

ESCOP Chairs Advisory Committee (CAC)

Monthly Conference Call, 03/15/12

NOTES

Participants:

Mike Hoffman
Dan Rossi
H. M. Harrington
Gerald Arkin
Arlen Leholm
Abel Ponce de Leon
Steve Pepke
Lee Sommers
Carolyn Brooks
Bill Ravlin

Mike Harrington spoke to Jim Richards earlier today. He was asked to remind the group that deadlines are March 20th for the House and March 30th for the Senate and to get requests in.

Mike Harrington walked the group through the Crop Protection white paper. The President's budget proposed to consolidate budget lines and create a new Crop Protection Program at \$29 million. Over \$8.5 million have been lost from important crop protection-related programs. Meryl has suggested that this is an opportunity to build a program from the ground up.

The issue is that there are some stakeholders/groups/people who don't see themselves in this new program.

ESCOP has supported the notion of consolidation but with the caveat that program integrity would be maintained.

Take home messages:

- Planning needs to be done with stakeholders and others. A working group is proposed to do this. Proposed that these programs be implemented in 2013 in the same manner as they are in 2012 to allow for more thoughtful planning to occur.
- All of the stakeholders have heard different stories. IR4 heard they'd have to charge indirect costs for their programs. Now, their stakeholder group has mounted a mass-campaign to contact representatives and senators to set the IR4 program aside from the Crop Protection Program. www.saveir4.org. Steve Slack and Mike Harrington tried at length to stop this independent effort, to no avail.

Dan Rossi reported that the IR4 folks met last week with NIFA for 1.5 hours. The problem is that NIFA had no explanation other than this is how to save our programs, there were no assurances from NIFA.

Dan doesn't think the meeting helped the situation. The commodity people were not convinced to buy into the consolidation. IR4 is not willing to lose \$3-4 million in indirect costs. They are willing to talk to ESCOP, but are not willing to gamble until they have something more concrete. They have a strong case in that there are no assurances that IR4 will be protected and they feel that it is a critical program for their commodities. They feel they are being asked to sacrifice to protect IPM, a program they don't find as valuable. They have and will continue to argue for a separate line. They have a lot of people signing on in support on their web site. A lot of the commodity organizations and others as well.

IR4, Extension IPM, the IPM Pipe, and the Regional IPM Grants Programs have been very effective and are all listed as things that should be continued into the future in the White Paper. In a recent meeting with USDA IPM folks, it seems that they are more interested in writing RFAs and that as a result, they couldn't collaborate on developing the new Crop Protection Program. Mike feels there is still room for a joint work-group on this. Meryl seems receptive to this idea. The USDA-IPM folks felt that some of the regional multistate programs need to be better connected. Jim and Hunt (Cornerstone) suspect that IR4 funds will probably be cut if they go off on their own line; it doesn't necessarily matter how strong your stakeholder group is in this budget environment.

The White Paper was reviewed by the Budget and Legislative Committee. Some Extension Directors are upset at a change from formula funds to a grant situation. In one state, they had lost 40% of the IPM funds for extension. There may be other states that gained funds.

Next Steps:

- The White Paper has gone to the ESCOP Budget and Legislative Committee asking that it will be considered "adopted" by Monday. There were no comments from the ESCOP Budget & Legislative Committee.
- Candidates to serve on the workgroup need to be identified. The group will identify a single-line program and funding level. It is not clear how the committee will be formed, exactly. Mike has a list of people who could and would be willing to serve on the committee. Extension will also be recommending some people. The IR4 commodity folks have expressed some concern about IR4 representation on the committee. Would prefer to keep committee membership to roughly 20 people—the pros to a smaller group are that they can more effectively get things done, but a smaller group may not be as trusted as a larger, more representative one. NIFA people would be encouraged to participate.
 - Frank and Meryl need to provide some leadership for the formation of this work group to ensure that the outcomes will be taken seriously by NIFA and that members feel empowered.
 - IR4 is not likely to stop the efforts of their commodity stakeholders. Their participation on the group is unclear. They will still be invited to participate.
 - Mike distributed a list of possible names via email during the call. The EDs will review this list and share a final one with ESCOP CAC for review and comment.
- Resource needs for the programs need to be identified.

- There will be several Listening Sessions in the next couple of weeks, but they are not likely to cover any broad-scale discussions. Mike Harrington may attend the one in Memphis.
- Mike sent an agenda brief to all of the EDs for use at spring meetings.
- Mike will contact Frank and let the group know what he's thinking.

Contingency Plan for the remaining programs if IR4 separates? Extension has proposed "Integrated Crop Protection" as a name.

Roadmap Survey

The survey was completed. The top two priorities could be used as input for the AFRI program. Water is embedded in a lot of what was written about and it was also separated out as a set objective. Because of that, it got diluted. Water is one of several things that transcends the priorities. Water and some others may be written in as "cross-cutting" themes.