

# WBF | World Banana Forum



## e-conference report

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date: 14-20 July 2011

address: <http://dgroups.org/fao/worldbananaforum>

areas of discussion: 5

number of participants invited: 53

number of effective participants: 20

number of messages posted: 47  
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### **Summary of contributions per area**

#### **a01 – Review of budget and fundraising process**

##### **Secretariat of the WBF's initial message**

*The Secretariat, together with the Task Force on Budget and Fundraising has sent during the last weeks personalized emails to most of the active members of the Forum. Thank you to all the organizations that have completed their payment for the current year (June 2011-June2012)!*

*So far we have collected 44,250 USD, about one third of the amount initially projected in our budget for the participants' contribution. Some SC members and WG coordinators have replied very quickly to our email and sent the funds; we did not receive a single 'no' to the request, but many of you have not replied at all. Please, come back to those emails or write to the Secretariat in order to review your status.*

*In the meantime, we will keep sending emails to all the interested players. If you want to suggest new names, do it here or send us a private message to [wbf@fao.org](mailto:wbf@fao.org); you can also promote our Forum directly to your contacts and refer interested stakeholders to our dedicated page: <http://www.fao.org/economic/worldbananaforum/join>*

*We have also received the first contribution from a public donor: France. We appreciate very much this gesture and trust that more governments will confirm soon their support to our initiative by contributing more funds. Any suggestion at this regard?*

*Thanks,*

*The Secretariat of the WBF*

##### **Contributions**

- No names or alternative suggestions were made regarding how to improve the effectiveness of fundraising.
- There was a question about the possibility of FAO-WBF to issue invoices for the contributions received. The Secretariat wishes to ensure that invoices can be prepared upon request.

## **a02 – Approaching the Second Global Meeting of the WBF: setting location and date**

### Secretariat of the WBF's initial message

*As you know, a few days ago we opened a consultation poll to know your opinions about WHERE and WHEN to hold the next global meeting of our Forum, the SECOND GLOBAL MEETING of the WBF.*

*We have counted a total of 26 replies. The favourite venue is Guayaquil, followed closely by Panama City. Apparently, most of you think that it is time now to organize a major meeting in a banana producing country! We have also gathered some information on costs regarding these two options. We have selected several potential venues (specialized hotels) in each location and asked for a budget estimate, which should include 1 plenary room, 3 smaller rooms for group meetings and 20 single rooms (for sponsored participants, this figure is just a reference, not a final number); all of it for a duration of TWO DAYS.*

*The prices do not differ much, so we do not see relevant consequences for the WBF budget regarding the location:*

*GUAYAQUIL. Prices range from 10,000 USD to 33,000 USD  
PANAMA. Prices range from 10,000 USD to 18,000 USD.*

*In terms of setting the date, we must also take a decision as soon as possible.  
We are proposing 3 possible dates in a poll through Doodle, please state your preferences here:  
<http://www.doodle.com/chsks2gkcazurhkg>*

*Proposed dates:  
5-6 December 2011  
12-13 December 2011  
15-16 December 2011*

*Please, reply to this email to express your view on the location for the meeting (choosing between the two alternatives suggested above) and explain your reasons if you wish so.*

*Thanks,*

*The Secretariat of the WBF*

### Contributions

- More time will allow the WBF's SC & WG coordinators to better prepare the meeting. The location chosen should take into account the feasibility to prepare guided visits to the plantations (if possible, just before the meeting).
- A possible month could be February 2012. Two main events must be taken into account, though: Fruitlogistica (Germany, 8-10 Feb) and Banana conference by Corbana (Costa Rica, 20-24 Feb).

## **a03 – Next SC meeting: setting location and date**

### Secretariat of the WBF's initial message

*In November 2010 we held a successful joint meeting of Steering Committee members and Working Groups coordinators. We would like to invite all of you again to repeat the experience later this year. The goal of this meeting will be to review the progress of the WBF during the last months and to take key decisions on the Second Global Meeting of the WBF (foreseen for December 2011), such as agenda, participants, budget and work plan.*

*We would like to hold this meeting in late September or early October.  
Our proposal is a 2-day meeting to be held in FAO HQ (Rome).  
What is your view on the duration, location and proposed issues for this meeting?  
What would you like to suggest for the agenda of the SC & WG coordinators meeting?*

Please comment on this topic by replying to this email or simply express your preference from the dates suggested in our Doodle poll:

<http://www.doodle.com/2h36tbn7g65xqvsu>

Thanks,

The Secretariat of the WBF

### Contributions

- Confirmed interest in keeping the format of joint meetings: Steering Committee members and coordinators of the Working Groups.
- Budget situation, list of sponsored participants and WGs' work plan, goals and expected research and development budget were suggested as key items for the agenda of the next SC & WG coordinators meeting.
- General agreement on the suitability of holding a 2-day meeting in Europe. Exact location and dates to be decided (see section *Decisions to be taken* below).

