

Standards and Trade Development Facility

STDF NEWSLETTER

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STDF team on a rainy day in Geneva

Back row, from left:
Michael Roberts, Secretary,
Melvin Spreij, Panos
Antonakakis

Front row, from left:
Kenza Le Mentec, Simón
Padilla, Marlynn Hopper

*"Welcome to this second edition of our newsletter!
We look forward to informing you of recent and future
activities carried out by the STDF and our partner
organizations in the area of trade, food safety, animal
and plant health."*

Michael Roberts, STDF Secretary

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The STDF is a multi-donor trust fund supported by: Australia, Canada, Denmark, the European Commission, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, the United States and the World Bank.



The STDF is a joint initiative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), the World Bank, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Trade Organisation (WTO). Other participating organizations include the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), the International Trade Centre (ITC), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).



STDF ACTIVITIES

STDF Aid for Trade events to mobilize resources for SPS-related capacity building

Within the Aid for Trade Initiative, the STDF held regional workshops on the mobilization of capacity building resources in the area of food safety, animal and plant health in Cambodia (21-22 May), Uganda (28-29 May) and Guatemala (11-12 June). The workshops were part of a process that started a year ago to synthesize the results of existing SPS capacity evaluations, develop an inventory of technical assistance and identify “gaps” still not being addressed.

The STDF research was based on existing SPS capacity evaluation studies (11 in Central America, 10 in East Africa and 8 in Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam). The project did not undertake new research (except for updates to previous capacity evaluations in Central America). Synthesizing the findings of these studies, discussing the conclusions with national stakeholders and tabulating the results provided an important opportunity for government agencies and development partners to agree on outstanding priorities.



His Excellency Dr Cham Prasidh, Minister of Commerce, Kingdom of Cambodia and Michael Roberts, Secretary, STDF at the workshop in Phnom Penh

"I particularly welcome this STDF initiative because it offers an excellent opportunity to take maximum advantage of the assistance which is on offer. It also forces us to look back at our needs in a systematic way, evaluate our accomplishments and to think to the future about where our priorities lie."

H.E. Dr. Cham Prasidh, Minister of Commerce, Kingdom of Cambodia.

Actionable priorities

The background research and conclusions in each region specify a series of priority actions to strengthen performance in the SPS area. As such, they are a valuable basis on which to mobilize future SPS-related assistance from development partners.

A full report on the workshops will be made to the SPS Committee and STDF Working Group in the week of 23 June. For further information, go to: www.standardsfacility.org/regional_consultations.htm



Participants at the Kampala workshop



Participants at the Guatemala City workshop

Follow-up

Mobilizing resources to address the priority needs identified will be key to the success of this work. The STDF Secretariat is committed to work with bilateral donors, regional and multilateral organizations to catalyse additional resources, match the supply and demand for SPS-related technical cooperation in each region, and monitor follow-up activities. One key mechanism for that purpose is the use of the STDF project preparation grants facility.

Workshop on SPS-related capacity evaluation tools

Some 200 delegates from the WTO's SPS Committee, including 15 developing country officials funded by the STDF, attended an STDF workshop on SPS-related capacity evaluation tools on 31 March 2008.

The workshop considered the various tools that exist or are being developed, and some of the associated challenges. There was recognition that a large amount of data is being generated but that compilation and exchange of the results has been limited. Similarly,

little attention has focused on monitoring the impact of capacity evaluations in generating results. Scope for collaboration in the future development and use of these tools was discussed, and broad agreement emerged on the need to strive towards harmonization of approaches and improved sharing of information generated by capacity evaluations.

For more information, see: www.wto.org/english/news_e/news08_e/sps_31march08_e.htm



Participants at the STDF workshop on capacity evaluation tools

ACTIVITIES OF STDF PARTNER AGENCIES

76th Annual Session of the International Committee of OIE

Some 600 representatives from OIE's 172 members, international, regional and national organizations, attended the OIE's International Committee meeting on 25-30 May 2008. A resolution was adopted stressing the strong link between the fight against hunger and the fight against animal diseases in particular developing countries, and consequently between food security and animal health.

