



**Report of the Core Group on the meeting
held on 7 March 2012**

1. The Core Group, chaired by Ms Amy Karpel of the USA, met in London on 7 March 2012 for the first time under the International Coffee Agreement 2007.

Item 1: Feedback on 2nd Consultative Forum on Coffee Sector Finance

2. The Group expressed its appreciation for the excellent presentations made at the 2nd Forum, and noted that two key points were that risk management and finance tools were relevant throughout the coffee supply chain and challenges could not be solved by focussing on a single part of the chain which was inter-related, and the importance of institutional and legal frameworks in enabling entities in the supply chain to pursue finance and risk management tools.

3. The Head of Operations reported that the presentations and report of the Forum would be posted in all four languages on the ICO website, and the recordings of presenters would also be available for downloading. The ICO would issue a press release and, as with the 1st Forum, would contact the World Bank and other organizations to request their assistance in disseminating the results. The materials would also be available on CD-Roms which would be disseminated by the Executive Director on missions and at conferences. All Members were urged to be proactive in disseminating information and materials in their countries.

4. The following suggestions were made with respect to disseminating the results:

- All Members were encouraged to issue press releases to publicize the results and generate interest in the Forum in their countries.

- The proceedings could be prepared in a formal publication, with information presented thematically, possibly like the Annual Review, which could be widely disseminated and used to inform policy making.
- Social networking sites could be used to disseminate the results, including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and the CoffeeClub. In the case of the latter, it was suggested that a community could be established, mediated by an expert who could help to monitor content posted on the site. A list of resource persons who could assist with answering questions could be developed.
- The possibility of webcasting could be explored for a future Forum, although this could have cost implications.
- The ICO could prepare a one or two page fact sheet distilling the main points and themes of each Forum, which could be distributed on missions.
- The issue of dissemination should be included as a regular item on the agenda for future meetings of the Core Group.
- The need to ensure policymakers were informed of these important issues and tools was highlighted. It was suggested that the ICO could contact all producer associations and invite them to raise these issues with policy makers in their countries. It would be useful to know what Members thought of the tools provided by institutions and cultural aspects were relevant. It was suggested that a proposal could be developed for September on how to raise awareness among different Governments on risk management and finance issues in the coffee sector.

5. The Committee noted the suggestion that the ICO should send a communiqué to the G-20 meeting in Mexico in June 2012, highlighting the importance of risk management tools for agriculture and the work being undertaken by the ICO to address this issue which could include identifying the challenges faced by the sector, solutions and encouraging more investment and work in this area. The Group agreed that the Chairperson and Vice-Chairman of the Group would prepare a first draft for circulation to Members, following which it would be finalized by the Chairperson and Secretariat and submitted to the G-20 as soon as possible given the time-frame for the preparations of the G-20 meeting.

Item 2: Role and function of the Core Group

Consideration of the role and function of the Core Group

6. The Group noted that the Core Group was one element of the Forum which acted as an umbrella for activities ranging from discussions to social media. It agreed that it had both an advisory function and an organizing function, which were linked. It could act as a platform for exchanging ideas where experts could share their experiences and devise ways

of addressing challenges as well as reviewing discussions at Forum events. It could also be involved in planning future events such as panel discussions or workshops. The point was made that substantive matters should be discussed where the majority of Members were present and could contribute to identifying issues.

Identification of Member experts to serve on the Core Group

7. The Group encouraged Members to include experts in risk management and finance in their delegations to expand the range of expertise available and support Members in their work. The USA, Colombia and Mexico were among those who expressed their willingness to do so. It was suggested that it would be useful if experts could assist Members in developing ideas that were widely relevant across the coffee sector in different regions. The point was made that although the terms of reference specified that the Group would operate in English, some experts might not be fluent in English and the Secretariat was requested to explore the possibility of making interpretation available for its meetings. This should be possible if the Group met during normal working hours of the Council.

Item 3: Advisors for the Core Group for 2011/12

8. The Group discussed suggestions for advisors to the Core Group and noted that it would be useful if there could be a balance of individuals from different types of institutions. The Core Group identified four individuals or institutions, and four alternates, that could be invited to serve as advisors to the Core Group and agreed to recommend to the Council that Members of the Core Group informally approach those individuals/institutions, and their alternates as necessary, to sound out their availability to serve, following which a formal invitation would be made by the Executive Director. The Group noted that the National Coffee Council (CNC) of Brazil had confirmed that it was willing to participate as an advisor in an institutional capacity.

9. The Group noted that it would be useful to prepare an outline of the role so that advisors knew what was expected, and how much time would be involved. The role would involve attending two Core Group meetings a year, as well as preparing for and participating in intersessional meetings. To maximize the participation of advisors at the next meeting, consideration should be given to developing the agenda which could include discussing and selecting a theme for the next Forum, and developing material and information that could help Members get to the core of the issue.

Item 4: Consideration of future Forum event formats

10. The Group noted that the panel discussion and exchange of views at the 2nd Forum had been very useful but should not be the only way in which it could operate. Other

options which could be explored included workshops, engaging a professional facilitator, breakout groups, internet platforms or holding the Forum outside London in a producing country. This issue would be considered again at the next meeting.

Item 5: Other considerations for future Forum events

11. The Group agreed that a Forum should not be held in September 2012 to allow time to discuss the future of the Forum, and to avoid detracting attention from a seminar on certification which would be held at that time. A meeting of the Core Group and advisors could be held during the week of the 109th Session of the Council to discuss ideas arising from the 2nd Forum and to consider topics and formats for future events.

12. The Group expressed its appreciation for contributions from the Banco do Brasil and the CNC to the 2nd Forum. All Members were encouraged to explore sponsorship further and to communicate the benefits of the Forum for the coffee sector to their private sector so that potential sponsors were aware of it before being approached for sponsorship. Consideration should be given to identifying what companies could be offered in return for sponsorship, such as promotional opportunities, as well as information on the costs of the Forum. The costs of the first Forum had amounted to £4,300, and the costs of the second Forum would be finalized shortly. They excluded the costs of interpretation which had been provided as part of the Council Session, and travel expenses which had been met by participants in the case of the first two Forums. The Group requested the ICO to prepare a draft plan to assist with approaches to sponsors.

Item 6: Next steps

13. The Group noted that next steps discussed during the meeting included ways of disseminating the results of the Forum, encouraging sponsors, suggestions for advisors and their role, and plans for outreach.

Item 7: Any other business

14. There was no other business to discuss.

Item 8: Date of next meeting

15. The Group noted that the next meeting would take place in London at the time of the 109th Council Session from 24 to 28 September 2012.