

TRADE STANDARDS PRACTITIONERS NETWORK

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Overview of the Trade Standards Practitioners Network (TSPN)

www.tradestandards.org

Mission of the TSPN

Improve the effectiveness of initiatives that support developing country capacity and participation in the implementation of trade-related social, environment and sanitary/phytosanitary standards and related measures through information sharing, policy research and capacity building. In doing so, the TSPN seeks to foster more sustainable, competitive, and equitable developing country supply chains by improving their ability to respond to different commercial, safety, social and environmental requirements.

What is the TSPN?

Technical specialists working in the fields of social accountability, environmental standards, food safety and agricultural health frequently operate and communicate within particular ‘silos’ with little cross-fertilization of ideas and experiences. The TSPN seeks to cut across these technical ‘silos’ and facilitate a more effective flow of information and experiences among a diverse group of interested organizations. It seeks to analyze the work of membership interventions in order to develop best or better practices that will enhance developing country capacity to implement market standards. The TSPN serves as a community of practice addressing the need for consistent dialogue and sharing of experiences. This collaborative effort builds upon the strengths of individual institutions while working as a community to achieve the shared goals. The TSPN offers participants the opportunity to explore possibilities for forging partnerships and undertaking joint projects to improve capacity for implementing standards in developing countries.

Objectives of the TSPN

A. Providing strategic guidance to standards related capacity building efforts.

The TSPN will share existing knowledge about and bring new insights to the capacity-building process. This will be achieved through the review/evaluation of implementation experiences; sharing of lessons learned and identification of good practices; generating new data and insights on the underlying economics (costs, benefits, distributional aspects) of standards/good practice compliance; and on key institutional issues, including the potential and necessary roles of the public and private sectors.

B. Deepening awareness and knowledge among developing country stakeholders.

The Group will raise the awareness and deepen the knowledge of stakeholders regarding the dynamics of emerging official and private standards while addressing the challenges faced in adopting improved standards/practices. This would involve awareness-raising and information dissemination on focused areas

where best value can be added to existing efforts. This might relate to good practices in strategic planning and implementation, institutional options and responsibilities, socio-economic dimensions of standards, and improved participation of developing country stakeholders in the development of international and national standards

- C. Create a network of practitioners, policy makers and groups working on building developing countries' standards management capacities and improving the sustainability of their supply chains.

Our Group will function as a “core” network with each member serving as a link between the TSPN and other organizations and individuals such as policy makers and others who could potentially contribute to our efforts. Our group can draw on this wide network to harvest lessons learned and identify best practice while also disseminating information about findings.

- D. Outreach and Information Dissemination

Further development and expansion of partnerships in order to provide technical assistance or other support in specific developing countries through the use of in country training, online courses, websites and other communications and capacity building tools.

Membership Criteria for the TSPN

- A. Involved in pertinent standard setting and/or standards-related capacity strengthening work.
- B. Involved in multi-country settings and/or activities.
- C. Able/willing to contribute to attaining TSPN objectives through institutional knowledge and implementation experiences.
- D. Have own networks/sets of contacts that can be useful in information gathering and dissemination.

Trade Standards Practitioners Network Concept Paper

Background

In relation to international trade in agro-food and forest products, increasing attention is being given to managing risks associated with food safety and sustainability, and to addressing concerns associated with the social and environmental dimensions of production. In these areas, there is an emerging proliferation of official regulations and private standards, with a trend toward increased stringency and requirements for certification. Although standards related requirements are frequently cast in terms of 'barriers to trade' and 'costs of compliance', experiences of many developing countries suggest that standards can also present opportunities, serving to catalyze the adoption of better and safer production practices, induce the modernization of regulatory systems, and enable suppliers to add value and re-position their products to gain competitive advantage.

Developing country governments and producers are increasingly seeking assistance to better enable them to respond to the challenges and opportunities associated with emerging standards. As experience accumulates, the effectiveness of this assistance should improve as 'good practices' are replicated and past mistakes avoided. However, this assumes that interventions are properly monitored and evaluated and that there are ample fora for the sharing of experiences and lessons learned. In some areas, this is indeed the case as with the example of biodiversity conservation and microfinance. However, there are other fields in which relatively little effort has gone into developing and disseminating lessons learned from development support initiatives. For example, a recent study by the World Bank found that there have been very few attempts to share experiences (by international agencies and/or the private sector) in strengthening capacities for trade-related food safety and agricultural health management in developing countries.¹ Similarly, the sharing of information and experiences across different technical communities has also been very limited. That is, technical specialists working in the fields of social accountability, environmental standards, and food safety and agricultural health frequently operate and communicate within particular 'silos' with little cross-fertilization of ideas and experiences. This is becoming untenable in an era in which social, environmental, and SPS standards are increasingly being packaged together, at least in the specifications of major international buyers.

The Trade Standards Practitioners Network

The Trade Standards Practitioners Network (TSPN) seeks to cut across these technical 'silos' and facilitate a more effective flow of information and experiences among a diverse group of interested organizations. It seeks to analyze the work of membership interventions in order to develop best or better practices that will enhance developing

¹ Although recently several international organizations have come together to form a Standards and Trade Development Facility, one objective of which is to increase the sharing of information about capacity-building related to food safety and agricultural health.

country capacity to implement market standards. The TSPN will serve as a community of practice that will systematically address the need for consistent dialogue and sharing of experiences. This will be a fully collaborative effort, building on the strengths of each individual institution while working as a community to achieve the goals of the community and member institutions. The TSPN will also offer participants the opportunity to explore possibilities for forging partnerships and undertaking joint projects to improve capacity for implementing standards in developing countries.

