



TFNet STRATEGIC PLAN 2009 – 2011

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A. INTRODUCTION

This 2009 – 2011 strategic planning framework of the International Tropical Fruits Network (TFNet), is a result of the active engagement of members of the Board of Trustees with the Secretariat in a workshop, held in Putrajaya, Malaysia on 16 – 17 February 2009.

This strategic framework will guide TFNet as it undertakes 15 major strategic initiatives under five (5) strategic key result areas to achieve results that are valued by members and other stakeholders. It also aims to strengthen linkages with common interest groups in every region worldwide, and to enhance communication and coordination with other networks and organizations with the common agenda to address the need for international cooperation to tackle critical issues involving production, consumption and trade of tropical fruits.

Establishment of TFNet

The initiation of TFNet was first raised during the first International Consultation on Tropical Fruits (ICTF) hosted by Malaysia from 15 – 16 July 1996, which was attended by delegates from 22 countries.

Two main issues deliberated at the forum were:

- Economic and trade issues which centred on the current situation of tropical fruit industry, future prospects for fruits and processed tropical fruits, tariff, phytosanitary and quarantine measures.
- The nutritional importance of tropical fruits in providing important necessary dietary intakes, including vitamins, nutrients, micronutrients and fibre, which are essential for improving human health and well being.

The ICTF then recommended the setting up of the Sub-Group on Tropical Fruits (SGTF) and under its auspices the establishment of an FAO-sponsored global Network on Tropical Fruits (TFNet) to promote international cooperation in the production, consumption and trade of this commodity group. It further agreed that Malaysia should be the prime mover in setting up TFNet.

A total of 30 countries, 5 international and regional organizations, 2 non-governmental organizations and 12 representatives from the private sector, attended the first General Assembly of TFNet held in Kuala Lumpur on 27-29 July 2000.

Key Accomplishments of TFNet

From 2001 to 2008, TFNet has carried out various activities to pursue its mandate in the areas of information exchange, studies and consultancies.

1. Information exchange

- a. Setting up of TFNet Information Portal & website
 - includes fruit compendium, experts list and discussion forum. In 2008, web portal was upgraded to include more comprehensive fruit information, blog and resource persons list.
- b. Involved in the establishment of MyFruits.org portal on information pertaining to the 10 prioritized Malaysian Fruits.
- c. The setting up of a 'global information system' on tropical fruits with special focus on Africa' which was funded by CFC.
- d. International Seminars.
 - Four series of international seminar had been organized, each on a different focus on tropical and subtropical fruits.
 - International technical and trade seminar on Tropical and subtropical fruits
 - International seminar on Postharvest Handling and Processing of Tropical and subtropical fruits
 - International seminar on Economics and Marketing of Tropical and subtropical fruits
 - International seminar on Consumer Trends and Export of Tropical and Subtropical Fruits
- e. International Study Tours
 - Since 2004, twice a year study tours and hands-on workshops on fruit/food processing have been organized for entrepreneurs and government agencies to East Java, Indonesia.
 - In 2008, a study tour was organized for entrepreneurs from Indonesia to fruit farms and wholesale markets in Thailand.
- f. Other workshops
 - The Transfer of Global Information System on Tropical Fruits with Special Focus on Africa
 - International Study Visit cum Workshop on Post Harvest Handling and Processing of Tropical and Subtropical Fruits – funded by IDB
 - Training Course on GAP and Plant & Soil Nutrition

2. Studies and consultancies

- a. Country study on Elements of Strategies and Action Plan for Sustainable Development of Tropical Fruit Industry. Studies done on 4 countries – Bangladesh, Fiji, Malaysia and Philippines and all studies funded by FAO
- b. On-Farm Conservation and Utilisation of Traditional Fruit Species in Malaysia – TFNet, MARDI, DOA, UKM
- c. Technical Assistance for a Three-Year Joint Collaborative Project on Post-harvest Handling and Processing of Fruits in Syrian Arab Republic
- d. Study of Plant Variety Protection Testing of Tropical Fruits in Eight Asian Countries – funded by GTZ
- e. Consultancy on East Coast Economic Region Integrated Pineapple Project in the South West Pahang, Malaysia (Districts of Pekan and Rompin)

B. OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES AHEAD

Opportunities

1. Opportunities for raising foreign exchange earnings, employment and incomes and food security
 - Of the agricultural commodities traded internationally, fruits – i.e. tropical, sub-tropical and temperate, as a group, have registered the most dynamic growth. In 2006, international trade value of tropical fruits, excluding bananas, was US \$ 5.97 billion of which US\$ 4.67 billion in fresh form, and USD\$ 1.3 billion as processed.
 - The potential for increased production, consumption and trade of tropical fruits is significant enough to justify intensive, concerted and collective efforts at the international level to further develop the sector.
2. Current scenarios that provide opportunities for this commodity:
 - Increasing health consciousness of developed nations' population - export potential of tropical fruits as exotic and nutritious.
 - Emphasis on increasing local consumption of tropical fruits in developing countries
 - Availability of international program funding on related agricultural and tropical fruit development

Challenges

1. External factors

- Reduced purchasing power globally (in view of the current economic slowdown)
- Increasing cost of production due to increasing costs of inputs
- Post-harvest losses still prevalent in developing tropical fruit producing countries
- Market access for tropical fruit as compared to temperate fruit – market constraints and exports
- and the strong competition for program funding opportunities

2. Internal factors:

- Perception that TFNet is Malaysian/Asian-centric
- Limited capability of TFNet

C. MISSION, VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Mandate

To promote sustainable development of the tropical fruit industry globally

Vision Statement

The International Tropical Fruits Network (TFNet) will be a dynamic, sustainable and self-financing global network promoting international cooperation in the production, consumption and trade of this commodity group.

Guiding Principles

We subscribe to the following guiding principles in defining and driving TFNet's activities and interactions.

Accountability - TFNet is driven by and accountable to its members.

Membership Satisfaction – TFNet is committed to anticipating, understanding and meeting with members' needs and expectations.

International Cooperation – TFNet is committed to international cooperation and the building of partnerships among members and other regional networks in its operations and activities.

Diversity - TFNet recognizes the diversity within its member institutions, and strives to build consensus and understanding in achieving common goals.

Excellence – TFNet is committed to strive relentlessly in the pursuit of excellence and continuous improvement in its services and operations

D. STRATEGIC KEY RESULT AREAS (SKRA)

TFNet will address the following areas of key importance during the next 3 years:

SKRA#1: Membership

SKRA #2: Financial Sustainability

SKRA #3: Corporate Communications

SKRA #4: Products & Services

SKRA # 5: Capacity Building

SKRA#1: Membership

Goal #1: To increase the number of country members and members.

Expected outcome:

- At least 30% of FAO members join as TFNet.
- One tropical fruit MNC joins TFNet.
- 30 new members / year

Goal #2: To establish linkages with regional networks related to the tropical fruit industry

Expected outcome:

- Membership composition to be representative of all regions in the world.
- 4 regional networks by 2011.

Goal #3: To fulfill the needs and requirements of members.

Expected outcome:

- Higher level of membership satisfaction.

SKRA #2: Financial Sustainability

Goal #1: To ensure that TFNet has adequate and diversified sources of funding to undertake its operations.

Expected outcome:

- Multiple sources of funding
- Financially stable

SKRA #3: Corporate Communications

Goal #1: To project the image of TFNet as an International network in its membership, operations and management.

Expected outcome:

- Global visibility and recognition of TFNet as an International network, committed to the development of the tropical fruit industry.

SKRA #4: Products & Services

Goal #1: To offer new value creating products and services to members and non-members.

Expected outcome:

- Benefits to members.
- Access to TFNet knowledge base.
- Use TFNet platform to interact with others (members / non members)

Goal #2: To market products and services with commercial value.

Expected outcome:

- Potential revenue from commercialized products and services.

SKRA # 5: Capacity Building

Goal #1: To strengthen the capacity and capability of the TFNet secretariat.

Expected outcome:

- A high performance organization.

Goal #2: To build capacity in leading a network organization.

Expected outcome:

- A dynamic network highly valued by its members.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Strategic Initiative #1 : Review of Membership Structure & Governance

- The current requirements in the constitution pertaining to membership eligibility, fees, voting rights and eligibility for Board membership will all be reviewed so as to attract and facilitate the entry of new members.

Strategic Initiative #2 : Linkage with existing Regional Networks

- To define the main networks that can be referred as 'focal' networks and to reestablishment linkages with regional networks which have already been identified
- To continue identifying and inviting other networks to be part of the TFNet network

Strategic Initiative #3 : Establishment of national liaison bureau

- This is especially relevant in the case of Country member China where a national liaison bureau is expected help increase membership and participation in tropical fruit trade related activities.

Strategic Initiative #4 : Establishment of an ASEAN Regional Network

- Establishment of an ASEAN Regional Network is part of the overall network expansion plan for TFNet. Thailand has been suggested to lead the ASEAN network.

Strategic Initiative #5 : Analysis of Members' Needs

- Members needs and satisfactions need to be gauged, so that they can be better served. Continued support and participation by members will indicate that their needs are being looked into.

