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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

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IPPC IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW AND SUPPORT SYSTEM (IRSS)

REPORT FOR THE COMMITTEE ON SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES MEETING OF 16-18 OCTOBER 2013

Agenda Item 10(b) - Monitoring of the Use of International Standards

The following communication, received on 14 October 2013, is being circulated at the request of the International Plant Protection Convention secretariat (IPPC).

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1. This report provides an update on the activities of the IPPC's Implementation Review and Support System (IRSS). The IRSS concept emanated from an IPPC Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) proposal for the establishment of a possible IPPC compliance mechanism. The compliance mechanism concept was reviewed and rejected in 2007 because there was a belief that a compliance (enforcement) mechanism was not specified in the IPPC and was contrary to the general philosophy of the IPPC's emphasis on cooperation, harmonization of science-based measures and exchange of information to prevent introduction and spread of pests.

1.2. Therefore the IRSS program was developed as a proactive means to identify the extent of implementation of the IPPC and its International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs), diagnose challenges to implementation, and offer support to strengthen future implementation, all outside of the context of compliance. The IRSS programme was adopted by CPM in 2008, noting the importance of this programme in the implementation of both the IPPC and the implementation of ISPMs. The programme initiated in 2011, thanks to generous financial contributions from the European Union.

1.3. The IRSS is a program unique to the IPPC, now in its third year of implementation, and revolutionising the way the IPPC approaches the provision of support to contracting parties to improve implementation of the IPPC and its standards. The IRSS utilizes a non-confrontational approach based on analysis of implementation status, challenges, and identification of opportunities for improvement. This takes place through a range of interventions including revisions of ISPMs for clarity, strengthening Secretariat information systems based on information gathered through IRSS analyses, and orienting global and national phytosanitary capacity development support to address the specific needs that have been identified.

1.4. This approach offers clear benefits to the contracting parties, IPPC Secretariat, and donors. These benefits include the ability to:

- establish baseline information on implementation of the IPPC and its ISPMs;
- identify technical, policy and other limits to implementation at national, regional and global levels;
- utilize this information on limits to implementation to strengthen capacity development activities directed to the specific challenges that contracting parties face;
- monitor, encourage and support harmonised implementation of the IPPC and its ISPMs;

- identify and address emerging and potential implementation problems; and
- identify strengths and gaps in adopted standards (ISPMs) and offer some recommendations for their improvement when they are up for revision.

1.5. The IRSS is a cross-cutting activity in the IPPC Secretariat and involves close collaboration between the three principal IPPC Secretariat units (Standard Setting, Capacity Development and Information Exchange), as well as with the principal structures of the IPPC (the CPM Bureau, Standards Committee, Subsidiary Body on Dispute Settlement and Capacity Development Committee). A Triennial Review Group has been established, comprising of members from the above-named structures and the IPPC Secretariat, to review the IRSS' work each year and produce a final report at the conclusion of the initial three-year funding cycle.

2 UPDATES OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES IN THE THIRD YEAR: APRIL 2013-MARCH 2014

2.1. Since the last meeting of the WTO SPS Committee, the IRSS has conducted a general survey on the IPPC and 32 standards. The draft of the report will be available soon on the IPP.

2.2. There is also an on-going survey on pest reporting and regulated pest listing. The Secretariat is requesting contracting parties to complete this survey as soon as possible. This information will help in identifying ways that the IPPC Secretariat and the IRSS program can improve support for countries to fulfil related IPPC obligations.

2.3. Additional future and on-going activities for the IRSS include:

- The IRSS website and help desk have been launched and continue to be fine-tuned;
 - Identification of donors for translation of existing IRSS analyses, tools and resources;
 - Identification of donors for the second 3-year cycle of the IRSS;
 - Further analyses of country implementation challenges with adopted standards;
 - Management of the helpdesk and related support tools; and
 - Production of a triennial report, Implementation Review Response (IRR), covering the first 2011-2014 IRSS cycle. The IRR will include conclusions from analyses of ISPMs, relevant data from the IPP, and studies such as those on aquatic plants and e-commerce. The IRSS Triennial Review Group (TRG) will provide guidance to develop the IRR.
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