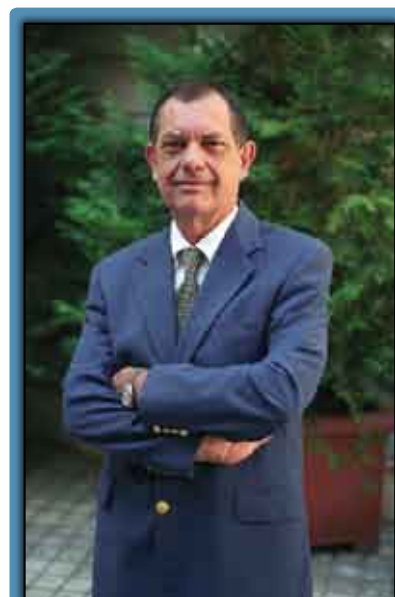
The meeting approved an updated list of countries and zones that had applied for an official recognition of their sanitary status for bovine spongiform encephalopathy, foot and mouth disease, contagious bovine pleuropneumonia and rinderpest.

The Committee updated and adopted new international standards aimed at providing better safeguards for the sanitary safety of world trade, as well as guidelines to better implement surveillance of animal diseases and zoonoses worldwide.

The worldwide zoosanitary situation, covering around 100 terrestrial and aquatic animal diseases, was also reviewed and delegates heard that dramatic improvements had occurred in the notification of disease outbreaks from Members since the launch of the new online reporting system in 2006.

Two technical items were considered during the Committee:

- Participation of small farmers in animal health programmes. There was agreement on the need for training to enable small farmers to act as key partners of veterinary services for animal disease surveillance and early detection.
- Implications of private standards on international trade in animals and animal products. Discussions emphasized that the WTO SPS Agreement recognizes the OIE as the official standard-setting body for animal health.



Dr Bernard Vallat
OIE Director General

For more information, see the Director General's annual report and the OIE website (www.oie.int)



OIE laboratory twinning initiative

The OIE laboratory twinning initiative supports formal collaboration between OIE reference laboratories / collaborating centres and candidate institutions in regions where there is a need to enhance capacity and expertise, with the objective of helping candidates to improve their performance and, in some cases, to eventually participate in the OIE network of reference laboratories / collaborating centres.

OIE is receiving an increasing number of proposals and is actively identifying geographical areas, diseases and topics where capacity and expertise can be strengthened through twinning.

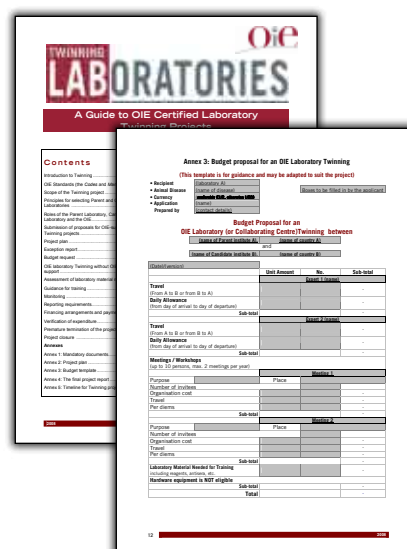
As of June 2008, 31 proposals or expressions of interest for laboratory twinning projects had been received. Eight of these have been approved (for 6 diseases in 7 candidate countries and involving 7 OIE

Reference Laboratories) and one is underway. A further 15 proposals are being assessed.

Twinning involves creating and supporting a link that facilitates the exchange of knowledge, ideas and experience between two parties.

OIE Members are urged to identify regional needs for twinning. Care must be taken to have regional consensus and to avoid duplicating facilities in close proximity of each other.

Diseases other than avian influenza must also be considered, and additional OIE reference laboratories and collaborating centres are needed for Rift Valley fever, Camelid diseases, rabies and haemorrhagic diseases.



