



The World Banana Forum (WBF)

Working together for sustainable banana production and trade

Report of the Twenty-Fifth Meeting of the WBF Steering Committee (SC25)

Attended by the Steering Committee (SC) members and Working Group (WG) coordinators

21 - 22 November 2023

Online meeting

Tuesday, 21 November 2023

1. Welcome by the WBF Secretariat

Mr Pascal Liu (FAO) opened the meeting by providing a brief welcome on behalf of the WBF Secretariat.

2. Opening remarks by the Steering Committee/Advisory Board Co-Chairperson

Mr Andrew Biles (Chiquita) shed light on the status of the global banana industry, which grapples with numerous challenges related to climate change, economics, and plant diseases. He delved into the repercussions of climate change on banana production and supply worldwide, touching on issues such as inflation and political turmoil, and citing various conflicts around the world. He stated that the recent presidential elections in some key banana-exporting countries also took centre stage, with their consequences impacting the banana industry in different ways. Diseases, particularly the containment efforts for Fusarium Wilt TR4 in the Philippines, Colombia, and Peru, were discussed as ongoing concerns. Despite the array of challenges, the banana industry remains a significant contributor to worldwide food security. This underscores the vital role of the WBF in addressing these issues. Mr Biles concluded by outlining the agenda, objectives and expected outcomes of Day 1 of the SC25.


3. Overview of recent activities of the WBF's Working Groups and outcomes of the Thematic Sessions

Working Group 01 on Sustainable Production Systems and Environmental Impact (WG01)

Mr Matheus Lima (FAO) provided an update on the progress and achievements of the Carbon and Water Footprint initiative in 2023, including the in-person trainings for producers and technicians and the expansion of the outreach of the tool to 11 countries. The WBF Secretariat actively maintained the tool's reliability by updating emission and water scarcity factors, ensuring its adaptability and robustness in various contexts. He mentioned the training sessions conducted in Ecuador and added that more information will be presented in Day 2.

Regarding updates on the activities of the *Subgroup on Climate Change Adaptation, Mitigation and Biodiversity Conservation*, a project proposal on sustainable soil management was developed in collaboration with FAO's Global Soil Partnership (GSP) and GIZ, with the objective to support banana producers in adapting to climate change and enhancing biodiversity in their production systems. Additionally, Mr Lima shared that the Secretariat, supported by subgroup members, conducted desk research to identify best practices on sustainable management of plastics. This collaborative effort aims to scale up best practices to reduce the risk of plastic contamination across the banana value chain. Furthermore, he highlighted that the TR4 Global Network (TR4GN), remains active and organizes technical events, such as the webinar on *Maximum Residue Levels: Regulations, Impacts and Opportunities for Sustainable Banana Production and Trade* held in July. Other activities included WG01-related sessions held in October during Fruit Attraction and a TR4GN webinar titled *Global Partnerships in the Fight against Fusarium wilt TR4*.

Mr Edgar Monge (Tesco) shared an incident where a plantation with TR4 had requested audits without disclosure of the outbreak. He emphasized the importance of suppliers reporting the presence of TR4 to enable virtual audits and reduce the risk of spreading the disease. He also proposed issuing recommendations or a guide for suppliers about the importance of communicating outbreaks. Mr Victor Prada (FAO) pointed out that plantations may omit the TR4 status due to their fear of the quarantine consequences. He also highlighted the strong impact



of the disease on smallholders and proposed creating a document outlining how to address suspicious and confirmed cases of the disease. This initiative could fall under the framework of the WBF's Smallholders Commission, the TR4GN and TR4 Task Force. Mr Prada also pondered the feasibility of conducting independent activities in different countries, considering the varying challenges faced by producers regarding sampling and diagnosis. Mr Lima reiterated the importance of raising awareness about TR4 and reporting suspicions to authorities. Mr Liu proposed that the TR4GN and its Task Force look into Mr Monge's proposal and explore the potential and feasibility of creating a document or guide. He suggested using the existing material and resources available on the TR4GN website as a starting point for this endeavour.

Decisions:

- Explore the feasibility of creating a document/guide on recommendations for suppliers with suspicion of TR4, based on existing TR4GN materials and resources.
- Explore the feasibility of developing tailored materials for producing countries regarding sampling and diagnosis.

Working Group 02 on Distribution of Value (WG02)

Mr Mattia Serrano (FAO) provided an update on WG02 activities completed over the reporting period. These activities aligned with specific discussion areas outlined after the SC23, covering topics such as costs of production, the European Union's Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD), the EU's Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), living wages, purchasing practices, and shared responsibility. One activity in particular was the organization of WBF Meetings on Global Value Chain Sustainability held at Fruit Attraction in October 2023. This included the organization of the fourth multi-stakeholder coordination meeting to discuss living wages and incomes in the banana industry under the WBF Multi-stakeholder Commission on Living Wages and Income. Several decisions were taken, including the request for the WBF to continue facilitating discussions on these topics. Additionally, an agreement was reached on the need to increase the involvement of retailers and worker representatives in discussions about production costs and living wages.

Furthermore, two new subgroups under the WBF Multi-stakeholder Commission on Living Wages and Incomes were established, namely on markets and living wage methodologies. Workstreams were delineated, focusing on aspects such as the IDH salary matrix, the Anker Living Wage Methodology, the implementation of methodologies, price setting mechanisms, data collection, and others. Lastly, Mr Serrano noted that the Secretariat has started to organize a dedicated side event on living wages to complement the WBF4C, titled the *Global Conference on Living Wages and Incomes*.

Working Group 03 on Labour Rights and Other Workplace Issues (WG03)

Ms Camila Reinhardt Hurtado (FAO) shared an overview of the activities conducted under the WG03 during the reporting period, which primarily centred on the topic of health and safety, namely gender-sensitive workplace health and safety risk assessment trainings in Colombia and Ghana. Additionally, she added that the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Republic of Cameroon has officially confirmed their interest in initiating a multi-stakeholder consultation process in the country to review the health and safety manual developed as part of the Banana Occupational Health and Safety Initiative (BOHESI). This process is expected to take place in the first half of 2024.

Ms Reinhardt Hurtado then provided brief updates on activities carried out by the Task Force on Gender Equity (GE-TF), encompassing: follow-up activities on the recommendations that came out of the Anker Research Institute's Gender Pay Gap (GPG) study in the Colombian banana industry, including a GE-TF webinar held in November; further revisions of the BOHESI [Guidelines for the healthy and safe of employment of women workers in the Latin American banana industry](#); and updates on the gender-stocking questionnaire. Additionally, the GE-TF coordinators met to discuss and develop the draft agenda for the forthcoming *Third International Meeting on Gender Equity*, which will precede the WBF4C.

Updates were also shared on the decent work consultations in Ecuador held in May 2023 and ongoing efforts to secure fundraising opportunities to implement the recommendations that came out of them.

