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# COMMITTEE ON COMMODITY PROBLEMS

<b>INTERGOVERNMENTAL GROUP ON TEA</b>
<b>Twentieth Session</b>
<b>Colombo, Sri Lanka, 30 January - 1 February 2012</b>
<b>REPORT OF THE INTERSESSIONAL MEETING OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL GROUP ON TEA Mombasa, Kenya, 18 - 19 July 2011</b>

## INTRODUCTION

At its 19th Session in Delhi, India, in May 2010, the Intergovernmental Group (IGG) on Tea agreed to hold its next intersessional meeting in 2011 to consider progress achieved by its Working Groups (WGs) in examining the issues they were assigned. With the kind offer of the Government of Kenya, through its Tea Board, the meeting was held in Mombasa from 18-19 July 2011. The list of participants can be found in Annex 1 of this report.

The meeting provided the opportunity to develop the elements of the programme of the WGs, based on the directives given by the IGG, which were as follows:

### For the Working Group on Tea Trade and Quality

Develop a plan of action for the Working Group on Tea Trade and Quality for the application of ISO 3720 (black tea and proposed standards for green tea) as a minimum quality standard for global tea trade.

### For the Working Group on Maximum residue levels

Agree on a plan of action towards meeting the strategy on achieving harmonization of Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs). Identify the priorities of compounds for MRL fixation, including for new data generation; position of country MRLs; position in regard to replacement of old and high polarity compounds by new and safer chemicals and urgency to fix new MRLs for them.

### For the Working Group on the Tea Brew

Agree on a plan of action for addressing the concerns raised by the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR) for the establishment of MRLs based on “tea brew”. The report of CCPR was circulated for information.

To take advantage of the meeting of the WGs, the Secretariat also prepared several discussion points on the following for guidance and comments from delegates, which would also be taken up to the IGG at its Twentieth Session in January 2012:

- 1) Agree on the specification and modus operandi of the coordination and function of the FAO World Tea Model.
- 2) Consider the request for forming a Working Groups on Organic Tea.
- 3) Discuss the initiatives on economic analysis of the impact of climate change and agree on a plan of action on the way forward.
- 4) Assess the progress made of the interactive electronic forum and provide feedback.

The following Plans of Action were agreed to at the meeting and will be presented to the IGG at its next session, which is scheduled for 31 January to 1 February 2012 in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

**WORKING GROUP ON TEA TRADE AND QUALITY (ISO 3720)****ACTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS:**

- 1) Work towards an agreement among all tea producing countries to ensure ISO 3720 minimum quality standards for Black tea compliance as a statutory provision (Transform if required Voluntary Standards/Codes into national legislation).
- 2) Need to prevail upon tea producing countries not regularly participating at FAO IGG on Tea sessions to come on board and agree to work towards ISO 3720 minimum standards for Black tea as a mandatory parameter for compliance.
- 3) Requirement to harmonize the points of application (ex-factory, pre-auction, pre-shipment, pre-import and retail) and testing methods adopted for analysis pertaining to compliance with ISO 3720.
- 4) Prevail upon tea consuming countries to recognize ISO 3720 standard as a minimum quality parameter at the point of import (endorse an internationally accepted food standard).
- 5) Recognize the specific difficulties encountered by certain producer countries to implement the ISO 3720 minimum quality standard for Black Tea and assist them to overcome the problems.
- 6) Adopt the proposal on standards for Green tea (ISO 11287).

**WORKING GROUP ON TEA MAXIMUM RESIDUE LEVELS IN TEA****ACTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS:**

The goal of this WG is ultimately to achieve global harmonization of MRLs in tea. The following action plan was agreed:

- 1) The group considered the progress reports, as reported by the co-chairs, and agreed on the following activities to achieve the objective and goals of this WG:
  - to continue to generate pesticide residue data for fixation of MRLs in tea and make submissions to CODEX;
  - to identify compounds for future field trials;
  - to continue field trials on priority compounds; and
  - to develop IPM for tea in the member countries.
- 2) To work towards achieving each of the four goals outlined in the identification of issues and goals (Annex 2) of the discussion paper as follows:
  - to develop and implement IPM strategies;
  - to continue making MRL submissions in consuming/producing countries and JMPR;
  - to develop a programme for replacement of old/banned compounds, discouraging sudden withdrawal of approval of chemicals without alternatives being in place;
  - to develop priority list of pesticides based on sustainability, affordability and safety;
  - to give advance notice of changes in authorization affecting chemicals in use; and
  - to develop an effective communication plan with stakeholders.
- 3) The members of the WG agreed to identify one nodal person from each member country to cooperate on the above activities.

