

**REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL PLANT PROTECTION  
CONVENTION SECRETARIAT (IPPC)**

Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures – 18-19 October 2012

Agenda Item 2(b) - Information from Relevant SPS Standard-Setting Bodies

The following communication, received on 15 October 2012, is being circulated at the request of the IPPC secretariat.

**I. INTRODUCTION**

1. This report covers the period July – October 2012.
2. The activities of Capacity Development and Implementation Review and Support System (IRSS) are presented in separate documents.
3. The Committee is invited to note that as of September 2012, there are 177 contracting parties to the IPPC (the same as reported in July 2012).

**II. STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK AND ISSUE-SPECIFIC STRATEGIES**

**A. STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK**

4. The IPPC Strategic Framework 2012-2019, as previously reported, was adopted during the Seventh Session of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM-7) in March 2012 ("[https://www.ippc.int/index.php?id=1110798&frompage=13330&tx\\_publication\\_pi1\[showUid\]=2183947&type=publication&L=0](https://www.ippc.int/index.php?id=1110798&frompage=13330&tx_publication_pi1[showUid]=2183947&type=publication&L=0)"). The four major strategic objectives, listed below, underscore the broad range of issues covered by the IPPC's activities and take into account the changing global context. The four strategic objectives are:

- (i) protect sustainable agriculture and enhance global food security through the prevention of pest spread;
- (ii) protect the environment, forests and biodiversity from plant pests;
- (iii) facilitate economic and trade development through the promotion of harmonized scientifically based phytosanitary measures; and,
- (iv) develop phytosanitary capacity for members to accomplish (i), (ii) and (iii).

5. The IPPC is using these strategic objectives as a key part of its effort to increase awareness and the profile of the IPPC.

B. ISSUE SPECIFIC STRATEGIES

6. The IPPC National Capacity Development Strategy was adopted during CPM-5 (2010), and the IPPC Resource Mobilization Strategy was adopted during CPM-7 (2012). CPM has identified the Communication Strategy as a high priority for 2012 as it is essential to complement the IPPC Resource Mobilization Strategy, as well as to increase awareness and the profile of the IPPC. The draft Communication Strategy will be presented to CPM-8 in April 2013 for adoption.

III. STANDARD SETTING WORK PROGRAMME

A. MEMBER CONSULTATION ON DRAFT ISPMs

7. The commenting period on draft ISPMs will close 20 October 2012.

B. MEMBER CONSULTATION ON DRAFT SPECIFICATIONS FOR ISPMs

8. The commenting period on draft specifications closed on 31 July 2012. Comments have been compiled by the Secretariat and are posted on the IPP (<https://www.ippc.int/index.php?id=1110732>). These comments have been forwarded to the stewards. For the draft specification on *International movement of cut flowers and branches* (2008-005), the steward will revise the draft specification for presentation to the Standards Committee. For the draft specification on *the International movement of grain* (2008-007), the CPM-7 (2012) had a discussion on how to move this topic forward, in the format of an ISPM or other guidance material. CPM-7 (2012) requested that the member comments be analysed by the Standards Committee (SC), who will then prepare a draft CPM recommendation which will be presented to the CPM-8.

C. SUBSTANTIAL CONCERNS COMMENTING PERIOD FOR DRAFT ISPMs:

9. According to the new IPPC standard setting procedure adopted by the CPM-7 (2012), the Standards Committee Working Group (SC-7) or the Technical Panels (TPs) revises the draft ISPMs prior to the CPM meeting, taking into account the comments received during member consultation. Once the SC-7 or TP recommends the draft ISPM to the SC, the Secretariat makes it available to IPPC members for the substantial concerns commenting period and notifies IPPC members.

