

STDF/PG/321- Building trade capacity of small-scale shrimp and prawn farmers in Bangladesh – Investing in the Bottom of the Pyramid Approach

51. The Secretariat introduced the application to the Working Group and highlighted the main objectives and activities of the proposal. The proposal was reviewed by the Secretariat on several occasions and subsequently revised. The Secretariat recommended approving the proposal provided that prior to contracting: (i) the budget is adjusted (including additional specification of the 10% beneficiary contribution); and (ii) outputs and activities are brought in line with the logical framework and budget.

52. After several comments were made in relation to encouraging the recognition and use of the OIE PVS Pathway, promoting active participation and commitment by government authorities in the implementation of the project, and ensuring its sustainability, the Working Group agreed with the recommendation made by the Secretariat and approved the project, subject to the outlined conditions.

STDF/PG/336 - Enhancing the control of transboundary animal diseases in Cameroon

53. The Secretariat recalled that this proposal had been considered in October 2010 and presented the revised proposal. The proposal, prepared in consultation with FAO addressed most of the concerns raised previously mainly with regard to: (i) sustainability and feasibility of the vaccination campaign; and (ii) lack of strategic planning in control and eradication of animal diseases identified as the target of the project. The project's objectives and scope were re-oriented to overcome these major shortcomings. The Secretariat pointed out that the proposal still failed to document evidence of consultation with producer associations and still required a revision of the budget (including a detailed specification of the beneficiary's contribution and provision for FAO backstopping missions and the logframe (improve the indicators).

54. The Secretariat recommended that the project be approved on the condition that the proposal was finalized accordingly to the satisfaction of the Secretariat. The FAO further indicated that on-going consultations were being held between FAO's production and animal health services and the Veterinary Services in Cameroon to expedite the revision of the proposal. The Working Group agreed with the Secretariat's recommendation and approved the proposal, subject to the outlined condition.

STDF/PG/329 - Enhancing Sanitary and Phytosanitary capacity of Nepalese ginger exports through Public Private Partnerships

55. The Secretariat reminded the Working Group that this proposal originated from a PPG request submitted in 2010 and built on the recently held STDF/EIF workshop in March 2011 on project design. An overview of the objectives and activities was provided by the Secretariat. The Secretariat recommended the project for funding under the following conditions: (i) submission of letters of support from the Ministry of Commerce and Supplies and the Nepal Ginger Producers and Traders Association; (ii) efforts are made (prior to contracting) to address and clarify the identified

issues in the project document (including on the budget, M&E, indicators, recruitment of project manager, etc.); (iii) relevant FAO staff are satisfied that previously expressed comments have been adequately addressed; and (iv) the EIF or another donor confirms availability of funds for the infrastructure component.

56. The Secretariat clarified, in response to a concern expressed by the Working Group, that joint implementation by the EIF and STDF would be undertaken in order to ensure collaboration from the beginning of the project. The Working Group agreed with the Secretariat's recommendation to approve the project, subject to the conditions outlined.

STDF/PG/303 - Risk assessment to human health related to dietary exposure to chemical contaminants – A project proposal of a Regional Total Diet Study (TDS) for Sub-Saharan Africa (Cameroon and Nigeria)

57. The Secretariat provided an overview of the project, highlighting its aims and activities. The proposal originated from a PPG, approved in 2009, to provide training and awareness raising activities in the region on the contribution of the TDS approach for risk-based food control systems. The Secretariat outlined the shortcomings of the proposal in relation to formulation, sequencing of arguments and activities, synergies with existing and planned projects, logical framework, implementation structure, budget, etc. It was underlined by FAO that the proposal does not build sufficiently on the regional aspects and that essential information is lacking from Nigeria. The Secretariat recommended that the proposal be resubmitted for future consideration and sought feedback from its partners on issues related to funding possibilities, potential supervisory agencies and the capacity of the Cameroon Pasteur Centre and University of Port Harcourt to implement the project. The Working Group agreed with the Secretariat's recommendation.

STDF/PG/354 - Improving Safety and Quality of the Sri Lankan Fruits and Vegetables

58. The Secretariat introduced the proposal and highlighted its concerns with respect to gaps in the training component of the proposed project, as well as other areas related to the overall sustainability of the project and its duration. The Secretariat informed the Working Group of its discussions with FAO/IPPC in relation to some of the concerns and indicated that it had received detailed comments from FAO/IPPC in relation to: (i) project content and approach; and (ii) specific phytosanitary issues.

59. The Secretariat recommended that the applicant consult with the technical agencies (FAO/IPPC) and at national level with technical institutions in order to revise the training component of the proposal (including the criteria and selection of SPS consultants). The IPPC indicated that the revision of the proposal should also include the application of the new PCE. The Working Group agreed with the Secretariat's recommendation that the project be revised and resubmitted for consideration at a future meeting.

8. Decisions on financing and prioritizing

60. The Secretariat reported that no decision on prioritization was required.

9. Other business

61. One member requested more information on WTO's new travel policy. The Working Group indicated its support for the most cost-effective solution. The Secretariat indicated that it would keep the Working Group abreast of the internal discussions on this issue.

62. The meeting closed at 6:10 p.m.

Annex 1

STDF WORKING GROUP
27 June 2011
Room E

List of Participants

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