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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

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**REPORT OF INTERNATIONAL PLANT PROTECTION CONVENTION (IPPC)
TO THE SPS COMMITTEE MEETING ON 14-16 JULY 2021**

COMMUNICATION FROM THE IPPC SECRETARIAT

The following communication, received on 19 June 2021, is being circulated at the request of the International Plant Protection Convention secretariat (IPPC).

1 THE COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES (CPM-15, 2021)

1.1. The fifteenth meeting of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM-15) was held virtually on 16 and 18 March and 1 April 2021. More than 350 participants from over 122 countries and 40 observer organizations attended this first-ever virtual edition of the IPPC governing body, which contributed to defining key priorities and actions for the plant health community in the upcoming years.

1.2. The first historic virtual CPM-15 adopted the IPPC Strategic Framework 2020-2030, eleven international standards for phytosanitary measures (ISPMs) including phytosanitary treatments (PTs) and one CPM recommendation. It also established three CPM Focus Groups on 1) Implementation of the IPPC strategic framework 2020–2030 development agenda Items; 2) Communications; and 3) Climate change impacts on plant health. The CPM agreed to an electronic mechanism that seeks CPM concurrence electronically on decisions or issues that the Chairperson of the CPM Bureau may consider sufficiently important or sensitive to require CPM awareness and engagement (using a four-week silence consent procedure). The meeting also endorsed Zambia's initiative to proclaim the yearly observance of the international day of plant health (IDPH) on 12 May and called upon contracting parties to support the process. The CPM-15 session also witnessed the appointment of Mr Lucien Kouame Konan from Côte d'Ivoire and Mr John Greifer from the United States of America as the CPM Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson respectively, whose terms started immediately with the conclusion of CPM-15.

1.3. Four CPM Bureau meetings were held in 2021 to ensure continuity of IPPC work plan.

2 2021 REGIONAL WORKSHOPS

2.1. The IPPC secretariat preparations for the 2021 IPPC regional workshops are well advanced. This year the regional workshops will again be held virtually. The IPPC secretariat has finalized the global agenda and invitation letters are in the process of being sent out. Regional organizing committees have been set up and tentative dates set and topics of interests for the region selected. Tentative dates for these regional workshops are posted on the IPP.¹ Presentations for these regional workshops are being reviewed and translated, once finalized they will be posted on the IPP.

¹ IPPC Regional Workshop: <http://www.ippc.int/en/core-activities/capacity-development/regional-ippc-workshops/2021-ippc-regional-workshop/>.

3 STANDARDS COMMITTEE

3.1. The IPPC Standards Committee (SC) met virtually from 11 to 14 May 2021 to advance four draft ISPMs that the committee plans to send to IPPC contracting parties for a [consultation period](#). After thoroughly revising the drafts, the SC agreed to submit for consultation, as provided below:

- Revision of ISPM 4 (*Requirements for the establishment of pest free areas*);
- Use of specific import authorization (Annex to ISPM 20: *Guidelines for a phytosanitary import regulatory system*);
- Draft revision of ISPM 18 (*Requirements for the use of irradiation as a phytosanitary measure*);
- Draft 2021 Amendments to ISPM 5 (*Glossary of phytosanitary terms*).

3.2. During the meeting, the SC also re-elected Mr Ezequiel Ferro (Argentina), as Chairperson for an additional year. While the COVID-19 pandemic prevents in-person meetings, the SC's work continues in the realm of virtual meetings. As a result, the SC is sending revisions electronically prior to virtual meetings to ensure that the quality of the draft ISPMs are maintained throughout the pandemic challenges. For example, throughout the year the SC will have a series of "focused meetings" to continue program oversight and guidance for delivery to the [Technical Panels \(TPs\)](#).

3.3. The IPPC Standards Committee Working Group (SC-7), also met virtually from 17 to 21 May 2021 to revise four draft ISPMs that went for first consultation period in 2020. After intensive discussions and review of the comments submitted by IPPC contracting parties and RPPOs, the SC revised and approved that the following draft ISPMs be submitted to another round of consultation periods, which starts of 1 July 2021:

- Commodity-based standards for phytosanitary measures (2019-008);
- Audit in the Phytosanitary context (2015-014);
- Focused revision of ISPM 12 (Phytosanitary certificates) in relation to re-export;
- Draft 2019 and 2020 Amendments to ISPM 5: Glossary of phytosanitary terms (1994-001).

3.4. The report of the SC May 2021 and SC-7 virtual meetings will be posted on the IPP at the following link: <https://www.ippc.int/en/core-activities/standards-setting/standards-committee/>.

