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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

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**REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL PLANT PROTECTION
CONVENTION SECRETARIAT (IPPC)
(AS OF 1 OCTOBER 2015)**

The following communication, received on 10 October 2015, is being circulated at the request of the International Plant Protection Convention secretariat (IPPC).

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1. This report covers the period July - October 2015.

1.2. The Secretariat of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) has begun actively implementing the results of the 2014 IPPC Secretariat Enhancement Evaluation. Among other things, the Secretariat is finalizing an action plan which will include restructuring of the Secretariat, enhanced internal communication and working procedures, streamlining of reporting lines and a more open attitude to FAO and other partners.

1.3. The IPPC Secretary and Coordinator participated in a meeting of the Liaison Group of Biodiversity related Conventions in early September. The agenda covered a wide variety of topics, and the IPPC reported on developments related to activities related to the International Year of Plant Health proposal (<https://www.ippc.int/en/iyph/>), as well as ePhyto efforts (to include additional cooperation between CITES and IPPC on similar systems). BLG conventions were invited to take part in the upcoming International Symposium on ePhyto to be held in Korea on 9-13 November 2015. Of particular note was a request from CBD for parties to all of the MEAs to work with their CBD national focal point to identify financial needs for the next Global Environmental Fund (GEF) funding cycle.

2 STANDARD SETTING WORK PROGRAMME

2.1. Member Consultation. The following draft ISPMs were approved by the Standards Committee for member consultation¹ (1 July-30 November 2015): (1) Draft Appendix to ISPM 20 *Arrangements for verification of compliance of consignments by the importing country in the exporting country* (2005-003); (2) Draft revisions to ISPM 15 (*Regulation of wood packaging material in international trade*) – Annex 1 and 2 for inclusion of the phytosanitary treatment *Sulphuryl fluoride fumigation of wood packaging material* (2006-010A) and the revision of the dielectric heating section in Annex 1 of ISPM 15 (2006-010B); (3) Draft Annex to ISPM 27 - *Aphelenchoides besseyi*, *A. fragariae* and *A. ritzemabosi* (2006-025); (4) Draft Annex to ISPM 27 - *Xanthomonas fragariae* (2004-012); (5) Draft Annex to ISPM 27 - *Sorghum halepense* (2006-027); (6) Draft Annex to ISPM 28 - *Heat treatment of wood using dielectric heating* (2007-114); (7) Draft Annex to ISPM 28 - *Sulphuryl fluoride fumigation of insects in debarked wood* (2007-101A); (8) Draft Annex to ISPM 28 - *Sulphuryl fluoride fumigation of nematodes and insects in debarked wood* (2007-101B); and (9) Draft Annex to ISPM 28 - *Vapour heat treatment for Bactrocera tryoni on Mangifera indica* (2010-107).

¹ MC page on the IPP, <https://www.ippc.int/core-activities/standards-setting/member-consultation-draft-ispm>.

2.2. Standard Setting Calendar. The standard setting calendar is available on the IPP.²

3 NATIONAL REPORTING OBLIGATIONS

3.1. Contact points. IPPC contact points continue to update their information on the IPP – there are more than 50 new contact points alone in the last 12 months. Any contracting parties communicating with other IPPC contact points should visit the IPP frequently to ensure they have the latest contact information. Although the "IPPC Year of the IPPC Contact Point" is now complete, the Secretariat continues working with countries to update this information as a matter of high priority.

3.2. International Phytosanitary Portal (IPP) <https://www.ippc.int>. There have been a number of updates on the recently updated IPPC website by contracting parties, along with news and information from the Secretariat. Please visit the website regularly to get the latest updates, especially for IPPC contact points as they change frequently.

3.3. Usage of the NRO webpage continues to increase. Countries that are reporting IPPC obligatory information to the WTO are encouraged to provide this information (minimal modification is necessary) through the IPP to ensure they meet their IPPC reporting obligations.

3.4. The IPPC once again reminds SPS Committee Members that it continues to see evidence of a lack of coordination and/or communication between SPS authorities and IPPC contact points in countries, as well as a lack of understanding by some governments that meeting their WTO notification obligations does not in any way automatically meet their IPPC reporting obligations; i.e. they are two totally legally independent multi-lateral instruments of equal status. This remains a serious issue of concern.

3.5. The information available through the IPP has substantially increased the number of resources available to support standard and IPPC implementation, capacity development and the Implementation Review and Support System (IRSS). This information is being increased continually and is available through: (1) Phytosanitary Resources in Support of IPPC Implementation: <http://www.phytosanitary.info>; (2) IRSS: <https://www.ippc.int/en/irss/activities/>; (3) IPPC Projects Database: <http://www.phytosanitary.info/projects>; (4) eLearning: <http://elearning.phytosanitary.info>; and (5) A summary of IPPC Publications: <https://www.ippc.int/en/media-kit/>.

3.6. Pest Reporting. The secretariat is working to improve pest reporting in order to allow users to access this information in a more constructive and analytical manner. We remind members that the secretariat is now in a position to accept pest reporting from IPPC contracting parties via EPPO i.e. to undertake pest reporting through the RPPOs (as agreed in CPM). This should significantly increase the number, accuracy and timeliness of pest reports received from EPPO member countries.

3.7. Communications. The International Phytosanitary Portal (IPP) has been confirmed as the IPPC's main communication tool, and an IPPC newsletter has been developed. New publications and manuals are also under development. The following social media pages for the IPPC are available: (1) Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/International-Plant-Protection-Convention-IPPC/113230338690380>; (2) Twitter: <https://twitter.com/ippcnews>; (3) LinkedIn: http://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=3175642&trk=hb_side_g; (4) Flickr: http://www.flickr.com/groups/international_plant_protection_convention/; and (5) YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/IPPCnews>.