10. Thus, taking into account the comments that were received during the 2011 member consultation, the following draft ISPMs were reviewed by the Standards Committee Working Group (SC-7) in April 2012 and recommended to the SC (see April 2012 SC-7 report: <https://www.ippc.int/index.php?id=13355>):

- DRAFT ANNEX ON *PEST RISK ANALYSIS FOR PLANTS AS QUARANTINE PESTS* (2005-001) TO ISPM 11:2004 (*PEST RISK ANALYSIS FOR QUARANTINE PESTS, INCLUDING ANALYSIS OF ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS AND LIVING MODIFIED ORGANISMS*)
- REVISED ANNEX 1 ON *APPROVED TREATMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH WOOD PACKAGING MATERIAL* (2006-011) TO ISPM 15:2009 (*REGULATION OF WOOD PACKAGING MATERIAL IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE*)

11. This comment period closed on 30 September 2012. All substantial concerns were submitted by the IPPC contact point in the IPPC OCS. These concerns have been compiled and are posted on the IPP (<https://www.ippc.int/index.php?id=1111116>). They have now been forwarded to the Standards Committee and steward who will study these comments and revise the draft ISPMs at their meeting 12-16 November 2012. As agreed to in the revised IPPC standard setting process, the November Standards Committee meeting will replace the CPM evening sessions to review comments.

The Standards Committee versions of these draft standards will be for the first time in history, presented to CPM-8 (2013) for adoption without discussion.

#### D. EXPERT WORKING GROUP (EWG) ON SEA CONTAINERS

12. A EWG meeting on Sea Containers was held in Malaysia from 28 May to 1 June 2012. The EWG developed a draft ISPM on *Minimizing pest movement by sea containers and conveyances in international trade* and provided input to the development of a technical guidance to be used by industry. Further work continues on the development of a communication plan and an implementation plan.

#### E. WORK PLAN FOR THE SECOND SEMESTER OF 2012

13. The work plan for standard setting for the last semester of 2012 includes, in addition to the November meeting of the Standards Committee, meetings of the Technical Panel on Diagnostic Protocols, Technical Panel on the Glossary and Technical Panel on Phytosanitary Treatments. In addition, the IPPC secretariat continues to use web based technology to hold virtual meetings.

### IV. INFORMATION EXCHANGE

#### A. CONTACT POINTS

14. A significant number of IPPC contact points continued to update their information in the last three months. This means that contracting parties communicating with other IPPC contact points should visit the IPP frequently to ensure they have the latest contact information. In addition, the Secretariat continues to work with a small number of countries that need to nominate their IPPC contact points officially.

#### B. INTERNATIONAL PHYTOSANITARY PORTAL (IPP) [HTTPS://WWW.IPPC.INT](https://www.ippc.int)

15. There continues to be a lot of information being made available by countries through the IPP and the IPPC secretariat. Countries are encouraged to periodically visit the site for updates.

16. Usage of the IPP continues to increase but it is apparent that this can be improved in most regions and in some countries in particular. Countries that are reporting certain IPPC obligatory information to the WTO are encouraged to provide this information (only minimal modification is necessary) through the IPP to ensure they meet their IPPC reporting obligations.

17. The information available through the IPP has substantially increased the number of information resources available to support standard implementation, capacity development and the Implementation Review and Support System (IRSS). This information is being increased continually and is available through:

- (i) Resources in Support of IPPC Implementation: <http://www.phytosanitary.info>;
- (ii) IRSS: <https://www.ippc.int/index.php?id=1111059&L=0#irssactivities>;
- (iii) IRSS Help Desk: <https://www.ippc.int/index.php?id=1111059&L=0#helpdesk>;
- (iv) Projects Database: <http://projects.phytosanitary.info>;
- (v) Roster of Consultants: <http://consultants.phytosanitary.info/>;
- (vi) eLearning: <http://elearning.phytosanitary.info>.

### C. PEST REPORTING

18. National pest reporting continues to improve but there is still potential for further improvement. The 2011 reporting year saw a substantial increase in the number of pest reports and 2012 has started with a significant number of reports. The Secretariat is working on this information to allow users to access this information in a more constructive and analytical manner.

19. The IPPC secretariat is working with the European Plant Protection Organization (EPPO) to finalize the system that will allow national reporting under through EPPO (as an Regional Plant Protection Organization) to meet IPPC reporting obligations. There are certain legal procedures that need to be met before this system can be activated. It is hoped that this will be piloted within the foreseeable future and then expanded to other RPPOs and their members.