Regional and National Commissions of the WBF

Mr Prada highlighted the recent activities involving the various WBF commissions, including the Regional and National Commissions (i.e. Colombia and Ecuador), the WBF Multi-stakeholder Commission on Living Wages and Incomes, as well as the upcoming meeting of the Smallholders Commission. He further informed on the discussions held at Fruit Attraction to establish a new Commission on Certifications, for which no objections were expressed.

Decisions:

- Proceed with the creation of a WBF Commission on Certification.

4. Sessions of the WBF at Fruit Attraction 2023

Mr Prada delivered a comprehensive overview of the discussions held during Fruit Attraction in October 2023, underscoring the success of the WBF events due to significant audience engagement, cost-effectiveness and the positive relationship between the Secretariat and the Spanish government.

WBF multi-stakeholder meeting on living wages and living income in the banana industry

Mr Prada informed that the first session organized by the WBF was a private multi-stakeholder meeting on living wages and living income in the banana industry. The discussion centred on living wages and the use of publicly available price-setting mechanisms, like the Fairtrade Minimum Price Methodology which defines concrete minimum prices to be paid to producers, particularly when dealing with Fairtrade-certified goods. Mr Prada stressed the complexity of determining living wages, considering country-specific benchmarks and understanding prevailing wages based on contract duration. The first part of the meeting focused on setting the scene and collecting inputs from various constituent groups. A presentation from ALDI-SOUTH explained how the company used the Fairtrade Minimum Price differential as a guide for their banana purchases.

Ms Amanda Penn (IDH) then brought up an earlier suggestion regarding the need to involve trade unions and discussions around collective bargaining in the dialogue on living wages, something that was initially proposed by COLSIBA. Ms Penn also mentioned an ongoing discussion between retailers and Banana Link to enhance communication between retailers and trade unions, aiming for increased worker representation in the debate. She suggested exploring the correlation between these ongoing discussions and those held under the WBF Multi-stakeholder Commission on Living Wages and Income. Mr Prada explained that the suggested subgroup creation did not occur due to an effort to streamline meetings, which led to the creation of two subgroups under the topic of living wages and incomes at this stage. He then suggested that another dedicated subgroup on this topic could be created, or that the proposal could be included under the WG03 framework.

Mr José Hidalgo (AEBE) mentioned that several alternatives to the Anker Methodology exist, and thus stressed the importance of continuing efforts to reach a consensus on the most effective tool. He advocated for the engagement of retailers and other stakeholders in this process, to ensure a collective agreement on the tools to be used rather than having an obligation for producer's to follow a specific tool.


Session on the EU Directive on Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence

Mr Prada then added that the second session focused on the EU's Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD) and included a presentation from the EU Commission's Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers (DG-JUST) and the European Financial Reporting Advisory Group (EFRAG). The discussion revolved around the possibilities, advantages, and challenges associated with effectively implementing the approved measures under the CSDDD. The European Parliament commenced approval procedures for the final draft of the Directive on 1 June. With the Spanish Government currently holding the EU presidency until December, Mr Prada considered that the directive is likely to pass before December.

Mr Prada summarized the session's discussion, highlighting DG-JUST's insights on the current trajectory and potential approval of the directive. Information was shared on the tripartite process involving the EU Commission, Council, and Parliament, as well as on the importance of the directive for European companies and their non-EU suppliers. The directive will impact all companies conducting business within the EU, depending on their size and annual turnover. The EFRAG representative also provided an overview of the upcoming [Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive \(CSRD\)](#), including the main reporting standards on "Environment, Social, and Governance".

Session on shared responsibility and the perspectives of different constituencies

Mr Prada summarized the discussions of the third session held, which revolved around different perspectives on shared responsibility, its components, and the different approaches for implementing it. It tackled the issue of inflation, which ripples across the entire value chain, impacting retailers and consequently shaping consumer preferences for lower prices. Recent observations highlighted increased negotiations over banana box prices due to rising inflation. There was a clear recognition of the need to support producers operating at the upstream end of the value chain, especially considering the increasing costs they face. The importance of sectorial multi-



stakeholder collaboration was underscored. Government participation was also highlighted as crucial for ensuring shared responsibility through tripartite dialogue and long-term agreements.

Subsequently, Mr Prada asked for the participants' feedback on the WBF's potential participation in Fruit Logistica in February 2024. A number of them recommended that the Secretariat concentrate on the meetings of the working groups, subgroups and commissions, and the preparation of the WBF4C instead. As a result, Mr Prada confirmed that the WBF will not attend the upcoming Fruit Logistica event.

Decision:

- The WBF will not take part in the upcoming Fruit Logistica event.

Session on certifications and audits costs

In this session, Mr Prada shared that participants explored the possibility of reaching a multi-stakeholder agreement to reduce audit and certification costs. Representatives from Rainforest Alliance, GlobalG.A.P, and Fairtrade were present, along with representatives from producers' associations. AEBE's analysis of different certification schemes revealed a substantial 60% overlap in their requirements. After additional discussions, an agreement was reached to form a Certification Commission within the WBF framework. This commission could facilitate multi-stakeholder discussions and identify joint solutions to reduce redundancy and costs of auditing processes. Mr Prada then asked for inputs on establishing the commission and its suggested name, receiving no objections from members.

Mr Monge agreed with the commission's purpose and mentioned that Tesco is also addressing this topic. He pointed out that, from a retailer's perspective, certain certification schemes prioritize specific areas more than others, resulting in the need for different certifications. He proposed involving stakeholders in audits for improved quality and suggested inviting non-WBF members like SMETA and other relevant groups to join the Commission. The Secretariat agreed with the suggestion made and will arrange a meeting with SMETA accordingly. Mr Jean-Francois Billot (Afruibana) added that African producers would be eager to participate in the Commission.

Ms Penn emphasized that each certification has unique strengths and weaknesses that distinguish them in the market. If the commission aims to harmonize requirements or establish mutual recognition, it raises questions about the role of these certifying agencies and their active engagement in this process. She highlighted that any recommendations from this commission need to be both acceptable and feasible for certifiers to implement. Mr Prada acknowledged the current support from Rainforest Alliance, Fairtrade, and GlobalG.A.P and highlighted the imminent shift where several voluntary certification requirements may become mandatory due to upcoming EU regulations. This change might require future alignment among certifications.


Mr Liu shared insights on the Certification Working Group established in 2009 with the aim of developing a certification scheme for bananas. This endeavour posed significant challenges, leading to the dissolution of the group due to a lack of interest from members. He highlighted the complexity of creating a specific commodity certification and the existing coverage of various schemes for bananas. It was proposed to conduct a scoping study to determine the commission's mandate and feasibility, considering resource limitations and the need for members' contributions. While an informal setup is feasible, formalizing the commission under the WBF would demand considerable effort and decision-making. Mr Helge Fischer (Banafair) noted that certain unions within the WBF have had critical views on certifications in the past, especially concerning their limited participation in certification processes. It is therefore important to raise the question of trade union participation in these discussions.

