

**CONTINENTAL DIALOGUE ON NON-NATIVE FOREST INSECTS & DISEASES  
THIRD DIALOGUE MEETING  
DECEMBER 12-13, 2007**

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NOTE: Specific action items for each Workgroup/Issue are embedded throughout the summary.

## I. Overview and Background

On December 12-13, 2007, a diverse group of representatives from state, federal, and municipal agencies, private business and industry, academia, and non-governmental organizations gathered at the Capital Hilton in Washington, DC for the December 2007 meeting of the Continental Dialogue on Non-Native Forest Insects and Diseases (the Dialogue). The meeting was convened by the Dialogue Steering Committee, a cross-section of stakeholders with an interest in protecting forests from the threat of non-native insects and diseases.

The goal of the December 2007 Dialogue meeting was to advance collaboration around actions to address the threat of non-native forest insects and diseases. Specific objectives included:

- 1) learn what participants have been working on over the past nine months regarding the Dialogue goals and where the six Workgroups are heading in 2008;
- 2) influence the direction of these activities, as appropriate, through dialogue and deliberation;
- 3) agree on activities, individually and collectively, to take in the upcoming year; and
- 4) develop detailed strategies for advancing Action Agenda opportunities.

**NOTE: Attachments and presentations are available online at the following URLs:**

**Attachment A - Meeting Participant List:**

[http://www.continentalforestdialogue.org/documents/meetings/2007-12/A-Participant\\_List.pdf](http://www.continentalforestdialogue.org/documents/meetings/2007-12/A-Participant_List.pdf)

**Attachment B - Steering Committee Roster:**

[http://www.continentalforestdialogue.org/documents/meetings/2007-12/B-Steering\\_Committee\\_Roster.pdf](http://www.continentalforestdialogue.org/documents/meetings/2007-12/B-Steering_Committee_Roster.pdf)

**Attachment C – Dialogue Flip Chart Notes:**

[http://www.continentalforestdialogue.org/documents/meetings/2007-12/C-Dialogue\\_Flip\\_Charts.pdf](http://www.continentalforestdialogue.org/documents/meetings/2007-12/C-Dialogue_Flip_Charts.pdf)

**Presentations:** <http://www.continentalforestdialogue.org/documents/meetings/2007-12/index.html>

## II. Day One – Wednesday, December 12

### A. Welcome, Opening Remarks, and Orientation to the Continental Dialogue

Carol Holko, Chief of the Plant Division at the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA), welcomed participants to the Dialogue meeting and delivered a presentation about Maryland's Cooperative Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) Project. The project is a collaborative effort led by MDA to identify the area in which EAB has taken hold in Maryland, where the density of development and number of owners adds complexity to the efforts to eradicate the pest. Ms. Holko emphasized the importance of getting the public involved in the effort as well as the many contributions of the project partners including volunteers from other state agencies up and down the East Coast.

### B. Overview of Vision and Goals, Action Agenda Opportunities and Workgroup Activities Since January 2007 Meeting

Jodie Ellis, Purdue University and Dialogue Steering Committee member, reviewed background information about the Dialogue beginning with the overall vision and goals of the Dialogue. She also

went over the activities carried out by the Workgroups focused on the six action agenda opportunities identified at the January 2007 Dialogue Meeting. Please go to the Continental Dialogue web site at [www.continentalforestdialogue.org](http://www.continentalforestdialogue.org), for more information about the vision, goals, and action opportunities reviewed by Ms. Ellis.

### **C. Continental Dialogue's Role Moving Forward**

Frank Lowenstein, The Nature Conservancy and Dialogue Steering Committee member, followed with an overview of the overall role and governance of the Dialogue. He highlighted the following accomplishments of the Dialogue to date:

- Serving as a gathering point for a diversity of stakeholders to develop common advocacy positions on federal funding for pest control;
- Reaching a multi-stakeholder consensus position on revisions to the vitally important plants-for-planting regulations and presenting it to APHIS; and
- Conducting outreach and messaging research about the public's knowledge of and attitude toward non-native forest pests and pathogens.

