



INTERNATIONAL COFFEE ORGANIZATION
ORGANIZACIÓN INTERNACIONAL DEL CAFÉ
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**Report of the
Virtual Screening Committee (VSC)
on four coffee project proposals**

Background

1. This report contains assessments provided by the Virtual Screening Committee (VSC) on the following four project proposals (two revised and two new) which will be considered by the Executive Board and Council in September 2009:

- **Raising Vietnamese coffee farmers' income through increased farming efficiency and quality management** (formerly: Enhancing resource use efficiency in coffee production and processing by Farmer 2 Farmer Learning), submitted by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Vietnam.
- **Sequencing the genome for enhanced characterization, utilization, and conservation of *Coffea* germplasm diversity** (formerly: Characterization, enhanced utilization and conservation of *Coffea* germplasm diversity), submitted by the National Coffee Research Centre (CENICAFE), a technical agency of the National Federation of Coffee Growers of Colombia, in collaboration with Cornell University, on behalf of the International Coffee Genomics Network (ICGN).
- **Coffee genetic resources conservation and sustainable use: global perspective**, submitted by the Inter-African Coffee Organization (IACO).
- **Enhancing the potential of Robusta gourmet coffee production in Uganda**, submitted by the Istituto Agronomico per l'Oltremare (IAO) of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MAE), with the support of the Government of Uganda.

2. The VSC is currently composed of Brazil, Côte d'Ivoire, Guatemala and Indonesia (exporting Members) and Germany, Italy, Spain and the USA (importing Members).

Action

The Executive Board is requested to consider the report of the VSC and to submit a recommendation on the four proposals to the Council.

REPORT OF THE VIRTUAL SCREENING COMMITTEE (VSC)

Summary of VSC screening by technical area

September 2009

Technical area	Raising Vietnamese coffee farmers' income through increased farming efficiency and quality management*	Sequencing the genome for enhanced characterization, utilization, and conservation of <i>Coffea</i> germplasm diversity**	Coffee genetic resources conservation and sustainable use: global perspective	Enhancing the potential of Robusta gourmet Coffee production in Uganda
Coffee sector priorities	Sep 2009: Adequate Sep 2008: Insufficient Information May 2008: Adequate	Sep 2009: Poor Sep 2008: Poor	Adequate	Adequate
Project planning	Sep 2009: Adequate Sep 2008: Insufficient Information May 2008: Adequate	Sep 2009: Very poor Sep 2008: Poor	Adequate	Poor
Operational capacity of Project Executing Agency (PEA)	Sep 2009: Adequate Sep 2008: Good May 2008: Good	Sep 2009: Poor Sep 2008: Adequate	Poor	Poor
Sustainability	Sep 2009: Poor Sep 2008: Insufficient Information May 2008: Insufficient Information	Sep 2009: Very poor Sep 2008: Insufficient information	Adequate	Adequate
Budget/cost-effectiveness	Sep 2009: Adequate Sep 2008: Insufficient Information May 2008: Insufficient Information	Sep 2009: Missing information Sep 2008: Poor	Adequate	Poor
Overall recommendation	The VSC was split on: Sep 2009: Approval (3) or revision (1) Sep 2008: Approval, revision or rejection May 2008: Revision or rejection	The VSC was split on: Sep 2009: Revision (2) or rejection (1) Sep 2008: Revision or rejection	The VSC was split on: Approval (1) or revision (3)	The VSC was split on: Approval (1) or revision (2)

(*) This is the third time that this proposal has been considered by the VSC. The screening results are shown in the above table as follows: May 2008, September 2008 and September 2009.

(**) This is the second time that this proposal has been considered by the VSC. The screening results are shown in the above table as follows: September 2008 and September 2009.

1. Raising Vietnamese coffee farmers’ income through increased farming efficiency and quality management (formerly: Enhancing resource use efficiency in coffee production and processing by Farmer 2 Farmer learning), submitted by the Ministry for Agriculture and Rural Development of Vietnam – Project outline document WP-Board 1049/08 Rev. 1.

Screening by technical area	Scoring:
Coffee sector priorities	Sep 2009: Adequate Sep 2008: Insufficient information May 2008: Adequate
Project planning	Sep 2009: Adequate Sep 2008: Insufficient information May 2008: Adequate
Operational capacity of PEA	Sep 2009: Adequate Sep 2008: Good May 2008: Good
Sustainability	Sep 2009: Poor Sep 2008: Insufficient information May 2008: Insufficient information
Budget/cost-effectiveness	Sep 2009: Adequate Sep 2008: Insufficient information May 2008: Insufficient information
VSC recommendations:	Sep 2009: The Committee was split on whether to recommend the proposal for approval (3) or revision (1) Sep 2008: Approval, revision or rejection May 2008: Revision or rejection

General comments:

- (a) This project proposal is designed to improve Vietnamese coffee farmers’ livelihoods through improving farming efficiency, systematic quality management and reducing the negative environmental impact of farming practices.
- (b) The proposed Project Executing Agency (PEA) is the Department of Crop Production at the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.
- (c) This is the third (and, according to the procedures, the last) time that the Committee has considered this proposal.