More specifically, the TSPN will:

- Share experiences and insights about the emerging evolution of social, environmental, and SPS standards and how these may affect the competitiveness of developing countries.
- Develop a ‘triple standards’ information clearinghouse and ‘learning center’ to be used as a resource by various stakeholders.
- Develop a common understanding of the current scope and status of awareness- and capacity-building support by donors, NGOs, and the private sector.
- Analyze and draw lessons from activities designed to increase developing country capacity to implement private standards and comply with official regulations.
- Document and share ‘innovative’ approaches to implementing standards support programs in developing countries.
- Build consensus on the appropriate roles of different stakeholders in the process of strengthening capacity in the developing world.
- Undertake joint research on selected topics.
- Bring together diverse sets of stakeholders to share experiences and perspectives

Proposed Activities

A wide range of potential TSPN activities are presented below. These activities are illustrative and will be discussed in further detail at the inaugural meeting. New and alternative proposals will also be welcome.

TSPN Technical Steering Committee: Discussions and consultations indicate that there is a consensus for improved dialogue and information exchange within the donor community and between donors and the private sector. The mechanisms for carrying out this exchange should be identified and agreed upon by participants. In order to achieve this goal, the first activity under this initiative will be the formation of a technical steering committee (TSC). TSC membership will include a subset of TSPN members. This group will be responsible for making decisions about TSPN activities. A small secretariat would support the technical panel by organizing various activities and disseminating findings through various multimedia outlets.

Workshops: The TSPN TSC would organize a series of one-day workshops on various standards- related topics in order to highlight emerging trends and share research and/or experiences in the design and implementation of programs and projects. Illustrative examples of potential themes for such workshops include:

- Changing consumer attitudes to social, environmental and other claims

- Approaches to developing countries' capacities to engage in SPS diplomacy
- Alternative approaches to building accreditation and certification systems
- Public-private partnerships in program implementation
- Regulatory vs. self-policing regimes

TSPN Paper Series: Like the workshop series, topics of the paper series would be determined by the TSPN TSC. Potential topics might include:

- Available models on obtaining credible conformity assessments for food safety, phytosanitary, health and safety, environment and broad labor applications
- Prevailing capacity problems in developing countries and mitigation strategies
- Innovative techniques to build standards capacity in developing countries such as public private partnerships, developing incentives for compliance, etc.
- The costs and benefits of implementing different types of standards
- Country or industry case studies

Standards Information Clearinghouse and Online Learning Center: An electronic portal could be set up to consolidate information about various standards, sectors and sub-sectors, and their applications across regions. Primarily, the portal would be a stepping-off point for information about standards geared toward developing country producers and the institutions that work with them. It would further serve as a resource for academic research on standards-related issues, as well as a repository of case studies documenting good practices. The portal would be based on an open content management architecture where various members can contribute material freely. Special attention will be given to the emergence of private standards.² Chemonics has already begun work on this project. A draft version is available at www.caudillweb.com/triplestandards.

The online learning center would offer in-depth learning opportunities similar to those offered recently by the World Bank in its standards course.³ The objectives of the learning center would be to increase the technical and cultural diversity of discussions and improve the volume of delivery and follow up support.

Conference: Building on the activities stated above, a two-day global conference/workshop, or a series of regional conferences, would be organized within 12 to 18 months after the launch of this initiative. The conference(s) would bring together stakeholders from developing and developed countries, including regulators, buyers, consumer groups, researchers, practitioners, and others. The knowledge, information and insights accumulated by the TSPN would be disseminated and various experiences by developing country stakeholders would be presented. One output from the conference(s) might be a set of agreed guiding principles for assuring more effective use of technical assistance in improved standards adoption.

² Recently, the FAO and several partner organizations have established an International Portal on Food Safety, Animal and Plant Health, providing an extensive amount of information on official international and national standards.

³ This course, using WEBCT technology, involves more than 200 participants in some sixty five countries. It has involved a combination of required readings and on-going dialogue among participants and technical moderators (usually the authors of the reading materials and case studies).

Applied Field Coursework and Manuals: The discussions, papers and other materials resulting from the activities described herein could be consolidated into applied courses and detailed training manuals. Courses and manuals would serve multiple stakeholders in an interactive and easily replicable manner. Manuals and courses could address conformity assessments, cost benefit analysis, traceability, scalability, credibility of public and private sector standards, etc.

Trade Standards Practitioners Network Meeting Notes March 2-3, 2006

Overview

The second meeting of the Trade Standards Practitioners Network (TSPN) was held over two days at the World Bank in early March 2006. Members agreed to change the name of the group from the Trade Standards Working Group to the TSPN to better capture its true nature. On the first day of the meeting, members made presentations on their operational experience in a number of areas, highlighting lessons learned as well as 'outstanding issues' that the TSPN could help address. On day two the group pulled together some of the common themes from these discussions and laid out some concrete next steps and future activities.

Presentations by Network Members

Day one presentations were grouped under four themes. In addition, there was a lunch-time guest presentation by the Sustainability Manager of Mars Inc. The discussion panels and hyperlinks to individual presentations are as follows:

Panel One: *Refining the Rules of the Game*

-Developing, influencing and/or harmonizing standards and codes of good practices which affect developing countries.

[ISEAL Code of Good Practice in Setting Social and Environmental Standards](#)

Sasha Courville, ISEAL Alliance

[Private Sector Lead International Commodity Round Tables](#)

Catherine Cassagne, Team leader, Biodiversity and Environmental Finance Group, IFC

[Environmental Standards of NGO's And Buyers](#)

Jane Earley, Director of Conservation Innovation, WWFUS

[Assessment in the Tourism Industry: Emerging Standards and Best Practices](#)

Dave Gibson, Chemonics International

Panel Two: *Awareness and Strategic Planning for Developing Country Response*

-Raising awareness about emerging standards and technical issues and facilitating the determination of priority actions/investments and broader national, industry or other strategies of response.

