



**INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL  
TIMBER COUNCIL**

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FIFTY-SEVENTH SESSION  
29 November – 3 December 2021  
Virtual Session

**REPORT OF THE INFORMAL ADVISORY GROUP (IAG)**

**AT ITS THIRTY-FIFTH MEETING**

**1 July, 26 August and 24 November 2021  
Virtual meetings**



**Thirty-fifth Meeting of the Informal Advisory Group (IAG)  
Virtual Meetings, 1 July, 26 August and 24 November 2021**

**Report of the Chairperson**

1. The Thirty-fifth Meeting of the Informal Advisory Group (IAG) was convened virtually on 1 July, 26 August and 24 November 2021. The meeting of 24 November 2021 was chaired by Mr. Kheiruddin Md. Rani (Malaysia), Chairperson of the Council and attended by Mr. Jesse Mahoney (Australia), Vice-Chairperson of the Council; Mr. Zahrul Muttaqin (Indonesia), Chairperson of the Committee on Economic Information and Market Intelligence (CEM) and the Committee on Forest Industry (CFI), Ms. Aysha Ghadiali, Chairperson of the Committee on Reforestation and Forest Management (CRF); Ms. Teresa Guila Nube, Chairperson of the Committee on Finance and Administration (CFA); Mr. Jorge Malleux (Peru), Producer Spokesperson; Mr. Luke Thompson (USA), Consumer Spokesperson; Ms. Yoshiko Motoyama, Representative of Japan (the Host Government of ITTO Headquarters) with observer colleagues Mr. Taku Sakaguchi and Ms. Akiko Tabata; and ITTO Officer-in-Charge Mr. Steven Johnson assisted by other senior members of the Secretariat.
2. The minutes of the IAG meetings held on 1 July and 26 August 2021 are annexed to this report in Annexes C and D, respectively.
3. The IAG considered and adopted the following agenda for its meeting on 24 November 2021:

***Meeting of 24 November 2021***

- A. Brief background of the IAG:
  - Decision 2(LI);
  - Report of the IAG at Thirty-fifth Meeting Parts 1-2 (1 July and 26 August 2021);
  - General observations by the IAG Members;
- B. Status of contributions to the Administrative Account and members' voting eligibility
- C. Filling positions of Council officers/bodies
- D. Matters related to the Appointment of the Executive Director – Decision 5(LVI)
- E. Consideration of draft decisions/elements of decisions submitted pursuant to ITTC Decision 7(XXXIII):
  - i. Projects, Pre-Projects and Activities [Decision 1(LVII)]
  - ii. Amendment of Financial Rules and Rules Relating to Projects of the ITTO;
  - iii. Extension of the International Tropical Timber Agreement, 2006;
  - iv. Adoption of the ITTO Strategic Action Plan 2022-2026;
  - v. Adoption of the Terms of Reference for Decision 4(LVI) Advisory Board and the Timeline and Terms of Reference for the Review under Decision 5(LIV) on the Pilot Programmatic Approach;
  - vi. Appointment of the Executive Director
- F. Other matters

**A. Brief background of the IAG**

4. The OIC noted that the IAG has been taking on a larger role than previously, including by convening two intersessional meetings in 2021, the minutes of which have been posted under the Members' Portal on the ITTO website. He proposed that the report of the present IAG meeting be submitted to the Council as usual, with the minutes of the two earlier 2021 meetings appended to the report.

**B. Status of contributions to the Administrative Account and members' voting eligibility**

5. The OIC told the meeting that no member in Africa has paid its contributions for 2021 and only four have cleared all previous obligations. Therefore, if voting is required during the session and there is no change to the situation, no African members will be eligible to vote. In the Asia-Pacific region, Cambodia, Myanmar and Papua New Guinea are all currently ineligible to vote due to one or more years of arrears; Thailand has outstanding contributions from previous years and is likewise ineligible. In Latin America and the Caribbean, nine of 13 countries are currently ineligible to vote, although there is uncertainty over the 2021 payment by Panama which is being investigated and will be resolved before the session. Several members in all regions are in longer-term arrears. Brazil is currently in arrears for 2021 and is therefore ineligible to vote, although it recently made a significant payment of previous arrears. On the consumer side, all countries except Albania and the United Kingdom are eligible to vote, with efforts to contact the official contact point of the United Kingdom unsuccessful to date. The OIC asked meeting participants for assistance in making such contact. This is the first year the United Kingdom has not been covered by the European Union (EU). Albania has arrears of more than USD 300 000 accumulated since no payments have been made since joining. The OIC noted that any voting required during the session for the election of the Executive Director would involve a special vote, with a requirement for a supermajority among both producers and consumers.
6. The Producer Spokesperson said that the possibility that no African member country will be eligible to vote was a serious issue. He considered that, under the ITTA, 2006, the region's votes would be lost, thus putting the producers at a disadvantage. He suggested that the issue of arrears could be addressed during the Council Session under agenda item 11.
7. The spokesperson for the consumers said he had been unable to obtain a response from the United Kingdom official contact point but would continue to attempt to do so. He noted that, to his knowledge, the United Kingdom had not participated in the consumer caucus in 2021. There had been discussion in the consumer caucus on agenda item 11, and there is recognition that this is a problem for all members and especially for those that are significantly in arrears.
8. The OIC pointed out that, even if no member in the African region is eligible to vote, the votes would not be lost. Under the ITTA, 2006, both producers and consumers have 1000 votes each; in the event that no African country is eligible, the votes for Africa would be reallocated to Asia-Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean. What would be lost, however, would be any voice from Africa, but the producers as a whole would not lose votes.
9. The Producer Spokesperson thanked the OIC for the clarification but reiterated that, on one interpretation of the ITTA, if no African member country is eligible to vote, the votes allocated to Africa would not count. He reminded the meeting that, at the first IAG meeting in 2021, he had suggested that the Secretariat contact every country to establish synergy and to discuss, with high-level authorities, the difficulties they were facing in paying their arrears.
10. The OIC said that 300 producer votes are allocated equally among the three producer regions. In practice, 100 votes per region are allocated equally to each member country in that region, so each country gets a standard number of votes. If an entire region has no members eligible to vote, the correct procedure, as confirmed by the UN Conference on Trade and Development, is that the 300 votes are split among the other two regions. The other 700 votes available to producer members are allocated based on forest area and the volume of timber exports and therefore the issue of regional ineligibility has no bearing on those votes. The OIC said that the Council could decide to make a different interpretation, but this would introduce more complexity. The hope was that some African countries will pay their assessed contributions for 2021 in the next few days and therefore become eligible to vote during the session. He said that in 2021, the Secretariat has sent four personalized letters to ministers and focal points of all countries in arrears but had received little response. As far as he is aware, this is the first time that an entire region could be ineligible to vote, and a discussion during the Council Session on the issue of arrears and possible incentives for paying

arrears would be welcome. He also undertook to make a clear presentation of the problem and the roles of the administrative budget/account and the working capital reserve to members during the session.

11. The representative of Japan observed that other international organizations are facing similar problems with the receipt of assessed contributions, especially for 2021, with the same countries not paying their contributions. She asked whether the situation of arrears has affected the submission of credentials thus far, especially from Africa. The OIC responded that credentials are often submitted during the actual session. He noted that five African countries to date had registered to participate in the session and presumably will submit credentials in due course. Even if some countries are ineligible to vote, he said that in practice quorum is ascertained based on those members that have submitted credentials at the start of the session, regardless of voting eligibility. Based on current registrations (and assuming all those registered submit valid credentials), one more producer member and two more consumer members would be required to register and submit credentials to achieve quorum at the forthcoming session. The OIC noted that nine of 27 EU members had registered to date; more of the EU members must register and submit credentials for any session to achieve quorum on the consumer side. The OIC proposed that the Council assess quorum at the start of the session and also towards the end. He listed the members currently registered to participate in the session, being Australia; Benin; Brazil; China; Colombia; Costa Rica; Côte d'Ivoire; the European Commission and the following EU countries—Austria, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Netherlands, Portugal and Sweden; Gabon; Ghana; Guatemala; India; Indonesia; Japan; Malaysia; Mexico; Mozambique; New Zealand; Norway; Panama; Peru; the Philippines; the Republic of Korea; Switzerland; Thailand; the United States of America; and Viet Nam. Thus, 36 of 74 members have registered, which is slightly less than half the total; quorum requires at least half the members of each group. The OIC said he would send the list of registered members to IAG members after the first meeting of the Credentials Committee on 25 November.

#### **C. Filling positions of Council officers/bodies**

12. The OIC noted that all positions in the various Council bodies have been filled for 2021 and expressed appreciation for the efforts of the Producer and Consumer spokespersons in this regard. The only pending positions were two consumers for the Expert Panel for the Technical Appraisal of Project Proposals, but this is not urgent. The OIC said that nominations would be required during the session for the new vice-chairpersons of the Committees and for the Council itself. A table showing the names of appointees to the various official Council bodies is attached in Annex B to this report.

#### **D. Matters related to the Appointment of the Executive Director – Decision 5(LVI)**

13. The OIC noted that, based on previous experience, considerations related to the appointment of the Executive Director will likely consume significant time during the session. The selection panel had prepared a shortlist of three candidates for the consideration of the Council, including Ms. Sheam Satkuru, currently a member of the ITTO Secretariat. Ms. Satkuru recused herself during the consideration of this item, and the OIC said she would also do so during the Council Session when the relevant agenda item is under discussion (the Council's Vice-chairperson will be available to assist the Chairperson during such times). The other two candidates are Mr. Yuri Octavian Thamrin (a former ambassador from Indonesia to the EU and UK) and Mr. Francisco Souza (a Brazilian national). The OIC noted that Brazil is currently ineligible to vote, and the impact of that on the appointment process remains to be seen, although the preferred approach for the appointment will be to achieve consensus. The Chair will seek feedback from the caucus spokespersons on how the Council should proceed on this agenda item, which has been scheduled for discussion on the first day of the session and then several times during the week. Candidates will make their presentations early in the week. All candidates have been given access to the session except during the specific agenda item dealing with the election. In case voting is required, the Secretariat has arranged a voting system separate from Kudo, which has worked well in test runs. Virtual voting might take slightly longer than usual because of the manual checking and calculation processes required. A decision to take a vote in the first place requires one or more members to call for a vote.
14. The Chair expressed hope that quorum will be achieved should a vote be required. The OIC said that a decision cannot be made to appoint an Executive Director if there is no quorum, regardless of whether a vote is undertaken. If quorum is not achieved, a special session may be needed if Council wishes to appoint the new ED before its next session.

15. The Producer Spokesperson expressed hope that the appointment of the Executive Director could be made by consensus because this will send a message of strong support to the Executive Director from both producers and consumers.
16. The Consumer Spokesperson said that consumers recognize that consensus is the preferred method for the appointment and would work to help make it happen. Establishing a strong mandate for the elected candidate is important, he said, and this can best be achieved through consensus. He noted the OIC's indication that the voting software is separate from the Kudo system.

**E. Consideration of draft decisions/elements of decisions submitted pursuant to ITTC Decision 7(XXXIII)**

17. This item was chaired by the Vice-chairperson in the temporary absence of the Chair. The OIC informed the meeting that two late decisions had been received, one from Japan on cooperation with other entities and the other on the adoption of the biannual budget. The OIC said that the latter draft decision was a standard one, as also adopted in 2017 and 2019, noting that, under changes to the financial rules and procedures, it now requires a Council decision (previously, biannual budgets had been adopted by the Council via its endorsement of reports of the Committee on Finance and Administration). The OIC mentioned that all draft decisions will be open to negotiation during the Council Session, as per usual practice.

Projects, Pre-Projects and Activities [Decision 1(LVII)]:

18. The OIC said that, as per usual practice, this decision details activities and projects approved and funded by the Council, and will be ready before the end of the session. Donor consultations are ongoing, and some projects will likely be funded at the session.

Amendment of Financial Rules and Rules Relating to Projects of the ITTO

19. The Secretariat (Mr. Simon Kawaguchi) said that this decision is expected to arise from Council discussions on the Working Capital Reserve (WCR), on the basis of which there may be a need to amend the financial rules and procedures accordingly. The current draft represents the Secretariat's proposals, including possible incentive measures to encourage members to pay arrears. Not all these measures may be agreed by the Council, and the draft is intended to form the basis of discussion.
20. The Consumer Spokesperson said that the consumer caucus has discussed this draft decision and considers it useful to have the existing draft text as a basis for discussion. A range of views have been expressed in the caucus on some of the indicated measures, and the decision will require negotiation.
21. The Producer Spokesperson said that payments of assessed contributions will be discussed under item 11 of the Council agenda with the aim of finding solutions that would enable producers to continue to participate in the Organization. On the other hand, potential amendments to the financial rules suggest that members would be ineligible for various benefits, which is potentially contradictory. He requested more explanation on the proposal to raise the threshold for using the WCR from USD 300 000 to USD 1 million.
22. The OIC said that the proposal to raise the threshold of the WCR has been put forward by the Secretariat in light of current cash flow inflexibilities, under the current rules, experienced over the past several years. Due to non-payment and late payment of contributions in 2021, the secretariat had been forced to seek Council authorization for additional use of the WCR through two decisions without meeting, both of which were not approved by Council. Given that insufficient funds will be available to make necessary payments in December 2021 from the 2021 contributions, it is possible that, without additional payments from members and/or access to the WCR, staff will need to be laid off under the given constraints. Increasing the threshold would enable the Organization to continue functioning if members fail to pay their assessed contributions or make such payments late. He reminded the IAG that the WCR comprises dues paid by members after the year in which they were assessed and were therefore shared funds belonging to all members to maintain operations covered by the administrative budget, not voluntary funding to be used for projects/activities.
23. The Producer Spokesperson said he raised the question regarding the WCR because there will be a producer coordination meeting on the coming Friday and he needs to understand why the increase in the threshold is being requested. A further question was whether the request is to increase the threshold for this year only or more permanently.