Decisions:

- Proceed with the creation of a Commission on Certification (nomenclature to be confirmed) to address the issues raised in the session. The Commission will be inclusive and open to all WBF members.
- Draft the first agenda for the meeting of the Commission, based on the recommendations made by panellists and participants, to be shared with members for their feedback and suggestions.
- Engage with SMETA and other groups for their participation on the Certification and Audit Commission.

Session on Climate Change: the banana industry as an example to follow

Mr Lima then shared updates on WG01-related sessions held at Fruit Attraction, highlighting the Secretariat's presentation on the CWF tool, discussing its key milestones and the tool's latest achievements. He then provided an overview of the topics presented by the panellists. Agrofair shared their experience using the CWF tool across various countries and supporting their suppliers in measuring carbon and water footprints. CLAC presented the Strategy of Fairtrade on Sustainable Bananas and their Productivity Increase Program (PIP), which demonstrated how agroecological practices can enhance farm productivity and environmental performance. CORBANA also



shared their journey in measuring and reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and water footprints. Lastly, EFRAO outlined the upcoming requirements for companies to establish and adhere to metrics and targets as per the forthcoming [ESRS E1 on Climate Change](#). Participants shared the view that the FAO CWF tool is the most comprehensive tool available, encouraging wider adoption by organizations.

Session on regulation on the use of phytosanitary products and its impact on the fruit aesthetic

Mr Lima informed that this session discussed the close relationship between the use of phytosanitary products and the visual aspect of fruits, underlining the need for greater consumer awareness on this particular matter. Mr Lima mentioned discussions held during the SC24 on the disparities between the EU's Green Deal and the Farm-to-Fork Strategy, which aim to reduce the use of agrochemicals, and the rigid marketing standards related to fruit aesthetics.

The session counted on the participation of the EU's Directorate General on Health and Food Safety (DG-SANTE) and the EU's Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG-AGRI). They provided an overview on Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs) of pesticides, its setting process and the new European reform centred on consumer education and food loss prevention. COLEAD, CORBANA and DOLE representatives shared insights on the implications of limited agrochemical availability on banana production and trade.

Mr Monge stressed the need to raise awareness about imperfect fruits. Even though some retailers have taken steps in this direction, he suggested that the WBF could develop recommendations to help change consumer's perception on fruit aesthetics and reduce food waste. He recommended contacting more retailers to collect diverse best practices and sharing them among WBF members. Mr Hidalgo stressed how costs affect producers and advocated for consumer-targeted campaigns to reshape perceptions surrounding bananas. Mr Prada mentioned the example of televised ads in Spain and suggested the possibility to conduct a similar initiative at the European level to educate consumers.

Mr Bjoern Willms (GIZ) recommended engaging retailers due to their influential communication channels. He noted that GIZ has created communications focused on this theme and intends to share them with the WBF. Mr Prada added that the European Commission has a key role to play, especially regarding MRLs. Mr Monge suggested engaging with EU institutions to secure their support and endorsement for this initiative.

Decisions:

- Explore how the WBF could issue a formal recommendation on the importance of changing consumer's perception of fruit aesthetics and reducing food waste in the agricultural sector.
- Discuss the possibility to involve EU institutions in consumer-awareness initiatives and activities on fruit aesthetics.


5. Activities on occupational health and safety and decent work in the banana industry

Updates on the Banana Occupational Health and Safety Initiative (BOHESI) in Ecuador

Ms Reinhardt Hurtado provided updates on the ongoing activities concerning occupational health and safety (OHS), focusing on the BOHESI initiative which was piloted in Ecuador in 2014 and has since expanded to other countries. She briefly summarized the series of BOHESI activities conducted in Ecuador since 2014 and stressed the importance of the multi-stakeholder consultations held in May to give continuity to the initiative in the country. The process aimed to discuss the potential revision of the BOHESI manual as well as other needs and priorities for enhancing workplace health and safety. It resulted in several recommendations, including: ensuring collaboration among industry stakeholders on activities related to OHS; proceeding with the updating and revision of the manual; supporting smallholder farmers who may not have direct access to the manual and related trainings (to be addressed under the Smallholders Commission); expanding outreach and means to effectively engage workers and smallholders in activities related to health and safety in the workplace; and, delivering targeted OHS trainings to technical experts as well as health and safety inspectors. She then informed participants that follow up to the recommendations made will be given in a forthcoming meeting of the WBF National Commission for Ecuador.

Capacity-building sessions on gender-sensitive workplace health and safety risk assessments in the Colombian banana industry

Ms Reinhardt Hurtado then reminded participants of the BOHESI replication proposal for the Colombian banana industry, which was presented during the SC23 and included four main activities: adapting the manual to the Colombian context; conducting gender-sensitive OHS training sessions; supporting the improvement and/or formation of national tripartite commissions for health and safety and workplace health and safety committees; and strengthening tripartite dialogue processes on OHS at the national level. Although interest in replicating



BOHESI in Colombia had been expressed by various members at the time, a full commitment was unfortunately not secured. However, one WBF member, Lidl, did express interest in supporting pilot activities on OHS in Colombia, which were carried out from June to November of this year.

The main activities entailed the adaptation of the latest version of the BOHESI manual to the Colombia context – with support from Mr Peter Hurst, international health and safety expert – as well as three five-day trainings on gender-sensitive workplace health and safety risk assessment for selected producers in Urabá and Santa Marta, held in October 2023. The objectives included: training managers and workers on gender-sensitive health and safety risk assessment, in line with national legislation and international standards on OHS; addressing health and safety issues specific to female workers; and, carrying out awareness raising with both employers and workers on their legal rights and responsibilities regarding workplace health and safety.

The pilot activities further aimed to engage a total of 60 participants across 15 farms, striving for at least a 33% female participation rate and integrating a strong gender perspective. Pre- and post-training assessments were used to evaluate knowledge gaps and improvements. Images were then shared from the training sessions held, with active participation noted from both employer and worker representatives.

Mr Fausto Rovalino, OHS expert and facilitator of the trainings in Colombia, then shared additional details regarding the trainings, which spanned both classroom sessions and practical fieldwork, allowing participants to observe good practices and identify areas for improvement on workplace health and safety. Throughout the training, participants analysed various work activities and potential hazards. He further highlighted the importance of active pauses during the day designed to mitigate risks and ensure worker safety. Mr Rovalino then discussed the practical and theoretical aspects of the manual, emphasizing its dynamic nature and successful use by participants throughout the sessions. He emphasized the need to strengthen and continue these trainings in Colombia.

Participants inquired about the involvement of trade unions, specifically SINTRAINAGRO, in the trainings. The Secretariat responded that SINTRAINAGRO was informed of the activities, and several representatives also participated in the trainings. As this was only a pilot phase, the objective would be to ensure a more formal and active engagement of trade unions and worker representatives in potential forthcoming BOHESI activities.