[Managing SPS information to Maximize Stakeholder Interest and Involvement: Strengths and Weaknesses of Internet-based Solutions](#)

John Lamb and John Holtzman, ABT Associates

[Beyond Crisis Management: Promoting Strategic Planning and Prioritization of SPS Capacity Building Needs](#)

Steven Jaffee and Mirvat Sewadeh, World Bank Trade Department

[The Changing Business Environment: Building Local Capacity to meet International CSR Standards](#)

Can Atacik and Micheal Jarvis, World Bank, Corporate Social Responsibility

[A Closer Look at How the Americas are Advancing the WTO/SPS Agreement](#)

Tim O'Brien, IICA

Guest Presentation

[Sustainable Cocoa Production: Approaches and Partnerships](#)

Roger Dehnel, Sustainability Director, Mars Inc.

Panel Three: *Supply Chain Competitiveness - Farmer Centered Interventions*

-Capacity-building work with farmers and other players in specific developing country supply chains, involving the adoption of trade-related standards and good practices.

[Developing a Manual for the Management of Smallholders Wishing to Obtain EurepGAP Certification](#)

Doris Gunther, GTZ

[Developing a Code of Practice for Smallholder Producers that is Acceptable to the EurepGAP Requirements](#)

Robert Rabatsky, FINTRAC

[PIP Support to Small Stakeholders](#)

Harry Lugros, Pesticide Initiative Program

[What Works and What Doesn't in Fostering African Smallholder Participation in Higher-Value Supply Chains: A Tentative Research Agenda](#)

Spencer Henson and Steven Jaffee, University of Guelph and the World Bank Trade Department

Panel Four: *Supply Chain Competitiveness - Interventions Centered on Firms or Further Downstream*

-Capacity-building work with firms, associations, other service providers, and other players in specific developing country supply chains, involving the adoption of trade-related standards and good practices

[Trade Capacity Building: Addressing Firm Level Constraints](#)

Steffen Kaeser, UNIDO

Certified Sustainable Products Alliance

Tensie Whelan, Rainforest Alliance

Demand Pull and Supply Push: Standards as Market Tools for Workplace Quality

Eileen Kaufman, Social Accountability International

Common Implementation Challenges

Across the four speaker panels several common themes and challenges emerged, some of which the TSPN could likely address through research, consultations, sponsored conferences, or other means. These common themes included:

- Approaches to ensure broad and sustained stakeholder participation in the development of standards and in processes to develop strategies and priorities for investment/capacity-building related to standards management. Related to this are approaches to facilitate stakeholder learning and assumption of leadership roles in the pursuit of country, industry, or thematic standards and good practices.
- Approaches/methods to build the ‘business case’ for pursuing societal objectives and public goods, and to build the rationale for public sector assistance for the adoption of private standards and management systems.
- Improved understanding of the respective roles of the public and private sectors in standards-related capacity building in developing countries. In what areas does the public sector need to take the lead, both in the supply of assistance and in the implementation of functions? In what areas are the most appropriate means of support from the public to the private sectors? From the private to the private sector? Etc. Where are public-private partnerships most feasible? How does the apparent credibility/accountability of governments affect such decisions?
- Approaches and specific indicators to develop common metrics and associated benchmarking tools to track the implementation and impact of standards
- Exploring avenues for getting private standard-setting entities (including EUREP, BRC, and others) more directly involved in development assistance TA and other support.
- Approaches to better understand the underlying costs and benefits associated with the adoption of trade-related standards.
- Approaches to better discern and document ‘good practices’ in the implementation of interventions in various aspects of standards development and application.
- Means to improve the coordination of activities among bilateral, multinational, NGO, and other entities operating in this field.

Potential Network Activities

Based upon this discussion of common themes, the group discussed various activities for future work by TSPN, including:

- The development of a shared website to exchange information on Member activities and on an array of themes related to standards. Linked to this website would be a periodic TSPN newsletter.
- The planning of periodic conferences on selected themes. The group agreed that a potential topic for an upcoming conference could be ‘Good Practices in Promoting Good Practices’, with emphasis placed on public-private partnerships.
- Operational research on specific topics to elaborate on best management practices. Possible topics mentioned included:
 - Smallholder-market linkages (for which a new research project has already been launched)
 - Incentive for public/private participation in SPS
 - Best practices for expanding certification and verification
- Collaboration among TSPN members at the level of specific countries to do pertinent diagnostics and program design/implementation related to standards management
- The development of a ‘working paper’ series to highlight implementation experiences, ‘good practices’, lessons learned, etc.
- For Washington area TSPN members, the development of a brown bag series involving Member or guest speakers on pertinent topics

Next Steps

The Network agreed that the establishment of a website would maximize the capacity of the network to achieve its stated mission and objectives. A panel consisting of Matthew Edwardsen from Chemonics International, John Lamb of Abt. Associates and Steffen Kaeser from UNIDO volunteered to lead the effort. The launch date for the website was set for the winter 2007 TSPN conference.

It was also agreed that the Network would reconvene in the winter of 2007 for a multi-day conference on one of the common implementation constraints identified. A steering committee consisting of Steve Jaffee from the World Bank, Dave Gibson of Chemonics International, Spencer Henson from the University of Guelph and Sasha Courville of the ISEAL Alliance volunteered to lead the coordination efforts and report back to the group by mid-summer 2006 on their progress.

