

External evaluation of the project “Strengthening national capacities of the CIS countries to implement ECE agricultural quality standards” (September 2018)

Final Progress report as at 31 December 2019

#	Recommendation	Management response	Responsibility	Date of implementation/comments
1	The UNECE needs to finalise negotiating with the Shushary lab about disposing the equipment, e.g. by transferring ownership to the Shushary laboratory according to the UN rules and regulations.	The secretariat accepts the recommendation. The transfer of the equipment to the Shushary lab, in accordance with the UN Financial Rules and Regulations, will be completed by 30 June 2019.	Mika Vepsäläinen, Chief, Market Access Section	Implemented in September 2019. The transfer documents have been received signed in September 2019 and this activity is fully completed and closed.
3	The UNECE secretariat is encouraged to consider supporting strengthening and facilitating formalized links between Lorkh Institute, Shushary Lab and Laboratory in North Ossetia to co-develop action planning or facilitate implementation of strategies for self-sustaining operations, to further effect and potential impact of UNECE contributions on Russian market.	The secretariat accepts the recommendations within the limits of its mandate of providing a platform for member States’ cooperation. UNECE will contact the three laboratories and invite them to participate in the work of the Specialized Section on Seed Potatoes (GE6) in order to link the laboratories up with each other and with other member States.	Mika Vepsäläinen, Chief, Market Access Section	Implemented in April 2019. The secretariat invited the three laboratories to all meetings of the Specialized Section on Seed Potatoes (GE.6) taking place in 2019, including the forty-sixth session of the Specialized Section (18 - 19 March 2019) and a Rapporteurs’ Meeting in Montana, US (September 2019). Members from the Shushary Lab and the adviser from the Lorkh Laboratory participated in the Geneva meeting and have indicated their intention to attend the Meeting in the USA. Both laboratories reported on their cooperation and joint activities. The laboratories have been invited to develop exchange of experience and ideas among themselves, including based on materials developed by GE.6 in Russian.

5	<p>It is recommended that a practical guide/brochure be developed by the Shushary lab outlining the lab concept, list of equipment, its application, capacity building activities (trainings, conferences, etc.), lessons learnt, etc. for broad dissemination and placement on the web site). UNECE secretariat or individual technical experts who have been involved in the project are encouraged to participate, to increase likelihood of impact of the project and create opportunities for showcase this work and translate it to other projects/regions/ etc. showcase effects and increase impact.</p>	<p>The secretariat partially accepts the recommendation. The secretariat will convey the recommendation to the Shushary laboratory. However, this being outside the scope of the United Nations, UNECE can only recommend the said action to the Shushary laboratory.</p>	<p>Mika Vepsäläinen, Chief, Market Access Section</p>	<p>Implemented in December 2019.</p> <p>The UNECE has informed the Shushary laboratory of the recommendation and indicated the willingness of the secretariat to support such work provided that sufficient funds can be identified. The secretariat provided the names of ECE experts who would have the expertise for supporting supporting such work and the Shushary laboratory is working with Dr Lê, ECE's main consultant for the laboratory project.</p>
6	<p>It is recommended that UNECE Secretariat involves all relevant staff members while developing and implementing the project interventions to ensure knowledge and expertise transfer. The mechanism should be in particular in place in case of soon to retire staff.</p>	<p>The secretariat accepts the recommendation.</p>	<p>Liliana Annovazzi-Jakab, Mika Vepsäläinen, Market Access Section</p>	<p>Implemented in May 2019</p> <p>Handover notes were prepared by the staff member who was the initial project manager for this activity. In addition the Chief of Section made sure that all experts as well as the management of GE.6 were fully informed of the work undertaken and opportunities of further work.</p>

7	<p>In developing similar agricultural projects oriented at CIS countries, the UNECE Secretariat, need to fully consider agricultural needs, primary agricultural products (persimmons, potatoes, soya beans or dried apricots) and different climatic zones. This will help streamline the project activities and render better results.</p>	<p>UNECE accepts the recommendation. This project clearly highlighted the need to adapt to the local conditions. In the design of future projects, this component will be given due attention.</p>	<p>Liliana Annovazzi-Jakab, Mika Vepsäläinen, Market Access Section</p>	<p>Closed as of December 2019</p> <p>Should the secretariat receive a request, and XB funding be available, this recommendation will be fully implemented.</p>
8	<p>UNECE Secretariat should engage with government, beyond research institutions, in order to attain better performance, outcomes and increase likelihood of sustainability or project's outputs and learning, and wide dissemination of results.</p>	<p>The secretariat accepts the recommendation. The secretariat will make all efforts to improve the performance of the cooperating partners in the recipient organizations to ensure the sustainability of projects after the completion of the UNECE activities and the dissemination of projects' results beyond the immediate partnerships.</p>	<p>Liliana Annovazzi-Jakab, Mika Vepsäläinen, Market Access Section</p>	<p>Closed as of December 2019</p> <p>This recommendation will be implemented as new XB projects are developed.</p>