24. The OIC said that the cash flow problem has been exacerbated this year because more members than usual haven't paid their assessed contributions up to now, and the EU made its payment later than usual; nevertheless, similar issues have arisen in previous years and it is, therefore, a recurring problem. If some producers are hesitant about using the WCR to meet the operational costs of the Organization/Secretariat, it might be worthwhile discussing what they want this reserve to be used for, keeping in mind that the working capital reserve is NOT available for funding voluntary projects. He reiterated that the WCR constitutes the shared money of all ITTO members to fund the Secretariat's daily operations. For the current year (barring any additional payments by members of 2021 dues), a minimum additional allowance of USD 600 000 is required from the WCR to ensure the continued functioning of the Secretariat to the end of 2021 and the early part of 2022 (since few 2022 contributions are expected to be received before the end of February).
25. The representative of the USA said that the proposal to raise the threshold would be in line with other organizations. The representative of Japan said it is important to frame this matter as bringing the Organization into line with standard practices among international organizations. The Secretariat currently lacks sufficient financial flexibility because it is limited to spending the year's budget from the year's contributions and it can only access a very small portion of past payments going into the working capital reserve due to the low threshold established under the rules, which amounts to only about 4% of the annual budget, she said. The requested new threshold of USD 1 million would be about 15% of the current annual budget, which is a standard proportion for contingencies among international organizations. The WCR exists in all organizations to provide the necessary flexibility for meeting urgent financial needs to fund Secretariat operations, such as staff payments, in light of late payments by members of their assessed dues.
26. The Producer Spokesperson said these explanations were very helpful and he will convey them to the producer caucus.

*Extension of the International Tropical Timber Agreement, 2006*

27. The OIC said that this decision was considered at the previous Council Session, with some members requesting additional time for internal consultations. The proposal is to extend the ITTA for five years, to 2026.
28. The Consumer Spokesperson said that consumers have indicated they are ready to adopt this decision. There had been discussion about adding guidance in the decision on what will take place during the five-year extension period, and this could be discussed in the drafting group, possibly including the formation of an ad hoc advisory group. The Producer Spokesperson said that the producer caucus is also in full agreement about extending the ITTA. He noted that, if improvements are required to the ITTA during the extension period, the Council, as the highest authority, could make such changes. The Consumer Spokesperson cautioned that, although the Council is the Organization's supreme body, even minor changes to the ITTA would be tantamount to renegotiating text of the ITTA and would require domestic procedures for treaty negotiation. He noted that the extension is time-sensitive, with the ITTA due to expire soon after the end of the Council Session, and he urged that no changes to the ITTA be tabled during the session.
29. The Chair said this was a sensible suggestion for ensuring that all members can agree on the timely extension of the ITTA. The OIC said that Article 40 of the ITTA holds that Council can amend the agreement. This would, however, involve a process of negotiation, in which members would need to accede to any amendments, and the threshold of the number of members needed to do so is higher than that required for a special vote.

*Adoption of the Terms of Reference for Decision 4(LVI) Advisory Board and the Timeline and Terms of Reference for the Review under Decision 5(LIV) on the Pilot Programmatic Approach*

30. The OIC said that the first part of this decision is in response to a request by the Council to include terms of reference for the Advisory Board, which the board had finalized at its most recent meeting. The second part of the decision is in response to an earlier decision (Decision 5(LIV)), which had specified that the pilot programmatic approach would be reviewed in 2022. There was a strong view amongst the IAG and the Decision 4(LIV) Advisory Board, however, that 2022 will be too early for such a review, with the first project arising from a concept note about to start only now. The draft decision would defer the review.

Matters related to Article 15 of the ITTA, 2006 on Cooperation and Coordination with Other International Organizations

31. The representative of Japan informed the meeting that this draft decision repeated almost verbatim the text in a previous Decision 7(XXX) and incorporated some text from the agenda document prepared by the Secretariat. It is being proposed now because of the increased interest in tropical forests accorded in other international forums recently, and it is relevant, therefore, to seek synergies with such forums, especially as we are about to adopt the new Strategic Action Plan at this council, and such cooperative activities could help implement ITTO's new Strategic Action Plan more broadly. In preparing the draft decision, Japan had requested the assistance of the Secretariat to update the text and the annex to the previous decision to take into account recent international developments and its existing engagements, and welcomed IAG members to further update, as appropriate.
32. The OIC said that the Secretariat had updated the annex as requested, with some previously mentioned partners no longer relevant and others having emerged more recently; moreover, reference is now made to existing memoranda of understanding between ITTO and other organizations. The OIC noted that the previous decision from more than a decade ago requested the Secretariat to obtain accreditation with the Green Climate Fund and this was still on-going, showing that such processes can be slow. It is important that the Council is kept abreast of developments in other forums, which are growing in number, complexity and the extent to which they address tropical forest issues. The OIC noted that the draft decision includes a small budget to facilitate liaison.
33. The Producer Spokesperson recognized the contribution of Japan in proposing this decision as an update of the previous decision. He suggested using the decision to strengthen the role of ITTO and the Secretariat in developing a more aggressive strategy on fundraising, especially in light of outcomes at the recent 26th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26), with large funds pledged by some countries.
34. The Secretariat (Ms. Sheam Satkuru) said that, in preparing the annex to the draft decision, the Secretariat had taken a cautious approach, all depending on sufficient funding being made available for such efforts. Nevertheless, it is intended to complement fundraising efforts and on the UNFCCC-related measures, specifically, it is targeted at measures that can be taken post-COP26. It is important to ensure that all actions in this Annex support the mandate of the ITTA and are focused on tropical forests and tropical forest stakeholders.
35. The Producer Spokesperson suggested that the USD 100 000 allocated for implementing the decision could be increased because it is a complicated task. The Secretariat noted that the amount is for a two-year period and that there would be synergies with the activity to promote collaboration with CPF (and other) organizations approved and partially funded under the 2021-22 BWP.
36. The representative of Japan said that, in many organizations, this type of draft decision would be implemented as part of the core budget, and the agenda regularly discussed at Council, as it is becoming an important factor for donors. She indicated that Japan intends to support paragraph 5, which pertains to the resources required to implement the decision, by using funding originally earmarked for a concept note they had submitted which they had subsequently decided not to proceed with. She also said the decision is an opportunity to highlight the work the Secretariat is already doing in cooperation with other international organizations, which deserves greater credit and acknowledgement.
37. The representative of the USA thanked the Secretariat and Japan for the draft decision and indicated that the USA supports stronger relationships among international bodies. Regarding the annex, there is scope, she said, to negotiate the details, including that it should be aligned with the new Strategic Action Plan and a better balance achieved between organizations and non-traditional partners, such as the private sector. She suggested that several additional partners could be included in the annex. She queried the relationship between the draft decision and the relevant item in the Biennial Work Programme (BWP).



38. The OIC said that funding for this decision could be channelled through the BWP activity, which focuses mainly on the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and has not been fully funded. He said he is aware that some entities have been left out of the annex, and there is scope to add other organizations and make other revisions. The decision could refer to the BWP activity as the means of implementation.
39. The representative of Japan said she agrees with the US suggestions and would welcome any specific additions to the annex before it is forwarded for the consideration of the Council. She invited the USA to provide suggestions for amendments in writing.
40. The IAG decided to forward the draft decision to the Council, potentially with minor amendments to the annex as discussed.

Appointment of the Executive Director:

41. The OIC said this draft decision arises directly from the Selection Panel related to Article 14 of the ITTA, 2006 and responds to requests to include additional contractual specifications/requirements for the Executive Director as part of the appointment decision.

Administrative Budget for the 2022 and 2023 Financial Biennium:

42. The OIC indicated that this decision is procedural and is required under the ITTO's financial rules.
43. The IAG recommends the following list of decisions to be considered for adoption by the Council at its Fifty-seventh Session:
  - i. Projects, Pre-Projects and Activities [Decision 1(LVII)]
  - ii. Amendment of Financial Rules and Rules Relating to Projects of the ITTO – *submitted by the Secretariat;*
  - iii. Extension of the International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA), 2006 – *submitted by the Secretariat;*
  - iv. Adoption of the ITTO Strategic Action Plan 2022-2026 – *submitted by the Secretariat;*
  - v. Adoption of the Terms of Reference for Decision 4(LVI) Advisory Board and the Timeline and Terms of Reference for the Review under Decision 5(LIV) on the Pilot Programmatic Approach – *submitted by the Secretariat;*
  - vi. Appointment of the Executive Director – *submitted by the Secretariat;*
  - vii. Administrative Budget for the 2022 and 2023 Financial Biennium – *submitted by the Secretariat*
  - viii. Matters related to Article 15 of the ITTA, 2006 on Cooperation and Coordination with Other International Organizations – *submitted by Japan with input from the Secretariat*

Draft proposals for these decisions (except the first) are included in Annex A to this report.

**F. Other matters**

44. The OIC reported that the Chair has received a letter from Costa Rica and Panama asking that project funding be the subject of discussion at the Council Session and placed on the agenda. The Producer Spokesperson said that the matter raised in the letter is directly related to the payment of arrears and the correct place for discussion, therefore, is probably Agenda item 11. The representative of Japan mentioned that, independent of the letter, her office has decided to fund a project submitted by Panama, and the Japan Forestry Agency will fund a project submitted by Costa Rica (together with the USA), although this is subject to formal approval by Parliament. She suggested agenda item 18(a) (Pledges to the Special Account and the Bali Partnership Fund) as an appropriate place for a discussion on project financing rather than a discussion on arrears, which is related to the core budget (not directly related to voluntary contributions-based projects under the Agreement).
45. The representative of the USA noted that the USA has also pledged funds for the Costa Rica project. She said the letter mentioned a regional equity issue, and she requested the Secretariat to provide information on the regional distribution of project funding. She said the USA sympathizes with the funding issues facing producer countries, which is one reason for the recent focus on programmatic lines, but changes/results from this new mechanism will take time.

46. The OIC suggested that the Secretariat assist the Chair in replying to the letter, informing them of the pending financing for their projects, indicating the intention to enable a broader discussion on project funding during the Council Session, and suggesting that the two countries take the lead on such a discussion. Regarding equity between regions, the OIC said that, in total, Africa has received 26% of project finance, Asia 42% and Latin America 22% (with the remainder allocated to non-region specific projects).
47. The Producer Spokesperson said that the issue for Costa Rica and Panama is not which country is receiving more or less funding but more about the general context of the global financial crisis, the pandemic, the payment of arrears, and so on. It appears that the new financial architecture has not led to an increase in funding and there is a need to think further about how to improve the funding environment.
48. The OIC said that perhaps the best place for discussion of this item, therefore, is under agenda item 17 on the new financial architecture, which has been put in place to help deal with the backlog of unfunded projects. The Consumer Spokesperson agreed with this suggestion because the heart of the new financial architecture is diversifying and increasing the voluntary-funded resources of the Organization. The Producer Spokesperson agreed with this.
49. The Chair said there appeared to be consensus on this suggestion. The OIC will draft a reply to the two countries informing them of this, and also regarding the pledging of funds for their projects.
50. The representative of the USA said that, under this agenda item, members should also be given the opportunity to make comments on concept notes, including indicating a future intention to fund some of these, as a way of creating a more positive energy on the issue.
51. The OIC reported that 13 concept notes are available for funding. Countries may indicate their interest in funding concept notes under the agenda item on the new financial architecture and also during the pledging session.
52. Also under "other matters", the OIC summarized the proposed schedule for the 57th session of the Council and a proposal to complete CRF on Monday and devote a 90 minute schedule on Wednesday to CFA was agreed. Slots for the Chair's drafting group would be added to the draft schedule on Wednesday and Thursday, with times to be decided by the Chair's Bureau. A question was raised about when the caucuses would meet. The OIC said that these are not official meetings of the Council, but the Secretariat will make the necessary arrangements, including interpretation if required, at the request of the caucuses. A revised draft schedule of meetings will be circulated to the IAG and posted on the ITTO website by Friday, 26 November 2021.
53. The IAG meeting on 24 November 2021 was adjourned at 10:00 p.m. (Japan Standard Time).