Trade Standards Practitioners Network Meeting Summary June 21, 2005

On June 21, 2005, representatives from 18 organizations met to consider the scope and potential modalities of a network that would strengthen the sharing of information, knowledge, and experiences related to agro-food standards, both among the immediate participants in the network and among key stakeholders in developing countries. The group (i) reviewed common and distinctive challenges faced in implementing standards-related activities, (ii) identified several potential areas for collaboration, (iii) considered the pertinent lessons from selected other technical inter-organizational networks, (iv) initiated discussions on the possible mission statement, objectives, core foci, and organizational structure for a new network, and (v) agreed on tentative next steps to develop more of a consensus vision on each of these aspects. **Participants agreed that there was sufficient mutual interest in developing more concrete proposals for the functioning and foci of a new network.**

A. Background

Developing country governments, producers and buyers are all seeking assistance to enable them to compete within complex global markets. Proliferating private and public standards have become the language of trade and are quickly evolving from simple quality measures to now include food safety, environmental, and worker safety procedures. As experience in the use and assessment of conformity to these standards accumulates, the effectiveness of public and private sector assistance should improve as 'good practices' are replicated and past mistakes avoided.

However, this assumes that interventions are systematically monitored and evaluated, and that there are ample fora for the sharing of experiences and lessons learned. Experience has shown that technical specialists working in the fields of social accountability, environmental standards, and those operating in specific subsectors – agrifood, forestry, fisheries etc. - most often operate and communicate only within particular 'silos' with little cross-fertilization of ideas and experiences. This is becoming untenable in an era in which social, environmental, and food safety standards are increasingly being integrated with complex specifications creating serious technical barriers to trade.

In an attempt to address the relative isolation of practitioners within the standards community, representatives from bilateral and multi-lateral agencies, implementation support organizations, certifying and standard setting bodies, non governmental organizations and academic institutions were invited to meet in Washington D.C. to determine the need for, and potential scope and modalities of a Trade Related Standards Practitioners Network (TSPN). Some 18 organizations were able to participate in this meeting. Various other organizations which could not send a representative to the meeting expressed an interest in the proceedings and in possibly joining whatever formal or informal network which would emerge (see Annex 1 for a list of the invited organizations and of the individuals who were able to attend).

Participation at the meeting came from a broad, cross-section of organizations, including:

- Bilateral/multilateral agencies: World Bank, EU, UNIDO, FAO, USAID, IICA, and GTZ
- Standard-setting/certifying agencies: ISEAL Alliance, Rainforest Alliance, Smartwood Program
- Implementing/advocacy/analytical organizations: Chemonics, Abt Associates, DAI, Fintrac, MSU, Oxfam, IISD, World Wildlife Fund, and COLEACP/PIP.

B. Meeting overview

The meeting was opened by Uri Dadush, Director of the World Bank’s Trade Department and Development Prospects Group. He highlighted the purposes of the meeting and noted the possible benefits of forming a ‘community of practice’, to more systematically share information and experiences related to our work on trade and agriculture-related standards. He noted that the Bank has had some very positive experiences working with formal or less formal inter-organizational networks to advance knowledge and/or improve implementation performance in various technical fields.

Representatives from the different participating agencies then provided a brief summary of their main roles and activities related to standards and some of the key constraints which they (and their developing country clients/partners) face. These constraints are varied—some having to do with the limited awareness, ‘strategic vision’, or effective leadership on applicable standards in many developing countries; others relating more to the seeming proliferation of standards and lack of common language and/or arrangements for conformity assessment; still others relate to the relative lack of good documentation related to good/bad practices in implementation, the underlying economics and impacts of standards, etc.. For some organizations, a key problem is the lack of credibility of certain standards, with this relating to both the conformity assessment and economic impact issues, plus also weakening the resolve for a more strategic approach by developing country stakeholders. Participants also noted how a new collaborative network might help them (and their clients) address pertinent constraints.

Before considering in any depth what a SWG might do and look like, the group listened to several presentations about other collaborative technical groups (including for forestry and for trade facilitation/logistics). The discussion emphasized the importance of leadership, the various phases and protracted gestation periods for such networks, and different methods for stimulating collaboration within non-traditional “non-project” arenas. This discussion also brought out the need for this Group to more carefully consider the foci, composition, and capacities of other networks (dealing with standards), both to learn from those experiences and to ensure that the new Group could indeed provide ‘value addition’. A subsequent session highlighted the potential for an online clearinghouse for information on standards and for using online technology to reach a broad or targeted audience for purposes of awareness-raising, training, or policy dialogue in the standards field.

Break-out groups were then formed to discuss and identify options pertaining to a mission statement, set of objectives, core activities, audience/stakeholders, and possible organizational structure (and/or membership) for the proposed SWG. Considerable progress was made in a short period of time with many interesting proposals tabled. Consensus was neither reached nor was it expected. Different perspectives and interests were expected given the diversity of mandates and entry points which the various organizations have vis-à-vis standards.

C. Conclusions

More questions were raised than conclusions reached during the course of the meeting. Some of the key outstanding issues relate to:

- (i) defining the distinctiveness or value-addition of the SWG, given the existence of several other inter-organization networks which relate to standards, agriculture and trade;
- (ii) the degree of formality/informality that the group would take;
- (iii) whether the group would focus only on sharing existing knowledge or also endeavor to generate new knowledge through commissioned research and analysis;
- (iv) who could/should become (core) members of the Group (including the private sector) should it pursue a more formal organization;
- (v) who would be the main audiences of the information/knowledge generated and disseminated by the Group?; and
- (vi) what would be the resource needs for such a Group and how these would be mobilized?

