



## **WORLD BANANA FORUM**

***working together for sustainable banana production and trade***

### **Fourth meeting of the Steering Committee**

27 February 2012

Hotel Ramada, Guayaquil, Ecuador

### **Report**

#### **Introduction**

The Steering Committee (SC) members and Working Groups (WG) coordinators of the World Banana Forum (WBF) held a meeting at Hotel Ramada of Guayaquil on the day before the Second Conference of the WBF. The meeting was attended by 35 participants representing the various stakeholders of the banana sector. The agenda and list of participants can be found in annex.

Pascal Liu welcomed the participants and introduced the new members of the SC. He explained that the objectives of the meeting were to review the preparations for the global Second Conference of the WBF, to select facilitators and chairpersons for the sessions, to discuss progress in the activities of the specialized working groups, their governance and communication issues, to review the budget of the World Banana Forum and fundraising, and to examine comments on a proposed draft Charter for the WBF. To this end, the Secretariat had prepared 6 documents that were tabled at the meeting (see annex).

During the meeting Víctor López, who has worked for the Secretariat of the WBF since the first meeting of the preparatory committee (held in Rome in April 2009), announced that he would leave his position between May and June 2012. He explained that his decision was due to an interesting Associate Professional Officer job offer at the Inter-American Development Bank in Mexico City. Víctor expressed his satisfaction with the work carried out by the Secretariat and thanked deeply the SC and WG coordinators, among other participants, for the support given during all these years.

#### **1. Review of preparations for the WBF Conference**

Víctor López welcomed the participants and explained the agenda for a meeting with a very limited duration (three hours only). He continued detailing the different tasks that the Secretariat -together with an *ad hoc* Organizing Committee- undertook during the last months to prepare the Second Conference of the World Banana Forum (the Conference).

Víctor explained the work carried out by the different components of the Organizing Committee. It was announced that the financial support of the Government of Ecuador to the Conference was channelled through the Ministry of Social Development. He also explained that the Secretariat invited President Rafael Correa and several ministers to open the Conference following a request from the Government.

During the debate, the programme was reviewed in detail and some small modifications were done. This session was also attended by Marcela Cruz, from Cafolis, the Civil Society Organization from Ecuador that was contracted by FAO to organize the field trip visits and handle the registration of participants and note taking.

Anna Cooper and Iris Munguia briefed the participants on the main issues discussed during the Global meeting of women banana workers, an event organized by the WBF's Working Group on Labour Rights (WG03). They requested that information about this event be distributed during the Conference and that its results be explained in the plenary through a specific presentation.

Decisions:

- The chairpersons for the different sessions and the facilitators for the roundtables were chosen
- It was approved to set some time for the participants of the global meeting of women banana workers to present their conclusions to the plenary. An additional presentation to the plenary (a video prepared by Sintrainagro) was also added to the agenda.
- The agenda and list of documents for distribution were finalized
- Decisions were made to fine tune the organization and logistics of the conference

## **2. Reports by the Working Groups**

Víctor López explained the main communication and coordination issues that affected the WGs during the last year. The WG's coordinators found difficult to plan activities and to work towards their implementation due to other commitments with their own organizations and suggested the need for a facilitator/coordinator in each of the WGs. Anne Heurtaux suggested that this could be a paid role, but that not much funds were available. Miriam Neale explained the increasing amount of work needed to carry out the activities of WG02. Anna Cooper explained how she could dedicate part-time support to WG03 activities thanks to a special fund that Banana Link received. She added that the fund was to expire soon and it was not clear whether it could be extended.

The participants agreed that more support was needed for the WGs. Victor presented a proposal for hiring a consultant that could provide this support on a part time basis for a moderate cost to be charged to the working groups.

Decisions:

- The WBF will establish a specific budget to support the working groups. The Secretariat will oversee this process and supervise the consultant.

## **3. Financial issues**

Pascal Liu presented the final accounts of the WBF for 2011. He detailed the fees paid by participants. The total fees collected were some \$76,000, which was below the \$115,000 forecast in the funding plan approved by the SC. He explained that the Secretariat spent a considerable amount of time following up with WBF participants that did not pay their fees, which was not an efficient use of the Secretariat's limited resources. The result of that work was uneven, with several organizations unable or unwilling to provide financial support.

Pascal detailed the contributions received from other sources in 2011. Among these stood out a large contribution from FAO (some \$150,000) which would not be renewed in 2012 due to extensive budget cuts. He went on to present a table forecasting income and spending in 2012 based on the budget previously approved by the SC. The forecast shows a deficit of some \$190,000. This raises a challenge to the development of the WBF. The SC had devised a funding plan based on 25% of membership fees and 75% of grants by donors. However, two years of unsuccessful

fundraising have shown that donors are not interested in covering the core expenses of the WBF and generally reply that the large participating companies can afford these costs. So far, it seems that donors may at best accept to fund some activities of specific working groups. This implies that the core costs of the WBF (coordination, support, public interface, promotion, etc.) should be primarily funded by the annual fees.

A discussion ensued on how to fill the funding gap. Compagnie Fruitière announced their willingness to join the WBF and to pay the 2012 fee (cat. *large company*). A participant suggested that professional firms could be hired to do the fundraising work. Another participant suggested that the Secretariat could look for students in order to provide extra human resources support to the WBF (i.e. for translation purposes). Another participant said that members should be excluded from the SC and/or WGs if they do not pay their dues (especially since the ladder fee seems quite fair). There was also a suggestion to increase the number of meetings in the Southern hemisphere as a way to help developing countries' participants to attend those meetings. It was suggested that sponsored participants were invited a limited number of times only and, after that, should be persuaded to identify other sources of funds for participating in these meetings (this would enable more rotation in terms of sponsored organizations). In this regard, it was also suggested that the organization of every sponsored participant be asked to cover a share of the travel costs. This would prove the motivation for attending the meeting and make the organization feel more involved in the fund management and fund raising needs of the Forum. Finally, a participant stated that the annual fee scheme should be reinforced and made compulsory for all members of the SC and Working Groups. In addition, a participant suggested that the Secretariat provide public donors with written explanations on the administrative procedures for using their funds.