### **a04 – Review of Working Groups' activities: work plan, communications issues and meetings agenda**

#### Secretariat of the WBF's initial message

*This is the space for the coordinators of the Working Groups (WGs) to express their views, ideas and concerns regarding the functioning of those.*

*What has worked well? What needs to be improved? What were the main constraints faced?*

*The Secretariat has been following as much as possible the development of the WGs. However, we have only limited time to contribute to this task since the Secretariat involves a wider list of tasks and we have only one person working for the WBF with very limited funds so far.*

*We noticed that WG02 and WG03 have made significant efforts to progress according to their own work plans. These groups have also raised funds themselves and will be holding open meetings soon (Ecuador, August 2011) to gather and exchange the result of their work. WG01 has been rather inactive during the last months, but funds coming will probably boost its activities.*

*Please, participate in this discussion by simply replying to this email.*

*Don't forget to check the web pages of each of the WGs in order to be informed on their work!*

WG01 | Sustainable Production Systems and Environmental Impact

<http://www.fao.org/economic/worldbananaforum/wbf-working-groups/wg01>

WG02 | Distribution of Value

<http://www.fao.org/economic/worldbananaforum/wbf-working-groups/wg02>

WG03 | Labour Rights

<http://www.fao.org/economic/worldbananaforum/wbf-working-groups/wg03>

*Additionally, we have just opened three special email accounts, where you can address your queries to the attention of the respective group coordinators.*

WG01 coordinator's email: [WBF.coord.WG01@dggroups.org](mailto:WBF.coord.WG01@dggroups.org)

WG02 coordinator's email: [WBF.coord.WG02@dggroups.org](mailto:WBF.coord.WG02@dggroups.org)

WG03 coordinator's email: [WBF.coord.WG03@dggroups.org](mailto:WBF.coord.WG03@dggroups.org)

*The open meetings of the WBF and its Working Groups' meetings are also available in our calendar at:*

<http://www.fao.org/economic/worldbananaforum/wbf-aboutus/wbf-calendar/en/>

Thanks,

The Secretariat of the WBF

### Contributions

- It was suggested that each Working Group would designate 'a leader', whose main responsibility would be to keep the WG active by taking the lead in organizing calls and meetings and to help the WG to implement its work plan and objectives. Leaders could rotate on a regular basis (every six months for example).
- A participant stated that the translation of communications to enable those who speak only one of the languages of the Forum should be considered. They should feel capable of taking on the role as well!
- Some questions asked: Given the tasks involved in coordinating a WG (particularly administration and translation), do WGs need a leader (internal) or even external support? How could that be funded?

### **05 - Any other issue?**

- No relevant contributions here (a recommendation on WGs functioning was readdressed to the right area).

### **Decisions to be taken as soon as possible after this e-conference**

#### **1. Next joint meeting of the Steering Committee and Working Groups coordinators of the WBF: LOCATION and DATE**

Location: Europe preferred. Rome, Amsterdam and London have been suggested.

Date: October preferred. The date 13-14<sup>th</sup> was initially endorsed, but then several reactions discouraged this choice. The more appropriate time seems to be during the month of October, but a new poll needs to be done.

#### **2. Second Global Meeting of the World Banana Forum: LOCATION and DATE**

Location: Latin America. Guayaquil, Ecuador preferred (reasons stated: 1<sup>st</sup> exporter worldwide, extensive and diverse plantations easy to reach for field trips, high number of participants already involved in the WBF).

Date: February preferred. Dates to avoid: Fruitlogistica (Germany, 8-10 Feb) and Banana conference by Corbana (Costa Rica, 20-24 Feb).

#### **3. Working Groups to define a single focal point (leader) per WG**

He/she will keep frequent communications with the core members of the WG and with the Secretariat. It will be a rotational position (i.e. each 6 months).

The Secretariat proposes that a 'leader' is identified with immediate effect for the period July-December 2011. For the time being and to be practical, we suggest that one leader is chosen in each group amongst its coordinators. The position will be unpaid and on a rotational basis, as suggested and mainly agreed. If appropriate funds arrive, an external facilitator could be identified and hired from 2012 if that is deemed appropriate after a new consultation.