



REPORT ON  
PROMECAFE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETINGS  
HELD OCTOBER 10 - 11, 2008  
IN GUATEMALA CITY

Prepared by: Louis Campbell, Advisory Services Unit Manager

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The official meeting was held at the new Grand Tikel Future Hotel in Guatemala City on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> of October 2008. The participants were technical managers of the Member Countries Coffee Institutions and some allied agencies. Guillermo Canet Brenes who chaired the meeting was duly assisted by Dr. Armando Garcia and his secretary, Ms. Dulcie Orbi. (See agenda and list of participants who attended).

### **Objectives of the meetings were:**

- To give each member country the opportunity to present proposed work activities for 2008/09;
- To identify areas where assistance is required from PROMECAFE and;
- To get consensus on topics that PROMECAFE should include in the Regional Work Plan for 2009 and beyond.

The Executive Secretary welcomed all participants and introduced two new representatives, these are, Jeremy Hagggar from CATIE and Edgar Valdespina from MIDA. The Secretary gave an overview report of the various projects which were targeted for 2008 and the scheduled and unscheduled workshops (e.g. cuppers' workshop) that were held.

He proposed to arrange a workshop probably of 4-5 days duration for technicians in PROMECAFE member countries to update and reinforce concepts of Agronomic Management, such as soil fertility, pest management, etc. Mr. Jeremy Hagggar suggested that we should look at new coffee production models in light of high costs and climate change.

The issue of preservation of Genetic Material at CATIE was raised; the meeting was informed that CATIE is now in the process of setting up a new plot to accommodate the genetic material that exist in Costa Rica and for any new material that can be secured.

The meeting was informed that Guatemala will host the World Coffee Conference in 2010. Each country needs to start planning what type of presentation they will do. Investigative work should be done with a view of getting data to present at the conference. The Secretary reported that a Legal Workshop will be held in Jamaica in 2009.

Mr. Omar Funez, PROMECAFE representative, gave an overview of the two active projects, that is, FOMIN funded by PROMECAFE and IDB and PCRA which is funded by PROMECAFE and AECID. He emphasized the fact that the European Union needed a high comfort level about the production processes for coffee by year 2010 and that the Denomination of Origin (DO) and Genetic Indicators (GI) projects were critical to this end. He reported that the final Pulperly Workshop will be held in Guatemala in October 2008.

The following Regional Networks were mentioned:

- 1) DO & GI linked to quality control
- 2) Reaping and processing
- 3) Legal

## **PRESENTATIONS BY COUNTRY**

### **PANAMA**

Mr. Edgar Valdespino, the representative, articulated the following topics as the main focus for Panama in 2008/09:

- Training of technicians
- Study of impact of pulping on the environment
- Agro Terrorism
- Value added 'BARISTA'

### **EL SALVADOR**

The representative, Mr. Sergio Gil, gave an overview of the status of coffee in his country. He raised some concerns about the slow transfer of technology and information from the technicians to the farmers, and suggested that this is affecting the speed at which farmers accept and adapt to new technology.

Mr. Gil suggested that farmers are not prepared to deal with issued of Denomination of Origin and Geographic Indicators. They are also not aware of the benefits to be derived from being Rain Forest Certified or having Bird Friendly Status. He further stated that the major issues facing the farmers were low productivity and lack of financing.

The focus of El Salvador will be on promotion of multiple cropping systems for small farmers and to incorporate forestry as a way to sustain production and income for the small farmers. Planting of the F1 Hybrids do not guarantee success. No technical management guide has been prepared for this Hybrid for circulation to farmers.

The Executive Secretary responded to the issues of slow technology transfer etc. by emphasizing the fact that each member country and organization is obligated to design programmes to train their technicians and farmers and that PROMECAFE could only facilitate and provide technical expertise for these programmes.