### V. DISPUTE SETTLEMENT

20. As noted previously, the phytosanitary trade dispute between South Africa and the European Union is continuing and further announcements will be made as information becomes available and when appropriate. Despite resource challenges within the IPPC secretariat that have impacted this process, efforts are underway to address this issue.

21. The IPPC is in the process of reviewing the IPPC Dispute Settlement system and the outcome should be available in 2013 for the eighth session of the CPM.

### VI. COMMUNICATIONS

22. The IPPC Strategic Planning Group (SPG) discussed the IPPC Communication Strategy and the strategy will now be submitted for possible adoption to CPM-8 in 2013. In addition, through the generous support of the United States, an implementation plan will be developed for the plan after adoption at CPM-8 (2013).

23. The 60th Anniversary of the IPPC is celebrated through: <https://www.ippc.int/60years> and a video on the IPPC is available at: "<https://www.ippc.int/60years/2012/05/video-the-international-plant-protection-convention-at-60/>".

24. Increasing amounts of electronic material is available for use and download at: <https://www.ippc.int/60years/media>.

25. The following social media pages for the IPPC are available:

- (i) Facebook: "[http://www.facebook.com/pages/International-Plant-Protection-Convention-IPPC/113230338690380?ref=tn\\_tnmn](http://www.facebook.com/pages/International-Plant-Protection-Convention-IPPC/113230338690380?ref=tn_tnmn)";
- (ii) Twitter: <https://twitter.com/#!/ippcnews>;
- (iii) LinkedIn: [http://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=3175642&trk=hb\\_side\\_g](http://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=3175642&trk=hb_side_g);
- (iv) Flickr: [http://www.flickr.com/groups/international\\_plant\\_protection\\_convention/](http://www.flickr.com/groups/international_plant_protection_convention/);
- (v) YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/IPPCnews>.

### VII. RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

26. The Secretariat would like to thank all those contracting parties and other donors who contributed to the 2012 budget and activities of the IPPC so far. The IPPC encourages them to consider sustainable contributions for the future. It will be greatly appreciated if donors are able to

express their intention for further contributions in order to facilitate planning for the coming year. These donations will help to ensure the core work programme will be delivered. A full list of financial and in-kind support is made available to CPM each year – "[https://www.ippc.int/index.php?id=1110798&frompage=13330&tx\\_publication\\_pi1\[showUid\]=2183770&type=publication&L=0](https://www.ippc.int/index.php?id=1110798&frompage=13330&tx_publication_pi1[showUid]=2183770&type=publication&L=0)".

27. The sustainability of the IPPC secretariat, and hence the work programme of the IPPC, is being addressed as a matter of urgency on an ongoing basis. The current resource allocation (financial and human resources) is simply not sustainable, although slightly improved for 2012. The Secretary is giving this his highest priority and has initiated discussions with the governing body as well as traditional and non-traditional partners to improve the situation in the foreseeable future.

28. Under the IPPC Resource Mobilization Strategy adopted in CPM-7 (2012), the IPPC Financial Committee was created to enhance the accountability of financial issues to CPM and the donors who may consider a contribution to the IPPC activities. Together with such newly introduced arrangements, specific resource mobilization efforts will be made based on operational work plans to be developed.

29. It should be noted that FAO, the organization hosting the IPPC secretariat, continuously faces a severe financial challenge and is seeking cost reduction efforts in most areas; the resources available for the IPPC activities will likely be affected as well.

30. As the year 2012 is the 60th Anniversary of the IPPC, the IPPC secretariat has been organizing celebration activities but within the very limited resources currently available. These activities are linked with awareness raising efforts to increase resources available from donors.

31. The Secretariat welcomes any discussions with members or partner organizations that could provide solutions to the current challenges, particularly in the medium to long term.