## **ANNEX A**

### **Draft Decisions**

**The full text of the ITTO Strategic Action Plan (SAP) 2022-2026 can be found in document ITTC(LVII)/10.**



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FIFTY-SEVENTH SESSION  
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### Draft DECISION ... (LVII)

#### AMENDMENT OF FINANCIAL RULES AND RULES RELATING TO PROJECTS OF THE ITTO

The International Tropical Timber Council,

Recalling the provisions of the International Tropical Timber Agreement, 2006 regarding the Administrative Account as provided for by Article 19;

Recognizing the provisions under Rules 29 of the Financial Rules and Rules Relating to Projects of the ITTO which provide for these rules to be amended by a decision of the Council;

Noting that the reference to the write-off scheme and eligibility for submission of proposals in Decision 7(XXXIII) are superseded by Rules 4.6 and 4.7 in the Financial Rules as adopted in this Decision;

Appreciating the continuing efforts made by the Secretariat in exercising cost savings in the expenditures from the Administrative Budget;

Noting with concern the insufficient receipts of contributions from members to the Administrative Budget due to untimely payment of assessed contributions which often fall short of the estimated total expenditures;

Further noting the urgent need to revise relevant rules to ensure that the Secretariat may continue to function and operate under fluctuations in the cash flow due to the unpredictable timing and amount of receiving assessed contributions, as documented in ITTC(LVII)/6;

#### Decides to:

1. Amend the Financial Rules and Rules Relating to Projects of the ITTO as contained in the Annex to this Decision;
2. Request Members to pay as early as possible and in full their annual assessed contributions to the Administrative Budget, as well as arrears in contributions from previous years; and
3. Urge the Secretariat to look for cost saving measures on a continuing basis and to exercise economies where possible in expending the Administrative Budget.

**ANNEX**

**ORIGINAL TEXT**

**AMENDMENTS**

**FINAL TEXT**

**Financial Rules and Rules Relating to Projects of the International Tropical Timber Organization**

**Financial Rules and Rules Relating to Projects of the International Tropical Timber Organization**

Rule 4 : Contributions of Members to the Administrative Account

Rule 4 : Contributions of Members to the Administrative Account

4. In accordance with Article 19, paragraph 8 of the Agreement, any member which has paid its full contribution within four months of the due date shall receive a discount at a rate to be determined from time to time by the Council. Such discounts shall be applied in the form of rebates from the assessed contributions of members in the financial biennium following that in which the discount was earned, and the total amount of such discounts shall become part of the estimated expenditures described in Rule 2 paragraph 2 (a) for the budget for the Administrative Account of the aforesaid following biennium. The discount rate shall be decided by the Council and initially shall be 5.5%.

Change the discount scheme to the following to encourage payments during the fiscal year:

- Full payment within four month of the due date – 5.5%
- Full payment after fourth months but within seven months of the due date – 3%
- Full payment after seven months but within ten months of the due date – 1.5%

4. In accordance with Article 19, paragraph 8 of the Agreement, any member which has paid its full contribution within four months of the due date shall receive a discount at a rate to be determined from time to time by the Council. Such discounts shall be applied in the form of rebates from the assessed contributions of members in the financial biennium following that in which the discount was earned, and the total amount of such discounts shall become part of the estimated expenditures described in Rule 2 paragraph 2 (a) for the budget for the Administrative Account of the aforesaid following biennium. The discount rate shall be decided by the Council and initially shall be 5.5%. Additionally, any member which has paid its full contribution after four months but within seven months of the due date shall receive a 3% discount, and any member which has paid its full contribution after seven months but within ten months of the due date shall receive a 1.5% discount. Any discount received after a draft budget for the Administrative Account is circulated to members in accordance with Rule 3.1 shall be applied to the biennium following the period in the draft budget.

6. N/A

Update write-off scheme of Decision 7(XXXIII) and incorporate into the Financial Rules. The period of the write-off is changed from 1986-1996 to the period under the prior ITTA (i.e. 1986-2011) and the criteria to receive write-offs is changed from payment of 2002 and beyond to the

6. The Executive Director is authorized to write off, on an annual basis, one-fifth of a member's arrears from the period under the prior ITTA for any member which has no arrears in its contributions to the Administrative Budget in respect to its obligations related to the period under the current ITTA.

7. N/A

**ORIGINAL TEXT**

**AMENDMENTS**

**FINAL TEXT**

period under the current ITTA (2012 and beyond).

Incorporate into the Financial Rules the clause on eligibility for members to submit proposals included under ITTA, 2006, Article 19.8 and Decision 7(XXXIII) Annex1C. Changes are made to the Rules included under Decision 7(XXXIII) from 2002 to the beginning of the current ITTA (2012) for the period that is counted towards determining eligibility.

7. In accordance with Article 19, Paragraph 8 of the Agreement, if a member has not paid its contribution in full for two consecutive years, taking into account the provisions contained in Article 30 of the Agreement, that member shall become ineligible to submit project or pre-project proposals for funding consideration under Article 25, paragraph 1 of the Agreement. Additionally, the Secretariat will not process project and pre-project proposals submitted by members with cumulative arrears to the Administrative Account beginning from the earliest period under the current Agreement which are equal to or in excess of three times the member's annual assessed contribution in the year proposals are submitted.

8. N/A

Policy on allocation of assessed contributions received when members are in arrears are clarified in order to avoid members making payment to arrears that are applicable for a write-off once conditions are met.

8. Assessed contributions received by members shall be applied to the oldest outstanding assessment due under the current Agreement.

Rule 5 : Administration of the Administrative Account

5. If and when necessary, the Executive Director is authorized to transfer an amount not exceeding US\$300,000 annually from the Working Capital Reserve to the current account in the Administrative Account to meet the shortfall of funds to implement the work programme of the Organization. All other uses of the Working Capital Reserve require a Council decision.

Increasing the maximum annual amount from the Working Capital Reserve authorized for use to meet the shortfall of funds to implement the work programme of the Organization.

\* \* \*

Rule 5 : Administration of the Administrative Account

5. If and when necessary, the Executive Director is authorized to transfer an amount not exceeding US\$1,000,000 annually from the Working Capital Reserve to the current account in the Administrative Account to meet the shortfall of funds to implement the work programme of the Organization. All other uses of the Working Capital Reserve require a Council decision.



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29 November - 3 December 2021  
Virtual Session

**Draft DECISION ... (LVII)**

**EXTENSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER AGREEMENT, 2006 (ITTA)**

Recalling Article 44 of the ITTA, 2006;

Noting that the ITTA, 2006 entered into force on 7 December 2011, with an initial duration of ten years;

Further noting the desire expressed by all Members to extend the ITTA, 2006;

Decides in accordance with Article 44(2) of the ITTA, 2006, that the Agreement be extended for a period of five years with effect from 7 December 2021 until 6 December 2026.

\* \* \*



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### Draft DECISION ... (LVII)

#### ADOPTION OF THE ITTO STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN 2022-2026

The International Tropical Timber Council,

Recalling Decision 3(LVI) on developing the next ITTO Strategic Action Plan for consideration and approval by Council at its Fifty-seventh Session in 2021;

Decides to:

1. Adopt the ITTO Strategic Action Plan (SAP) 2022-2026 contained in the annex to this Decision;
2. Establish at its Fifty-eighth Session in 2022 an “indicative five-year resource mobilization goal” for the SAP 2022-2026 taking into account estimated costs to carry out the targets contained in Tables 2 and 3 of the SAP annexed to this Decision;
3. Requests the Executive Director/Officer in Charge to: (a) publish and widely disseminate the ITTO SAP 2022-2026 and (b) develop proposed cost estimates referred to in paragraph 2 for the Council’s consideration at its Fifty-eighth session;
4. Authorize the Executive Director/Officer in Charge to utilize funds pledged to Activity 10 of the Biennial Work Programme 2021-2022 to cover the costs associated with paragraph 3.



**ANNEX**

ITTO STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN 2022-2026 TO BE INSERTED BELOW  
IF COUNCIL AGREES TO DECISION

\* \* \*



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### Draft DECISION ... (LVII)

#### **ADOPTION OF THE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE DECISION 4(LVI) ADVISORY BOARD AND THE TIMELINE AND TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE REVIEW UNDER DECISION 5(LIV) ON THE PILOT PROGRAMMATIC APPROACH**

The International Tropical Timber Council,

Recalling Decision 4(LVI) requesting the Advisory Board to develop formal terms of reference for its work, to be considered by the Council at its Fifty-seventh Session;

Further recalling Decision 5(LIV) which requested the Executive Director to undertake a review of its implementation in 2022, including the long-term effectiveness and feasibility of the pilot programmatic approach;

Taking into consideration the work and recommendations of the Advisory Board established under Decision 8(LV) as well as the progress report on the implementation of ITTO's New Financing Architecture - Phase II as contained in document ITTC(LVII)/14;

Noting that to date only one concept note has been developed into an approved project and funded under the pilot programmatic approach following the initial open call for proposals that was undertaken in December 2020, and that it is therefore premature for a review to be undertaken in 2022;

Decides to:

1. Adopt the formal terms of reference for the work of the Advisory Board as contained in the Annex;
2. Request the Executive Director/Officer-in-charge to prepare a second progress report on the implementation of the pilot programmatic approach for consideration at ITTC 58; and
3. Postpone the review of the implementation of Decision 5(LIV) until at least 2023, and take a final decision on the timing and terms of reference of the review at ITTC 58.

## Annex

### **Draft Terms of Reference for the Decision 4(LVI) Advisory Board (established under Decision 8(LV) and augmented under Decision 4(LVI))**

#### **Introduction**

The establishment and general role of the Advisory Board (AB) is governed by decisions 8 (LV) <sup>1</sup> Implementing ITTO's New Financing Infrastructure – Phase I and 4 (LVI) Implementing ITTO's New Financing Infrastructure - Phase II. <sup>2</sup>

#### **Composition of the AB**

The AB is composed of the ITTO Informal Advisory Group (IAG) complemented by representatives of the Trade Advisory Group (TAG) and the Civil Society Advisory Group (CSAG), or their designated alternates.

#### **Mode of Operation**

1. The AB will be chaired by the Chairperson of Council, or in his/her absence, by the Vice-Chairperson of Council.
2. The AB will meet three times a year including one meeting immediately prior to, during or following Council sessions. Intersessional work by the AB will be conducted virtually, by e-mail and telephone, as appropriate.
3. The AB may propose informal joint producer/consumer sessions for the consideration of the ITTC Chairperson, as appropriate, to address key financial matters during respective Council sessions.
4. The AB will liaise closely with the Executive Director, the Committee on Finance & Administration (CFA) and the Secretariat in carrying out its functions.
5. The AB will be supported by the ITTO Secretariat to plan meetings, provide meeting and documentary support and undertake any intersessional work as deemed appropriate and necessary.
6. The AB may make recommendations based on its remit under the appropriate Council Decisions for the Consideration of Council. In doing so, the AB will take direction solely from Council and will not give direction to, nor take direction from the IAG, the producer/consumer caucuses, individual members or the Secretariat.
7. The final minutes of all AB meetings will be made publicly available/available to the ITTO membership by being posted on the ITTO website within a reasonable timeframe following each AB meeting and final clearance by the AB.

#### **Role and Responsibilities of the AB**

8. To request and receive regular updates from the Executive Director on the implementation of the pilot programmatic approach and ITTC-endorsed Programmatic Lines, including engagement with international bodies such as potential funding partners, as stipulated in applicable Council decisions.
9. To advise the Executive Director on the ongoing implementation of applicable decisions on ITTO's financing architecture including on new/emerging funding opportunities that the AB may be aware of and/or appropriate timing of new calls for proposals under any of the four funding scenarios described in Decision (4(LVI)).
10. To provide guidance to the Executive Director on the most appropriate methods of implementation of the finance architecture approved by council in order to achieve the objectives stipulated in the applicable decisions.
11. To specifically advise the Executive Director and make recommendations for Council's consideration on how the regular project cycle is to be dealt with during the pilot phase of implementation of the Programmatic Approach and applicable decisions.

---

<sup>1</sup> **Reference para in Decision 8 (LV)** 16. Establish an advisory board composed of the IAG complemented by representatives of TAG and CSAG, or their designated alternates, that meets via conference call every four months to receive an update on the implementation of the pilot programmatic approach, including engagement with international bodies such as potential funding partners, and to advise the Executive Director.

<sup>2</sup> **Reference para in Decision 4 (LVI)**: 9. Request the Executive Director to continue to implement the activities requested under Decision 8(LV), including periodically convening the Advisory Board; and engaging with funding mechanisms, including the GEF and its partners ahead of its eighth replenishment process; 10. Request the Advisory Board to develop formal terms of reference for its work, to be considered by the Council at its Fifty-seventh Session.