Frank then explained the governance structure of the Dialogue, noting that the Steering Committee operates by consensus and serves as the voice of the Dialogue when it speaks in the public realm. He also noted that the Dialogue does not lobby per se and will not speak for participants of the Dialogue unless they give explicit permission to do so. Frank described the Dialogue as being like an airport in the following ways:

- Any interested person can enter (i.e., voluntary participation with limited screening);
- There a variety of flights taking off (i.e., issue-specific workgroups);
- There is an overarching commission making decisions about the timing and destination of flights (i.e., Steering Committee);
- There is air traffic control (i.e., RESOLVE); and
- There are a variety of ground transportation options to move things (i.e., research, white papers, letters, meetings with public officials).

Frank emphasized that 2008 is a critical year for the Dialogue as the crisis of invasive pests and pathogens continues to spread throughout the U.S. He pointed out the following opportunities for the Dialogue to have an impact on the problem in 2008:

- Collaborate to comment on the draft revised plants-for-planting rule;
- Provide input to new leadership at APHIS and specifically the Plant Protection and Quarantine branch on the allocation of resources and priority of action;
- Identify creative ways to garner new funding sources;
- Engage key stakeholders and the public on firewood and wood packaging issues;
- Influence priorities and policies of potential new political leaders; and
- Develop stronger relationships with municipalities.

### **D. Addressing Issues Associated with Transport of Firewood**

Action Agenda Opportunity 3: Engage Private Groups in Forest Protection – Develop and adopt business practices to limit the import and spread of forest pests and diseases; and Action

Agenda Opportunity 6: Communicate and Market Key Ideas about Protecting Forests-- Transform political and public opinion in order to seize these opportunities.

*Overview Presentation*

Jodie Ellis and Ashley Walter, of Workgroup 3, and Frank Lowenstein of Workgroup 6 outlined issues associated with the transport of firewood, the efforts that are currently underway to address it, and the Dialogue Workgroups' recommendations for action. They described the results of surveys of firewood producers and sellers in Pennsylvania and of firewood consumers in the northeast and upper Midwest. The results illustrate how firewood is obtained, transported, and used, as well as attitudes about firewood and the resonance of public information messages about transporting it. The presentation also reviewed the actions federal and state level entities are taking to address firewood transport issues.

Ms. Walter highlighted that the issue of firewood transport presents a good opportunity for the Dialogue to gain visibility and raise awareness about non-native forest pests because it is an issue to which many people can relate.

Frank Lowenstein then gave a summary of the Workgroups' proposed action, specifically developing a consumer-oriented website dedicated to actively marketing safe firewood practices and opportunities to businesses and consumers. Such a website would capture information that visitors volunteer about themselves (perhaps in order to gain entry into contests or giveaways) and would then provide an ongoing stream of useful information about and potential solutions to problems associated with firewood transport. The site might include opportunities to identify safe firewood sources in a visitor's local area. The Workgroups also recommended using a marketing campaign to 'drive' people to the website.

*Breakout Sessions*

Participants formed two separate breakout groups to discuss the firewood website proposal. The discussions focused on the advantages and challenges of creating an effective website, and generating ideas for target audiences, potential partners, and website features. Participants agreed that there is a need for a central clearinghouse of information about the issue of firewood transport and invasive species and that it is an achievable goal for the Dialogue. However, several participants expressed concern about how to draw people to the site. The groups generated a range of ideas about how to market the site including target audiences, potential partners, and attractive website features.

Both groups talked about how to use the website as part of a larger public education and outreach campaign. One group discussed the idea of developing the website as an information clearinghouse initially and then transitioning toward a more specific message aimed at changing the behavior of firewood producers and users. The groups brainstormed a long list of potential target audiences and partners. Participants generally agreed that the Dialogue Workgroups need to better define the focus and purpose of the website before constructing it.