More information about this initiative, including a manual and template for proposals, is available at: www.oie.int/download/LABREF/A_Guide.pdf

Climate change: Implications for food safety

This recently published FAO paper identifies potential impacts of anticipated changes in climate on food safety and their control at all stages of the food chain.

The purpose is to raise awareness of the issue and to facilitate international cooperation in better understanding the changing food safety situation and in developing and implementing strategies to address them.

Available at: www.fao.org/ag/agn/agns/index_en.asp



Climate change: The impact on the epidemiology and control of animal diseases

This special issue of the OIE Scientific and Technical Review, to be published in August 2008, will provide an overview of the latest scientific knowledge on the impact of climate change on animal diseases and the control options available. It will include a number of case studies on different animal diseases of major importance.

For more information, see: www.oie.int

Third Session of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM)

The governing body of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), the CPM, met at FAO Headquarters in Rome from 7 to 11 April 2008. The meeting adopted two new standards: ISPM 30: *Establishment of areas of low pest prevalence for fruit flies (Tephritidae)* and ISPM 31: *Methodologies for sampling of consignments*. It also adopted an IPPC Recommendation: *Replacement or reduction of the use of methyl bromide as a phytosanitary measure*. Amendments were made to ISPM No. 5 (Glossary of phytosanitary terms).

See the IPPC portal for more information:
www.ippc.int

Strategy for phytosanitary capacity building activities

The CPM agreed to develop a national capacity building programme, coordinated by the IPPC Secretariat, and established an Open-ended Working Group to develop:

- a concept paper on national phytosanitary capacity for consideration by the CPM Informal Working Group on Strategic Planning and Technical Assistance (SPTA) in 2008 for presentation to the CPM-4;
- a draft strategy for national phytosanitary capacity building for consideration by the SPTA for presentation to CPM; and
- a proposed operational plan for implementing the strategy over the first six years of its operation.



"The need for a technical assistance strategy for national phytosanitary capacity building has been recognized for some time, and reinforced by the independent evaluation of the IPPC (2007). Article XX of the IPPC and the CPM business plan (2007-2011) both promote technical assistance but a clear strategy to guide CPM capacity building activities does not exist."

Mr Richard Ivess, IPPC Coordinator

UNOPS to manage EIF Trust Fund

The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) was recently selected as Trust Fund Manager (TFM) for the Enhanced Integrated Framework. Headquartered in Copenhagen, Denmark, TFM activities will likely be handled out of UNOPS's Geneva office with support from its regional offices in Africa and Asia. For more information, see:
www.unops.org

The selection of the EIF Executive Director is also in its final stages.

Outcomes of the WTO SPS Committee meeting, 2-3 April 2008

Procedures on regionalization, approved on an *ad referendum* basis by the SPS Committee in April 2008, were formally approved on 16 May, no objections having been received within the deadline for comments. These procedures are important for both importing and exporting countries to enhance the predictability of the process of recognition of pest and disease free areas.

The SPS Committee meeting also adopted revised recommendations on how governments provide information on new or proposed measures they take on food safety and animal and plant health. The new recommendations will take effect later in 2008.

For more information, see:
www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/sps_e/sps_e.htm

Regionalization is recognition that an exporting region (all or part of a country or a border-straddling zone) is disease-free or pest-free (or has a lower incidence). When importing countries recognize different situations in different regions, their restrictions on products from areas with disease do not apply to whole countries.



FORTHCOMING STDF ACTIVITIES

Compartmentalization

Compartmentalization is based on recognition of an enterprise or group of enterprises as “free from a specific disease or diseases”. Through a recently approved STDF grant, the OIE is developing a project to support countries to implement compartmentalization for avian influenza and Newcastle disease in commercial poultry. Activities are taking place in Brazil and Thailand in the preparatory phase. For more information, see: www.oie.int

Private standards information session

Practical aspects of compliance with private SPS-related standards is the focus of an STDF information session to be held at WTO Headquarters on 26 June 2008. Open to SPS Committee delegates, the session will explore practical issues related to compliance including:

- How to make developing countries’ voices heard in the private standards arena ?
- How to promote further equivalence between schemes ?
- How to reduce the costs of certification for developing country suppliers?
- How to promote dialogue and information exchange on compliance between private standards holders, suppliers, certifiers and other interested parties?