**WORKING GROUP ON RESIDUE IN TEA BREW****ACTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS:**

The goal of this WG is to convince CODEX to accept an alternative methodology of measuring MRLs in tea based on the residue content (transfer value) in tea brew.

- 1) Delegates recommended that the WG coordinated by Prof. Zangmao Chen (China), with the assistance of Dr T.C. Chaudhuri (India) and Mr J. Simrany (USA), continue to work to achieve the objectives of this WG and implement the following action plan:

- to generate pesticide residue data for fixation of MRLs in tea based on tea brew for more compounds, after fixing standard methodologies and conducting ring test, for submission to CODEX as per decisions taken at the CCPR meeting, Beijing, April 2011;
- tea producing countries to take action to fix MRL based on tea brew in their own country regulations to strengthen the cause at the international level;
- to address the processing studies to refine the dietary risk assessment of tea which arose from the CCPR meeting in April 2011, in Beijing during discussion of the policy document; and
- to revise and resubmit the policy document to JMPR, through the IGG Secretariat, addressing the issues/concerns raised by the CCPR at its meeting.

#### **PLAN OF ACTION: GENERATING A MEDIUM-TERM OUTLOOK FOR THE WORLD TEA ECONOMY**

- 1) Identify focal points to liaise with the Secretariat on all issues related to statistics and projections.
- 2) The tasks of the focal points should cover the following:
  - view projection results for tea supply and demand balance for their specific country and make adjustments, if needed. Focal points are also invited to consult with other national authorities for the collection of macro data;
  - Secretariat to send data requirements to focal points in order to update parameters used in the world FAO tea model; and
  - Send adjustments to projection numbers 4 months before the IGG.
- 3) The focal points will need to be part of the country delegations attending the IGG.
- 4) The Secretariat will be organizing a hands-on workshop during the next IGG in Sri Lanka with focal points to discuss the steps leading up to the generation of a medium-term outlook.

#### **FORMATION OF A WORKING GROUP ON ORGANIC TEA**

The agenda item was proposed by China which was not present in the meeting, but delegations present supported the formation of this WG on Organic Tea, in principle. The scope and terms of references (TORs) for the proposed WG were discussed and delegates generally agreed that the TORs should include generation of market information for organic tea, technology requirement and certification for smallholders, medium and estate tea production. The following plan of action was agreed:

- 1) To collate information on various aspects of organic tea sourced from different countries, and present a discussion paper for the 20th Session of the IGG on Tea, scheduled for January 2012 in Sri Lanka.
- 2) India will coordinate and seek contributions from member countries and prepare the document for discussion at the 20th Session of the IGG on Tea.

#### **WORKING GROUP ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

The delegates recommended the formation of a WG on Climate Change, with the following:

#### **ACTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS:**

**Chair:** India

**Co –Chairs:** Kenya, Sri Lanka

#### **Members:**

- |             |               |
|-------------|---------------|
| 1) China    | 5) Malawi     |
| 2) Japan    | 6) Bangladesh |
| 3) Tanzania | 7) Rwanda     |
| 4) Malawi   |               |

**Terms of Reference**

- 1) To collect and collate all available research data on climate change in member states.
- 2) To determine the impact of climate change on the tea economy.
- 3) To identify/suggest mitigation and adaptation strategies.
- 4) To develop appropriate long term technologies for mitigation/adaptation.

**INTERACTIVE ELECTRONIC FORUM ON TEA**

The establishment of the electronic forum was well received by the delegates. They recommended that “private rooms” be set up for each Working Group. The delegates were informed of the operational guidelines of the forum and were requested to adhere to these in order to ensure its smooth functioning.

## ANNEX I

## LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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