Ms Reinhardt Hurtado then added that a more detailed presentation on the results of the trainings will be provided by the donor in a forthcoming meeting of the WBF. She further mentioned that potential next steps following this pilot phase could include the broader engagement of industry actors at national level and the expansion of activities towards a full BOHESI replication. This could consequently entail: a national multi-stakeholder consultation for the revision and approval of the manual; the extension of trainings to other banana producers in the country; strengthening of tripartite commissions and workplace health and safety committees; and, strengthening of tripartite dialogue processes towards regulatory and institutional changes, such as the ratification of ILO Convention 184 on Safety and Health in Agriculture and Convention 190 on Violence and Harassment, neither of which has been ratified by Colombia to-date. Mr Hurst added that this work is ever more important, given that the status of OHS has been raised due to the ILO's decision to acknowledge health and safety as a fundamental principle and right at work.


Ms Reinhardt Hurtado concluded the session by stating that follow up to these activities will be given in a forthcoming meeting of the WBF National Commission for Colombia.

Decisions:

- Organize a presentation of the results of the training activities in a forthcoming meeting of the WG03, which will be provided by the donor of the pilot project.
- Continue the discussions on the potential multi-stakeholder revision of the draft manual on gender-sensitive health and safety risk assessment produced for the Colombian banana industry and BOHESI replication under the forthcoming meetings of the WBF National Commission for Colombia.

Updates on the occupational health and safety trainings carried out in Ghana

Ms Lilian Karikari (Golden Exotics Ltd. (GEL)) provided insights into a four-day training organized by the Banana Producers Association Ghana (BPA) – with support from the WBF Secretariat – in June 2023, which also focused on workplace health and safety risk assessment. The training gathered participants from various roles within two banana producing companies, GEL and Volta River Estates Limited, including senior and middle-level management, supervisors, worker and local union representatives, and company health services representatives. It ultimately aimed to actively involve and train employers and workers on how to conduct workplace health and safety risk assessments, as well as how to implement appropriate risk controls to minimize injuries and illnesses.



Similar to the activities in Colombia, the training entailed classroom sessions, which were followed by practical applications of the methodology through site visits to conventional and organic plantations. Participants were engaged in identifying hazards, assessing individual risk levels, evaluating existing risk control measures, proposing additional risk control measures, and assigning responsibilities for their implementation. Following the field visits, participants reported on their findings through risk assessment forms. Significant hazards identified were highlighted and existing and proposed control measures outlined. The training also entailed sessions on how to ensure a gender perspective in risk assessments as well as the institutionalization of workplace health and safety risk assessments on banana plantations.

The training generated several recommendations, including: continuous training and capacity building for health and safety committees; integrating OHS risk assessment training into the companies' core training programs; sustaining management commitment; conducting bi-annual assessments of stakeholders' OHS knowledge; regular monitoring and evaluation of OHS practices; extending training to third-party stakeholders; fostering collaboration with international partners to share best practices; encouraging trade union participation; and, continuing advocacy efforts for the approval of the OHS bill at the national level. Mr Hurst stressed the need to continue these efforts and delve deeper into the ongoing initiatives.

Decision:

- Support, where possible, the implementation of the recommendations resulting from workplace health and safety trainings and activities in Ghana.

Updates on the multi-stakeholder consultations on decent work in Ecuador

Ms Reinhardt Hurtado provided a brief update on the decent work multi-stakeholder consultations held in Ecuador in May 2023, particularly with regards to resource mobilization efforts conducted following the sessions to support the recommendations made by participants. She shared that the WBF Secretariat submitted a USD 5 million proposal to the US government for a funding opportunity focused on improving adherence to international labour standards in the banana and cut-flower sectors in Ecuador, which would address, *inter alia*, issues related to child labour prevention and health and safety. The proposal was unfortunately not accepted, but the Secretariat remains committed to seeking alternative avenues for funding to sustain ongoing activities in Ecuador. Discussions on these topics will be continued in the upcoming meetings of the National Commission for Ecuador.

Decision:

- Organize a meeting of the WBF National Commission for Ecuador to follow up on the decent work multi-stakeholder consultation process started in May 2023 as well as other relevant activities for the country such as living wages, climate change and TR4.

7. Activities on gender in the banana industry

Webinar of the GE-TF: Closing the Gender Pay Gap by Increasing Women's Participation in Banana Production and Leadership Roles

Ms Reinhardt Hurtado informed on the GE-TF webinar held in November 2023, titled *Closing the Gender Pay Gap by Increasing Women's Participation in Banana Production and Leadership Roles*, which focused on supporting a concrete recommendation that came out of the Anker Research Institute's gender pay gap (GPG) study in Colombia, namely: to train women on field activities; carry out activities to transform gender stereotypes and norms; and, develop women's abilities to participate in workers' organizations and committees. Panellists shared valuable insights into concrete initiatives and efforts being implemented in this regard, and further shared recommendations on how industry actors can promote women's involvement in a wide spectrum of tasks within the sector, as well as in supervisory and managerial positions.

Ms Reinhart Hurtado then informed that, to further support efforts aimed at improving women's participation in the banana industry, GE-TF members had proposed the development of a good practices booklet or fact sheet. This publication would aim to compile and disseminate successful case studies highlighting the objectives, accomplishments, challenges faced, lessons learned, and recommendations concerning women's participation in the sector. Participants were encouraged to share their good practices for the publication, which is expected to be ready prior to the Third International Meeting on Gender Equity, scheduled for 11 March 2024.

Decision:

- Proceed with the development of a good practices booklet to highlight successful initiatives supporting efforts to increase women's participation in the banana industry. This will be dependent on the information received from WBF members and industry actors.

Gender Stocktaking Questionnaire

Ms Nozomi Ide (FAO) provided an update on the gender stocktaking questionnaire, informing participants that it has been finalized and is ready for online dissemination. Once the survey is disseminated by CORBANA to companies in Costa Rica, it will be circulated among WBF members. Members are also encouraged to extend the survey link to their Costa Rican suppliers to potentially boost response rates. The aim is to gather survey responses by 15 December, dependent on CORBANA's timeline for launching the survey. In addition, following discussions with COLSIBA and COSIBA Costa Rica after the SC24 in June, it was confirmed that follow-up online interviews will be held with worker representatives to validate the survey results in early 2024. The subsequent steps will therefore involve data analysis, further interviews, and the production of the final report, which is expected to be completed by summer 2024.

Decision:

- Invite WBF members to participate in the Gender stocktaking survey once it has been launched in Costa Rica.

BOHESI Gender Guidelines

Ms Reinhardt Hurtado shared an update on the BOHESI gender guidelines, noting that the WBF Secretariat is finalizing the revision of the document, which will address the concerns raised by members during the SC23. Following the SC23, a consultation was held with relevant industry actors to obtain their feedback for the new revision of this document. A dedicated session of the WG03 will be organized to discuss and seek WBF approval before publication. Efforts are also being undertaken to translate the guidelines into English.

Decision:

- Proceed with the organization of a WG03 session to present and approve the updated version of the BOHESI gender guidelines.

8. Open discussion

A funding discussion for the maintenance and utilization of the CWF tool was rescheduled for Day 2.

9. Conclusions remarks - Day 1

Mr Prada summarized the day's presentations and discussions, expressing gratitude to the participants for their contributions and highlighting once again the WBF4C and its side events.