### **HONDURAS**

The Honduras representative, Mr. Mario Ordonez, in his introduction gave the following statistics:

- The coffee sector earns approximately US\$ 470 million annually
- Produces coffee on 280,000 hectare
- Employs 100,00 persons directly or indirectly
- Produces 4.423 million , qq Green Beans annually

Honduras Coffee Institute (IHCAFE) provides the following services:

- Quality assurance
- Productivity research
- Promotions
- Diversification
- Financial support to farmers

The institution is supported by 37 Officers, 6 Regional Research Centres and 4 Farms. The representative reported that there has been a significant improvement in production and productivity in Honduras. This could be attributed to the work done via the sustainability project that they had implemented.

Mr. Ordonez highlighted soil fertility issues as an area that needed attention along with the following:

- Work to be done on Beauveria Bassiana in 2009;
- Strengthening of Human Resource;
- Establish small drying facilities in coffee producing zones to prevent the long haulage (8 hrs.) of coffee to San Pedro Sula for drying;
- Reduce high turnover rate of researchers and agronomists – need to assist in establishing 6 week coffee production courses for new employees.

### **GUATEMALA**

The Guatemalan representative, Mr. Francisco Anzueto, reported that the coffee sector is presently expanding growing areas in zones over 4000 m ASL. Traditional producing zones are contracting. The sector is experiencing biannual bearing and they are having serious labour problems. Areas of focus were:

- Soil fertility management
- Investigation of soil borne diseases
- Increasing the capacity of extensionists
- Improving information gathering and generation

### **COSTA RICA**

Jorge Ramirez, the representative, highlighted the fact that the ICAFE Research Unit was over 50 years old and the Unit now consists of a small number of researchers. They now focus on entomology (CBB in particular) and coffee berry diseases.

This work is preparatory in anticipation of the arrival of the disease. Other work being done includes the following:

- Cost benefit analysis of controlling nematodes
- Efficacy of organic products versus chemical products
- Integrated control of CBB
- Use of nematodes to control CBB
- Production of parasitoids (mass rearing) in laboratory
- Genetic improvement of coffee varieties

He stated that assistance is needed in Molecular Biology; rearing parameters for parasitoids and the collection of labour data from the region to do comparative analysis. The presenter lamented the fact that as the level of production is lowered, the cost of labour in the coffee sector has increased significantly.

Costa Rican farmers have to be importing labour from Nicaragua. El Salvador also employs Nicaraguan to work on coffee and sugar cane farms. The big concern, he stated, for the two countries was, if there is resurgence in coffee production in Nicaragua, adequate labour might not be available.

#### **DOMINICA REPUBLIC (CODOCAFE)**

Jose Candelario, the representative, reported that the coffee sector in the Dominica Republic has been severely affected by four named storms in the past two years. Their infrastructure has been extensively damaged. Presently only a minimum amount of restorative work has been done to roads, etc. He stated that the Government concentrated its recovery effort on the coastal and commercial areas. Also, at present, there are socio political problems in the country.

The following projects have started:

- Beauveria Bassiana project started by Armando Garcia was not followed-up; nothing has been done since he left;
- Promoting the use of temporary shade thus banana for food security.

**JAMAICA**

It was highlighted to the meeting that the country has also suffered extensive damage and losses in 07/08 due to three (3) named storms and recently from Hurricane Gustav. The following data was presented:

<b>CROP YEAR 2007/08</b>		
	<b>CROP ESTIMATE</b>	<b>ACTUAL REAPED</b>
BLUE MOUNTAIN	510,000	290,000
LOW LAND	90,000	45,000

The following activities were presented:

- Work being done on Denomination of Origin & GI in collaboration with JIPO and WTO. The branding/labeling of Appleton Rum, Jamaica Jerk Sauce and Jamaica Blue Mountain Coffee was also used as examples of the progress being made in this area.
- Pesticide Residue Testing:  
The testing of coffee samples for export was mentioned; testing for more than 23 pesticides being done. CIB is seeking funds to establish its own laboratory.
- Farm Registration:  
The importance of this activity was explained.
- Establishment of Research Unit at CIB:  
The concept was explained to the meeting.
- Training of Trainers:  
The concept was explained and an overview given of the assistance received from the EU to prepare manuals and to revise the book, 'Growing of Coffee in Jamaica'. Collaboration between CIB and certifying agency, HEART, was also outlined.