Bernard Vallat, Director General, OIE and Harsha Singh, Deputy Director General, WTO sign the STDF compartmentalization grant agreement

Looking on, from left: Michael Roberts, STDF Secretary, Anabel Gonzalez, Director, Agriculture Division, WTO and Sarah Kahn, Chef de Service, International Trade Department, OIE

New PPGs

Two new project preparation grants (PPGs) were approved in April by the STDF Working Group:

- Improving the competitiveness of Burkina Faso suppliers in national, regional and international markets (STDF 221); and
- Strengthening the official food control programme to support an emerging food business sector in the Republic of Moldova (STDF 223).

“Good practices” in SPS-related technical assistance

How to apply the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in the highly technical area of SPS capacity building is the theme of ongoing STDF field research in selected countries in East Africa, the Greater Mekong Delta Sub-Region and Central America. The research, being carried out in cooperation with the OECD, is further to a survey (GEN/SPS/816) of WTO Members and observers to identify “good practices”.

The aim is to identify elements of good practice in project design, implementation, outputs and the achievement of higher order objectives that could be replicated in future activities.

The findings will be discussed at a workshop on 6 October 2008.

Contact: marlynnne.hopper@wto.org

STDF initiative on fruit fly

In April, the STDF Working Group approved an initiative to bring together efforts to control the spread of fruit fly in West Africa. Several donors and international organizations have projects in this area but no overarching attempt has yet been made to control the problem at a regional level or to coordinate ongoing and planned activities.

STDF is working with a range of organizations to identify ongoing research and projects. Efforts at coordination will culminate in a workshop, involving all relevant stakeholders, later in 2008. On the basis of this meeting, a plan of action will be established.

For information, contact:
panos.antonakakis@wto.org

FORTHCOMING SPS EVENTS & OTHER NEWS

June

23-25 June, Geneva: WTO SPS Committee

26 June, Geneva: STDF Information Session on Private Standards

26 June, Geneva: IPC workshop on US and EU food import requirements for green beans and shrimp

30 June-5 July, Geneva: Codex Alimentarius Commission



Codex in session

US and EU Food Import Requirements – The case of green beans and shrimp

This workshop will present a forthcoming study by the International Food & Agricultural Trade Policy Council (IPC), *Helping Developing Country Producers Meet US and EU Food Import Requirements through Transatlantic Cooperation: The Case of Green Beans and Shrimp*. The presentation will be followed by comments from SPS experts from Africa, Europe and the United States.

26 June, 13:00-16:00

AJF Auditorium, Graduate Institute of International Studies, 132 Rue de Lausanne, Geneva

To register, contact:
Stpierre@agritrade.org

For information, see:
www.agritrade.org

31st Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission

The Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC), jointly created in 1963 by FAO and the WHO, works to protect the health of consumers and ensure fair practices in the food trade. The Commission has 176 member countries and one member organization.

At its 31st session in Geneva in July 2008, the Commission will discuss adoption of over 30 standards, guidelines and codes of practice that cover a wide range of topics. One of the texts to be adopted this year – the *Code of Hygienic Practice for Powdered Formulae for Infants and Young Children* – aims at protecting some of the most vulnerable of consumers.

Other items on this year's agenda include new or revised standards, codes or guidelines on:

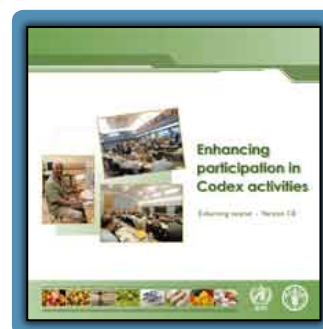
- Mycotoxin contamination in cereals and other foods;
- Use of flavourings;
- Quantitative ingredient declarations;
- Gluten-free foods;
- Processing and handling of quick frozen foods;
- Commodities including raw and live bivalve molluscs, bitter cassava, tomatoes and natural mineral waters.

