Committee on Commodity Problems

 JOINT MEETING OF THE THIRTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL GROUP ON HARD FIBRES; THE
THIRTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL GROUP ON JUTE, KENAF AND ALLIED FIBRES; AND THE EIGHTEENTH SESSION OF THE SUB-GROUP OF SISAL AND HENEQUEN PRODUCING COUNTRIES

Negombo, Sri Lanka, 5 - 7 November 2013

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# AGENDA NOTES

1. The Joint Meeting of the Intergovernmental Group (IGG) on Hard Fibres (Thirty-seventh session) and of the IGG on Jute, Kenaf and Allied Fibres (Thirty-ninth session) will be held in Negombo, Sri Lanka, from 5 to 7 November 2013, preceded by the Eighteenth Session of the Sub-Group of Sisal and Henequen Producing Countries. A Consultation on Natural Fibres Policies, which will be open to the private sector and all stakeholders, will take place on 4 November 2013.
2. The ongoing FAO reform and implementation of the Immediate Plan of Action have underlined the need to improve the relevance of the Organization’s statutory bodies, including the IGGs, taking account of the needs and expectations of member countries. This is to be achieved through the full involvement of members in the planning and implementation of the Groups’ programmes. The IGGs on Hard Fibres and on Jute, Kenaf and Allied Fibres have already made a start in this direction by agreeing at the Joint Meeting in Pasay City, Philippines (20-22 October 2009) on a Plan of Action and on the designation of Champions from amongst members charged with guiding work to achieve various priority elements of the Plan.[[1]](#footnote-1)
3. While this Provisional Agenda comprises the traditional aspects of the work of the Groups, new elements have been introduced to take account of the priorities expressed by member countries in the Plan of Action agreed to at the previous Joint Meeting which took place in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil (5 - 7 November 2011). The consideration of such elements by the Joint Meeting will be guided by the designated Champions. Opportunities will be offered for interested member countries to consult prior to and during the Joint Meeting to define measures to jointly carry forward priority activities. Members and observers of the Groups are urged to take an active part in all aspects of planning and implementation so as to shape meaningful and useful initiatives for fibre producing and consuming countries.

# ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

## ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON AND VICE-CHAIRPERSONS

1. The Meeting will elect a Chairperson and two Vice-Chairpersons. The Joint Meeting of the Thirty-sixth session of the IGG on Hard Fibres and the Thirty-eighth session of the IGG on Jute, Kenaf and Allied Fibres in 2011 elected Mr Wilson Andrade as Chairperson, Mr Markku Vilkki (Finland) as First Vice‑Chairperson and Ms Cecelia Gloria J. Soriano (Philippines) as Second Vice-Chairperson.

## REPORTING PROCEDURES

1. During the course of the Meeting, the Secretariat proposes to draft a record of the major conclusions, based on the Chairperson’s concluding comments for each item discussed, for adoption by the Meeting at its final working session.

# ECONOMIC AND POLICY ISSUES

## CURRENT MARKET SITUATION AND MEDIUM TERM OUTLOOK

1. The last Joint Meeting agreed that the regular assessment of the current market situation and medium term projections were necessary in identifying potential growth markets and expanding demand of these fibres. Hence, the Secretariat will provide background documentation to assist the membership in assessing the current market situation and medium term outlook, including a statistical compendium on production, imports, exports, consumption and prices (CCP:HF/JU 13/CRS 1).

## PRICE TRENDS FOR SISAL, ABACA, JUTE AND KENAF

1. The Meeting will examine recent supply and demand developments in the sisal, abaca, jute and kenaf markets and their impact on prices of these fibres.

## REPORT ON SUBSIDIARY ACTIVITIES

### i) Report of the Eighteenth Session of the Sub-Group of Sisal andHenequen Producing Countries

1. The Sub-Group is scheduled to meet on 5 November 2013. Its report will be attached as Annex I to the Report of the Joint Meeting of the IGG on Hard Fibres and the IGG on Jute, Kenaf and Allied Fibres, which will be adopted during the afternoon of 7 November 2013.