VSC comments:

- Members expressed satisfaction with the revised proposal and three suggested that it should be approved, while only one suggested revision. Most Members considered that the proposal did not focus on either basic research or generic promotion and this was suitable for CFC funding. However, this is not currently possible since Vietnam is not a CFC member. If the project is approved, an alternative source of funding would have to be sought. Most Members deemed that more co-financing was required.

2. Sequencing the genome for enhanced characterization, utilization, and conservation of *Coffea* germplasm diversity (formerly: Characterization, enhanced utilization and conservation of *Coffea* germplasm diversity), submitted by the National Coffee Research Centre (CENICAFE), a technical agency of the National Federation of Coffee Growers of Colombia, in collaboration with Cornell University – Project outline document WP-Board 1054/08 Rev. 1.

Screening by technical area	Scoring:
Coffee sector priorities	Sep 2009: Poor Sep 2008: Poor
Project planning	Sep 2009: Very poor Sep 2008: Poor
Operational capacity of PEA	Sep 2009: Poor Sep 2008: Adequate
Sustainability	Sep 2009: Very poor Sep 2008: Insufficient information
Budget/cost-effectiveness	Sep 2009: Missing information Sep 2008: Poor
VSC recommendations:	Sep 2009: The Committee was split on whether to recommend the proposal for revision (2) or rejection (1) Sep 2008: Revision or rejection

General comments:

- (a) This project proposal is designed to facilitate genetic diversity characterization, preservation and utilization in *Coffea*, and to ensure the long-term sustainability of coffee production (social, economic and environmental). Estimation of genetic diversity in cultivated crops is essential for breeding programmes and for the conservation of genetic resources. All genetic-resource conservation activities require the characterization of the diversity present in both the gene pools and the gene banks.
- (b) The proposed PEAs are CENICAFE, a technical agency of the National Federation of Coffee Growers of Colombia, and Cornell University.
- (c) This is the second time that the Committee has considered this proposal.

VSC comments:

- The proposal still does not discuss how several other countries that have expertise would join the group and bring better results as is expected by the proposal. Although the ICGN is cited, it is not clear which other countries and researchers would be involved and which germplasm would be used (if only germplasm from Colombia is used, this could not be characterized as an international approach). The cost of this project proposal is too high.
- One Member considered that the proposal focused on basic research and was not suitable for funding by the CFC.

3. Coffee genetic resources conservation and sustainable use: global perspective, submitted by the Inter-African Coffee Organization (IACO) – Project outline document WP-Board 1058/09.

Screening by technical area	Scoring:
Coffee sector priorities	Adequate
Project planning	Adequate
Operational capacity of PEA	Poor
Sustainability	Adequate
Budget/cost-effectiveness	Adequate
VSC recommendations:	The Committee was split on whether to recommend the proposal for approval (1) or revision (3)

General comments:

- (a) This project proposal is designed to build consensus on a realistic vision for conservation of coffee genetic resources and the use of these resources for the sustainable development of the global coffee industry and to improve the livelihoods of smallholder farmers in coffee producing countries.
- (b) The proposed PEA is the IACO and Bioversity International (formerly IPGRI).

VSC comments:

- One Member stated that it was a good idea to establish a policy on coffee genetic resources conservation.
- Another Member noted that:
 - i) the expected outcomes might not be realistic since the project activities were expected to be implemented in only one year;
 - ii) the level of involvement by participating institutions was not clear, since some had not yet been contacted; and
 - iii) more information about the budget was needed.
- Two Members considered that the proposal did not focus on basic research and was suitable for CFC funding. Another Member deemed that co-financing was required.

4. Enhancing the potential of Robusta gourmet coffee production in Uganda, submitted by the Istituto Agronomico per l’Oltremare (IAO) of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MAE), with the support of the Government of Uganda – Project outline document WP-Board 1059/09.

Screening by technical area	Scoring:
Coffee sector priorities	Adequate
Project planning	Poor
Operational capacity of PEA	Poor
Sustainability	Adequate
Budget/cost-effectiveness	Poor
VSC recommendations:	The Committee was split on whether to recommend the proposal for approval (1) or revision (2)

General comments:

- (a) This project proposal is designed to add value to coffee and promote the coffee producing region of Uganda and its local cultural heritage. Areas suitable for high quality crops will be selected and planning abilities strengthened, with particular emphasis on rural development and the promotion of the region.
- (b) The proposed PEA is the IAO/MAE, Florence – Italy.

VSC comments:

- One Member considered that this proposal should be revised to include other countries from Africa, as occurred with the proposal in Central America (Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua).
- Another Member noted that it would be appropriate to specify which criteria would be used to select the 1,000 small producers who were expected to be involved, since the number of farmers in the region was much bigger.
- It was also suggested that the proponents should explain the basis for considering that, after two years implementation, as a result of the project activities (increased production of quality coffee, processing productivity and diversification) it could reasonably be expected that family income would increase by between 20% and 30%. On the latter point, the proponents were requested to define more specific verifiable indicators for the outcomes.
- Two Members considered that the proposal did not focus on either basic research or generic promotion and was suitable for funding by the CFC. Two others deemed that more co-financing was required.