For more information, see the Codex Alimentarius web site (www.codexalimentarius.net/).

New FAO/WHO e-learning course on global food standards

This e-learning course aims to provide in-depth knowledge of Codex Alimentarius procedures and the international food standards setting process. As well as basic information on Codex, it includes helpful tips on forming national delegations and making effective interventions at Codex meetings. The concepts of food safety risk analysis and the relevance of WTO Agreements are also covered.

Available on CD-ROM and at:
www.fao.org/ag/agn/agns/capacity_en.asp



FORTHCOMING SPS EVENTS & OTHER NEWS

July

27-31 July, Vancouver, Canada:
29th World Veterinary
Congress

September

1-5 Sep., Vienna, Austria:
Technical Panel on Fruit Flies

8-12 Sep., Rome, Italy: Open-
ended Working Group for
Development of IPPC Capacity
Building Strategy

10-11 Sep. 2008, Oxford, UK:
Birdflu2008: Avian Influenza
and Human Health

24-25 Sep. 2008, Beijing,
China: China International
Food Safety and Quality
Conference & Expo

29 Sep. – 17 Oct. Geneva:
WTO Specialized SPS Course

October

6 Oct., Geneva: STDF
Workshop on "good practice"
in SPS-related technical
cooperation

7-10 Oct., Warsaw, Poland:
FAO/WHO Coordinating
Committee for Europe for
the Codex Alimentarius
Commission

8-9 Oct. Geneva: WTO SPS
Committee

27-30 Oct. 2008, Tonga: FAO/
WHO Coordinating Committee
for North America and South
West Pacific for the Codex
Alimentarius Commission

29 Oct.-3 Nov. 2008:
International Phytosanitary
Portal Capacity Building
Workshop (Anglophone
countries)

November

10-14 Nov. (tentative),
Mexico City, Mexico: FAO/
WHO Coordinating Committee
for Latin America and the
Caribbean for the Codex
Alimentarius Commission

17-21 Nov. (tentative),
Denpasar, Indonesia: FAO/
WHO Coordinating Committee
for Asia for the Codex
Alimentarius Commission

26-27 Nov., Cairo, Egypt:
International Conference on
Traceability

December

1-5 Dec., International
Phytosanitary Portal
Capacity Building Workshop
(Francophone countries)

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EC DG Trade's SPS News

[www.ec.europa.eu/trade/
issues/sectoral/agri_fish/
sps/newsletter.htm](http://www.ec.europa.eu/trade/issues/sectoral/agri_fish/sps/newsletter.htm)

FAO's Food Safety and
Quality Update eNewsletter

[www.fao.org/ag/agn/agns/
news_en.asp](http://www.fao.org/ag/agn/agns/news_en.asp)

FAO-BiotechNews

www.fao.org/biotech/

IPC's Agritrade Forum
Newsletter

[www.agritrade.org/
Publications/#newsletter](http://www.agritrade.org/Publications/#newsletter)

ITC Competitiveness
Newsletter

www.intracen.org/e-trade/

OIE bulletin

[www.oie.int/eng/publicat/
en_bulletins.htm](http://www.oie.int/eng/publicat/en_bulletins.htm)

PiP Programme newsletter

[www.coleacp.org/
FO%5FInternet/
Pip/Default.asp?ai_
IdSection=9&ai_
Language=1&as_Status=](http://www.coleacp.org/FO%5FInternet/Pip/Default.asp?ai_IdSection=9&ai_Language=1&as_Status=)

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Hasta pronto, Simón

After a year with the
STDF team, Simón is
leaving us to join the
logistics unit at WTO.
Our sincere thanks to
Simón for all his hard
work and our best
wishes for the future.