Wednesday, 22 November 2023

10. Welcome by WBF Secretariat

Mr Liu welcomed all participants to the second day of the SC25 and highlighted two significant milestones next month, namely: the 14th anniversary of the WBF founding conference in December 2009 and Mr Prada's upcoming 10-year anniversary working at the WBF Secretariat. He then encouraged all participants to attend the WBF Fourth Global Conference (WBF4C) which will take place at FAO Headquarters in Rome, Italy on 12 and 13 March 2024, as well as its two side-events: the *Third International Meeting on Gender Equity in the Banana Industry* on 11 March and the *Global Conference on Living Wages/Income in the Banana Industry* on 14 March.


11. Opening remarks by the Steering Committee/Advisory Board Co-Chairperson

Ms Christelle Lasme (Companie Fruitière) provided the opening remarks and presented the objectives, expected outcomes and agenda for the second day of the SC25.

12. Session on Fusarium Wilt TR4

Activities on Fusarium Wilt Tropical Race 4 (TR4)

Mr Lima provided an update on the activities conducted by the TR4 Global Network (TR4GN). On 12 October 2023, a webinar titled "*Global Partnerships in the Fight Against TR4*" was held with the aim of disseminating information about collaborative initiatives and projects undertaken by different alliances working on Fusarium TR4. The panel featured representatives from several coalitions working on TR4 and the main message was the



need to continue strengthening collaboration in order to effectively prevent and contain the disease. During the Working Group 01 (WG01) Thematic Session, Mr Maged Elkahky (NSP) offered insights into the [work conducted by FAO in African countries affected by TR4](#), especially in the Union of Comoros that recently reported cases of TR4. Mr Lima noted that the TR4GN continues to grow, and that 60 new publications and resources have been added to the resource page over the reporting period.

Mr Jaime Cardenas (FAO SLM) then provided an update on FAO-led initiatives related to Fusarium TR4 in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) and showed a video highlighting FAO's support to countries in the implementation of preparedness, prevention, detection, response and recovery action plans. He then presented information on workshops and training sessions organized in the region this year, which reached over 1 500 beneficiaries. Moreover, several Technical Cooperation Programmes (TCP) are currently being implemented, with collaborations spanning across various entities, including the National Phytosanitary Protection Organizations, the International Regional Organization for Animal and Plant Health (OIRSA), the Andean Community (CAN), the WBF, the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), SE-CAC, CIAT-Biodiversity, and the Colombian Agricultural Research Corporation (AGROSAVIA).

He stated that FAO closely collaborates with producers' associations such as AUGURA, ASBAMA and CORBANA through South-South Cooperation mechanisms. Some of the activities carried out this year include: 1) capacity building sessions and the distribution of biodiversity kits in Ecuador, in collaboration with ICA, the National Service of Agrarian Health (SENASA – Peru) and the National Institute of Integral Agricultural Health (INSAI – Venezuela); 2) trainings on diagnostic, early warning systems, surveillance at entry points and field control with drones in several countries; and, 3) support in conducting risk assessments and defining mitigation strategies in coordination with all relevant local actors. Mr Cardenas indicated that these initiatives and their outcomes are regularly communicated to the public through posters, social media, videos, press releases, and publications.

He mentioned that a recent webinar, titled '[Present and Future of Actions Against Fusarium Wilt of Bananas](#)', led to the identification of three main priorities for the short- and medium-term, namely: 1) advancements in biological control, with a focus on suppressive soils; 2) the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for the detection and surveillance of TR4; and, 3) advancements in genetic improvement. These priorities align and build upon the outcomes from a previous regional workshop that had identified strategies to manage TR4 in LAC.

In conclusion, Mr Cardenas announced the launch of a Community of Practice – led by FAO's Regional Office for LAC countries, in collaboration with OIRSA, AGROSAVIA, and CIAT-Biodiversity – whose goal is to support collective efforts in mitigating the impact of TR4.


13. Session on Climate Change

Project on Carbon and Water Footprint in the Banana Industry (CWF)

Mr Lima provided an overview of the progress and milestones achieved in 2023 under the CWF initiative. In the last year, the WBF Secretariat provided in-person trainings to 128 producers and technicians and enabled credentials to 146 new users. In terms of outreach, the tool currently has 521 users covering 11 countries, with Cote D'Ivoire being the latest addition. The Secretariat has also actively engaged in updating the emission and water scarcity factors. This commitment ensures that the tool remains updated and reliable, as well as adaptable to various countries and contexts, while maintaining a strong robustness. The growing number of users serves as strong evidence of the tool's acceptance across the industry, as well as across different farm sizes and production systems.

In-person training sessions were held in Ecuador from 20 – 26 October 2023, in Machala, El Oro, Guayaquil, and Guayas. These in-depth trainings covered a wide range of topics, from theoretical insights about climate change and its linkages with banana production, to practical steps for conducting carbon and water footprint assessments. Additional aspects covered in these sessions included methodologies on carbon inventory and water impacts, data requirements at farm and company levels, results interpretation and the definition of mitigation strategies. The trainings lasted two days each and involved 44 participants in total. In Machala, most participants were from small producers' organizations, whereas in Guayaquil, most attendees represented large exporters, showcasing the tool's versatility across different contexts and company sizes.

During the training sessions, valuable insights were shared from large producing companies that dedicate considerable resources to addressing environmental sustainability challenges in their operations. Perspectives from exporting companies facing increasing pressure to meet consumer demands while having to comply with new European regulations were also shared. Several producers commended the tool as the best available in the market, noting the possibility to attach supporting documents like invoices to different registries for third-party auditing traceability.



The post-training evaluation survey showed excellent feedback. The tool was praised for being clear, practical, user-friendly, and reliable. Some of the recommendations made included: requesting companies to provide real-farm data in advance for more accurate input; tailoring training sessions to participants' varying experience levels; and allocating more time for complex topics.

Furthermore, technical accompaniment was offered to a prominent carbon-neutral certified exporting company. The primary aim of these sessions was to comprehensively assess the company's use of the CWF tool and provide technical guidance. The analysis involved comparing certified data, independently verified through third-party audits, with the tool-generated results. This reinforced ongoing efforts to evaluate the tool's readiness for supporting carbon neutrality claims.

Lastly, the WBF Secretariat received recommendations from various stakeholders on potential ways to improve the CWF tool, including: 1) the establishment of a new user category for auditors, along with one for traders, enabling them to collect results from their suppliers and compute their own footprint; 2) the integration of modules for maritime transport and other downstream operations; 3) the possibility to set reduction targets and monitor GHG emissions over time in line with SBTi commitments; and, 4) the automatic integration of additional sets of emission factors.

Next Steps

Mr Prada indicated that the maintenance of the tool, its translation into different languages, and the upgrading of its functions will involve additional costs, and that FAO has already provided considerable financial support throughout the different phases of the project. Mr Lima also stressed that the updates needed to keep the tool aligned with the evolving methodologies for GHG emissions reporting require investments. Mr Prada then urged the SC to consider ways to keep the tool updated and accessible for smallholders.