3.5. The next meeting of the SC is planned for 23 and 24 June 2021.

4 IMPLEMENTATION AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

4.1. Since February 2021, the main part of the activities of the Implementation and Capacity Development Committee (IC) are articulated around monthly virtual meetings (VMs). During this period, four IC meetings were held and are summarized below:

- a. IC VM11 (February): The IC discussed and approved the 2021 work plan of the Sea Containers Task Force and agreed on the options proposed for the next steps of the Design-Thinking study. The update on the activities of Beyond Compliance project was presented and the IC reviewed and approved the 2021 e-Commerce work plan.
- b. IC VM12 (March): During this meeting, the IC discussed the proposed revisions in the process for the development of IPPC Implementation and Capacity Development guides and training materials. The summary of activities on NROs and the proposed work plan for 2021 was presented to the IC for approval. This VM12 was also the occasion to discuss the main ICD related decisions from the CPM-15 (2021) with a focus on needed guidelines for the Sea Containers Task Force.
- c. IC VM13 (April): The update on activities of the Integration Support Team (IST) and the update on the IPPC ePhyto solution was provided to the IC. The update of the IPPC regional workshops 2019 and 2020 was presented as well as the ongoing preparation of the 2021 regional workshops. The IC discussed also the progress of the ICD web resources and decide the way to move forward on the pending components pages.

- d. IC VM14 (May): An update on the current situation of current situation *Fusarium oxysporum* f. sp. *cubense* Tropical Race 4 (TR4) was presented as well as the ongoing initiatives to create an IC Team to contribute to address this urgent issue. However, the main objective of this meeting was to discuss ICD projects. On this purpose, the projects managed by the IPPC secretariat as well as projects from partners (Japan, IAEA, NAPPO, COLEACP, World Bank and Australia DFAT) were discussed to promote synergies.

4.2. For full details, please consult the IC reports of these meetings on the IPP.²

4.3. The IC approved six draft Specifications for IPPC Guides and training materials and one draft Terms of Reference for an IC Sub-group for the 2021 Consultation period starting 1 July 2021.

5 EMERGING PESTS

5.1. While the new programme on Pest Outbreak Alert and Response Systems is being guided by the dedicated CPM Focus Group, concrete pilot activities are being developed on *Spodoptera frugiperda* (Fall Armyworm) through a Technical Working Group. Prevention, preparedness and response guidelines for countries where *Spodoptera frugiperda* is absent or of limited distribution are to be published soon after having received over 500 comments through the IPPC secretariat's Online Commenting System. A series of three webinars is being developed by the dedicated Technical Working Group for NPPOs to be able to implement the guidelines.

5.2. Considering the success and efficacy of the FAW TWG, the Implementation and Capacity Development Committee (IC) suggested an IC Team be created on the emerging pest *Fusarium oxysporum* f. sp. *cubense* Tropical race 4.

6 PROMOTING TRADE FACILITATION

6.1. e-Commerce: The IPPC secretariat is continuing to work to strengthen collaboration with national plant protection organizations and key international organizations, such as the World Customs Organization, Universal Postal Union and World Trade Organization to address the phytosanitary risks associated with e-Commerce and continues to support an informal network of e-Commerce experts. A working group has started drafting the IPPC e-Commerce Guide for plants, plant products and other regulated articles (2017-039).

6.2. ePhyto: Ninety-three countries are now connected to the IPPC ePhyto Solution and 54 are in full production. The <http://www.ephytoexchange.org/> webpage has been updated to highlight a number of extensive case studies from countries that have implemented ePhyto either through their own national system or the web-based Generic ePhyto National System (GeNS). The IPPC secretariat, together with the United Nations International Computing Centre and the Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation, are working on implementing eSignature capabilities for the system (a feature already a part of the GeNS) in addition to ongoing improvements previously mentioned such as SPS Messaging (UNCEFACT term - certification status, inspection reports, etc.), setting up appointments for export and import inspections (via a "channel" connection, and adding harmonized system (HS) codes to the system). In collaboration with the Industry Advisory Group and the Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation. Workshops have been held with Bahamas and the Dominican Republic, with additional webinars planned to be held for Eastern and Central Europe, Costa Rica, the Near East and China. Visit the ePhyto website³ for additional information.

