

Sustainable Rice Platform

Extraordinary Executive Board Meeting: COVID-19 Preparedness

9 April 2020 15:00-16:00 SE Asia Standard Time

Venue: Microsoft Teams

Participants

Board Members

Matthias Bickel	GIZ (Chair)	Paul Nicholson	Olam International (Vice Chair)
Christ Vansteenkiste	Rikolto (Treasurer)	Adrian Sym	AWS (Secretary)
Stephan Moreels	Control Union	Diederik Pretorius	Ebro Foods
Colin Taylor	IFC	Jai Shal Oberoi	LT Foods
Keith Jones	Bayer, Corteva, Syngenta	Sanjay Sethi	Phoenix Group
Simon Mahood	WCS Cambodia		

Secretariat

Wyn Ellis	SRP Secretariat	Lea Las Piñas	SRP Secretariat
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Regrets

Mark Radka	UNEP (Observer)	Emma Peacock	Mars Food
Remy Bitoun	IRRI (Permanent)		

Summary of Resolutions and Actions

Resolutions:

1. The Executive Board unanimously approved the agenda as circulated without objection or amendment.
2. It was resolved unanimously to include budget for laptops and phones for Secretariat staff in 2020 budget revision.
3. The Executive Board resolved unanimously that SRP should act in line with other commodity schemes and grant extensions to validity of existing audit certificates.
4. It was resolved unanimously that SRP membership should not be a mandatory requirement for use of SRP on-pack logo, subject to caveats.
5. It was resolved unanimously that VBs should be required to be SRP members.

Actions:

1. WE to prepare revised Action Plan to next Executive Board meeting.
2. WE/CV to develop cashflow projection for Q2-Q4, including scenarios to reprioritize / ringfence essential activities.
3. Include hosting options for Plenary and General Assembly 2020 on agenda of next scheduled meeting 3-20 of the Executive Board.
4. WE to include budget for laptops and phones for Q3 as part of cashflow projection.
5. WE to draft proposal for emergency extension of audit certificates submission to next regular Board meeting 3-20.
6. WE to amend SRP Bylaws, Assurance Scheme and Communication and Claims Guideline to remove mandatory membership requirement for use of SRP on-pack logo and propose to next Executive Board meeting 3-20.

Draft Minutes of Meeting

1. Chairperson's remarks

- MB welcomed participants and declared the meeting quorate as an Extraordinary meeting, focusing primarily on COVID-19 implications and responses. WE read the Anti-Trust Statement ahead of the commencement of business.

2. Approval of agenda

- **The Executive Board unanimously approved the agenda as circulated without objection or amendment.**

3. COVID-19 Preparedness and Business Continuity

- A Business Continuity Plan (Annex 1) was presented to the last SRP Executive Board meeting 2-20.
- Building on this, the 2020 Action Plan (Annex 2) uses colour coding to indicate activities where impacts are anticipated. WE presented these areas of activity that may be impacted either in terms of the Secretariat's own ability to deliver, or in terms of delayed responses or changing priorities of members and external partners. These are as follows:
 - **Administration** (Operationalization of SRP e.V., invoicing, UNEP recruitment of Outreach Coordinator)
 - **Assurance/Retailers** (Retailer engagement strategy, accreditation of Verification Bodies)
 - **Awareness** (Consumer awareness through youth engagement)
 - **Events** (Plenary Meeting and General Assembly 2020, SRP Conference 2021)
 - **National Chapters**
 - **Training**
 - **ICT** (Project data management system)
- Detailed impact and response scenarios for these areas are in preparation, with a view to digitizing activities wherever appropriate and feasible.

Action 1: WE to prepare revised Action Plan to next Executive Board meeting, indicating potential impacts and responses.

- Board members raised the question of heightened financial risk in view of COVID-19 (i.e. potential non-payment of annual dues). WE noted that (a) the Q1 end balance is \$110,170 (mostly earmarked for salaries and IRRI SSFA), representing 94% collection for 2019 dues; and (b) the financial projections presented by the Treasurer to last Board meeting assumed a low collection rate of 50%, providing a certain contingency in this regard in the event of reduced collection resulting from COVID-19.

Action 2: WE/CV to develop cashflow projection for Q2-Q4, including scenarios to reprioritize / ringfence essential activities.

- **Annual Plenary / General Assembly 2020 (Annex 3):** Three options were presented, including a full face-to-face conference for all members; face-to-face meeting of the Board with members attending virtually, and a fully virtual event. WE/AS also noted the possibility of conducting several webinar sessions to cover the subject matter of the Plenary. WE also noted that the Articles of Association permit the statutory meeting (Annual General Assembly) to be held via remote conferencing.

- Aside from the cost implications (which favour a purely virtual event), a decision may be premature until the trajectory of COVID-19 becomes clearer. It was agreed therefore to consult the membership on preferred options as soon as the situation clarifies.

Action 3: Include hosting options for Plenary and General Assembly 2020 on agenda of next scheduled meeting 3-20 of the Executive Board.

- WE also reported additional administrative measures as follows:
 - **Backup staffing:** In the event of sickness of core Secretariat staff, Sandra Khananosit is designated as emergency backup contact, who will hold a list of all passwords/admin access to the website, database and subscription services.
 - **Office equipment:** currently Secretariat staff use their own laptops and phones; it was agreed that it is preferable for security and continuity reasons to require use of corporate equipment, properly inventoried as SRP assets. **It was resolved to include budget for laptops and phones for Secretariat staff in 2020 budget revision.**

Action 4: WE to include budget for laptops and phones for Q3 as part of cashflow projection.

- Member engagement: The Board also noted that COVID-19 may also raises risk of losing member engagement.

4. SRP Assurance Scheme

- Emergency provision for extension of audit certificates (see Annex 4 for sample): **The Executive Board resolved unanimously that SRP should act in line with other commodity schemes and grant extensions to validity of existing audit certificates.**

Action 5: WE to draft proposal for emergency extension of audit certificates submission to next regular Board meeting (3-20).

- Requirement for SRP membership of retailers: **It was resolved unanimously that SRP membership should not be a mandatory requirement for use of SRP on-pack logo**, subject to the following conditions:
 - SRP member logo and on-pack logo are sufficiently differentiated (action by Secretariat)
 - Rice in the pack must have been produced by a SRP member
 - Retailer must be able to produce Level 3 verification certificate.

Action 6: WE to amend SRP Bylaws, Assurance Scheme and Communication and Claims Guideline to remove mandatory membership requirement for use of SRP on-pack logo and propose to next Executive Board meeting 3-20.

- Requirement for SRP membership of VBs: **it was resolved unanimously that VBs should be required to be SRP members.**

5. Any other business

- None

Meeting adjourned at 16:27

Annexes

Annex 1 : SRP COVID-19 Business Continuity Plan (from Secretariat Report to Board, 1 April 2020)

Annex 2 : SRP Action Plan 2020 (reviewed re potential COVID-19 impacts)

Annex 3 : Hosting options for Annual Plenary / General Assembly 2020

Annex 4 : NEPCON Policy on Auditing (sample)