Participants generally liked the concept of a ‘community of practice’. There seemed to be a consensus that there was a critical need for the practitioner community to better document and disseminate: (i) positive examples of standards application in developing countries, (ii) good (and bad) practices in capacity building, technical assistance or other external support for standards application in developing countries, (iii) methods for monitoring and evaluating the impact of standards, and (iv) findings on the underlying costs and benefits of standards adoption. More information in each of these areas would be beneficial for both the ‘members’ of the Group and their clients/partners in developing countries. There was a sense among participants that such themes have not been the foci of existing inter-organizational networks and that—perhaps--work in these areas could constitute the ‘value addition’ of this Group.

There were several other proposed foci or functions for the Group that were discussed, although a consensus was not reached on whether the Group could or should pursue these directions—or on how it might do so. Examples include: (i) developing tools for increasing access to standards-related information (included a shared website); (ii) facilitating improved dialogue between the public and private sectors, (iii) promoting the harmonization of standards; and (iv) increasing understanding of how consumer

perceptions/preferences truly impact the operating environment and room for maneuver of developing country agro-food/forest suppliers.

It was clear that the Group would need to reach a consensus on its overall mission statement and objectives (and ‘value-addition’) before it could fully elaborate even a tentative work program. The scope of work for the Group would also certainly depend upon available resources, raised from among network participants and, perhaps, others. At this stage, it was still premature to consider resource requirements and possible sources.

D. Next steps

Among the majority of participating organizations, there was an agreement to maintain a dialogue and see if we could build on the momentum from this inaugural meeting and flesh out a suitable model or process to form a sustained practitioner’s network.

Many of the participating organizations volunteered to participate in informal committees to address key organizational or other issues or to plan a second meeting which might take place toward the end of 2005. However, given the dispersed nature of the SWG, a more practical next step would be to establish a WebCT portal (along the lines used in the World Bank’s recent training course on standards) to carry out a continued dialogue among prospective TSPN members/participants to further address several of the key themes and issues discussed at the inaugural meeting. That is, we would exchange further ideas and options regarding the mission statement, objectives, audience, activities, etc. of the TSPN, while also sharing information and insights about the efforts of other pertinent networks to ensure that we are not ‘re-inventing the wheel’ and that the TSPN has the potential to add significant value to on-going dialogue and understanding.

Recognizing that the summer months are a time when many people are taking breaks for R&R, this online dialogue would be carried out over a period from mid-July to early September to enable people to provide their input. Different individuals would be asked to moderate the discussions on the various topics and to try to guide the group toward reaching a consensus (or at least a more narrow set of choices) on these topics. Those moderators would also be asked to package together the discussions on their particular theme so as to make a presentation to the wider Group at our next meeting.

We would then seek to organize a second meeting, toward the end of 2005. This might be a two-day meeting. The first day could be a thematic one, in which participant organizations or others would present examples of successes/good practices (or conversely ‘horror stories’) related to developing country implementation of standards and/or technical support programs seeking to assist such implementation. (Each of the SWG organizations already has some examples which can be taken ‘off the shelf’ to share in such a forum.) The second day of the meeting would be a business one, where we would build on the outputs from the on-line dialogue to put further flesh on the bones

of the nascent TSPN and further consider issues of organization, financing, etc, if applicable.⁴

An initial summary of the mandate, composition, and activities of other pertinent inter-organizational networks is provided in Annex 2. If you are aware of any additional networks, please contact Matthew Edwardsen (medwardsen@chemonics.com).

Within the next week or so, you will be provided information about how to log on to our on-line dialogue and we will begin the discussion by considering alternative ‘mission statements’ for the Group. We will subsequently undertake a dialogue pertaining to the Group’s objectives, audiences, operational model, composition, possible specific activities, and finally, the planning for the next event/meeting. This dialogue will go on until the middle of September. If you are enjoying yourselves away from your office or from any web connection, just re-engage when you get back into work mode.

⁴ In parallel, some participants in the inaugural meeting are likely to pursue activities for which they may seek collaboration from other organizations. For example, the World Bank will likely seek to organize a follow-on standards training course (for delivery during the Fall of 2005) and will seek to collaborate with several organizations in doing so. There may be other examples of new collaboration among SWG participants.

Annex 1 – Attending organizations

Multilateral Agencies	Standard Setting & Certifying Organizations	Implementing Institutions	Others
Steve Jaffee and Mirvat Sewadeh , - World Bank	Tensie Whelan - Rainforest Alliance	Dave Gibson , William Kedrock and Matthew Edwardsen - Chemonics International	Emily Alpert - Oxfam America
Steffen Kaeser , - UNIDO	Sasha Courville - ISEAL Alliance	John Lamb - Abt Associates Inc.	Jason Potts - IISD
Renata Clarke - FAO	Kathryn Pierront - Smartwood Program	Bob Rabatsky - Fintrac	
Charlotte Hebebrand , and Vlassia Vasskieri , - European Commission		John Bowman - DAI	Kathryn Bostick - WWF
Ingrid Mueller-Neuhof - World Bank/GTZ		John Stone - Institute for Food and Agricultural Standards at MSU Valerie de Oliveira - Pesticides Initiative Programme	
Robin Mason - USAID			
Tim O'Brien and Kevin Walker - IICA			

Annex 2 – Other pertinent networks

The following table illustrates the function and role of seven networks with missions that complement to varying degrees the proposed activities of the STWG. This information is based upon a web survey of these organizations and requires further scrutiny and will be updated based upon information gathered during the course of WebCT forum. The table is followed by more detailed outlines of the mission, composition and activities of these networks.