12. To provide guidance to the Executive Director on the most appropriate methodology for reviews of the implementation of the Programmatic Approach, including its long-term effectiveness and feasibility.
13. To review and advise the Executive Director on draft/proposed memorandums of understanding (MOUs) or other agreements of cooperation between the ITTO and other organizations or entities to ensure alignment with the intent of relevant Council decisions and directives.

\* \* \*



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### Draft DECISION ... (LVII)

#### APPOINTMENT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The International Tropical Timber Council,

Acting pursuant to Article 14, paragraphs 1 and 2 of the International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA), 2006;

Recalling Decision 5(LVI) on matters related to Article 14 of the ITTA, 2006, regarding the recruitment, selection and term of the Executive Director;

Further recalling the Report of the Panel on Matters Related to Article 14 of the ITTA, 2006, regarding the recruitment, selection and term of the Executive Director (Document ITTC(LVII/8));

Underscoring the strategic role of the Executive Director as the Head of the Organization;

Welcoming the spirit of partnership between consumer and producer members in the selection of the Executive Director;

Taking into consideration Decision 10(LIII) on rotation in the framework of the selection of the Executive Director of the ITTO;

Also taking into consideration Decision 6(LIV) on the selection of the candidates for the position of Executive Director of the ITTO;

Noting with appreciation the applications for the position of Executive Director of ITTO;

Also noting the obligation on the Executive Director to respect the Standards of Conduct set out in Decision 8(LII);

#### Decides:

1. To appoint by consensus Ms./Mr [name] as Executive Director of the International Tropical Timber Organization for a period of four years, beginning on [date] 2022. The term of the appointment may be extended for up to 2 years if approved by Council.
2. That the appointment will be at the UN ASG level and includes benefits in accordance with the most recent ITTO Staff Regulations and Rules, such as removal expenses, home leave travel every 24 months, children's education grant, rental subsidies and others.
3. That the Executive Director shall be subject to the ITTO Staff Regulations and Rules in so far as they can be applied to her/him.
4. That the Executive Director shall be subject to Regulation 7.4a which sets the retirement age as prescribed by the United Nations, currently 65 years.

5. That the Executive Director shall be subject to the ITTO provisions for early dismissal (for poor performance, misconduct or other violations).
6. That the Executive shall be subject to the Standards of Conduct set out in Decision 8(LII).

\* \* \*



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### DECISION xx(LVII)

#### ADMINISTRATIVE BUDGET FOR THE 2022 AND 2023 FINANCIAL BIENNIUM

The International Tropical Timber Council,

Recalling the Financial Rules and Rules Relating to Projects of the ITTO, Rule 3.3, which stipulates that Council shall approve and adopt the budget for the Administrative Account through a Council Decision;

Decides to:

1. Approve and adopt the Biennial Administrative Budget for the Financial Years 2022 and 2023 as contained in document CFA(XXXVI)/2 Rev.1, in the amount of US\$7,031,320 and US\$7,104,295, respectively.

\* \* \*



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### Draft DECISION ... (LVII)

#### MATTERS RELATED TO ARTICLE 15 OF THE ITTA, 2006 ON COOPERATION AND COORDINATION WITH OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

The International Tropical Timber Council,

Recalling Article 15 of the International Tropical Timber Agreement, Decision 7(XXX), Decision 8(LV) and Decision 4(LVI) on the role of ITTO in international and regional fora;

Noting with appreciation the efforts made in seeking collaboration and cooperation with international partners under ITTO's Biennial Work Programme, including the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), in carrying out the Organization's mandate as specified in the ITTA, 2006 and as summarized in Document ITTC(LVII)/13 presented during the Fifty-seventh Session of Council;

Reaffirming the importance of maintaining and further strengthening cooperation with relevant international organizations, institutions and partners in order to advance the objectives and implementation of the Agreement, in light of the special acknowledgement accorded in other fora including the 2021 G7 Environment Ministers' Communique;

Noting that some measures for enhancing the ITTO's role in international and regional organizations and fora can be accommodated with existing resources while other measures will require additional funding from other sources;

#### Decides to:

1. Request the Executive Director to further pursue the measures in the Annex to this decision for effective ITTO involvement in international and regional organizations and fora, in particular with regard to the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the recently established Forest, Agriculture and Commodity Trade (FACT) Dialogues under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), taking into account the expected mutual benefits and timing of relevant international and regional events, and to provide progress reports to Council during this time frame;
2. Request the Executive Director to undertake measures that support the implementation of the new Strategic Action Plan 2022-2026, including through measures identified within the approved budget of the Administrative Account, and to seek voluntary contributions from member countries to support the measures identified in the Annex to this decision;
3. Encourage members to seek ways to assist ITTO and/or member countries to access funding sources (such as GEF8 replenishment funds and future replenishment cycles) through country driven programmes which could help realize ITTO priorities through funding some of the smaller pilot projects approved by ITTO which could be upscaled later with funding from the GEF or others;



4. Authorize the Executive Director to offer ITTO co-sponsorship, pending availability of funds, to any country-led initiatives on issues relevant to ITTO objectives, including measures outlined in the Annex to this decision, and urge member countries to engage with their respective country focal points of these organizations to realize mutual synergies;
5. Request the Executive Director to seek voluntary contributions from members of US\$100,000.00 to meet the costs of implementing this decision in 2022-23 and to report to Council on funds raised and their use during this period;
6. Review the effectiveness and benefits of undertaking such measures and update as needed the measures contained in the Annex to this decision at its Fifty-eighth Session in Yokohama in 2022, in view of progress made and developments in relevant international and regional events.

## **Annex**

### ***International Organizations and Conventions***

#### **UNFF**

- Continue to be actively involved in UNFF meetings (especially regarding trade and environmental issues, forest monitoring, forest conservation and sustainable management).
- Prepare briefs and/or contribute to the UNFF Workplan 2021-2024 on issues where ITTO has comparative advantage.
- Continue to be actively involved in UNFF ministerial segments and multi-stakeholder dialogues.
- Continue to host and lead side events at UNFF meetings (with CPF partners as appropriate) on key UNFF topics related to ITTO's mandate to facilitate highlighting recent ITTO accomplishments and innovations.
- Continue to participate in relevant ad hoc technical expert groups convened by UNFF.

#### **CPF**

- Continue to serve as the lead agency on issues where ITTO has comparative advantage.
- Continue to participate in and contribute to select CPF Joint Initiatives which fit ITTO's mandate under the ITTA, 2006 and the CPF Workplan 2021-2024.

#### **FAO**

- Continue and enhance coordination and cooperation on trade statistics, including collaborative reporting on statistics.
- Strengthen coordination with FAO regional commissions, including having the three ITTO Technical Committees report on activities of the commissions during Committee sessions, with a view to considering areas for joint project work.
- Continue to strengthen communication and cooperation between Secretariats on areas of mutual interest, such as capacity building, criteria and indicators, Forest Resource Assessment, forest contribution to carbon cycles, forest fires, improved harvesting and processing techniques, forest education and, where appropriate, certification, legality verification and mutual recognition.

#### **CITES**

- Continue to actively participate, in preparatory work within the Plants and Animals Committees leading up to the CITES COP 19 to be held in Panama City, Republic of Panama, with a view to providing technical advice and guidance to support informed discussions at CITES COP 19 in 2022.

#### **WTO**

- Re-engage with the WTO to provide information on ITTO's trade and environment activities.
- Monitor and report to Council developments in WTO Trade Policy Reviews particularly on potential impacts on the tropical forestry sector, revision in the agriculture negotiations and other relevant developments and/or outputs from the WTO Ministerial Conferences.
- Participate in WTO meetings where feasible if relevant to providing assistance to ITTO members on trade issues.

#### **CBD**

- Continue to seek collaborative avenues with the CBD Secretariat and its members with a view to operationalizing the MOU finalized in 2021, particularly in relation to the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework when finalized and agreed upon.

#### **CIFOR**

- Continue cooperation on issues of mutual interest.

#### **ICRAF**

- Explore the possibility of dialogue and collaborative work in areas of mutual interest.

#### **IUFRO**

- Continue to collaborate with IUFRO on activities of mutual interest, including Global Forest Expert Panel reports undertaken by IUFRO relevant to tropical forests.

#### **UNEP**

- Continue and explore the possibility for increased cooperation, including joint sponsorship of workshops in areas of mutual interest related to sustainable forest management, such as forest fires, and explore avenues on joint UNEP-UNDP-World Bank activities and/or programmes with a view to seeking a role for the ITTO as an implementing agency in producing regions.

#### **UNFCCC/IPCC**

- Continue to participate at, monitor developments and contribute where relevant and appropriate to UNFCCC/IPCC discussions regarding forests post-COP 26, especially on the Forests, Agriculture and Commodity Trade (FACT) Dialogues and discussions on deforestation and their potential implications for tropical forests and the world tropical timber economy.
- Invite, as appropriate, representative(s) of the UNFCCC/IPCC and other relevant institutions to report to Council on the status of forest/timber related discussions under UNFCCC/IPCC/FACT.
- Continue to strive to achieve an MOU between ITTO and UNFCCC to promote cooperation on work related to tropical forests.

#### **UNCCD**

- Continue to explore opportunities for dialogue and potential cooperation in areas of mutual interest.
- Continue to strive to renew an MOU between ITTO and UNCCD to promote cooperation on work related to tropical forests.

#### ***International Financial Institutions***

##### **GEF**

- Recommend to Council areas for increased dialogue and potential technical collaboration on GEF policy and project funding, particularly in relation to GEF-8 including co-financing with GEF implementing agencies of ITTO and producer member projects that may be suitable for funding under the GEF biodiversity, land degradation and climate change focal areas, and the potential for an ITTO role as an implementing or executing agency under GEF, particularly in the Small Grants Program which is likely to open up to new Partner agencies.
- Extend and deepen ITTO's ongoing cooperation with the GEF Secretariat and the GEF implementing agencies: the World Bank, UNDP and UNEP.
- Exchange information (markets and statistics, guidelines and project experience) and cooperate with the GEF's Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) to explore mutual synergies that can increase ITTO's global influence and branding as an expert on tropical timber/forestry-related matters.
- Engage with member countries to coordinate their approach to ITTO and GEF, aimed at member qualification for country-driven project funding under GEF programming which could facilitate the realization of mutual synergies that may assist with the implementation of the ITTO Strategic Action Plan 2022-2026 in their own territories.

##### **World Bank**

- Continue to explore possibilities for increased cooperation with the World Bank with respect to implementing ITTO objectives in member countries based on "lessons learned" through ITTO project implementation and evaluation.
- Engage in dialogue with the World Bank on the implementation of the World Bank Forest Investment Programme (FIP) and the World Bank Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) with a view to promoting synergies where possible, in all producing regions.

##### **Regional Development Banks**

- Initiate a dialogue with relevant regional development banks, including the Inter-American Development Bank, African Development Bank and Asian Development Bank on their policy review and project implementation processes relevant to ITTO objectives, including implementation of national forest plans and strategies, research and development and plantation management.

#### ***Regional Organizations and Fora***

##### **COMIFAC**

- Continue collaborative work and explore new avenues with COMIFAC to build on successful projects implemented to facilitate knowledge-sharing and enable strengthening relationships between Francophone countries and ITTO with a view to promoting more active support for ITTO activities and in implementing ITTO criteria and indicators and guidelines.
- Participate in high level African regional forest law enforcement conferences as appropriate.

**ASEAN and ASEAN Foundation**

- Explore possibility of joint projects on training programmes for prevention of forest fires and other relevant matters and knowledge-sharing on sustainable forest management with participation of local communities within the region.

**APEC**

- Continue to collaborate in the APEC-EGILAT process by participating actively in meetings and contributing to relevant joint activities

**Criteria and Indicators Processes**

- Continue to actively participate in meetings of the Montreal and Pan-European processes on temperate and boreal forests, including as appropriate meetings of their technical advisory committees.
- Continue to actively participate in the FAO Forest Resource Assessment (FRA) process and other CPF work to streamline international reporting on forests using C&I.
- Consider as appropriate expanding cooperation on C&I previously undertaken with the (now defunct) African Timber Organization to other regional tropical forest criteria and indicators processes involving ITTO producer members.

**South Pacific Forum**

- Participate in relevant activities of mutual interest.

**Non-Governmental and Private Sector Groups**

**IUCN**

- Continue to strengthen collaboration related to forest rehabilitation and restoration in development of transboundary conservation areas, bushmeat issues, and the IUCN red list of endangered species, consistent with ITTO's mandate aimed at supporting the implementation of the ITTO Guidelines on Forest Landscape Restoration in the Tropics.

**Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)/Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)**

- Continue to strengthen outreach to international and regional NGOs/CSOs to encourage their greater participation in ITTO policy and project activities and explore opportunities for collaboration in areas of mutual interest.
- Strengthen the Civil Society Advisory Group (CSAG) established pursuant to Decision 9(XXVIII) to facilitate greater contribution and participation by civil society to the work of ITTO.

**Trade/Industry Groups**

- Strengthen the Trade Advisory Group (TAG) established pursuant to Decision 9(XXVIII) to facilitate greater contribution and participation by the trade/industry to the work of ITTO.