He stated that bilateral discussions with WBF members have taken place, and there could be financial contributions to support the updating of the tool. However, a framework needs to be established by the SC and further discussed in the Global Conference. In light of the forthcoming CSDDD, the tool will be very helpful, especially for small-scale producers who are more vulnerable and face greater challenges in reporting GHG emissions. Hence, the WBF/FAO would like to keep the tool free and accessible to them.

In this context, Mr Prada presented two possibilities. The first would involve engaging the community of users of the CWF tool and having them join the WBF. This could provide a win-win situation, where the WBF could redirect voluntary contributions received from members to maintain and develop the tool while expanding the engagement of organizations in the WBF activities. The second would involve a fee related to the use of the CWF tool. He then discussed the current fee table structure and explored the possibility to create new subcategories within the table.

Several participants requested a clear written proposal to be shared with SC members for their review and feedback. They also stressed the need to define the budget required to cover the costs related to the maintenance and updating of the tool. Mr Prada stated that a proposal will be shared before Christmas or early January, with the aim taking a decision before the WBF4C. Mr Liu suggested to address the funding of the tool (maintenance and updating) and the WBF membership fees as two separate processes. Mr Prada then mentioned that the Secretariat will develop a document suggesting different potential scenarios along with their corresponding investments.

Decision:


- Prepare a proposal defining the budget requirements and different scenarios for the maintenance and updating of the CWF tool and share it with SC members.

Activities on Climate Change Mitigation, Adaptation and Biodiversity Conservation

Mr Lima opened the session mentioning the main workstreams of the subgroup, namely sustainable soil management and sustainable management of plastics.

Sustainable Soil Management

Ms Carolina Olivera (FAO/GSP) presented a joint pilot project proposal prepared by FAO's Global Soil Partnership and the WBF Secretariat. The project proposal aims to implement the [Global Soil Doctors Programme](#) (GSDP) to promote climate change adaptation and biodiversity conservation in banana production systems. The main objective is to increase the capacity of banana producers in sustainable soil management through a farmer-to-farmer training system, facilitated by the GSDP and the WBF. This collaboration also includes GIZ, which identified several key measures to address climate change and included them in the [Handbook of Sustainable Agriculture](#).



Ms Olivera then outlined the planned outputs of the pilot project which encompass three key areas: 1) Module Development and Capacity Building; 2) Implementation and Demonstration; and 3) Monitoring and Evaluation. The Global Soil Doctors Approach is a farmer-to-farmer training system designed to promote best practices regarding sustainable soil management. In partnership with a National Promoter and GSP, training programs for trainers are formulated. These trainers subsequently educate soil doctors who will, in turn, train other farmers, leading to the establishment of a wide network. Ms Olivera indicated that the training modules are based on both theoretical materials and practical field exercises. Upon completion of these training modules, farmers will undergo an evaluation to assess their comprehension of sustainable soil management practices, GHG mitigation, soil carbon sequestration, soil biodiversity, etc.

Currently, several resources are available for the implementation of the program, including 25 posters on a broad range of topics (soil salinity, compaction, pH, nutrient availability and others) and 20 field exercises with video-tutorials. GSP also provides a soil educational kit to the participants. Ms Olivera highlighted the program's focus on aiding farmers in visual assessments and measuring soil indicators, which can complement soil laboratory results.

The project consists of three main outputs. Output 1 focuses on developing customized modules for banana-specific challenges, training Soil Doctors, and securing stakeholder engagement. Output 2 aims to establish demonstration sites where farmers can learn-by-doing about the implementation of best practices. Output 3 involves the evaluation of the project's impact on soil health, climate change, and biodiversity through key indicators. This pilot project would be expected to last 18 months and would provide insights for potential future scalability and long-term achievements. Mr Lima noted that the project – which is actively seeking strategic partners – could be adjusted to fit local contexts and needs. He encouraged participants to review the project's Concept Note available in the WBF Background Documents folder.

Decision:

- Continue to contact members of the WBF and strategic partners for the implementation of the pilot project.

Sustainable Management of Plastics

The subgroup is currently developing a booklet outlining best practices for the sustainable management of plastics in the banana industry. The objective is to compile and promote effective plastic management strategies within the sector. While the structure has not yet been decided, the proposed sections include plastic usage, consequences of the absence of effective management, industry good practices, challenges, and references. The Secretariat, in collaboration with subgroup members, has already identified eight good practices encompassing reverse logistics, alternative materials (such as paper or natural fibers), plastic reuse, rejuvenation programs, recycling initiatives, bio-based alternatives (like biodegradable bags), reduced packaging, and plastic credit programs.

The Secretariat will soon disseminate a survey among WBF members to collect additional examples of good practices and data. The goal is to showcase best practices in the booklet and host technical webinars to promote their adoption and replication. Mr Luud Clercx (AgroFair) then shared information regarding a podcast titled '[Can the use of plastic products in agriculture be made sustainable?](#)' by Richard Thompson, the main author of FAO's assessment report on plastic use in agriculture.

Decision:


- Proceed with the development of a good practices booklet to highlight successful initiatives for the sustainable management of plastics in the banana industry.
- Disseminate a survey among WBF members to collect data and examples of good practices for the management of plastics being implemented in the banana industry.

14. Session on Living Wages in the Banana Industry

Mr Prada provided a brief overview of the WBF Multi-stakeholder Living Wage sessions held this year and the establishment of two new subgroups.

Living Wage Subgroup on Markets

Mr Prada presented the structure of the new Subgroup on Markets, stressing the importance of multi-stakeholder collaboration. This subgroup aims to build consensus on several fronts, notably ensuring a fair price for the banana box. The Fairtrade Price Methodology could offer a temporary solution while the subgroup addresses more complex challenges such as prevailing wages, the informal sector, living wage benchmarks, and



methodology improvements. Additionally, it seeks to establish a database on sustainable purchasing practices and facilitate collective bargaining agreements between producers and retailers, emphasizing equality and balanced representation among stakeholders. Mr Prada noted that these details are outlined in the concept note already shared with members.

The subgroup's objectives also include structuring and determining the frequency of meetings, prioritizing the information collected by the subgroup, engaging relevant actors (especially retailers), understanding production costs, discussing procurement practices, and establishing fair pricing for the banana box. Mr Prada noted that the subgroup's inaugural meeting was held on 13 November, with the participation of GIZ, IDH, and other constituent groups. In this meeting, GIZ committed to replicating wage gap studies in Costa Rica and Colombia, similar to that conducted in Ecuador, and sharing their findings as well as information on sustainable purchasing practices with subgroup members. Meanwhile, IDH committed to providing insights into their Responsible Procurement Practices Framework. Retailers pledged to pay a fair price for the banana box, contingent on all banana-producing countries adopting the Fairtrade Minimum Price Methodology for international comparability. Additionally, there were several discussions about the implementation of short-term tools and long-term structural changes to close the wage gaps.