Aspects of Various Standards-Related Networks												
Name of Network	Year Estab	Geog of Members*	Composition of Membership			Functions/Roles						
			Public	Private	Mixed	Monitor Trends in Standards	Technical Research/ Analysis	Identify & Share Best Practices	Economic Analysis; Impact Assessment	Training & info for dev. country strategic planning	Specific Industry Initiatives	Capacity Building Support in dev. countries
ECL Space	2003	Asia, SA, NA, Eur			X	X						
CTF	2004	Global			X	X				X	X	
SFL	2004	NA, Eur, SA, LA			X		X	X	X		X	
PROFOR	1997	Global	X				X	X	?			?
ISEAL	2000	NA, Eur		X		X	X	X				
SCI	2002	NA, Eur			X	X			X		X	
STDF	2004	IA	X							X		X
WG	2000	Global			X		X	X			X	

*NA - North America
 SA - South America
 Eur - Eurpoe
 Afr - Africa
 IA – International Agencies

Ethical Certification and Labeling (ECL) Space⁵

Mission

The ECL Space is designed as a neutral and multi-stakeholder space to address issues limiting the acceptance and effectiveness of ECL with special emphasis on developing countries and small and medium sized enterprises. The Space is designed to provide guidance to ECL initiatives for improving market access and uptake, have adequate balanced stakeholder participation and deliver improvements in term of sustainable development.

Composition

ECL Space is governed by three sets of stakeholders. The Steering Group (SG) operates as an advisory body for the ECL Space project and is made up of multi and bi lateral donors, standard setting bodies and NGOs. The SG provides policy direction, guidance, information and advice to the project implementation (PI) team on project planning. Core Group members are a group of specialists on different aspects of ECL. The CG is the second layer of advice and consultation for the ECL Space project implementation. The PI team manages the day-by-day tasks associated with the project development and is responsible for project deliverables.

Activities

1. Establishment of a project team
 - Identification and enrolment of potential members: These shall be individuals able to bring the views of different constituencies (business, standard setters, ECL, social and environmental NGOs, governments, North and South) and to outreach to these constituencies.
2. Carrying out a mapping study
 - Developing of selected case studies, based on a mapping study of existing initiatives, to identify mainly: the involvement of stakeholders in particular from developing countries, the governance provided to small and medium sized enterprises to comply with the requirements and their success compared with their stated objectives.
3. Organization of stocktaking and launching meeting
 - Bring together ECL stakeholders, share and discuss results of the preparatory phase, fine-tune the activities for the "Space", and communication platform for its launch.

⁵ Summary of information found on ECL space project website; http://www.piec.org/ecl_space/

UNCTAD Consultative Task Force (CTF) on Environmental Requirements and Market Access for Developing Countries⁶

Mission

Improving collection and dissemination of information on environmental requirements, notably on voluntary standards, and analyzing key underlying trends; reviewing experiences of developing countries in pre-standard-setting consultations; assess regulations and standards that may have significant implications for developing countries; exploring pro-active adjustment policies and measures in developing countries; acting as a think tank to give guidance on further analytical and practical work.

Composition

The CTF is funded by the Government of the Netherlands and the task force is one component of a technical co-operation project undertaken by the UNCTAD Secretariat and collaborating institutions. Members include governments, relevant intergovernmental organizations, private sector partners, NGOs from developed and developing countries and other interested stakeholders. The CTF and time-limited thematic activities under its umbrella are implemented as project-based activities.

Activities

Provide a forum for well-structured and focused dialogue and networking on relevant issues at the interface of environmental requirements (ER) and market access for developing countries (this will include analysis, policy dialogue, information exchange and supportive activities). Under its umbrella, the CTF may consider launching some specific, well-defined and time-limited project activities, whose results will aid the substantive debate in the CTF. Initially, this would include work on (a) sector-specific experience in the preparation, adoption and implementation of regulations and standards and the related examination of possible trade implications for developing countries; (b) the development of holistic, proactive strategies in developing countries that effectively respond to ERs in key export markets; (c) improved access to and dissemination of information on ERs, including private-sector requirements.

The most recent CTF meeting identified two sector-specific project proposals: (i) environmental requirements and market access for developing countries: the case of the electrical and electronic sector; and (ii) assisting developing countries in developing national or subregional codes on good agricultural practice for horticultural products that are benchmarked to EurepGAP (the Euro-Retailer Produce Working Group's Code on Good Agricultural Practice).

⁶Summary of information found on CTF website; http://r0.unctad.org/trade_env/test1/projects/taskforce.htm

The Sustainable Food Laboratory⁷

Mission

The purpose of the Sustainable Food Laboratory is to accelerate the movement of sustainably produced food from niche to mainstream.

Composition

The Lab Team's 62 members are a microcosm of the stakeholders in the food system: farmers, processors, wholesalers, retailers, government representatives, activists, financiers, technical experts and others. In addition, the Lab Team's 18 Executive Champions – high level representatives including Chief Executives of the companies and organizations with which team members are affiliated -- provide feedback, credibility and support. A 9 person secretariat manages facilitation, research, evaluation and communication. The Lab team has chosen to work in six activity areas. Each activity has several technical specialists from prominent institutions who provide technical leadership and guidance.

Activities

1. **Fisheries:** Improve the Economic and Environmental Impacts of Harvesting Fish
 - Integrated coastal management for small-scale fisheries and aquaculture in Chile.
 - Creating a transparent sustainable food chain from fish harvester to consumers.
 - More sustainable aquaculture for Asia.
 - Best practice codes of conduct in West Africa.
2. **Food for Health Learning and Livelihoods:** Improve the health and sustainability of the food served in schools and healthcare institutions
 - Develop transatlantic sharing of best practices
 - prototype institutional buying and supply chain development in the US and EU
3. **Responsible Commodities:**
 - Support commodity standard setting efforts and develop a meta-standard – a unified, transparent, credible and low cost approach that can cut across commodities and deliver sustainability on the ground in a measurable way.
4. **Latin America:** Develop Partnerships for Sustainability
 - Small scale Latin American farmers (Guatemala and Dominican Republic) and large international food companies collaboratively identify and implement innovations in food supply chains.
 - Learning alliance partnership for sustainability which will compile best practices for increasing market access for small holders in Latin America.