<b>Firewood Transport Action Items (Workgroup 3b/6) – Breakout Groups agreed that the Dialogue should go live with a website before Summer 2008</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Completed by</b>
1. Continue producer survey and other target audience/market research	Jodie Ellis, Workgroup 3b/6	Ongoing
2. Identify major components of web site (i.e., clearinghouse, message)	Workgroup 3b/6	ASAP
3. Formulate coherent pitch to engage partners (i.e., information resources, information dissemination, financial) a. Share pitch w/Dialogue participants who are willing to reach out/engage potential partners	Workgroup 3b/6, Steering Committee	ASAP
4. Schedule & hold Workgroup 3b conference call to process Dialogue meeting input and develop strategy moving forward (Invite Ben Wigley, Deborah Landau, Gina Childs to join call)	RESOLVE, Workgroup 3b/6	ASAP
5. Confer with Craig Kellog about his target audience research and report back to Workgroup	Gina Childs	ASAP
6. Send USFS web link to page about state firewood information to Jodie Ellis	Gina Childs	End of January 2008/Early February 2008
7. Contact American Forest Foundation and inform about Dialogue’s firewood transport effort	Ben Wigley	Once WG has developed & disseminated web site “pitch”
8. Contact Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts and inform about Dialogue’s firewood transport effort	Deborah Landau	Once WG has developed & disseminated web site “pitch”
9. Go live w/firewood web site a. Start basic and plan to build/evolve over time b. Consider starting as clearinghouse c. Work toward behavior change among specific audiences d. Springboard for campaign on firewood (needs further definition)	Workgroup 3b/6, Steering Committee	June 2008

**E. Money in the Bank: Finding Funds for Needed Actions**

Action Agenda Opportunity 5: Increase USDA’s Funding for Federal and State Efforts – Increase USDA’s annual appropriations to levels where success is assured.

*Overview Presentation*

Faith Campbell, The Nature Conservancy and Dialogue Steering Committee member, began her presentation by outlining the roles and responsibilities of APHIS and USFS in controlling invasive forest pests. She argued that the level of funding each agency receives is not adequate to meet their responsibilities vis a vis the economic and ecological value of the resources at risk. Ms. Campbell followed with examples of less than adequate funding for dealing with some specific forest pests and diseases including Asian Long-Horned Beetle, Emerald Ash Borer, *Sirex* woodwasp, and Sudden Oak Death. She then reviewed efforts Dialogue members have made to influence federal funding decisions and proposed the following activities for 2008:

- Energize grassroots;
- Develop documents for Hill distribution;
- Find champions within Congress;
- Group meetings with Hill staff, Administration;
- Tie invasive species to other hot issues; and
- Grow support through media exposure.

*Breakout Session*

Participants in the breakout session about increasing federal and state funding focused on identifying specific activities to carry out in 2008. They outlined a number of activities related to influencing decisions in Congress, researching existing funding scenarios to identify targets for future discussions, and developing new strategies to generate non-federal funds to support agencies and organizations working to prevent the introduction and spread of non-native forest insects and diseases.

<b>Funding Action Items (Workgroup 5) – Breakout Groups agreed the Dialogue should continue to assist in organization of advocacy efforts associated with federal funding for forest pests control and prevention</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Completed by</b>
10. Overall coordination of activities and “binder”	Faith Campbell, Tom Cassidy	ASAP
11. Explanation of budget needs (i.e., why current funding not sufficient; and upcoming needs not funded today)	Faith Campbell, Ken Rauscher	January 2008

12. Develop template and gather stories (i.e., personal, success stories) and lessons learned (i.e., Chicago and NYC)	Ken Rauscher (state), Joe McCarthy (local/city), Michael Buck (state forestry)	January/ February 2008
13. Develop talking points and “science” documents (pull together from existing docs)	Nadine Block, Faith Campbell/TNC	Late February 2008
14. Organize a constituency (i.e., grassroots & “grasstops”)	Faith Campbell, Needs co-lead	Early March 2008
15. Consider budget issues on 3-year timeline, and strategy adjustments over time	Workgroup 5	Ongoing
16. Analysis of budget development politics / process and +/- of Dialogue’s efforts	Workgroup 5	Ongoing
17. Use FY ’08 Targets for FY ’09 efforts (APHIS)	Workgroup 5	Ongoing, 2008
18. Identify a target / total for USFS budget (consider starting with ’07 levels)	Workgroup 5	Ongoing, 2008
19. Identify target for USFS line items	Workgroup 5	Ongoing, 2008
20. Review and make resource allocation recommendations re: existing budgets (APHIS, Forest Service)	Workgroup 5 (individuals TBD)	TBD
21. Identify non-federal funding sources (private/ industry, foundation, local government taxes or fee systems)	Workgroup 5 (individuals TBD)	TBD (As Workgroup/ Dialogue identifies projects, consider non-traditional funding sources)
22. Fire suppression budget for USFS – move elsewhere to make funds available for invasives	Michael Buck	TBD (could be independent project)
23. Expand the dialogue and build support for lobbying	Workgroup (individuals TBD)	Ongoing
24. Ensure that funding priorities are heard by agencies (so new funds are properly allocated)	Workgroup members (TBD)	Ongoing