Living Wage Subgroup on Living Wage Methodologies

Mr Serrano provided an overview of the Subgroup on Living Wage Methodologies. The subgroup aims to discuss various aspects related to living wage methodologies and tools (such as the Anker Methodology and IDH's Salary Matrix), including their implementation and impact, potential improvements, data collection processes and grievance mechanisms. Its two main agenda points are (1) enhancing current living wage methodologies and their application in producer countries and (2) formulating fair data collection and feedback mechanisms. The inaugural meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, 6 December, at 16:00 Rome time.

Members requested clarification on the terminology used with regards to a 'consensus' on methodology implementation. It was clarified that the focus lies on the methodology's application in producing countries, which requires a complete understanding of national contexts and local realities. It was agreed that the terminology used would be amended to ensure clarity. Some participants raised concerns about the Anker Methodology, stating that it does not accurately reflect the present realities of banana-producing countries. They also stressed the need to reach a consensus on the use of a particular living wage methodology instead of imposing one on producers, which may cause negative consequences in producing countries. Mr Mariano Jiménez (CORBANA) reinforced this point, explaining that neither CORBANA nor any other Costa Rican producers have agreed to use the methodology. He noted that retailers persist in demanding compliance from producers with living wage standards without fully comprehending the complexities and challenges faced by producers.


Mr Monge concurred and added that the implementation of living wage methodologies and international standards should be gradual, rather than being abruptly imposed. To this end, Tesco has been closely collaborating with its producers, collecting feedback on living wage methodologies and taking into account the variable living cost between countries and regions.

Mr Wilbert Flinterman (Fairtrade International) encouraged producer associations to notify IDH whenever retailers make drastic changes to their sourcing activities, as IDH mediates long-term partnerships between retailers and suppliers. Members were informed that IDH has had extensive conversations with retailers about commitments with suppliers, highlighting the pledge to avoid immediate demands. Ms Penn stressed the need for IDH to be informed whenever retailers deviate from these commitments and set ultimatums to producers.

Mr Prada recognized the complexity of supporting this process, considering that retailers' decisions to change suppliers may involve several justifications that these commitments are not legally binding. It was agreed to include this topic in the agenda of the upcoming meeting of the Subgroup on Living Wage Methodologies.

Mr Alistair Smith (Banana Link) presented a proposal on behalf of several organizations to establish a clear communication channel between retailers and worker representatives on the topic of living wages. This mechanism could fall under the WBF framework but would not be coordinated by the Secretariat. It would allow for further involvement of trade unions in the discussions, highlighting the role of social dialogue and bargaining agreements in closing the wage gap.

Ms Penn added that trade unions had initially contacted retailers, who were receptive to fostering a more open and direct dialogue. As a result, the organizations involved in this proposal had considered bringing this communication channel under the WBF framework, aligning it with the Forum's activities with the aim of complementing existing conversations between retailers, producers, and trade unions and bridging this communication gap. Some participants expressed concerns about expanding the range of topics under the WBF



umbrella on living wages and stressed the need to agree on fair prices for producers using existing communication channels. They encouraged retailers and trade unions to participate in these spaces rather than creating a distinct platform. Additional comments were made regarding existing funds and activities related to the establishment of this communication channel. Some participants suggested to develop this channel outside the framework of the WBF, provided that involved participants support this approach. Concerns were also raised about the considerable number of ongoing meetings within and outside the WBF. It was noted that in certain contexts, worker commissions complement the work of formal trade unions – such as in Costa Rica where workers engage with both trade unions and permanent worker committees. Lastly, participants acknowledged the proposal's complexities but agreed on the need to address the existing communication gap.

Ms Penn thanked all participants for their feedback and added that this would be further discussed with stakeholders involved in the proposal. It was suggested to continue this discussion under the framework of the WBF Multi-Stakeholder Commission on Living Wages and Incomes.

Decisions:

- Discuss retailer commitments to producers within the Subgroup on Living Wage Methodologies.
- Continue discussions on the creation of a retailer/trade union communication mechanism.

15. Next Meetings of the WBF

Next Steering Committee meeting (SC26)

Two options were presented to SC members regarding the date and format of the SC26: a hybrid session on Monday, 11 March following the *Third International Meeting on Gender Equity*, or an online meeting in May. It was agreed that the Secretariat would communicate these options via email and arrange an online vote for SC members.

Decisions:

- Share date and format options for the SC26 with SC members, so that they can provide their preference.

Organizing Committee (OC) Meeting

The first meeting of the WBF4C Organizing Committee was held on 17 November. The discussion covered several aspects, including the WBF4C agenda, the proposed list of sponsored travellers, and fundraising activities for the sponsoring of catering services and participants. Several suggestions on the agenda were made, including: 1) exploring the possibility of having breakout sessions for each panel discussion; 2) defining clear and achievable objectives with expected outcomes for each session and panel discussion, as well as for the overall conference; and, 3) organizing a dedicated session/panel discussion on the topic of trade with the participation of consumers, retailers, and market-oriented stakeholders. It was also recommended to consider inviting a representative from the European Commission to provide insights on the CSDDD and further discuss the feasibility of sponsoring the participation of smallholders in the Conference.

International Meeting on Gender Equity (IMGE) in the Banana industry

Ms Reinhardt Hurtado presented the draft agenda for the IMGE, developed by the WBF Secretariat and coordinators of GE-TF. In line with the proposals made during the SC24, the objective of this meeting will be to illustrate the progress in terms of gender equity within the banana industry from 2017 to the present day, as well as collectively define the trajectory and envisioned future of gender equity in the sector in the next 5 to 10 years. This will involve Futures Thinking Dialogues with panel discussions, followed by open discussions. Three main topics have been outlined: 1) improving women's voice and participation in banana production and leadership roles; 2) ensuring a safe and healthy work environment through the elimination of violence and harassment in the workplace; and, 3) complying with human rights due diligence requirements on gender equality.

Fourth Global Conference of the WBF (WBF4C)

Mr Prada provided an overview of the WBF4C agenda and announced that the conference will be held in the Green Room at FAO headquarters. Sessions will run from 09:00 to 18:00 CET on both days. The Secretariat will distribute the draft agenda to SC members for their review and feedback and will await SC approval before contacting potential panelists. Ms Svetlana Boincean (IUF) asked about the deadlines for SC members to submit inputs on the agenda of the WBF4C and the Global Conference on Living Wages. Mr Prada indicated that the deadline to propose inputs for the agenda of the WBF4C is set for mid-December. On the other hand, the agenda for the Global Conference on Living Wages (side-event) will be discussed during the Living Wage Commission meeting, scheduled for either 11 or 13 December. Once formulated, it will be shared with the SC.