Strategic Initiative #6 : High Profile Targetted Fund Raising

- Raising funds from identified high net worth stakeholders in the tropical fruits industry.

Strategic Initiative #7 : Project Financing from International Development Agencies

- Role as Project Executing Agency (PEA) in projects funded by international development agencies (CFC, ADB, IDB).

Strategic Initiative #8 : Lead Consultant in Project Evaluation Services

- Carry out consultancies, studies and project evaluation services for income generation.

Strategic Initiative #9: Strategic Communication Plan

- Promotion and marketing of TFNet to global stakeholders in the tropical fruit value chain.

Strategic Initiative #10 : Integrated Tropical Fruits Knowledge Portal

- Comprehensive fruit information portal, will be developed as a central tropical fruit information database and a platform for members / stakeholders to interact and share views.

Strategic Initiative #11 : Establishment of an eTrade Platform

- To provide a promotion, marketing and trade facility on the TFNet portal so that members can promote as well as source for produce and services.

Strategic Initiative #12 : Provision of Auditing Services

- Potential of offering facilitation services in agricultural auditing, especially in certification programs.

Strategic Initiative #13 : Review of Existing Products & Services

- To focus on products and services that are directly related to the tropical fruit industry.

Strategic Initiative #14 : Organization Development Plan (Secretariat restructure & HRM system)

- To build capacity and capability of the secretariat with effective organization structure, clear objectives and procedures.

Strategic Initiative #15 : Network Leadership & Mgt Devt

- To enhance knowledge and skills in network leadership and management for members of the Board (BOT), head of country liaison bureaus and coordinators of TFNet regional networks.

E. ACTION PLANS (OBJECTIVES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND TIMELINES)

Strategic Initiative #1 : Review of Membership Structure & Governance

Objectives	Date of Completion	Accountability	Expected Outputs
To review the TFNet constitution on membership structure and governance	30th April 2009	Mr. Kit Chan Dr. MK Sisir Mr. PC Chua	List of constitutional amendments for BOT approval

Strategic Initiative #2 : Linkage with existing Regional Networks

Objectives	Date of Completion	Accountability	Expected Outputs
To initiate linkages with existing regional networks	Latin America (2009) African network (2009) Other networks (2010)	Mr. Kaison Chang Dr. Errol Hewett Yacob	List of identified regional networks, letters of appointment and responses

Strategic Initiative #3 : Establishment of national liaison bureau

Objectives	Date of Completion	Accountability	Expected Outputs
To establish liaison bureaus in some member countries (pilot – China)	31 August 2009 (before 4th GA)	Dr. Yi Ganjun Mr. Kit Chan Dr. Izham	Terms and references on the establishment of the liaison bureau and acceptance letter from MOA China

Strategic Initiative #4: Establishment of an ASEAN Regional Network

Objectives	Date of Completion	Accountability	Expected Outputs
Establishment of an ASEAN Regional Network lead by Thailand	2009 – 2010.	Dr. Minh Chau Dr. Izham	Recorded chronology of meetings with MOAC Thailand, Terms of Reference and letter of appointment

Strategic Initiative #5: Analysis of Members' Needs

Objectives	Date of Completion	Accountability	Expected Outputs
To assess members needs and requirements	31 May 2009	Dr. Errol Hewett Dr. Othman	Analysed results from electronic questionnaire based survey

Strategic Initiative #6 : High Profile Targetted Fund Raising

Objectives	Date of Completion	Accountability	Expected Outputs
To bid and execute a high profile project	3 years (2011)	Dr. Yi Ganjun Dr. Izham	A high profile project proposal

Strategic Initiative #7 : New CFC Project Financing

Objectives	Date of Completion	Accountability	Expected Outputs
To propose and assume role of Project Executing Agency for projects funded by CFC	3 years (2011)	Dr. Minh Chau Mr. PC Chua	Project proposal accepted by CFC

Strategic Initiative #8 : Project Evaluation

Objectives	Date of Completion	Accountability	Expected Outputs
Request for appointment as Project Evaluator in regional FAO or CFC projects	3 years (2011)	Dr. Errol Hewett Mr. PC Chua	Appointment as Project Evaluator for selected projects by FAO

Strategic Initiative #9 : Strategic Communication Plan

Objectives	Date of Completion	Accountability	Expected Outputs
1.To produce capability statement	20th March 2009	Dr. MK Sisir Dr. Izham	Capability Statement document
2.To maintain an updated list of experts in the tropical fruit value chain	20th March 2009	Dr. MK Sisir Dr. Izham	e-Roster of International Experts