⁷ Summary of information from SFL website; <http://www.glifood.org/>

- Brazil partnership for sustainability to improve local supply chains and increase access to markets.

5. **Business Coalition for More Sustainable Food:**

- Harness the buying power of food-related companies to create more sustainable food supply systems through a coalition of members that will work collectively to aggregate demand, identify best practices, and improve the social, environmental and financial performance of specific supply chains.

6. **Framing** “sustainable food”

- Conduct cultural research into dominant perceptions of food and use the results to connect with wider audiences on the need for “sustainable food.”

Program on Forests (PROFOR)⁸

Mission

Based upon the three pillars of the World Bank's Forest Strategy and Policy PROFOR seeks to:

- Harness the potential of forests to reduce poverty
- Integrate forests in sustainable economic development
- Protect global forest values

Composition

Management Board comprised of representatives from donor agencies, client countries, international organizations, NGOs and the private sector provides strategic guidance to PROFOR and determines what activities are included in the PROFOR portfolio. The management board holds one formal meeting each year, maintaining an active role through correspondence and informal meetings in the interim.

Activities

PROFOR fosters policies and institutions through support to participatory processes, such as national forest programs, and knowledge generation in four key thematic areas:

- Forest governance
- Forests' contribution to livelihoods of the rural poor
- Mitigation of adverse cross-sectoral impacts on forests
- Innovative approaches to financing sustainable forest management

⁸ Summary of information from PROFOR website; <http://www.profor.info/>

International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling (ISEAL) Alliance⁹

Mission

The ISEAL Alliance is an association of leading international standard-setting, certification and accreditation organizations that focus on social and environmental issues. ISEAL delivers a variety of member services to strengthen the governance and promote the legitimacy of member programs and provide a platform through which members can identify ways to work together. ISEAL advocates on behalf of members in relevant trade discussions for recognition of credible voluntary certification and monitors policy on regulatory issues of common concern.

Composition

ISEAL membership includes full and associate members. The Alliance is managed by a full-time secretariat. Members include the Fairtrade Labeling Organization, Forest Stewardship Council, International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements, Marine Aquarium Council, Marine Stewardship Council, Rainforest Alliance and Social Accountability International. Associate members include the Global Ecolabeling Network and Chemonics International.

Activities

ISEAL activities include:

1. Capacity building tools
 - Develop capacity building tools that ensure that organisations setting social and environmental standards have the capacity and guidance to operate in a manner consistent with recognized good practices and with criteria laid out in internationally-recognized normative documents.
2. Policy monitoring and analysis
 - Monitor key civil society and governmental trade and regulatory fora in order to provide timely analysis to members on developments that may affect their programs. ISEAL also participates in a number of these fora including the ISO Social Responsibility Working Group, European Union CSR Forum, and UNCTAD for the purpose of engaging in discussions and presenting position papers on behalf of their members.
3. Peer review
 - Attain credibility for participating organisations through internal peer assessment and external audit of their conformance with internationally-recognized normative documents. The peer review is an objective tool used to verify the competence of

⁹ Summary of information from ISEAL website; <http://www.isealliance.org/>

participating organisations. It is not being applied as a mechanism for mutual recognition between systems.

4. Common platform for collaboration

- Offer a platform for members where new ideas are tested, research on common priority issues is carried out, and where collaborative initiatives can be formed around a myriad of related issues.

Sustainable Commodities Initiative (SCI)¹⁰

Mission

The principal objective of the SCI is to improve the social, environmental and economic sustainability of commodities production and trade by developing global multi-stakeholder strategies on a sector-by-sector basis.

Composition

A collaborative effort between the UNCTAD and the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) with financial support from a multitude of agencies and staff resources allotted from two UNCTAD and IISD. Private and public sector organizations contribute to the success of the initiative.

Activities

The first phase of the SCI will focus on the identification of strategies for the coffee sector. The coffee phase will build upon existing initiatives with the objective of identifying novel ways for addressing supply chain and market issues in a coordinated way that is suitable for substantial application in the coffee sector.

In addition to establishing a process for the development, testing and analysis of new ideas for action, the SCI will also provide a unique forum for generating multi-lateral and multi-stakeholder cooperation towards sustainable practice within the coffee sector.

¹⁰ Summary of information from SCI website; <http://www.iisd.org/trade/commodities/sci.asp>

Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF)¹¹

Mission

The strategic aim of the STDF is to assist developing countries enhance their expertise and capacity to analyze and to implement international sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) standards, improving their human, animal and plant health situation, and thus ability to gain and maintain market access.

Composition

The STDF is a joint initiative of the Food and Agriculture Organization, the World Organization for Animal Health, the World Bank, the World Health Organization and the World Trade Organization.

Activities

The STDF is both a financing and a co-coordinating mechanism. It provides grant financing for developing countries seeking to comply with international SPS standards and hence gain or maintain market access. It also provides a forum for dialogue on SPS technical assistance issues among its five partner organizations and interested donors.

Specific ongoing activities include the maintenance of the STDF database which; provides an overview of planned and delivered SPS-related technical assistance; assists coordination between the partners institutions of the STDF; enables information sharing between institutions thereby creating opportunities to identify gaps and exploit synergies; and minimizes and/or avoid duplication in the provision of technical assistance.

¹¹ Summary of information from STDF website; <http://www.standardsfacility.org/>

Working Group on Environmentally and Socially Responsible Horticulture Production and Trade¹²

Mission

Facilitate dialogue, collaboration and joint activities among stakeholders working with social and environmental issues in horticultural production and trade.