**F. Solid Wood Packaging: An Important Pathway**

Action Agenda Opportunity 2: Limit the Spread of Pests and Diseases in the US – Improve and supplement existing efforts to slow organisms’ domestic spread.

*Overview Presentation*

Bruce Scholnick, National Wooden Pallet & Container Association (NWPCA), began his presentation by describing the importance of solid wood packaging materials to the US and global economy. He then outlined NWPCA’s initiative to promote establishment of a regulatory program for treating wooden packaging for invasive insects. Mr. Scholnick noted that all major stakeholder groups support the initiative, but suggested that the effort is facing obstacles because the current configuration of the National Plant Protection Act favors reactionary measures rather than preventive measures. He also noted that APHIS is uncertain whether the agency has the authority to issue a regulation that pre-empts state regulations.

*Breakout Session*

This breakout session focused on whether the NWPCA solid wood packaging initiative would be a worthwhile effort for the Dialogue to support, and if so, what next steps should be taken. Participants agreed that the initiative is timely and addresses a real issue in which the Dialogue is interested. They discussed which stakeholders the proposal might affect adversely as well as which groups need to be engaged in the initiative. Some participants asked that NWPCA provide additional details about their regulatory proposal. Participants agreed that NWPCA should draft a letter of support for Dialogue members to review and decide whether they would like to sign onto it.

<b>Solid Wood Packaging Action Items (Workgroup 2) – Breakout Groups agreed the Dialogue should support improvement of biosafety of solid wood packaging</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Completed by</b>
25. Send fact sheets on solid wood packaging initiative to Faith Campbell	NWPCA	December 21, 2007
26. Draft letter of support for SWP initiative for Dialogue participants to sign on to as desired; send to Faith Campbell	NWPCA	December 21, 2007
27. Review draft letter and make any edits as appropriate	Carl Schulze/ Steve Kline, Workgroup 2	ASAP after receiving draft letter
28. Circulate letter of support to Dialogue participants	Carl Schulze/ Steve Kline, Workgroup 2	ASAP after receiving draft letter

**G. Keeping the Green Industry Green: Sustainability and Best Management Practices**

Action Agenda Opportunity 3: Engage Private Groups in Forest Protection – Develop and adopt business practices to limit the import and spread of forest pests and diseases.

*Overview Presentation*

Marc Tefteau, American Nursery and Landscape Association and Steering Committee member, discussed ways in which the Dialogue can contribute to infusing the “green industry” (i.e., nurseries) with sustainability and best management practices (BMPs) that address the problem of non-native forest insects and diseases. He said the Workgroup is still considering various possible activities for the Dialogue including helping establish a certification program and other voluntary, market-driven approaches. Mr. Tefteau emphasized the need to demonstrate the effectiveness of BMPs so that they become more appealing to industry stakeholders.

*Breakout Session*

This breakout session also focused on setting priorities for Dialogue activities in 2008 to move the opportunity forward. Participants brainstormed a list of key characteristics of a sustainable industry and elements of a sustainable green industry program. Participants agreed that the Dialogue Workgroup needs to do more work to flesh out both of those lists and do a variety of research to determine how to pursue this opportunity.