6.3. Sea Containers: The Sea Containers Task Force (SCTF) is having a series of virtual meetings to discuss the work plan as well as new directions set out by the CPM-15 (2021). Hence, the SCTF is working on addressing key questions outlined in CPM report with the intent of drafting recommendations to be presented to CPM-16 (2022). Among other issues the SCTF is considering the potential value of an international workshop (or open-ended technical consultation) that could be held in late 2022 while developing a draft Terms of Reference (ToR) for a prospective CPM Focus Group which would be charged with arranging a possible 2022 workshop/consultation and/or recommendations for subsequent communication to CPM-17 (2023). Finally, SCTF started outlining potential core aspects that the SCTF would consider important for inclusion in a) a potential revision

² IC meeting reports: <http://www.ippc.int/en/core-activities/capacity-development/capacity-development-committee/>.

³ ePhyto website: <http://www.ephytoexchange.org/>.

of CPM Recommendation No. 6 on Sea Containers; and/or a potential ISPM on sea containers. As a reminder for SCTF mandate the group continues the work on increasing awareness of different stakeholders on sea container pest risks through provision of information. Furthermore, the IPPC secretariat is participating in a informal meeting on the Code of Practice for Packing of Cargo Transport Units at the request of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Working Party on Intermodal Transport and Logistics. Finally, the IPPC secretariat delivered a presentation at World Customs Organization (WCO) Authorized Economic Operators (AEOs) 5th Global Conference to consider the use of AEO in helping to reduce the pest risks associated with the movement of sea containers.

7 PHYTOSANITARY CAPACITY EVALUATIONS

7.1. Santa Lucia concluded a Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation (PCE), while other PCEs are proceeding virtually in the Caribbean (Bahamas, Dominica, and Trinidad and Tobago) and in Sri Lanka. A PCE started in Nepal, with the financial support of the World Bank. A PCE is also foreseen in Senegal with the financial support of the German Cooperation (GIZ).

8 STRENGTHENING COMMUNICATION AND ADVOCACY

8.1. An ad hoc communication plan was developed and implemented for the 15th session of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM-15). Media advisory and press release were produced in cooperation with the FAO Office for Corporate Communication, while relevant news items were published on the FAO and IPPC websites covering major aspects of the CPM discussion, including the adoption of new standards and CPM recommendations, the International Year of Plant Health and the way forward, international cooperation and the Desert Locus upsurge in East Africa. An interview with the former CPM Chairperson, Mr Francisco Javier Trujillo Arriaga⁴, was also developed and published on the IPPC website. A CPM-15 Trello board⁵ was developed and shared with partner organizations collecting all the communication assets produced, including news, documents, key messages, hashtags, videos, cards and images. Social media coverage on FAO and IPPC channels was ensured prior-during-post event, as well as partner organizations. Two short videos for social media were produced by the IPPC secretariat to present the expected achievements of the CPM-15 and the adoption of the new IPPC Strategic Framework 2020-2030. A new animated video⁶ on the IPPC was also developed and projected during the event.

8.2. The IPPC secretariat released a number of new flagship publications, including the IPPC 2020 Annual Report, the IPPC Strategic Framework 2020-2030, the Scientific review on the impact of climate change on plant pests (available in all UN official languages and as digital report) and its summary for policymakers (in all UN languages), a factsheet on plant health and climate change, among others.

8.3. A special message⁷ for the International Day for Biological Diversity was developed by Mr Avetik Nersisyan, IPPC Officer in Charge on behalf of the IPPC secretariat and published by the Convention on Biological Diversity on the Biodiversity Day website.

8.4. The migration and release of the website for the Asia and Pacific Plant Protection Commission (APPPC) went through a major revision from the software and infrastructure point of view. The website was migrated and released on a new Cloud Server (AWS). The new AWS Cloud server is continually monitored, it secures and hardens the infrastructure of the website. The infrastructure is constantly upgraded to help minimize security vulnerabilities. The processes and procedures to deploy system updates have been standardized to reduce to minimum human errors.

⁴ Interview with the CPM Chairperson: <http://www.ippc.int/en/news/adapting-to-a-changed-world-interview-with-the-cpm-chairperson/>.

⁵ CPM-15 Trello board: <http://trello.com/b/cdnx14tC/15th-commission-on-phytosanitary-measures>.

⁶ Video on the IPPC: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oyTKLem3tZI>.

⁷ IPPC message for the International Day of Biological Diversity: <https://www.cbd.int/biodiversity-day/messages>.

8.5. All Announcements⁸, News⁹ and Calls¹⁰ are posted on the IPP. WTO Members are encouraged to subscribe to each to help ensure you get timely notifications related to our activities.

9 INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF PLANT HEALTH

9.1. A webinar on "Promoting safe trade during the International Year of Plant Health" was organized as a SPS Committee's side event on Tuesday, 23 March 2021.