**ANNEX B**  
**NAMES OF APPOINTEES TO THE VARIOUS OFFICIAL COUNCIL BODIES**

	<b>Producer Nominees</b>	<b>Consumer Nominees</b>
<b>Council</b>		
Chairperson	Mr. Mohd Kheiruddin Mohd Rani, Malaysia	
Vice-Chairperson		Mr. Jesse Mahoney, Australia
Spokespersons		
	Mr. Jorge Malleux, Peru	Mr. Luke Thompson, USA
<b>Committee on Economics, Statistics and Markets, CEM</b>		
Chairperson	Mr. Zahrul Muttaqin, Indonesia	
Vice-Chairperson		Ms. Anna Tyler, New Zealand
<b>Committee on Forest Industry, CFI</b>		
Chairperson	Mr. Zahrul Muttaqin, Indonesia	
Vice-Chairperson		Ms. Anna Tyler, New Zealand
<b>Committee on Reforestation and Forest Management, CRF</b>		
Chairperson		Ms. Aysha Ghadiali, USA
Vice-Chairperson	Ms. Siti Syaliza Mustapha, Malaysia	
<b>Committee on Finance and Administration, CFA</b>		
Chairperson	Ms. Teresa Guila Nube, Mozambique	
Vice-Chairperson		Mr. Bjoern Merkell, Sweden
<b>Credentials Committee</b>		
8 members	Mr. Riva Rovani, Indonesia	Ms. Janet Shannon, USA
	Mr. Ray Thomas F. Kabigting, Philippines	Mr. David Allen, New Zealand
	Mr. Alberto Julian Escamilla Nava, Mexico	Ms. Samihah Fattah, Australia
	Ms. Noorazimah Sarkon Othman, Malaysia	Ms. Elena Campos, EU
<b>Fellowship Panel</b>		
6 members	Mr. Roberto Andres Bosch, Guatemala	Mr. Rob Busink, Netherlands
	Ms. Fathia Maryam Perdata, Indonesia	Ms. Kathryn Furby, USA
	Mr. Joseph Appiah Gyapong, Ghana	Mr. Taku Sakaguchi, Japan
<b>Expert Panel</b>		
12 members	Mr. John Leigh, Peru	Ms. Aysha Ghadiali, USA
	Mr. Rosven Arevalo, Colombia	Mr. Takeshi Aihara & Ms. Akiko Tabata, Japan
	Mr. Kaip Dambis, PNG	Mr. Jobst Michael Schroeder, EU
	Mr. Hiras Sidabutar, Indonesia	Mr. Zhongtian Zhang, China
	Mr. Achille Orphee Lokossou, Benin	Nomination pending
	Mr. Nurudeen Idrissu, Ghana	Nomination pending
<b>Panel on Sub-Account B and Bali Partnership</b>		
6 members*	Ms. Carmela Quintanilla, Peru	Japan
	Mr. Korogone Sinagabe Ulysse, Benin	USA
	Ms. Emelia Gunggu, Malaysia	Switzerland

<b>ED Selection Panel</b>		
12 members	Mr. Jorge Malleux, Spokesperson	Ms. Aysa Ghadiali, USA
	Mr. John Leigh, Peru (Co-Chair)	Ms. Anna Tyler, New Zealand (Co-Chair)
	Mr. Zahrul Muttaqin, Indonesia	Ms. Yoshiko Motoyama, Japan
	Mr. Mad Zaidi Mohd Karli, Malaysia	Ms. Linlin Geng, China
	Mr. Nurudeen Idrissu, Ghana	Mr. Hugo Schally, EU
	Ms. Natasha Nssi Bengone, Gabon	Mr. Keiran Andrusko, Australia
<b>SAP Working Group</b>		
8 members	Ms. Carmela Quintanilla Centenaro, Peru	Ms. Jennifer Conje, USA
(6 & TAG/CSAG)	Mr. Ulysse Korogone, Benin	Ms. Yoshiko Motoyama, Japan
	Mr. Balamurugan a/l Nallamuthu, Malaysia	Ms. Sara Federica Reho, EU
	Mr. Barney Chan, Trade Advisory Group, TAG	
	Ms. Fernanda Rodrigues, Civil Society Advisory Group, CSAG	
<i>* for producers one member from each region; for consumers three members that are main contributors to the fund</i>		

**ANNEX C**  
**Minutes of Informal Advisory Group Meeting held on 1 July 2021**

**INFORMAL ADVISORY GROUP MEETING I REPORT**

**1 July 2021**

**PARTICIPANTS:**

**Advisory Board**

Mr. Kheiruddin Md. Rani, Chairperson, ITTC  
Mr. Jesse Mahoney, Vice-Chairperson, ITTC  
Ms. Luke Thompson, Consumers Caucus Spokesperson  
Mr. Jorge Malleux, Producers Caucus Spokesperson  
Ms. Aysha Ghadiali, Chairperson, CRF  
Ms. Yoshiko Motoyama, Representative of the host Government of Japan  
Mr. Taku Sakaguchi, Representative of the host Government of Japan  
Ms. Akiko Tabata, Representative of the host Government of Japan  
Mr. Jun Fukuda, Representative of the host Government of Japan

**ITTO Secretariat**

Mr. Steve Johnson, Officer-in-Charge (OIC)  
Ms. Sheam Satkuru, Director, Operations  
Mr. Gerhard Breulmann, Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation Officer  
Mr. Simon Kawaguchi, Finance/Administrative Officer  
Ms. Naho Tamura, Programme Assistant

**TENTATIVE AGENDA**

1. An update on the situation in Japan with regard to the COVID-19 and the work of the Secretariat;
2. A review of the preparations for ITTC 57 and the various working groups including the selection panel of the new ED;
3. A brief update on the implementation of projects and activities that are funded;
4. A report on the Decision without meeting process and the situation of the Administrative Budget;
5. Other matters and tentative date for next IAG call and closing

The virtual meeting was convened on Thursday, 1 July 2021 from 20:55 (Japan Standard Time) with the above participants and in the brief absence of the Chairperson of Council, the meeting of the Informal Advisory Group (IAG) was opened by Mr. Jesse Mahoney, Vice-Chairperson of the Council, after which Mr. Kheiruddin Md. Rani, Chairperson of Council, chaired the meeting.

**1. Update on the Situation in Japan with regard to the COVID-19 and the Work of the Secretariat**

The IAG was informed that the vaccination rollout in Japan, which uses vaccines that require two doses, has been slow with a little under 30% of the population having received their first shot and 12% fully vaccinated. Most of these people are medical workers and elderly people over the age of 65 who were prioritized but the rollout has been accelerated with the start of the workplace vaccination program that the Japanese government has approved. The situation is evolving every day and the rules and procedures of who is eligible for vaccination and when they will become eligible remains difficult to follow. The OIC said that there had been some progress in getting the ITTO staff vaccinated through special arrangements from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan that enabled the ITTO Secretariat to receive the vaccination coupons of all non-Japanese resident staff who are not registered with the local municipalities. However, the vaccination coupons are tied to age groups. Until the City of Yokohama, which is the municipality where non-Japanese resident ITTO staff will be able to get vaccinations, officially extends the vaccination reservations to younger age groups, it is uncertain when all these staff will be vaccinated. The OIC said that, through the generosity of the host government, he was offered the opportunity to get vaccinated under a program designed to have high level officials in embassies and international organizations vaccinated before the Olympics and will be fully vaccinated by the end of July. Another staff was able to get a reservation through a clinic that had extra

doses if not used would otherwise be wasted. All other Japanese staff and staff that have residency will receive vaccination coupons through their local municipalities and will be able to make reservations when it opens up to their age group. It was hoped that all staff would be vaccinated by the end of October.

The Producer Spokesperson asked if the protocol being extended for those coming for the Olympic Games could also be extended for the Council Session and the Selection Panel for the new ED. The OIC responded by saying that the arrangements for the Olympic Games to allow athletes, coaches and related staff to enter has not been extended to entry of private people and there is no provision in place to allow quarantine free entry to anybody coming into Japan including those that have been fully vaccinated. While the Japanese government had indicated that they are considering vaccine passports, there is no information available on when or if people will be entering Japan without quarantine, which determines whether it will be possible to convene working groups or to convene the Council Session physically. The representative of Japan said that the situation is incredibly fluid and it is unknown how the infection picture may change after the Olympic Games so it was too early for anyone to prejudge what the meeting landscape would look like. One thing that she had noted is that there is no international process planning for any physical meeting this year including working groups and suggested to tentatively consider rescheduling meeting plans for the end of the year to next year but that may also need to be reassessed with the spread of the delta variant. The OIC added that he heard semi-officially that CBD and the Government of China were in intensive discussions to shift the CBD COP, currently scheduled for October, at least until January 2022 to try to hold it physically. There had just been an offer from the Executive Secretary of UNFCCC saying that the Government of UK is making vaccines available to delegates in an effort to try to have a physical COP in Glasgow in Nov 2021 but it is unclear how these vaccines will be delivered or what form the meeting will eventually take. The Vice-Chairperson said that even if Japan did not have entry restrictions, the reality is that most other countries in the world will have limitations on vaccine accessibility and in the case of Australia, he did not foresee having access to a vaccination before November. This may be the existing situation across 50% of ITTO members. The OIC agreed with the comments made and suggested to move to the agenda item to review preparations for ITTC57, including the various working groups.

## **2. Review of the Preparations for ITTC 57 including the Various Working Groups**

The OIC noted that in Secretariat's view, it may be quite difficult to convene a physical meeting of the Council Session in November and recalled that a meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Advisory Group established under Decision 9(XXXI) was convened in July 2020 to advise on urgent changes to the agreed duration, location or timing of Council, which resulted in the decision to convene a virtual Council Session in November 2020. It was proposed that a meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Advisory Group (AHAG) established under Decision 9(XXXI) be convened on either 13 or 15 July. The AHAG, consisting of the Chairperson of ITTC, the two Spokespersons, the representative of the host government and the ED of ITTO represented by the OIC will discuss the possibility of convening a virtual Council Session again in November 2021 and a physical meeting as soon as possible in Japan in June 2022 or November 2022. A decision will also need to be made on what needs to be discussed urgently and matters that could be discussed in a virtual Council Session. The OIC explained that there are some important deadlines that have financial implications. Currently the Council venue is booked for November 2021 with an initial deposit of half of the fees amounting to approximately US\$80,000 that is non-refundable and if the venue is cancelled after end of July, there will need to be an additional non-refundable payment of US\$80,000 that has a significant financial implication for ITTO (total of US\$160,000). In addition, the officials from the City of Yokohama have been asking if there will be a physical Session in order to confirm if they need to commence the process to provide volunteers to service the Council in 2021. There are slots available at the venue for a physical meeting in June and November 2022. The City of Yokohama provides financial support for all costs associated with the convening of the Council Sessions in Japan in alternate years. The budget for 2020 is no longer available after the end of the 2020 financial year of the City of Yokohama on 30 April 2021. Hence, the costs associated with convening the Council Session, either virtually or physically in 2021, need to be covered by the ITTO Secretariat from its Administrative Account or the Working Capital Account. Because 2022 is the year that the City of Yokohama is originally scheduled to again provide financial assistance towards the convening of a Council Session, the City of Yokohama will have a budget allocation for 2022 starting from 1 May 2022 to pay for a Council Session in Yokohama possibly in June 2022 or in November 2022.

The Producer Spokesperson noted that from the explanations provided by the OIC and the representative of Japan, it seemed clear that it would not be possible to meet physically in November 2021 but he felt that Council should stick to its original schedule of holding a meeting in November 2021 to discuss some issues virtually while there could be some issues deferred to a physical meeting. The OIC said that the Secretariat is proceeding on the assumption that all decisions are to be implemented on schedule, including the ED Selection Panel and the working group to develop a new strategic action plan whose work would feed



into the next Council session currently scheduled for Nov 2021. The Secretariat would proceed with this schedule until instructed otherwise. The Consumer Spokesperson concurred with keeping with the current schedule and mentioned that in the previous year, the Secretariat had provided cost estimates in terms of hosting a virtual Council Session. It may be useful for the Secretariat to explore the modalities and associated costs of potentially doing remote voting in November and provide a document that would be useful for members in understanding the cost implications and logistical modalities. The OIC said that the Secretariat had already begun looking into virtual voting and would prepare a background paper in time for the meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Advisory Group established under Decision 9(XXXI). The background paper could be appended to the report of the AHAG to be sent out to members with a letter from the Chairperson.

### **3. Brief Update on the Implementation of Projects and Activities that are Funded**

The IAG was informed that all projects and activities are ongoing with some delays. A list of proposed Project Steering Committee meetings for the second half of 2021 had been sent to donors. Most of the proposed meetings are virtual with a few physical meetings scheduled at the end of the year in the hope that it might be possible. If donors are interested in participating, they can inform the Secretariat and the Project Managers will be in contact. The OIC noted that there are a couple of projects listed that have not been able to comply with the reporting requirements under the project agreements. This was a special concern this year because it has not been possible to physically visit the projects and also led to difficulties with the audit of the organization that have been overcome to obtain a clean audit with the recommendation that two projects be terminated at the upcoming Council Session.