16. Administrative and Financial Matters

Status of contributions of the 2023 Fee Collection Campaign

The status of the 2023 fee collection campaign was presented. Contributions received through signed Voluntary Contribution Agreements (VCAs) amount to USD 210 830 and signed VCAs with pending contributions total USD 24 610. Hence, the total amount currently anticipated from VCAs is USD 235 440. The VCAs pending signature amount to USD 69 930. The targeted total for the 2023 fee campaign is USD 305 370. Mr Liu then presented the expenditure forecast for the WBF multi-donor trust fund in 2023, totalling USD 385 000. This predominantly covers the WBF Secretariat human resources and travel costs, projected at USD 345 000.

Fee Collection Campaign 2024

Regarding the budget proposal for 2024, the available balance as of 31 October 2023 stands at USD 455 000. Factoring in remaining expenditures and membership fee payments, an estimated USD 460 000 is anticipated in the WBF trust fund at the start of next year. However, 2024 is projected to be a high-expenditure year due to the WBF4C. Sponsor contributions are crucial to reach an approximate budget of some USD 560 000, with 438 000 coming from the multi-donor trust fund. Thus, the WBF aims to secure approximately USD 120 000 from sponsors. This amount is intended to be used to cover travel costs for participants from non-profit organizations in developing nations – such as trade unions, NGOs and smallholder’s associations - as well as expenses for coffee breaks, promotional materials, and a reception scheduled for 12 March.

Mr Liu then mentioned that the FAO multi-donor trust-fund project will end in December of next year. He requested confirmation that the Steering Committee intends to extend the WBF activities and trust-fund project until 31 December 2026. The Committee confirmed its decision.

Mr Monge reiterated the need for a detailed budget breakdown for the conference to help reach an agreement regarding sponsored travelers and catering support. Mr Liu assured that a list with cost estimates will soon be shared with SC members, along with the draft WBF4C agenda. He added that information regarding the potential sponsored participants from civil society organizations in producing countries will also be made available.

Decisions:

- Extend the WBF trust-fund project to 31 December 2026.
- Circulate a list with cost estimates for the WBF4C activities with WBF members, so they may indicate their potential sponsorship contributions.

17. Conclusions of Day 1 and Day 2

Mr Liu extended his deepest thanks to the SC members for their active participation in this meeting, all panelists for their valuable contributions, and interpreters, technicians and other FAO colleagues for their support to the meeting. He congratulated the WBF Secretariat for the excellent organization of the meeting. He encouraged all SC members and working group coordinators to participate actively in the WBF Conference in Rome in March 2024.

Annex 1. List of participants

Twenty-Fifth Meeting of the WBF Steering Committee (SC25)

21- 22 November 2023

List of participants and observers of SC25

#	Organization / Organización / Organisation	Name / Nombre / Nom	Surname/Apellido/Nom	Participation/ Participación / Participation
1	AEBE	José Antonio	Hidalgo	SC member
2	AEBE	Agustin	Delgado	Observer
3	Afruibana	Jean-François	Billot	Obsever
4	AgroAmérica	Javier	Aguirre	Observer
5	AgroAmérica	Susana	Pérez	Observer
6	Agrocalidad	Fanny	Tenorio	Observer
7	Agrocalidad	Ronald	Méndez	Observer
8	Agrocalidad	Martin	Herrera	Observer
9	Agrocalidad	Carmen	Mullo	Observer
10	AgroFair	Luud	Clercx	SC member
11	Alternativas SAS	Carlos	Berben	Observer
12	Anflocor	Benny	Corcolon	Observer
13	APIB	Julio	Merida	Observer
14	Augura	Emerson	Aguirre Medina	Observer
15	Augura	Isabel Cristina	Yoshioka Tamayo	Observer
16	Augura	Sebastian	Zapata	Observer
17	Banafair	Helge	Fischer	Observer
18	Banafruit	Juan Gabriel	Rambay Cañola	Observer
19	BANELINO	Gustavo	Gandini	SC member
20	Chiquita	Andrew	Biles	SC member
21	Chiquita	Carlos	Crespo	Observer
22	CIRAD	Carolina	Dawson	SC member
23	CLAC Comercio Justo	Willy	Paredes	Observer
24	COLEACP	Morag	Webb	SC member
25	Compagnie Fruitière	Christelle	Owona Lasmé	SC member
26	Corbana	Mariano	Jiménez Zeledón	SC member
27	Corbana	Omar	Sánchez	SC member
28	CORBANA	Wendi	Montoya	Observer
29	Dole	Patricio	Gutierrez	Observer
30	Dole	Xavier	Roussel	SC member
31	Equapak	Jorge Alex	Serrano	Observer
32	Equifruit, Inc.	Jennie	Coleman	Observer
33	EUROBAN	Alistair	Smith	SC member
34	Ex- ILO	Peter	Hurst	Observer
35	Fairtrade International	Silvia	Campos	SC member
36	FARMCOOP	Kahlil	Apuzen-Ito	SC member
37	FENACLE	Angel Armando	Rivero Doguer	Observer

38	FHIA	Victor	Gonzalez	Observer
39	FLO	Wilbert	Flinterman	SC member
40	GIZ	Björn	Willms	Observer
41	GIZ	Raúl	Guerrero Weisson	Observer
42	GIZ	Andrea	Bruestle	SC member
43	GIZ Ecuador	Damián	Villacrés	Observer
44	GlobalG.A.P	Leonardo	Ferrer	Observer
45	Golden Exotics Limited	George	Kporye	Observer
46	Golden Exotics Limited	Lilian Yvonne	Karikari	Observer
47	IDH	Amanda	Penn	Observer
48	Independent consultant	Fausto	Roalino	Observer
49	Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union - Ghana	Esinam	Poku	Observer
50	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture	Gabriel	Rodriguez	Observer
51	IPL LTD	Tim	Brammer	SC member
52	IPL Ltd	John	Higgins	Observer
53	IUF	Svetlana	Boincean	SC member
54	Jasafrut S.A.	Guillermo	Maura	Observer
55	Jasafrut S.A.	Paola	Cabrera	Observer
56	Ministry of Labour of Ecuador	Maria Daniela	Peralta Galarza	Observer
57	Permanent Mission of the Dominican Republic to FAO	Patricia	Rodriguez	SC member
58	Permanent Mission of the Dominican Republic to FAO	Joseline	Pujol	Observer
59	Solidaridad	Jeroen	Kroezen	SC member
60	Tesco	Edgar	Monge	SC member
61	Tesco	Agathe	Caublot	Observer
62	UNIVALE Frutas	Silvio	Romao	Observer
63	FAO/IAEA	Cinthy	Zorrilla	FAO/IAEA
64	FAO	Jaime	Cardenas	FAO/SLM
65	FAO	Nozomi	Ide	FAO/ESP
66	FAO	Carolina	Olivera	FAO/NSP
73	FAO	Adriale	Benedetto	FAO/EST
70	FAO	Camila	Reinhardt	FAO/EST
74	FAO	Giuseppe	Bonavita	FAO/EST
72	FAO	Jazmina	Nelson	FAO/EST
69	FAO	Matheus	Lima	FAO/EST
71	FAO	Mattia	Serrano	FAO/EST
67	FAO	Pascal	Liu	FAO/EST
68	FAO	Victor	Prada	FAO/EST