<b>Keeping the Green Industry Green (Workgroup 3a) – The Breakout Group recommended the Workgroup determine (as quickly as possible) how the Dialogue can be of assistance to this effort</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Completed by</b>
29. Share Dialogue meeting input and obtain further input on definition/characteristics of “sustainable industry” and elements/criteria of a Green Industry Program	Marc Tefteau / Workgroup 3a	January 2008
30. Expand the Dialogue and build support for participants’ lobbying efforts a. Initiate dialogue with industry representatives about concerns/gaps, resources, elements of a good program	Workgroup 3a	ASAP
31. Review literature and other relevant materials to: a. Identify pathways and gaps that most need addressing/could be addressed by a “green industry program” b. Identify top issues/concerns/gaps c. Identify strategies and resources that could help address d. Identify key stakeholders that need to be involved in addressing issues	Workgroup 3a	TBD

<p>32. Investigate and take action on funding issues related to establishing a “green industry program”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Identify non-federal funding sources (private/ industry, foundation, local government taxes or fee systems)</li> <li>b. Communicate Dialogue’s view on funding priorities to agencies so that new funds are properly allocated</li> </ul>	<p>Workgroup 3a</p>	<p>TBD</p>
<p>33. Schedule and hold conference call to review Workgroup to determine focus of “green industry program” effort</p>	<p>Workgroup 3a, RESOLVE</p>	<p>ASAP</p>

**H. Considering Changes to the Federal Plant Protection Act**

Action Agenda Opportunity 4: Authorize New Federal Action – Pass legislation to fund long-term forest protection, to provide strong economic incentives for all to take part, and to give agencies new authority where gaps exist.

*Overview Presentation*

Terry McDill, Minnesota Department of Agriculture and Steering Committee member, presented an overview of Workgroup 4’s activities and proposed options for action. She noted that the Workgroup initially focused on Workgroup 1’s efforts to adjust language in the Findings section of the federal Plant Protection Act (PPA). Specifically, Workgroup 4 members felt the Dialogue should strive to develop and push for more innovative changes to the PPA. Specific items they explored included: ways to address concerns with the pre-emption clause; a system for assigning liability for introductions; how to provide compensation to those who suffer losses from the introduction of a new pest; and how to encourage better inter-agency cooperation.

*Breakout Session*

Participants in the breakout session discussed issues raised in the presentation and identified potential activities for 2008. Participants suggested that states and industry could form coalitions to address pre-emption laws at a regional scale. The group agreed that the next step is for state and industry representatives to hold a conversation about options for dealing with pre-emption within the existing PPA framework, because changing the legislation would be an arduous process.

Most participants expressed support for the notion of compensation, and a sub-set of participants agreed to meet to flesh out the Workgroup’s proposal further so that the Dialogue can move the issue forward in 2008. On the other hand, the possibility of liability raised concerns. Participants pointed out that development of a liability program would create a variety of implementation challenges. The group agreed that more research is needed for this to be viable proposal for the Dialogue to advance. Participants also favored the idea of improving coordination on plant protection among federal agencies.

<b>Plant Protection Act Action Items (Workgroup 4) – the Breakout Group agreed on the importance of these issues and the need to continue efforts to address them</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Completed by</b>
34. Develop overview of preemption “interests and options” to address within PPA (not by revising PPA)	Terry McDill, Gene Cross, Jerry Carlson, Michael Buck (State Representatives)	January 31, 2008
35. Gain commitment from industry to engage in dialogue about PPA	SAF, MNLA, ANLA	January 31, 2008
36. Schedule and hold conversation to develop proposals and/or ideas on reimbursement to present to the Workgroup	Lin Schmale, Amy Frankman, Craig Regelbrugge / Marc Teffau (in absentia)	January 31, 2008
37. Share ISAC recommendation regarding federal inter-agency coordination with Dialogue participants for review and possible support	Amy Frankman	January 31, 2008
38. Schedule and hold Workgroup conference call to discuss preemption; liability; reimbursement; coordination	Workgroup 4, RESOLVE	February 29, 2008
39. Consider whether to expand on existing liability discussion	Workgroup 4	February 29, 2008

### III. Day Two – Thursday, December 13

#### A. Welcome and Agenda Review

RESOLVE facilitator, Paul De Morgan welcomed participants and reviewed the agenda for the day. He reminded participants to notify RESOLVE if they are interested in signing up for any of the action opportunity Workgroups. Frank Lowenstein described the messaging clinic scheduled to take place subsequent to the conclusion of the main Dialogue meeting.