### **4. Report on the Decision without Meeting Process and Situation of the Administrative Budget**

The IAG was informed that the proposed Decision without meeting requesting to access more funds from the Working Capital Account was not adopted because out of the 17 producer members that are eligible to vote, only 6 of them voted on the decision and only 5 voted in favor. According to the Rules of Procedure, the first requirement is to have at least half of the eligible members agreeing to take a decision without meeting. Due to this criterion not being met, the decision did not pass, resulting in the Secretariat not being able to access additional funds from the Working Capital Account. Fortunately, China's contribution was received in June after the draft Decision without meeting was circulated, temporarily alleviating the need for additional funds to keep the Secretariat running.

To draw the attention of members to the situation of members' payments towards the Administrative Account, the OIC gave a presentation as attached in Annex I. The charts show in a color-coded scheme when members have been paying over the years with the numbers showing the month in which they paid. The dark green boxes mean that the member paid when they could get the discount available to those that pay before end of April. The light green boxes are the members that did not get the discount but paid before 1 July. The Secretariat would like to see most members paying before the beginning of July so that there are enough funds to run the organization throughout the year. The light-yellow boxes are members that paid from 1 July up to before the Council Session in November and the dark orange boxes are members that paid after the Council Session but before the end of the year. The red boxes with zeros are members that never paid their contribution during the year in which it was assessed. They may have paid later, and the funds may have gone into the Working Capital Account, but the Secretariat needs the funds to run the Organization in the year in which that budget was approved. In the slide on Africa, there are several countries that have consistently failed to pay at all during the calendar year in which the budget was assessed and many countries pay late. In the slide on Asia-Pacific, most of the members pay on time with a slight drop this year but we are not through the year yet, so hopefully more will pay. In the slide on Latin America, the situation has been getting worse. On the Consumer side, there are generally no problems except for Albania, which has not paid since they joined in 2013. Most of the members pay on time to qualify for the discount. The slide on the EU shows that they qualified for the discount every single year except for 2016 when they wrote to the Secretariat saying that they were not going to pay their assessed contribution until the impairment issue was resolved. However, this year there has been no explanation of the lack of payment despite several reminders sent as per the terms of the ITTA. Finally, the OIC took the IAG through a couple of slides that showed the aggregate situation of members making timely contributions to the Administrative Budget and highlighted the trend in the lines that go up to the light green line with a dark green shaded area and a light green shaded area below it, which are all payments year by year that are made before 1 July, which ideally is the point by when the Secretariat would like to have received at least 50% of the assessed contributions. It was noted that payments had been steadily but slowly going down with some big dips in 2016, which was the EU, and again in 2021. We are now at the beginning of July and have another huge dip in the trend which is even sharper than in 2016, so the situation this year is worse than the year of the impairment. The Secretariat felt that apart from the discount for paying by end of April, there was

a lack of incentives for members to make timely payments, there is no penalty such as losing the ability to submit projects until not paying for two years consecutively and losing the right to vote may not have any impact. Having a rolling scale of discounts may need to be considered. The OIC recalled that a decision without meeting to authorize access to additional Working Capital funds was required in 2016, 2020 and 2021 and pointed out that it is not good for the Organization to continue to have to resort to an emergency measure to keep the Secretariat operational. Council should consider raising the standing limit of currently US\$300,000 that the Secretariat is authorized to use from the Working Capital Account. Passing a decision without meeting through the normal process requires approximately six weeks - the Secretariat may be forced again in the middle of July to send out another decision without meeting to members requesting authorization to use more funds from the Working Capital Account if additional payments are not received before then.

The representative of Japan noted that unlike the budget of many other conventions, the EU payments seemed to be handled as a block rather than on a country basis and suggested to have them pay on a country basis like what they do in other conventions. The pattern with countries that are in arrears seem to be the same as in other conventions where even big conventions like the Rio Conventions do not see payments of up to 50% of the membership towards the end of the year. It was observed that there are over 105 countries currently seeking IMF assistance which may also explain the numbers. It was noted that unlike other conventions that do not have reserves and are in a much tighter financial situation, ITTO has a large amount in reserves which has restrictions so the Secretariat has to seek Council approval for its use each time and there are no guidelines that allow it to be used on an emergency basis. Other bodies usually have a standing decision whereby any leftover residual funds can automatically be rolled over into the next fiscal year and instead of a no-objection approval procedure by e-mail, they hold extraordinary budget meetings to resolve budgetary issues, which the representative of Japan suggested ITTO to consider. The importance of optics in requesting for funds showing that the organization has been prudent in its spending was also emphasized.

The Vice-Chairperson enquired on what confidence do we have in members voting if there was another decision without meeting and if there had been any advocacy to encourage voting. The OIC responded by saying that the primary advocacy was to send out a decision without meeting, which is an emergency measure not entered into lightly and that it is not the first time that this has happened in recent years. The OIC implored IAG members to explore why other members had not paid their contributions. In this context, the OIC also mentioned that after he has completed the vaccination process by the end of July, he planned to visit Brussels for consultations if payment had not been made by then. The Consumer Spokesperson informed the IAG that their caucus will be meeting again soon, and he will also be in contact with the EU directly. The Chairperson suggested sending another letter on payments and the OIC responded by saying that letters had been sent on 1 July to all members that are in arrears for six months and any member who is still in arrears on 1 August will have their votes suspended until full payment is made.

The Producer Spokesperson was not sure if the role of the spokespersons was to discuss or convince countries to pay their arrears but mentioned that he could do the same with the countries from the Producer Caucus. He thought it may be necessary to coordinate a strategy together with the Secretariat on how to effectively approach members in order to convince them to pay their arrears and suggested to include this under the agenda of the Council Session. The Vice-Chairperson agreed with the suggestion to determine a pitching strategy on why members should pay and what the benefit would be for them. He also noted the need for cooperation across the Council if members believe that the ITTO should continue to exist going forward and the mutual interest of all members needs to be determined, which is how payments and solutions are found.

In responding to an earlier comment made by the representative of Japan on whether the EU countries should pay individually or together, the OIC said that before the ITTA 2006 came into force at the end of 2011, each EU country paid on its own. Under the ITTA, 2006, the European Commission was given the oversight capacity and mandate ("competence") to be responsible for ITTO so the individual member countries no longer make individual payments to ITTO. The OIC understood through communications with some EU member countries that they were not aware that the EU had not paid this year until receiving the request for the decision without meeting that was sent to all member countries. Following up on the comments made by the Vice-Chairperson about cooperation across the caucuses, the Consumer Spokesperson noted that there is a lot of frustration on non-payment in arrears. He also informed the IAG that during a meeting of the Consumer Caucus some weeks ago, they discussed the extension of the ITTA and there was strong support from all attending members for the extension, including from the EU – an indication that members seek a viable future for the organization. It was suggested by Japan that raising the

visibility of the organization and moving forward on the strategic action plan may provide an impetus for payments to be made.

The OIC commented that the discussion of the IAG will be reflected in the minutes of the meeting and the Spokespersons could request caucus members to review them if they were made publicly available. He asked the IAG if they wanted the minutes to be posted on the ITTO website for transparency. The Consumer Spokesperson reminded the Secretariat that the minutes of the meeting should be approved by the IAG before being published. As some members were reluctant to having another decision without meeting and there was suggestion to explore convening an extraordinary meeting, the Secretariat would look into the procedures, feasibility of and financial implications for convening an extraordinary meeting before the end of July and consult with the Chairperson.

#### **5. Other matters and tentative date for next IAG call and closing**

The draft minutes of the IAG meeting will be circulated to IAG members in one week.

Depending on the outcome of the Decision 9(XXXI) ad hoc Advisory Group, the IAG and the AB will be convened together before the next Session of Council. For the Decision 9(XXXI) ad hoc Advisory Group, the Secretariat will be in touch with the Chair, the Spokespersons and the host government to decide on a date of either 13 or 15 July.

The IAG was informed that the Secretariat had preliminary discussions with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Japan on the possibility of ITTO undertaking work on guidelines for deforestation free supply chains, with a particular focus on tropical forests and tropical timber where Japan might provide some initial seed funding for a background study. The Japanese representative added that it was a topical area of interest that might help ITTO engage with a number of donors and funds who have an interest in this area and it may help the membership. The OIC said that a bullet point list summarizing the idea will be circulated with the minutes of the IAG meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 22:20 hours (Japan Standard Time).

ANNEXE I

Month when Assessed Contributions were received in full

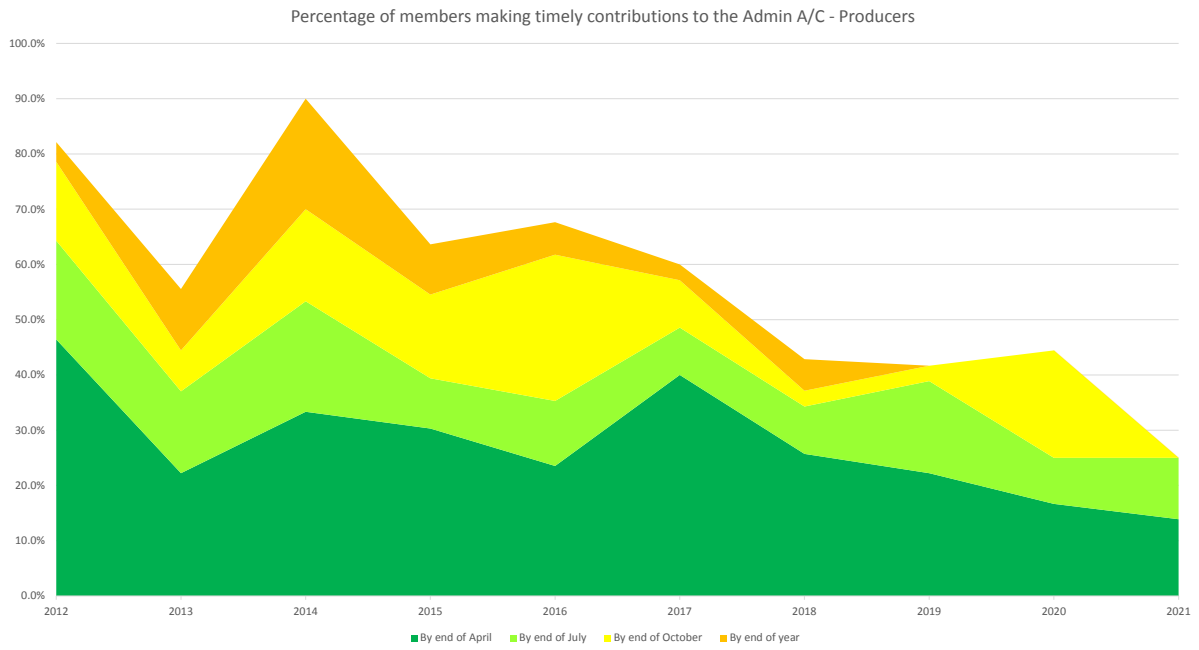
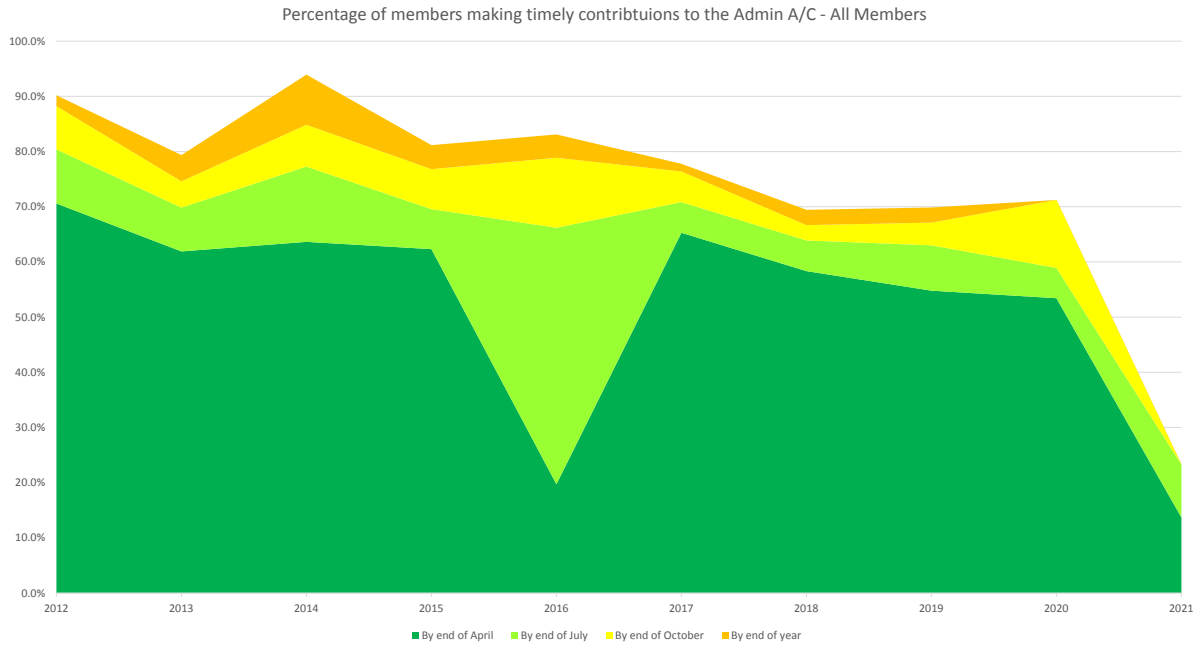
PRODUCER MEMBERS		2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Africa</b>											
Benin		-	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	10	0
Cameroon		1	11	11	6	11	0	0	0	0	0
Central African Republic		-	-	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Congo		8	5	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Côte d'Ivoire		3	5	11	0	0	0	11	0	0	0
Demo.Rep.of the Congo		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gabon		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ghana		11	0	11	11	10	11	0	0	0	0
Liberia		9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Madagascar		-	-	-	-	-	1	0	3	0	0
Mali		-	0	2	0	10	0	0	0	0	0
Mozambique		-	0	5	0	0	0	0	5	1	0
Togo		0	10	8	0	9	5	5	4	0	0