4 DISPUTE SETTLEMENT

4.1. The IPPC secretariat has for a number of years been very active in dispute avoidance and this remains the focus for IPPC contracting parties. The secretariat is revising all documentation to explicitly detail options available for dispute avoidance.

² <https://www.ippc.int/en/year/calendar/>.

4.2. The IPPC is also engaged with the two of the IPPC contracting parties in the resolution of a dispute. The formation of an expert panel to review the issue has been somewhat difficult as options are quite limited for panellists without prior involvement in this issue. As of the writing of this paper, the secretariat is still unable to form an expert panel.

5 IPPC CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (CDC)

5.1. As a result of the 2014 IPPC secretariat Enhancement Evaluation, changes will be forthcoming as the evaluation recommends the formation of a new committee under the auspices of a new unit to be called the Implementation Facilitation Unit. While the terms of reference for this new committee are yet to be established, the committee will be taking on the roles of the current Capacity Development Committee as well as others. Until the time of the new committee being established, the CDC will continue to operate. The next meeting of the CDC will be taking place from 30 November to 4 December 2015.

6 TECHNICAL RESOURCES AND OTHER INFORMATION FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

6.1. The phytosanitary technical resources web page (<http://www.phytosanitary.info>) has the objective to be used as an information platform for technical resources to support the implementation of the IPPC and its standards. The page includes various categories of phytosanitary resources and tools (advocacy, diagnostic protocols, guides, manuals, pest information, photos, standard operating procedures, videos, etc.). Members are encouraged to visit the page as well as propose additional contributions.

6.2. Additional new materials such as manuals that were developed under the auspice of the IPPC secretariat and with the direction of the CDC have been posted on the web page. Other materials in development will be made available in the near future.

7 REGIONAL IPPC WORKSHOPS

7.1. The IPPC continues to support and attend the Regional IPPC workshops to review draft International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs) to the greatest extent possible based on the resources available. Workshops have already taken place in the Pacific Islands, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, the Caribbean and the Near East.

7.2. The workshops now address a broader range of IPPC-related issues in addition to discuss and prepare the comments on draft ISPMs. These Regional IPPC workshops are planned in cooperation with a range of regional partners, and some with EU funding. In the future, the IPPC plans to make even greater use of these workshops as a means to facilitate enhanced communication with our contracting parties.

8 IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW AND SUPPORT SYSTEM (IRSS)

8.1. The second three year cycle of the IRSS began in April 2014 and is focusing on strengthening the Support element using largely the outputs of the first cycle in particular the data gathered through its many surveys.

8.2. The IRSS has had notable impact resulting in stimulating the CPM to discuss the need for a more focused approach on implementation activities. In this regard the CPM decided to establish an open ended working group on Implementation which convened in Rome in August 2014 and considered the elements for such a programme including a pilot activity on pest surveillance building on current IPPC and IPPC partner activities and the results of the work of the IRSS.

8.3. Subsequent to this meeting, as well as discussions held in the Strategic Planning Group and Bureau, CPM-10 (2014) agreed to go forward, if resources become available, with an implementation programme focusing on ISPM 6 which covers surveillance. As some resources have been identified, this effort has been initiated.

9 RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

9.1. The secretariat would like to thank all those contracting parties and other donors who contributed to the 2014 budget and activities of the IPPC. The IPPC once again encourages them to consider future, sustainable contributions. These donations will help to ensure the core work programme will be delivered. A full list of support is made available to CPM each year and can be found at: <https://www.ippc.int/resource-mobilisation>.

9.2. The sustainability of the IPPC secretariat, and hence the work programme of the IPPC, continues to be addressed as a high priority on an on-going basis. The current resource allocation (financial and human resources) measured against projected tasks is not sustainable, and in the absence of additional voluntary contributions for 2016 will be drastically reduced. The secretariat continues to engage in discussions with the governing body as well as traditional and non-traditional partners to improve the situation. In addition, the secretariat has established a resource mobilization task force which is now actively engaging in a resource mobilization effort.

9.3. It cannot be stressed enough that it is essential the IPPC receive regular and predictable contributions to provide sustainability to the work programme. The FAO continues to face severe financial challenges and is seeking cost reduction efforts in most areas; as a result the resources available to the IPPC activities continue to be affected, specifically in the area of information technology and support for the On-line Comment System.

9.4. The secretariat remains open to any discussion with members or partner organizations that could provide solutions to the current challenges, particularly in the medium to long term.

10 COOPERATION WITH THE WTO STANDARD SETTING ORGANIZATIONS

10.1. The IPPC secretariat would like to once again draw attention to the following current on-going activities with Codex and OIE: (1) Codex and the IPPC continue explore ways of addressing their IT needs in a more sustainable manner and share tools and skills when appropriate; (2) Codex and the IPPC are now collaborating fully in the operational maintenance and improvement of the OCS; (3) Codex, OIE and the IPPC continue to engage in consultations on Standard Trade and Development Facility (STDF) activities to understand each other's positions and coordinate activities and responses; (4) There is ongoing cooperation between the "three sisters" on SPS-related capacity development projects, if and when appropriate; (5) the secretariat continues to participate in coordination meetings between the "three sisters" to improve coordination and collaboration in SPS Committee meetings; (6) Ad hoc consultations are undertaken as and when subjects arise that are of mutual interest; and (7) the secretariat is committed to sustaining the deeper relationship between the "three sisters" to address future issues in the SPS Committee Secretariat and beyond.