**B. Import Plants Not Pests: Changes to the Plants-for-Planting Rule (Q-37)**

Action Agenda Opportunity 1. Prevent Introduction of New Pests and Diseases --Establish a strong and measurable national level of protection for pathways by which live organisms are imported.

*Overview Presentation*

Faith Campbell explained the rationale for the Dialogue’s efforts around the revision of the plants-for-planting regulation, as well as proposed activities to keep pursuing the issue in 2008. She explained that in January 2007, the Dialogue identified live plant importation as its highest priority pathway because of the threat and because the ongoing Q-37 rulemaking offered an opportunity for the Dialogue to exert influence. Subsequently, a Dialogue Workgroup developed a consensus position on the Q-37 rulemaking. The main premises of the consensus position are that current regulations are not adequate, APHIS needs more resources to implement necessary improvements in Q-37, and a systems-based approach would be more effective than the current system. Ms. Campbell also outlined interim actions APHIS could take to prevent introductions immediately, including strengthening the proposed “Not Allowed Pending Pest Risk Assessment” (NAPPRA) category, while long-term BMP programs are developed and implemented.

*Plenary Discussion*

Participants discussed ways in which the Dialogue can continue to promote the consensus position developed by the Workgroup and encourage APHIS to consider and adopt the Dialogue’s proposals. Two participants inquired about the proposed interim action of temporarily prohibiting import of plants thought to pose too great of a risk (i.e., NAPPRA) program. Ms. Campbell explained that APHIS has the necessary pest risk assessment tools, but needs staff and resources to apply them properly. The key issue is that APHIS is currently letting all plants proposed for importation to be imported without a risk assessment. The Dialogue position recommends APHIS allow imports with a proven record of safety to continue, but prohibit new imports or others that might pose higher risk until risk assessments can be performed, or require stricter conditions of import, such as enhanced inspections or import only as seeds or tissue culture. One participant inquired about APHIS’s level of interest in the Dialogue’s suggestions. Ms. Campbell noted that Dialogue members have met with the agency and that agency officials have shown considerable interest in the ideas. In response to an inquiry about APHIS’s timeline for the rulemaking, Ms. Campbell indicated that the agency is aiming to put out a draft proposed rule in the first six months of 2008. She added that Dialogue members are likely to submit the suggestions via the Q-37 public comment period. At the same time, one participant noted the Dialogue needs to engage additional stakeholders to “deepen the bench” on the issue as well as prepare to reach out to officials in the next administration.

<b>Q-37 Action Items (Workgroup 1) – the Dialogue confirmed the importance of promoting and supporting the Workgroup’s consensus position</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Completed by</b>
40. Make “circuit rider” visits and coordinate with Dialogue members in target states (i.e., Oregon, Florida, Georgia, and Minnesota)	Faith Campbell; other Dialogue members	Ongoing

41. Use Dialogue position statement on Q-37 to engage more organizations and stakeholder groups on the issue so that the position has more support when APHIS PPQ makes decisions (i.e., public comment period)	Workgroup #1; Dialogue Members	Ongoing
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**C. How Protective Do We Need To Be and Can We Get There? – A National Level of Protection**

Action Agenda Opportunity 1: Prevent Introduction of New Pests and Diseases – Establish a strong and measurable national level of protection for pathways by which live organisms are imported.

*Overview Presentation*

Frank Lowenstein gave an overview presentation about the value APHIS could gain from establishing a National Level of Protection (NLoP). He suggested that setting a measurable target would unify agency staff toward key outcomes, justify funding requests, clarify the need for regulatory revisions, and provide clear goals for management and evaluation of personnel and programs. Mr. Lowenstein submitted that it is in the Dialogue’s interest to help APHIS achieve greatness. He proposed the Dialogue hire a consultant to evaluate possible avenues for setting a level of protection and work with interested members of the Dialogue to determine next steps.