### ii) Report of the Consultation on Natural Fibres Policies

1. For the benefit for those who did not participate, a verbal report on the Consultation will be presented to the Joint Meeting.

## POLICIES AFFECTING TRADE IN FIBRE AND PRODUCTS

1. The last Joint Meeting recommended that the Secretariat actively engage in monitoring policy developments in trade and market developments, including their impact on countries and regions. To this end, the Secretariat's questionnaire was modified to include a comprehensive listing of tariff and non-tariff barriers, as well as of subsidies and domestic supports, affecting fibres and their products so as to have a better understanding of the policy environment influencing international trade. The Secretariat will provide background document CCP:HF/JU 13/2, updating developments since the last Joint Meeting, to assist delegates in discussions.

## THE SISAL VALUE CHAIN

1. The last Joint Meeting emphasized that value chain analysis was a valuable tool that could provide better understanding of the characteristics of the value chain to assist in improving the economic viability of jute and hard fibres and enhancing the participation of smallholders. However, the Secretariat was advised that value chain analyses had to be done on each fibre rather than collectively. As a first step, the Secretariat has prepared document CCP:HF/JU 13/3 which provides value chain mapping of the sisal industry in Tanzania, the issues affecting the chain as well as programmes designed to integrate smallholders in the value chain and the impact of these integration programmes.

# INTERGOVERNMENTAL ACTION

## PRIORITIES

1. At its last session, the Joint Meeting agreed that under the guidance of the Champions, the membership would develop a road map for international standardization, certification and accreditation (SCA) for each fibre . Document CCP:HF/JU 13/CRS 2 has been prepared by the Champions for discussion by the Joint Meeting.
2. The Joint Meeting will be briefed by the Champions on developments in analysis, as well as in research and development – two of the priority areas that were integrated into the Intergovernmental Action Plan agreed by the Groups at their last Joint Meeting.
3. In indicating the continued need for promotion, the last Joint Meeting agreed to the creation of a Working Group on Promotion. The Champion will provide an update on possible action to increase demand in potential markets and promote sales of traditional and value-added fibres world-wide.

## COMMODITY DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

1. The Intergovernmental Group on Hard Fibres is a designated International Commodity Body (ICB) under the rules of the Common Fund for Commodities (CFC), and in this role it has promoted projects on sisal, abaca and coir. The Meeting will consider the status of ongoing or planned project activities for hard fibres funded by the CFC.
2. The Secretariat will report on the Germany-funded project “Unlocking commercial fibre potential in developing countries (Haiti and LDC East Africa): strengthening global value chains for rural development, poverty alleviation and the environment” (GCP/INT/115/GER), which was launched in 2011 and ended in June 2012. Two major outcomes of the project were the logo, which was modified and will be presented to the Joint Meeting, as well as a publication on "Unlocking the commercial potential of natural fibres", which is available on the Future Fibres website at: <http://www.fao.org/economic/futurefibres/resources2/jp/>.

# WORK PROGRAMME AND OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

## INTERGOVERNMENTAL ACTION PLAN

### a) Report of the Working Groups of the Intergovernmental Groups on Hard Fibres and on Jute, Kenaf and Allied Fibres

1. Each Working Group of the IGGs will be invited to update the Joint Meeting on progress made on implementing the Joint Meeting's Intergovernmental Action Plan.

## B. EVALUATION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMODITY GROUPS

1. At its last session, the Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP) concurred that the future of each IGG should be an agenda item to canvas the views of the membership on the relevance and functioning of the Intergovernmental Commodity Groups (IGGs). Hence, the IGGs are invited to discuss and agree on their relevance, future roles and functions which should be reported to the CCP.

# OTHER MATTERS

## ANY OTHER BUSINESS

## DATE AND PLACE OF THE NEXT SESSION OF THE JOINT MEETING OF THE IGG ON HARD FIBRES AND THE IGG ON JUTE, KENAF AND ALLIED FIBRES

1. Agreed Intergovernmental Action Plan, CCP:HF-JU 09/CRS 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)