3.To formulate a strategic communication plan	31st May 2009	Mr. Kit Chan Dr. Izham Dr. Osman	Finalised comprehensive strategic communication plan document
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Strategic Initiative #10 : Integrated Tropical Fruits Information Portal

Objectives	Date of Completion	Accountability	Expected Outputs
To develop a comprehensive, integrated Tropical Fruits Information Portal	3 years (2011)	Dr. Yi Ganjun Mr. Kit Chan Yacob	Completed integrated Tropical Fruits Information Portal

Strategic Initiative #11 : Establishment of an eTrade Platform

Objectives	Date of Completion	Accountability	Expected Outputs
To develop an e-Trade platform to enable electronic trading and promotion of tropical fruit	3 years (2011)	Dr. Yi Ganjun Mr. Kit Chan Mr. A. Unggul Yacob	A functional e-Trade portal where products and services are promoted

Strategic Initiative #12 : Provision of Agricultural Auditing Services

Objectives	Date of Completion	Accountability	Expected Outputs
To look into the possibility of TFNet acting as auditors in certification programs	2 years (2010)	Dr. MK Sisir Yacob	A report outlining TOR and the feasibility of TFNet as auditors

Strategic Initiative #13: Review of Existing Products & Services

Objectives	Date of Completion	Accountability	Expected Outputs
To review and effectively market products and services that can be commercialised	31 July 2009	Dr. Errol Hewett Mr. A. Unggul Mr. PC Chua	List of products and services that can be commercialised

Strategic Initiative #14 : Organization Devt. Plan (Secretariat restructure & HRM system)

Objectives	Date of Completion	Accountability	Expected Outputs
To enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the secretariat	20th August 2009	Chairman, BOT Dr. Izham	Plan for restructuring secretariat
To attract, develop and retain world class talents	20th August 2009	Chairman, BOT Dr. Izham	Human Resource Management Plan

Strategic Initiative #15 : Network Leadership & Management Development

Objectives	Date of Completion	Accountability	Expected Outputs
To enhance network leadership and management of members of the Board (BOT), head of country liaison bureaus and coordinators of TFNet regional networks.	31st May 2009	Mr. Kaison Dr. Izham	Network leadership and management training program

F. CONCLUSION

We see the need to serve our members better and also extend our presence to all stakeholders in the tropical fruit industry. There is enormous potential in the industry which, can immensely improve the social and economic well-being of all those involved, whether they are in the producing countries or consuming countries. Through the full realization of each of the elements of TFNet's vision described, we envision the evolvement of a vibrant network that would be able to serve members well, specifically, and at the same time, generally, be relevant and beneficial, to those involved in the tropical fruit industry.

As it enters its second decade, TFNet, its members, partners, and partners at FAO are well positioned to help realize this vision. We have the knowledge, expertise, and tools needed to develop products and services to promote the sustained development of the tropical fruit industry globally.

Because of its mandate, inter-governmental and inter-institutional status, and focus on promoting, facilitating and catalyzing the work of its internal and external partners, TFNet is able to convene and mobilize the diverse disciplinary perspectives required to address the complex issues and challenges in the value chain related to the industry.

APPENDIX 1

Workshop participants:

1. Dato' Mohd. Mokhtar bin Ismail – Secretary General, Ministry of Agriculture, Malaysia
2. Dr. Yi Ganjun – Director, Institute of Fruit Tree Research, Guanzhou, China.
3. Dr. Izham Ahmad – CEO, TFNet
4. Mr. Kaison Chang – Senior Economist, FAO, Rome
5. Dr. Nguyen Minh Chau – Director, Southern Fruits Research Institute, Tien Giang, Vietnam
6. Mr. Kit Chan – K-Farm, Malaysia
7. Dr. Errol D. Hewett – Massey University, New Zealand
8. Dr. Sisir Kumar Mitra – Faculty of Agriculture, VNSL, West Bengal, India
9. Mr. Unggul Abinowo – Director, SPAT, East Java, Indonesia
10. Mr. Mohd. Syaifulzafni Abdul Aziz – MAFC, Malaysia
11. Mdm Yeoh Ngim Bee – Undersecretary, Ministry of Agriculture Malaysia
12. Ms Esther Lew – Assistant Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Malaysia
13. Mr. Khairuddin Md. Tahir – Ex-CEO TFNet
14. Mr. Chua Piak Chwee – TFNet
15. Dr. Osman Hashim – TFNet
16. Mr. Yacob Ahmad – TFNet

Facilitators:

1. Mr. Lim Kheng Joo – Executive Essentials
2. Mr. Unnikrishnan Menon – Executive Essentials