*Breakout Session*

Participants in this breakout session identified concrete next steps to move ahead with an evaluation of the challenge of setting an NLoP. Generally, participants agreed that the Dialogue should hire a consultant to help articulate the need and challenges associated with establishing an NLoP. They also decided that the Dialogue should request a briefing from APHIS and/or the Department of Homeland Security on current efforts related NLoP.

<b>National Level of Protection Action Items (Workgroup 1) – the Breakout Group encouraged the Dialogue to take the next step of engaging a consultant in an initial review of the idea</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Completed by</b>
42. Schedule conference call to organize effort to draft an RfP for a consultant study to synthesize existing data and articulate the need for a National Level of Protection	Anand Persad, Frank Lowenstein, Terry McDill, Lin Schmale, Jodie Ellis (stay informed)	February 2008
43. Request a briefing from APHIS and/or Department of Homeland Security about current measures for a National Level of Protection, including an update on budget problems	Frank Lowenstein (and other interested members)	February 2008

**D. Visionary Fund**

Action Agenda Opportunity 5: Increase USDA’s Funding for Federal and State Efforts – Increase USDA’s annual appropriations to levels where success is assured.

*Overview Presentation*

Frank Lowenstein presented a rationale for and ideas about how to go about setting up fund to support safe trade – including not only issues of forest pests and pathogen import, but other issues such as food safety, consumer product safety, and the spread of infectious diseases. He highlighted the variety of agencies responsible for ensuring safe trade and pointed out that taxpayers as a whole bear the costs when trade protections are not adequate to protect public health and the environment and either: a) public agencies intervene to fix the problems; or b) degradation of the environment reduces domestic economic productivity or quality of life. By contrast the financial benefits of inadequate protections accrue not to the public as a whole but to those corporations or individuals importing goods under current, inadequate protections. Mr. Lowenstein then presented the potential approach of instituting a fee to shift costs of adequate trade protection (e.g. sufficient inspection, timely risk assessment, improved interdiction technology) to the beneficiaries, including examples of fees created for similar a purpose such as the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund. He also suggested a few different roles the Dialogue could play in promoting a safe trade fund. He noted that while such a fund to address only invasive species issues had been proposed previously, it had not gained political traction. A broader fund, he suggested, might engage sufficient constituencies to be politically viable. Mr. Lowenstein emphasized that this was a very preliminary idea that had arisen at the fall 2007 Steering Committee retreat and that the Steering Committee was eager to get input from Dialogue participants as to the advisability of further exploring this idea.

*Breakout Session*

Participants discussed a variety of ideas about how the Dialogue could approach the idea of a fee on imports and international travel to fund safe trade needs. Participants agreed that this could be a worthwhile issue for the Dialogue to investigate, but suggested that the focus should remain on invasive forest pests and pathogens. One participant suggested the Dialogue track current events and conduct research to develop a stance on this issue to be in a position to insert invasive species into the safe trade discussion when a precipitating event occurs. Multiple participants stressed the importance of involving industry stakeholders in discussions about additional fees on imported goods. The group also discussed potential models from which to draw lessons about similar types of fees and funds, including the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund and emergency response funds. Overall, the group agreed that the Dialogue should define a goal to pursue on this issue and reach out to other interested stakeholders to build support, so that the Dialogue is prepared to enter any safe trade debates that may arise.

<b>Visionary Fund Action Items (Workgroup 5) – the Breakout Group encouraged the Dialogue to refine the idea as presented and begin conversations with other constituencies</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Completed by</b>
44. Send information on Dingell’s Food Safety Bill to RESOLVE	Bob Ehart	Done

45. Disseminate information on Dingell's Food Safety Bill to appropriate Dialogue Workgroup	RESOLVE	ASAP
46. Share report on emergency response funds with Dialogue members	Faith Campbell	ASAP
47. Research existing fees, funds, and related efforts; as well as lessons learned from other models	Workgroup #5	TBD
48. Define a goal for the Dialogue to pursue around this issue	Workgroup #5	TBD

#### IV. Summary and Next Steps

Frank Lowenstein thanked participants for their time and emphasized that the Dialogue is proving to be an effective collaborative process for getting issues on the table, avoiding misunderstanding between stakeholders, and improving the way the United States deals with non-native forest insects and diseases.