- Integrated Borer Management Programme:

The phasing out of Endosulfan 35 EC was outlined. The need for assistance from PROMECAFE in establishing a laboratory for the rearing of *Beauveria Bassiana* was highlighted. The representative gave detail of the existing programme where clean reaping (stripping), use of traps and endosulfan 35 EC were the main components.

### **CATIE**

The presenter, Jeremy Haggar, highlighted the following activities as ongoing work at the institution and also topics for future work:

- Sustainability resource - shade manipulation
- Impact of the changing environmental conditions, example marginalization of land.
- Research systems/models that can predict climate change
- Research into Bio friendly products to satisfy EU et al
- Validation of Agro forestry systems and to evaluate their benefits
- Geographic characterization of coffee quality - the presenter encouraged the other representatives to actively seek funding to do research along this path so as to be prepared for extremes in climate.

At the end of the presentations, the logistics for the farm tour on Saturday, October 11, 2008 were finalized.

### **COMMENTS**

- The regional institutions are all suffering from high staff turnover;
- The high fertilizer prices are impacting negatively on yields;
- Labour cost has increased significantly over the past 5-6 years;
- The importation of labour from other countries has become a permanent feature in Costa Rica and El Salvador;
- The members need to strengthen their record management capabilities in order to secure information on research done both locally and internationally;
- The strengthening of library facilities is critical to this process;



- Regional Institution must implement their own educational programme for coffee technicians/researchers. PROMECAFE will assist in this venture but cannot be held as the responsible organization;
- The transfer of information, example the significance of DO & GI not reaching the farmers and;
- Many farms changing hands in Guatemala; this will result in new investment capital coming into the country. This situation is somewhat similar to Jamaica.

The PROMECAFE Executive Secretary solicited support from all institutions in trying to carry out the mandate of the organization.

A draft work programme will be prepared and presented to the Board of Directors for ratification at their annual meeting set for November 27-28, 2008.

Prepared by:

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REUNION REGIONAL DE COMITÉ TECNICO

Guatemala, 10 y 11 de octubre 2008

AGENDA

✓ **DIA 10**

8:30 – 9:00 HORAS

- Bienvenida, objetivos y mecánica de la reunión

Guillermo Canet Brenes  
PROMECAFE

✓ 9:00 - 13:00 HORAS

Programa de trabajo PROMECAFE 2008:

- Presentación de acciones FAA 2009

Guillermo Canet Brenes  
Armando Garcia  
Omar Funez  
PROMECAFE

✓ 1/2 - Planes institucionales 2009

Faises

✓ 13:00 – 14.30 HORAS

✓ **ALMUERZO**

14:30 – 17:00 HORAS

Programa de trabajo PROMECAFE 2009:

- Elaboración conjunta, borrador del PAA 2009.

- Necesidades de avance, acuerdos

Participantes PROMECAFE

- Fin de la reunión.

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PRODUCTO ESPERADO: PAA 2009 de PROMECAFE  
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Café: 10:00 y 16:00 HORAS

**DIA 11**

08:00 horas

Salida al campo

Coordinación:  
Francisco Anzueto- ANACAFE



**REUNION DE COMITÉ TÉCNICO**  
Guatemala, 10 y 11 de octubre, 2008.

**Propósitos:**

- Presentar y acordar los planes institucionales que requieren apoyo técnico de PROMECAFE.
- Elaborar conjuntamente, el borrador del Plan de Acción Anual 2009 de PROMECAFE

**Producto esperado:**

- Borrador del Plan de Acción Anual de PROMECAFE, 2009.

**Participantes:**

<b>INSTITUCION</b>	<b>PARTICIPANTE</b>
ANACAFE	- Francisco Anzueto
PROCAFE	- Sergio Gil
IHCAFE	- Mario Ordoñez
ICAFE	- Jorge Ramirez
MIDA	- Edgar Valdespino
CODOCAFE	- José Candelario
CIB	- Louis Campbell
CATIE	- Jeremy Hagggar
CIRAD	- Nelly Vasquez
PROMECAFE	- Jacques Avelino
	- Guillermo Canet
	- Armando García
	- Omar Funez