PRODUCER MEMBERS		2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Asia &amp; Pacific</b>											
Cambodia		2	4	5	4	4	4	4	5	4	0
Fiji		1	2	3	6	1	1	2	1	6	1
India		0	0	11	9	8	7	0	7	7	0
Indonesia		2	0	3	8	4	3	3	6	0	4
Malaysia		3	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Myanmar		7	0	6	9	10	0	0	0	8	0
Papua New Guinea		4	6	9	0	8	1	0	0	0	0
Philippines		2	2	4	3	2	4	4	6	3	0
Thailand		4	-	-	-	9	9	9	8	0	6
Viet Nam		-	-	-	4	6	7	3	0	6	5

PRODUCER MEMBERS		2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Latin America</b>											
Brazil		-	-	11	11	7	3	0	0	8	0
Colombia		7	-	4	3	5	0	0	0	10	5
Costa Rica		-	-	7	1	6	3	3	3	2	1
Ecuador		7	11	7	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Guatemala		1	2	6	5	10	8	5	4	9	6
Guyana		5	11	4	4	10	3	11	0	0	0
Honduras		8	0	3	9	4	8	5	1	0	0
Mexico		4	9	2	2	3	3	2	3	3	3
Panama		8	6	11	10	0	3	4	5	8	0
Peru		0	0	9	11	11	3	0	0	0	0
Suriname		1	-	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Trinidad and Tobago		5	4	8	4	4	2	0	0	9	0
Venezuela		1	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	0

CONSUMER MEMBERS		2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Albania		-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Australia		3	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	3	1
China		4	4	6	6	6	4	5	10	8	6
Japan		4	3	3	2	3	3	1	2	3	2
New Zealand		1	1	1	1	2	5	3	11	1	1
Norway		2	10	3	4	11	0	0	12	10	6
Republic of Korea		3	3	2	2	3	3	3	4	3	3
Switzerland		1	1	7	1	4	2	1	1	1	1
United Kingdom		4	4	1	2	7	4	2	1	1	0
United States of America		4	6	5	5	4	10	10	8	7	6

CONSUMER MEMBERS		2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>European Union</b>											
Austria		4	4	1	2	7	4	2	1	1	0
Belgium		4	4	1	2	7	4	2	1	1	0
Bulgaria		-	4	1	2	7	4	2	1	1	0
Croatia		-	-	-	-	7	4	2	1	1	0
Cyprus		-	4	1	2	7	4	2	1	1	0
Czech Republic		-	4	1	2	7	4	2	1	1	0
Denmark		2	4	1	2	7	4	2	1	1	0
Estonia		-	4	1	2	7	4	2	1	1	0
Finland		4	4	1	2	7	4	2	1	1	0
France		4	4	1	2	7	4	2	1	1	0
Germany		4	4	1	2	7	4	2	1	1	0
Greece		4	4	1	2	7	4	2	1	1	0
Hungary		-	4	1	2	7	4	2	1	1	0
Ireland		4	4	1	2	7	4	2	1	1	0
Italy		4	4	1	2	7	4	2	1	1	0
Latvia		-	4	1	2	7	4	2	1	1	0
Lithuania		-	4	1	2	7	4	2	1	1	0
Luxembourg		-	4	1	2	7	4	2	1	1	0
Malta		-	4	1	2	7	4	2	1	1	0
Netherlands		2	4	1	2	7	4	2	1	1	0
Poland		4	4	1	2	7	4	2	1	1	0
Portugal		4	4	1	2	7	4	2	1	1	0
Romania		-	4	1	2	7	4	2	1	1	0
Slovakia		-	4	1	2	7	4	2	1	1	0
Slovenia		-	4	1	2	7	4	2	1	1	0
Spain		4	4	1	2	7	4	2	1	1	0
Sweden		4	4	1	2	7	4	2	1	1	0





**ANNEX D**  
**Minutes of Informal Advisory Group Meeting held on 26 August 2021**

**Minutes**

**INFORMAL ADVISORY GROUP**

**26 August 2021**

**PARTICIPANTS:**

**Advisory Board**

Mr. Kheiruddin Md. Rani, Chairperson, ITTC  
Mr. Jesse Mahoney, Vice-Chairperson, ITTC  
Mr. Luke Thompson, Consumers Caucus Spokesperson  
Mr. Jorge Malleux, Producers Caucus Spokesperson  
Ms. Aysha Ghadiali, Chairperson, CRF  
Ms. Yoshiko Motoyama, Representative of the host Government of Japan (Mr. Taku Sakaguchi and Ms. Akiko Tabata also participated as observers)

**ITTO Secretariat**

Mr. Steve Johnson, Officer-in-Charge (OIC)  
Ms. Sheam Satkuru, Director, Operations  
Mr. Gerhard Breulmann, Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation Officer  
Mr. Simon Kawaguchi, Finance/Administrative Officer  
Ms. Naho Tamura, Programme Assistant

**AGENDA**

1. An update on the situation in Japan with regard to the COVID-19 and the work of the Secretariat;
2. Decision without meeting results and the situation of the Administrative Budget
3. ED selection panel update
4. ITTC 57: logistics (costs, etc.), dates, agenda, pending nominations for Council/Committees/Panels/etc.
5. ITTC 58: timing;
6. Other matters and tentative date for next IAG call and closing

The virtual meeting was convened on Thursday, 26 August 2021 from 19:05 hours (Japan Standard Time) with the above participants. Mr. Kheiruddin Md. Rani, Chairperson of Council, chaired the meeting. During a brief absence of the Chairperson, Mr. Jesse Mahoney, Vice-Chairperson of Council, chaired part of the meeting.

**1. Update on the Situation in Japan with regard to the COVID-19 and the Work of the Secretariat**

1. The IAG was informed that the ITTO Secretariat was continuing its COVID-19 work modalities, in which the majority of staff was working from home while monitoring the situation of the pandemic in Japan. Since the beginning of July, Japan had experienced another wave of COVID-19 due to the Delta variant with record new cases, serious cases and cases amongst young people being reported on an unprecedented scale. Of the 20,000 cases being reported daily, a third were in the greater Tokyo area including Yokohama. Many of the prefectures in the country, including all the major population centers, have been placed under a new State of Emergency declaration, which includes strong requests for people to work from home. The government has been trying, within its limited powers, to persuade people to stop moving around. Concerns are growing about infections spreading rapidly among young people as many students in Japan are returning to school after the summer break. Other offices in the same building as ITTO such as FAO, WFP and Inter-University Center for Japanese Language Studies haven remained closed throughout the pandemic. In terms of vaccinations, approximately 50% of the population in Japan has had at least one shot and around 40% had both shots of either the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine. Since the last IAG meeting in July, there had



been some progress with vaccination of ITTO staff with less than half having succeeded in getting fully vaccinated, 4 or 5 persons that had received their first shot and will have their second shot within a month, and another 7 or 8 persons that are still underway. It was hoped that by the time of the Council Session, the OIC would be able to report that all staff wanting to be vaccinated will have been vaccinated.

## **2. Decision without meeting results and the situation of the Administrative Budget**

2. The IAG was informed that the proposed Decision without meeting requesting to address the shortfalls in the Administrative Budget circulated to members on 6 August 2021 was not adopted due to the necessary threshold not being met for producer members, resulting in the Secretariat not being able to access additional funds from the Working Capital Account (WCA). Fortunately, the EU's contribution was paid through the European Commission about a week after the draft Decision without meeting was circulated, providing sufficient cash to keep the Secretariat running (assuming no unexpected expenses and no additional country payments) until mid-November. The Secretariat plans to submit a draft decision for Council's consideration at its upcoming 57<sup>th</sup> session increasing the limit of withdrawals from the WCA without requiring Council approval, currently set at US\$300,000.
3. The OIC drew the attention of the IAG to the comments from the two countries that did not vote in favor of the decision, both of which perceived this problem as a structural issue that needed to be dealt with in a more holistic manner. It was noted that on the Consumer side, Korea voted in favor of taking a Decision without meeting but abstained from voting on the issue stating that they perceived this as a structural issue. On the Producer side, Mexico voted against taking a Decision without meeting on the argument that the Organization had gone through a series of crises and there had been several such decisions to draw on the Working Capital Account in recent years which, in their view, was not appropriate. The OIC reminded the IAG that the Working Capital Account was established in 1992 to cover shortfalls in the Administrative Budget contributions in the current year by using assessed contributions that came in late from previous years. There was a provision in the financial rules authorizing the Executive Director to draw up to US\$300,000 per year to maintain operations of the Organization in the face of shortfalls in the Administrative Budget but any amount over that threshold would require a Council decision. The OIC suggested that it may be useful to have a discussion in Council on how to deal with what some members see as a structural problem.
4. The Producer Spokesperson commented that many producer countries had expressed concern over the financial situation of the Organization and did not have a clear grasp of the issues. It was thought that a short report to members to explain the situation that the Organization faced would be helpful. He noted that while some information was available on the ITTO website, there were some members who did not understand why the Organization was requesting funds. The Producer Spokesperson observed that many countries were facing financial crises and suggested further discussions were needed to find a strategy to encourage producer members to pay their assessed contributions and arrears.
5. The Consumer Spokesperson recognized that while the persistent deficit issue was serious, the Secretariat had made significant efforts in keeping the budget flat and even reducing some costs over the past several years while at the same time implementing all the activities that Council requests of it. Also recognizing the concern of the Producer Spokesperson, the Consumer Spokesperson suggested including a new Council agenda item on how to deal with persistent deficits in the administrative account. He noted that this was an issue that falls within the purview of the Committee on Finance and Administration (CFA) but felt that its importance justified discussion under a Council agenda item. The discussion could note that the deficits are a major and persistent on-going issue, which some members felt needed a structural solution. While there are some potential short-term actions that could be taken, such as increasing the threshold to enable the transfer of funds from the Working Capital Account more easily, other long-term actions are needed to resolve the problem.
6. The representative of Japan thought that there was an optics problem with the way the decisions without meeting was presented due to the difference in the level of understanding on how budget processes work and suggested to place the discussion under Agenda item 9 on Implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on ITTO procedures as a new sub-item "Improving decision-making modalities during emergencies, such as the pandemic". There was also a suggestion for the Secretariat to research the reserve policies of other organizations, and how they have handled liquidity issues during the pandemic, including the UN which faced liquidity issues in 2020. She noted that this could also

enable Council to address Rule 5.8 of the financial rules (“The Council shall determine when and in what manner the resources of this reserve shall be utilized”) in a more concrete manner.

