



IKEC International Kava Executive Council

PRESS RELEASE LIFTING THE GERMAN 'BAN' ON KAVA EXPORTS OUTCOME AND STRATEGIES of IKEC- EU CONSULTATIONS

Brussels, 29 October 2008

The International Kava Executive Council (IKEC) has undertaken its Consultations with the relevant European counterparts (namely the Pacific Country diplomatic representatives in Europe, the European Commission and the competent German Ministries and Authorities- German Federal Ministry of Health, BfArM, the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology and the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development) in relation to the German "ban" imposed on the kava trade from the Pacific Islands.

The following are the outcomes and strategies recorded as a result of these consultations:

- IKEC called upon the European Commission to accord adequate consideration to this issue and work with individual EC Member State authorities and governments to broker a lasting mutually agreed solution which would avoid costly and time-consuming actions. IKEC believes that the close friendship and commercial ties that bind the EC and the Pacific will be conducive to such negotiated outcome;
- IKEC in its consultations with the key officials of the German Federal Ministry of Health, BfArM, the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology and the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development requested and was agreed to that the amicable solution to the current situation would include the provision by the German health authority (hereinafter BfArM) of specific parameters for the scientific data it requires to satisfy its requirements with respect to the safety and efficacy of kava. This would enable IKEC to undertake the necessary processes to comply with BfArM's requirements with close cooperation with all parties concerned (such as the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Technology and Development).

Strategies Moving Forward

IKEC and the Pacific Ambassadors in the EU have identified various strategies in seeking a complete removal by Germany of the restrictions imposed on the kava trade and to moving the Pacific Islands kava trade forward. A 2 year road map has been drawn up to undertake the following through a continuous consultative process between IKEC and the Pacific Island Governments with Germany and the European Commission.

I. Legal

IKEC will continue work closely with the TradeCom Facility to pursue and seek legal advice including in relation to negotiations (EPA and Doha), WTO consultations, and WTO dispute settlement procedures.



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Scientific

IKEC will continue to facilitate the collection of scientific data and the undertaking of research to meet the requirements of BfArM as well as to support its various applications for alternative kava registrations (for well-established and traditional herbal medicine, as a food beverage, as well as GI registration). Assistance will be sought through the ACP-EU Trade Facility; the German Pharmaceutical Industry as well as Counterparts to progress this important aspect.

II. Alternative Registrations of Kava

IKEC will facilitate the preparation of the registration of kava in Europe under alternative options such as:

- well-established herbal medicinal product;
- traditional herbal medicinal product;
- food/beverage; and
- GI protected commodity (e.g. Pacific noble kava-such as the French Champaign Case) in Europe. To this end, IKEC will consider becoming a member of oriGIn.

III. Institutional Strengthening and Supply Capacity Preparation

IKEC and its partners such as CDE will continue its work on quality control assurance and quality control standards for the Pacific kava producing countries.

This work will not only focus on meeting quality standards when the restrictions are removed on the kava trade, but it will also cater to preparing the Pacific Island kava producing countries to meet requirements under the various registration options listed above.

IKEC will also seek assistance for institutional strengthening and organisational establishment to manage and drive these processes and strategies.

V. Timeframe and Partners to Work with IKEC

The strategies adopted and listed above will be undertaken over the next 2 years (2009/2010).

IKEC has identified the following key partners in driving the above process: Pacific Island kava producing Governments and the Pacific Ambassadors in EU; Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat; Secretariat of the Pacific Commission (Formerly SPC); European Commission; German Ministry of Economics and Technology; German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development; The ACP Secretariat and the ACP-EU Commission (Trade Development Unit); Commonwealth Secretariat; UK Department for International Development; TradeCom facility; Centre for Development of Enterprise; and International Trade Centre.