9.2. The high-level launch event of the scientific review of the impact of climate change on plant pests took place on Tuesday 1 June 2021 and was opened by the FAO Director General, QU Dongyu. The main results and recommendations of the scientific review were presented by the lead author, Prof. Maria Lodovica Gullino from the University of Turin, Italy, providing scientific basis for IPPC community's future actions to assess and manage the impact of climate change on plant health. The scientific review was commissioned by the International Steering Committee of the International Year of Plant Health 2020 (IYPH) and is considered one of the key legacies of the IYPH. A summary for policymakers has been also produced and published in all UN official languages, while a new video on plant health and climate change has been developed and projected during the event, and is being translated into Spanish and French. Two IYPH webinars on *Food systems and plant health*, and *Climate change, plant health and biodiversity* are currently being organized and will take place on 29 and 30 June respectively, while the IYPH closing ceremony will be on 1 July.

9.3. The jury of the IYPH photo contest composed by four members of FAO and the IPPC secretariat, one representative of National Geographic Italia and one professional photographer selected the 1st and 2nd prizes for each of the two categories of the photo contest: healthy and unhealthy plants. A people choice's awards is currently being undertaken on the FAO Facebook account. Three winners for the art and drawing competitions for children were also selected for the two age groups: kids (5-9) and pre-teens (10-13). The winners of the IYPH contests will be announced and awarded at the IYPH closing ceremony on 1 July.

10 HIGHLIGHTS ON ACTIVITIES FOR THE REMAINDER OF 2021

10.1. The main meeting of the IPPC secretariat for the remainder of 2021 are being planned to be held virtually. All events organized by the IPPC secretariat are posted on the calendar on the IPP.¹¹

10.2. The IPPC consultation period on will start on 1 July via the Online Commenting System and a whole array of documents will be circulated for comments including:

- Eight draft ISPMs;
- One draft CPM recommendation;
- One draft Specifications for a standard (for the re-organization of PRA standards);
- Six draft Specifications for IPPC guides and training materials ;
- One Terms of reference: IC Sub-group on National Reporting Obligations (NRO);
- Six phytosanitary treatments;
- One diagnostic protocol.

10.3. The IPPC secretariat just launched the Call for Topics¹². The deadline to submit proposals for topics is 15 September 2021. This year the use of an electronic submission form will be used to streamline the submission of topics. To assist in the submission of topics, the IPPC secretariat will hold two webinars¹³, one with interpretation into French and another into Spanish on 21 June. Information on the process and how to prepare successful topic submissions as well as a demonstration on how to use the new electronic submission forms will be given.

⁸ IPPC Announcements: <http://www.ippc.int/en/news/category/announcements/>.

⁹ IPPC News: <http://www.ippc.int/en/news/category/ippcnews/>.

¹⁰ IPPC Calls: <http://www.ippc.int/en/calls/>.

¹¹ IPPC secretariat calendar:

<http://www.ippc.int/en/year/calendar/?year=2021&month=1&day=1&hour=0&minute=0&second=0>.

¹² Call for Topics: <http://www.ippc.int/en/core-activities/standards-and-implementation/call-for-topics-standards-and-implementation/>.

¹³ Call for Topics Webinars: <http://www.ippc.int/en/events/event/1035/>.

10.4. Under the direction of the IPPC Standards Committee (SC), two expert working groups to develop ISPMs are planned to happen this year, in virtual mode:

- Annex Criteria for determining host status of fruit to fruit flies based on available information (2018-011) to ISPM 37 (Determination of host status of fruit to fruit flies (Tephritidae));
- Annex Design and use of systems approaches for phytosanitary certification of seeds (2018-009) to ISPM 38 (International movement of seeds).

10.5. Under the oversight of the Implementation and Capacity Development Committee the following working groups will complete their work with the publication of Guides and the launch of e-learning courses:

- Pest risk analysis, e-Learning course (2020-002);
- Pest Status, Guide (2017-048);
- Phytosanitary export certification system, e-Learning course (2020-003);
- Plant Pest Surveillance, Guide-Revision (2017-049).

10.6. Also under the oversight of the IC, the following working groups will be convened in September and will meet monthly (calls for experts will be launched in June 2021):

- Contingency planning, Guide (2019-012);
- Inspection and diagnostics e-Learning course (2020-011);
- Surveillance and reporting obligations, e-Learning course (2020-012).

10.7. The following three CPM Focus Groups will also be convened to address several issues of concern to the CPM:

- Implementation of the IPPC Strategic Framework's 2020-2030 Development Agenda Items;
- Communications;
- Climate Change and Phytosanitary Issues.

10.8. The Strategic Planning Group is also planned to meet virtually 19 to 20 October 2021.