7. The Vice-Chairperson of Council felt that the deficits had been a persistent issue that predated COVID and felt that placing the discussion under COVID might downplay the past long-term severity and the future long-term severity of the issue and leaned towards the proposal made by the Consumer Spokesperson to keep it as a standalone item as it was going to be an issue that persists long-term and may eventually require an amendment to the ITTA during the next negotiation.
8. The OIC was inclined to agree with the suggestions from the Consumer Spokesperson and the Vice-Chairperson of Council on having a standalone agenda item to discuss a improved ways of decision-making in emergencies, noting that the IAG agrees to include it under the Council Agenda, while where to place it could be discussed further when the IAG considers the draft Council Agenda. In response to the comment from the Producer Spokesperson, the OIC informed that IAG that the Chairperson’s letter sent together with the Decision without meeting on 6 August 2021 had clearly laid out how much money the Organization had received in contributions compared to the approved Administrative Budget and how much money was needed to run the Secretariat as well as cost-cutting measures. The IAG was further informed that the only guidance provided in the establishment documentation of the Working Capital Account was that the Secretariat is required to inform Council if it falls below 15% of annual operating costs, which it has never done. The OIC suggested that in looking at the structural problem and finding ways to improve members’ payments, perhaps instead of the current provision for a simple 5% incentive for paying assessed contributions before April, there could be a declining sequence of incentives to provide continued motivation for payments before mid-year or later. Council could also look at Decision 7(XXXIII), which was formulated to allow Council to write off arrears accrued by members under the first ITTA if they had paid in full from 2002 to present and to consider provisions for granting write-offs to countries for a longer period (e.g. up to the entry into force of the current ITTA) with the view to providing an incentive to become a member in good standing.
9. The Producer Spokesperson felt that in order to analyse the issue in a holistic manner, the Secretariat should contact countries individually to find out why they were unable to make payments and to get feedback from the focal points and local authorities in each country.
10. The OIC agreed that, while it was not possible under the current situation, it had been useful in the past to visit countries and meet the relevant authorities to discuss payments and other member responsibilities under the ITTA. He stressed that the Secretariat is not asking for more funds, but to meet members’ respective obligations under the Agreement. Secretariat is asking to draw on funds from the Working Capital Account due to members’ failure to pay their assessed contributions towards the budget that they had approved on time. The IAG was informed that there had been no increase in the Working Capital Account in recent years because the minimum amount of US\$300,000, which did not require authorization from Council, was drawn upon every year since the impairment and for several years, there had been Decisions without meeting to use more than US\$300,000. The Secretariat will prepare a document and make a presentation to Council, explaining the structure of the Administrative Budget, the problem of members not paying their assessed contributions as due and the role of the Working Capital Account and other reserves as established by Council.

### **3. ED Selection Panel update**

11. The IAG was informed that at the kickoff meeting of the ED Selection Panel it was agreed that its work would be carried out confidentially with one member of the Secretariat (Gerhard Breulmann) assisting them. The IAG was further informed that two meetings, a kickoff meeting and a second meeting, had been held with a third meeting scheduled for Monday, 30 August 2021. The ED Selection Panel had eliminated candidates from non-member countries and had taken a decision not to consider candidates who have already reached or would reach the retirement age of 65 before completing one four-year term. The OIC further added that at the kickoff meeting, the ED Selection Panel was informed that while there is a timeline indicated in Decision 5(LVI) for its work to be completed, there would be some flexibility depending on the final decision on the dates of the Council Session and in the interest of having a good shortlist. The Chairperson of CRF observed that there may be a need for Council to fine-tune the terms of reference for the ED Selection Panel going forward based on lessons learned from this year’s Selection Panel, especially in terms of what the Council expects from the Selection Panel.

**4. ITTC57: logistics (costs, etc.), dates, agenda, pending nominations for Council/Committees/Panels/etc.**

Dates of the Virtual ITTC 57 Session

12. The OIC referred to the meeting of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group (AHAG) in July 2021, convened under Decision 9(XXXI), which decided to convene a virtual ITTC57 Session but left the dates open for consideration by the IAG. He put forward a proposal to the IAG to consider the week of 15-19 November 2021 to avoid overlap with the UNFCCC COP, which several members and the ITTO interpreters had expressed concern about. The Consumer Spokesperson, speaking on behalf of the U.S.A., suggested the week of 29 November-3 December 2021 and to work backwards from there in considering the dates to allow additional time for preparation for ITTC57. He further noted that this date would be the last functional week before the expiration of the ITTA 2006. The Producer Spokesperson and the representative of Japan endorsed the proposal. The IAG decided that the dates to convene the virtual ITTC57 Session are 29 November-3 December 2021.
13. The OIC informed that a letter from the Chairperson informing members of the outcome of the Decision without Meeting process and the dates of the virtual ITTC57 Session will be sent on Friday 27 August 2021.

Logistics

14. The IAG was informed that the virtual ITTC57 Session will be conducted with the Kudo platform, as it was with the ITTC56 virtual session with the exception that quotes had been obtained for five hours per day instead of three hours per day (as requested by the IAG at its previous meeting). The ITTO interpreters' team will be available and Kudo offered a discount for the fixed package cost. The costs for the Council Session including interpretation and the cancellation costs of the 2021 physical meeting venue will be around US\$210,000.00, to be paid from the Administrative Budget, staying within the original budget allocation for 2021. The Secretariat put forward a proposal for the meetings to start at 6:00 p.m. (Japan Standard time) and run until 11:00 p.m. instead of from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.
15. The Chairperson inquired if the extended meeting time had taken into account the member countries' time zones. The OIC reported that it had been considered to the extent possible but either way there would be members starting very early or staying up late as was the case with the three-hour meeting in 2020. The IAG was reminded that after each daily virtual segment, the Chairperson's Bureau will meet for up to an hour and there are also other consultative meetings that may take place. The Secretariat had explored the possibility of having the Council Session running into the weekends, which would lead to a huge increase in interpretation costs as their rates are higher on weekends.
16. The Chairperson suggested having four-hour meetings per day and an hour for Bureau meetings following each daily virtual segment. The OIC noted that the Bureau is convened at the discretion of the Chairperson, and that depending on the progress of Council deliberations, it may not be necessary to hold Bureau meetings daily. The need for Bureau meetings may only arise later in the week if there are difficulties in reaching an agreement on decisions where the caucus spokespersons may need guidance from the Chairperson or other Bureau members. The OIC observed that if Council were to meet for more than five hours, there would be a need to get an additional team of interpreters, which would increase meeting costs significantly. Since the interpreters are currently expecting to work for up to five hours, shorter meetings would not be a problem and he suggested to leave the exact duration/timing of the virtual meetings open for now. The IAG will be convening again closer to the date of Council where it could consider the final agenda and progress with the ED Selection Panel before taking a decision on the timing of meetings.
17. The representative of Japan proposed up to five hours including intermission as this was becoming standard and the agenda has many important issues that need to be addressed.
18. The Producer spokesperson agreed that virtual meetings that run for more than three hours are becoming standard and supported establishing a maximum of five hours per day and noted that there may be days where the meeting finishes earlier depending on the agenda. In accordance with the procedures adopted for the virtual Council Session in 2020, the Producer Spokesperson requested the Secretariat to assist in arranging regional consultations prior to the Council Session.

19. The Secretariat confirmed that a provisional schedule of meetings will be circulated to the IAG and to members before Council and the length of the meetings could be defined there. Hence the letter to be sent to members on 28 August 2021 would only say that the meetings will run for up to five hours per day.

Pending nominations of Council officers/bodies

20. The IAG was informed on the vacant positions of Council officers/bodies.
21. From the Consumer group, nominations for 2 members of the Expert Panel were pending.
22. The Producer Spokesperson confirmed the nomination of Mr. Zahrul Muttaqin (Indonesia) as the Chairperson of CFI. The Secretariat sought confirmation on the expression of interest from Costa Rica for the position of Chairperson of CEM as well as a nomination for the Vice-Chairperson of the CRF. The IAG was informed that nominations for three members for the Fellowship Panel were pending and some members of the Expert Panel who had completed two years could continue for an additional year, but this needed to be confirmed by the Spokesperson.
23. The Secretariat will send information on the vacant positions of Council officers/bodies in writing to the Producer Spokesperson. The OIC thanked the Producer Spokesperson for his efforts in securing nominations and recalled that during the previous year, there was one Chairperson for both CEM and CFI.

Agenda of Council

24. The OIC introduced the draft provisional agenda of Council, which had been circulated to the IAG for its consideration. The main deliberations were:
  - i. Agenda item 7 Report of the Informal Advisory Group (IAG) - the IAG report will focus on the meeting of the IAG that meets immediately before the Council Session and primarily considers draft decisions. The reports of the meetings held on 1 July and 26 August, which were/will be posted on the members' portal, will be included in the annex with a suitable preamble and explanatory text.
  - ii. Agenda item 9 Implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on ITTO procedures – some issues related to the hosting of a physical session in 2022 may be included.
  - iii. Agenda item 11 Extension of the ITTA, 2006 – the draft decision introduced at the previous ITTC and the non-paper introduced at the ITTC55 will be reintroduced through the IAG at its next meeting.
  - iv. Information on members that are eligible to vote will be presented to the IAG at its next meeting where a decision could be taken on whether the list should be appended to the IAG report to Council.
  - v. A new agenda item should be included after Agenda item 9 on persistent deficits in the Administrative Account and improving emergency decision making.
  - vi. The Producer Spokesperson stressed the importance of aiming for consensus in decision-making in light of the possibility that the payment situation of some producer countries may not improve in time for the Council and could have implications should voting arise.
  - vii. The CRF Chairperson recalled that at the previous meeting of the IAG, there had been discussion on the potential extra costs and the procedures for voting in a virtual meeting if Council needed to vote and inquired if there were any updates while agreeing that decision-making by consensus would be preferred. The IAG was informed that the Secretariat had inquired with Kudo on the logistics of voting, including any extra confirmation of where votes were being submitted from. The Secretariat did not anticipate any significant additional costs unless there is a need for more technical support from the Kudo technical team that could not be covered under the virtual conference package. It was understood that the voting would be done under a polling function where a question is defined and there would be buttons for yes or no. A test "mock vote" will be carried out prior to the session and the IAG will be informed of any implications/issues.
  - viii. The IAG was informed that the draft document on a new Strategic Action Plan (SAP) for ITTO had been circulated to members for comments but did not attract an overwhelming response. The OIC stressed the importance of the new SAP that will provide the framework for how ITTO operates over the next six-year period and possibly into the next ITTA.

- ix. The IAG welcomed the Trade Advisory Group's proposal to convene a virtual Market Discussion on the topic of "Implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on the tropical timber sector" and agreed that sufficient time should be allocated in Council for this core activity as it was a good means of informing members, the public and the industry of the continuing relevance of the Organization. Other Committee and Joint Committee activities will be handled under a single Council agenda item as was done at ITTC56.
- x. Include a new Agenda item 16 on Matters related to Article 15 with an appropriate Council document detailing ITTO's collaboration with other relevant agencies, bringing together reports previously provided individually under the BWP or elsewhere on ITTO's collaboration with CITES, CBD, accreditation to GCF/GEF, etc. The Council document under this agenda item should also draw attention as to how ITTO projects have had an impact in attracting larger-scale funding from other organizations in some countries.

#### **5. ITTC 58: timing**

- 25. The IAG was informed that the City of Yokohama had confirmed its budget allocation for the fiscal year 2022 (available from 1 May 2022) to pay for a physical Council Session in Yokohama. Pacifico-Yokohama, the ITTO headquarters venue, has already been booked for the week of 6-12 November 2022 (the only dates currently available in November 2022); this booking currently needs to be confirmed by end of November 2021. The OIC suggested that as the virtual ITTC57 in 2021 has now been scheduled to end on December 3, the Secretariat will inquire with Pacifico-Yokohama whether the confirmation could be delayed for one week to allow final confirmation after Council 's deliberation. The outcome of this inquiry would be reported at the next IAG meeting. The OIC recalled that there had also been discussion on a possible June 2022 slot booked tentatively at Pacifico-Yokohama and it had been decided by the IAG not to confirm this slot. Hence the Secretariat will cancel this booking before the deadline of end of August 2021 to avoid incurring any cancellation fees.
- 26. The OIC further recalled that the Decision 9(XXXI) AHAG had requested the Secretariat to research options of other venues that might be available if Council decided it wanted to convene a physical session earlier in 2022 (ie mid-year) and informed that a meeting room in the Sogo building near Yokohama Station is currently available on various dates in May and one week in July 2022 in the event that Council decides to meet sooner than the November 2022 date. The meeting facilities at Sogo would require a full payment one month after making a booking and there is a 50% refund for cancellations made within three months of the meeting date, after which the entire fee (which is slightly lower than the Pacifico complex) is non-refundable.
- 27. The representative of Japan noted that 6-12 November 2022 again coincides with the UNFCCC CoP scheduled for 6-18 November 2022 and advised against using the Sogo meeting rooms if the costs are not that different from Pacifico-Yokohama, which is a much nicer facility and safer under COVID-19. The Chairperson of CRF noted that the dates of the next CITES COP, being hosted by Panama, could potentially also overlap with the ITTC. The OIC reiterated that the November 2022 date was not a proposal made by the Secretariat but was a date that Pacifico-Yokohama had informed was available knowing that the ITTC usually meets in November. While the Secretariat could explore if there are any slots that become available due to cancellations, Pacifico-Yokohama had already informed that due to the backlog of meetings over the past two years now being scheduled in 2022, there was very little availability and the Secretariat had already checked October, November, December as well as June and the only available dates were the two dates in June and November 2022 already informed. The Vice-Chairperson of Council suggested to the IAG that the best course of action would be for the Secretariat to inquire with Pacifico-Yokohama if the deadline to confirm the 6-12 November 2022 booking could be extended for one week from end of November 2021 to allow time for Council to deliberate and take a final decision on the dates of ITTC 58. This was agreed.

#### **6. Other matters and tentative date for next IAG call and closing**

- 28. No other matters were raised, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m. (Japan Standard Time). The date of the next (virtual) meeting of the IAG will be proposed by the Secretariat by the end of October.