#### Decisions:

- The final accounts for 2011 were approved.
- The SC will increase the efforts to raise funds and revive the Task Force on Budget and Fundraising (TF01). Mr. Edgar Monge (Tesco) volunteered to join this Task Force.
- The Secretariat will start the collection of 2012 fees after the Conference. It will start with SC members and WG coordinators and then a wider group of WBF stakeholders will be contacted. The Secretariat will call for a meeting with the rest of TF01 members soon after.
- The TF01 should prepare after the Conference a complete package to attract more members (especially retailers) and donors to the WBF. This set of documents should be carefully prepared stressing the unique multi-stakeholder feature of the Forum and the successful delivery of some outputs since its constitution.
- Upon request, the Secretariat will prepare individual reports to each donor to explain how the funds given to the WBF were used.
- The Charter will be revised so that the category of participants that do not pay the annual fee is limited to very few cases

#### **4. Draft WBF Charter**

Due to the lack of time during the session, the Committee decided that the recently received suggestions on the draft Charter would be further discussed by email after the Conference. The Charter will be briefly presented to the Conference as work in progress.

The next in-person SC meeting will be held in the second half of 2012. The Secretariat will propose venues and dates in due course. In the mean time, an online meeting will be held.

## **ANNEXES**

### **Annex 1**

#### **Agenda**

##### **Fourth meeting of the Steering Committee (SC)**

*with members of the Organizing Committee and WG coordinators*

**Monday 27 February 2012, 15.00-18.00**

Salón La Hacienda, Hotel Ramada, Guayaquil, Ecuador

- 15.00 **Welcome to participants**
- 15.05 **Presentation of SC meeting objectives and adoption of agenda**
- 15.10 **Review of preparations for the WBF Conference**
- Programme
  - Speeches and presentations
  - Facilitators for discussion groups
  - Chairpersons for sessions
  - Logistical issues (registrations, access, breaks,...)
  - Draft WBF Charter
  - Expected outputs
  - Meeting documents
- 16.30 **Reports by the Working Groups (WGs)**  
*by the WG coordinators*
- *Presentations to the WBF Conference*
  - *Expected outputs for 2012*
  - *Resource needs*
- 17.30 **Financial issues**
- Final financial report for 2011
  - Fundraising – Review of current situation
  - Budget scenarios for 2012
- 18.00 **End of meeting**

## Annex 2

### Final list of participants

#### **Steering Committee members**

Koronado Apuzen (Farmcoop)	Sue Longley (IUF)
Karomo Browne (WINFA)	Víctor López Saavedra (FAO)
Eric Crisman (Bonita)	Iris Munguia (Colsiba)
Stephen Coats (US Leap)	Miriam Neale (Tesco)
Iain Farquhar (Banana Link)	Lina Renel (UGPBAN)
Anne Heurtaux (Ministry of Agriculture, France)	Bernardo Roehrs (Agroamerica)
Mariano Jiménez (Corbana)	Alistair Smith (Euroban)
Jon Tugwell (Fyffes)	Roberto Vega (Dole)
George Jaksch (Chiquita)	Raúl Villacrés (AEBE)
Pascal Liu (FAO)	

#### **Working Groups coordinators**

##### **WG01**

Sylvain Cuperlier (Dole)  
*Iain Farquhar (Banana Link)*  
*George Jaksch (Chiquita)*  
Jeroen Kroezen (Solidaridad)

##### **WG02**

*Alistair Smith (Euroban)*  
Edgar Monge (Tesco)  
Patricia Bresciani (Dole)  
Helge Fischer (Banafair)

##### **WG03**

Martin Cooke (ETI)  
Anna Cooper (Banana Link)

#### **Other participants and observers**

Diego Balarezo (Solidaridad-Perú)  
Marcela Cruz (Cafolis)  
Charles De Wulf (APEB consultant)  
Alan González (FAO Ecuador)  
Eliana Guarnoni (Altroconsumo, CI Italia)  
Magne Svartbekk (Bama)  
Remi Tessier (Compagnie Frutiére)

#### **Apologies for absence**

Gilbert Bermudez (Colsiba)  
Katie Knaggs (IPL)  
Renwick Rose (Winfa)  
Will Stephens (Tesco)  
Inge Van den Bergh (Bioversity/Promusa)  
Sébastien Zanoletti (UGPBAN)

**Annex 3**  
**List of documents**

**Fourth meeting of the Steering Committee (SC)**  
*with members of the Organizing Committee and WG coordinators*

**Monday 27 February 2012, 15.00-18.00**

**Salón La Hacienda, Hotel Ramada, Guayaquil, Ecuador**

<b>Document title</b>	<b>Document code</b>
1. List of documents	WBF-SC4-12-01e
2. Agenda	WBF-SC4-12-02e
3. Draft programme of WBF conference	WBF-SC4-12-03e
4. Final financial report for 2011	WBF-SC4-12-04e
5. Budget scenarios for 2012	WBF-SC4-12-05e
6. Draft WBF charter with comments	WBF-SC4-12-06e

**All the documents delivered during the meeting are available upon request. Please send an email to the Secretariat of the World Banana Forum [[wbf@fao.org](mailto:wbf@fao.org)] indicating the code of the documents that you would like to receive.**