Composition

NGOs involved in standard setting, certification and/or labelling of horticulture produce, auditors and environmental experts, producers and the FAO.

Activities

The Working Group holds expert meetings on topics related to social and environmental issues in horticulture production. These meetings are the impetus for the sharing of best practices and documentation of issues surrounding meeting subject matter. The topics of these meetings include:

- Voluntary Standards and Certification for Responsible Agricultural Production and Trade
- Socially and Environmentally Responsible Horticulture Production and Trade
- Socially and Environmentally Responsible Banana Production and Trade

¹² Summary of information from the Working Group website;
http://www.fao.org/es/ESC/en/20953/20987/highlight_29090en.html

Technical features of www.tradestandards.org

1. **CaudillWebTools 4.0** - The architecture behind the content management system. This includes approval/workflow system, streamlined user interface, photo gallery, document gallery, menu editor, and many other management tools. This operates under the assumption that users will have basic knowledge of Microsoft Word.
2. **Partners database** - Database of working group partners, including name, overview, logo, URL, contacts, other fields TBD. Includes online admin tools for editing list. Other content objects (projects, standards, topics, articles, countries, etc) can be associated with specific partners. Partner pages and all cross-references are automatically generated. Partners are included as a category of search results.
3. **Projects database** - Database of working group partners' activities worldwide, including title, description, dates, budget, other fields TBD. Includes online admin tools for editing list. Specific projects can be associated with other content objects (partners, standards, topics, articles, countries, etc). Project pages and all cross-references are automatically generated. Projects are included as a category of search results.
4. **Countries database** - Database of countries, including name, overview, capital, area, population, other fields TBD. Includes online admin tools for editing list. Other content objects (partners, projects, standards, topics, articles, countries, etc) can be associated with specific countries. Country pages and all cross-references are automatically generated. Countries are included as a category of search results.
5. **Interactive clickable map** - Flash-based world map allows users to zoom in on a region and then select a country to view all projects and partners active in that country. See www.usaidindonesia.org/en/provinces.aspx and <http://www.usaidindonesia.org/en/Province.1.aspx> for an example of a similar feature
6. **Standards Database** - Module provides a central topical organizing principle. At its core is a list of specific standards such as US NOP, ISO 14000, or Fair Trade, as well as broader topical areas such as social accountability, timber, or fresh flowers. The database will contain detailed information on each standard and on each topic, organized in a structured manner. Each content object in the website (resources, links, etc.) can be linked to the relevant standards. A "home page" for each standard and for each topic will bring together all of the resources available on the site for that standard.
7. **Automated document generation** - Allows website visitors to select a list of standards and/or topics and download a professionally formatted, printable guide to the relevant standards (in Microsoft Word format).
8. **e-Newsletter Package** - Build, test, and send attractive HTML-formatted newsletters based on existing website content or newsletter-only content. Contacts have full opt-

in/opt-out control of their email preferences according to permission marketing principles. The system allows you to reuse existing website content, or create newsletter-only articles.

9. **Multilingual Tools** - Toolset allows for site maintain a site in multiple languages. You can present selected pages in multiple languages, or maintain parallel versions of your entire site in each language. Content management tools can accommodate any language and any writing system. Translation workflow tools smooth the process of maintaining a website in several languages by bringing professional, human translators onto your virtual website team.
10. **Search Engine** - Allow website visitors to search your website across all types of content. Results may be organized by content type (success stories, press releases, forum postings, downloadable documents, printed materials, etc.) and by relevance. Searching algorithm uses keywords as well as full-text indexing.
11. **Online Community Discussion Forum** - Enable multiple ongoing conversations among the Market Standards community, enabled by topical, moderated forums. Create new forums and moderate existing ones using a simple web-based interface. Users can subscribe to specific threads in order to receive email updates when new submissions are posted.
12. **Related Links Module** - This database of related websites is tagged according to the subject matter. Rather than displaying a single page of links somewhere on the site, this module will display a small set of context-sensitive links on each page, according to the subject matter of that page.
13. **Article Feedback Module** - Provide space for discussion around each article or success story. Registered website visitors can post comments and feedback following each article. Designated Chemonics staff can choose to receive email notifications of new posts, and are able to moderate the postings, editing or removing posts if necessary.
14. **Calendar of Events** – The calendar will allow TSPN members to update global activities to improve coordination of events.
15. **Customized online documentation manual** - Online reference for website content contributors and administrators, specifically adapted to this website’s content, features and functionality.
16. **Glossary with pop-up definitions** - Highlights technical vocabulary on the site, allowing visitors to mouse over terms to view a definition. Staff can maintain the list of terms, synonyms, and definitions in use.

17. **Most-emailed page tracking** - Allows staff and website visitors to monitor the articles and web pages that are attracting the most attention. Tracks pages as they are emailed by website visitors, and automatically generates a list of the most-emailed pages.

TSPN Membership

Organization	Acroynm
Abt. Associates	Abt
Chemonics International	CII
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit	GTZ
Development Associates International	DAI
Euopean Union	EU
Fintrac	Fintrac
Food and Agricultural Organization	FAO
Inter-American Development Bank	IADB
Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture	IICA
International Finance Corporation	IFC
International Institute for Sustainable Development	IISD
International Organization for Standarization	ISO
International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling Alliance	ISEAL
Michigan State University Insitute for Food and Agricultural Standards	MSU IFAS
Oxfam	Oxfam
Pesticides Initiative Programme	PIP
Rainforest Alliance	RA
Social Accountability International	SAI
TechnoServe	Technoserve
United Nations Industrial Development Organization	UNIDO
United States Agency for International Development	USAID
University of Guelph	UG
World Bank Group - International Trade Department	WB
World Wildlife Fund	WWF