### **VIII. IMPORTANT MILESTONE FOR ELECTRONIC CERTIFICATION IN THE IPPC (EPHYTO)**

32. The issue of ePhyto is a high priority for CPM and the revised Appendix 1 (*Electronic certification, information on standard XML schemes and exchange mechanisms* (2006-003)) to ISPM 12:2011 is out for member consultation (see above, section III.C.). The IPPC secretariat has created an ePhyto web page (<http://ephyto.ippc.int/>) on the IPP containing information on codes and schema to be used in ePhytos.

33. In September 2012, the ePhyto Expert Working Group (EWG) met in EPPO in Paris to finalize a number of technical issues related the ePhyto XML structure, communications process and security. The details have now been agreed and will now enter a phase of field testing to ensure that all challenges are addressed before ISPM 12:2011 Appendix 1 is considered for adoption by CPM in 2014.

34. The potential development of a common global system for electronic certification (central "hub") was highlighted during the April 2012 SC and June 2012 Bureau meetings. A feasibility study will be conducted in the immediate future. The IPPC believes this represents a good opportunity for future collaboration with OIE and Codex.

35. General information on ePhyto can be found on the IPPC website at: <http://www.ippc.int/index.php?id=1111140> or obtained from the IPPC secretariat (ippc@fao.org).

36. With generous support from Brazil, there will be an ePhyto workshop from 20-22 November 2012 in Victoria City, Brazil, to increase awareness about ePhyto and allow countries to understand and plan for the introduction of phytosanitary electronic certification given their national capacity and trading needs. WTO Members are encouraged to participate. An internet feed of at least the first day of proceedings has been arranged for those not able to attend the meeting. Further information is available on the IPP at: [https://www.ippc.int/index.php?id=1111139&no\\_cache=1&L=0](https://www.ippc.int/index.php?id=1111139&no_cache=1&L=0).

## **IX. COOPERATION WITH THE WTO STANDARD SETTING ORGANIZATIONS**

37. As there are on-going discussions regarding increased involvement of the "Three Sisters" in SPS-related activities, Members are reminded of CPM-7 (2012) decisions (particularly (ii) and (v) ) after considering the "Recommendations on Joint Work by WTO-SPS Agreement Standards-Setting Bodies" as agreed in the WTO SPS Committee meeting in October 2011:

- (i) welcomed the recommendations of the WTO SPS Committee;
- (ii) considered these recommendations by the SPS Committee in the context of the overall work programme, priorities and available resources;
- (iii) agreed these activities are already on-going in the work programme as agreed by ICPM-7 (2005);
- (iv) requested the IPPC secretariat to provide updates on its activities with Codex and OIE in the IPPC secretariat report to the SPS Committee and actively to exchange information with Codex and OIE on matters of mutual interests; and
- (v) noted that any additional work arising from these activities that are added to the CPM work programme will need to be accompanied by associated additional resources.

38. The IPPC secretariat has requested discussions with the SPS Secretariat to improve coordination and cooperation between the two Secretariats while ensuring a closer and more systemic work programme. This is also related to the ongoing IPPC activity of formalizing relevant partnerships while ensuring that deliverables stay within the available resources.

39. The IPPC secretariat would like to note on-going formal activities with the "Three Sisters" since the initial decision of ICPM-7 in 2005, and draw attention to the following current on-going activities with Codex and OIE:

- (i) Codex and the IPPC are exploring ways of addressing their IT needs in a more sustainable manner and share tools & skills when appropriate;
  - (ii) Codex continues to work with the IPPC secretariat to develop the OCS for Codex purposes, taking into account Codex needs in gathering member country comments. OIE is also examining the OCS more closely and may also consider using this system in the future.
  - (iii) Codex, OIE and the IPPC now undertake in-depth consultations on Standard Trade and Development Facility (STDF) activities to understand each other's positions and coordinate activities and responses;
  - (iv) There is on-going cooperation between the "Three Sisters" on SPS-related capacity development projects, if and when appropriate;
  - (v) The IPPC secretariat has initiated coordination meetings between the "Three Sisters" to improve coordination and collaboration in SPS Committee meetings; and
  - (vi) Ad-hoc consultations are undertaken as and when subjects arise that are of mutual interest.
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