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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 3-5 NOVEMBER 2021
FOR THE PERIOD: 15 JUNE 2021 - 1 OCTOBER 2021**

COMMUNICATION FROM THE IPPC SECRETARIAT

The following communication, received on 11 October 2021, is being circulated at the request of the International Plant Protection Convention secretariat (IPPC).

1 THE COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

1.1. The Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) sixteenth session (CPM-16) is being planned to take place virtually and the CPM Bureau is requesting International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) contracting parties to endorse this decision, following FAO procedures to hold virtual governing body meetings.

1.1 CPM Bureau

1.2. The CPM Bureau held two virtual meetings in August and September 2021 to advance the IPPC work plan of the IPPC community.

1.3. In the August meeting, the CPM Bureau provided guidance on the ongoing preparations for the first meetings of the three newly established CPM Focus Groups (FGs) on Implementation of the IPPC Strategic Framework Development Agenda; Climate Change and Phytosanitary Issues; and Communication. It also addressed items on the adjustment of tasks for the CPM Focus Group on Sea Containers, the status of the terms of reference and rules of procedure of the Implementation and Capacity Development Committee (IC) as well as the introduction of the report on moving the Implementation Review and Support System (IRSS) to a more sustainable platform.

1.4. The September meeting focused on receiving updates on the work done by the newly established CPM Focus Groups mentioned above and discussed the report on some follow-up action of the International Year of Plant Health legacies, particularly the establishment of an International Steering Committee of the International Day of Plant Health (IDPH ISC). The seventy-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly is set to discuss the IDPH establishment by December 2021, which would then become a yearly recurrence for the IPPC community to celebrate.

1.2 IPPC Dispute Settlement Procedure

1.5. Two sets of dispute settlement procedures (DSPs) under the IPPC were developed and adopted by the Interim Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (ICPM). The first version of the DSPs (1999) was adopted by the ICPM at its 2nd Session in 1999. At that Session, the ICPM also mandated the further elaboration of certain aspects of the 1999 DSPs. As a result, at its 3rd Session in 2001, the ICPM adopted specific procedures (2001 DSPs) set forth in Section F to N of Appendix XI to the Report of the 3rd Session of the ICPM.

1.6. In 2019, the Strategic Planning Group (SPG), a subsidiary body of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM), reviewed a document outlining the difficulties with the 1999 and 2001 DSPs and agreed that the inconsistencies found in the 1999 and 2001 DSPs should be worked

on, but this work was postponed until the end of the International Year of Plant Health (IYPH) in June 2021. In July 2021, the CPM Bureau approved resources for this review and a revised version of the IPPC DSPs will be presented to the SPG at the October 2021 meeting.

1.3 CPM Focus Groups

1.7. CPM Focus Groups (FGs) are established by the Commission to tackle a specific issue and then report back to the CPM. The following FGs have been active.

1.4 FG on Climate Change and Phytosanitary Issues

1.8. The FG, established by the Fifteenth Session of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM-15) in 2021, is initiating its work on the implementation of one of the eight development agenda items of the IPPC Strategic Framework 2020-2030: "*Assessing and managing the impacts of climate change on plant health*".

1.9. The goal defined in the IPPC Strategic Framework 2020-2030 is that by 2030, the impacts of climate change on plant health and the safe trade of plants and plant products are evaluated on a regular basis, especially in relation to pest risk analysis and management issues, and that phytosanitary matters are adequately reflected in the international climate change debate and considered by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

1.10. The focus group is formed by ten experts from National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs) representing the seven FAO regions, plus an independent expert suggested by the IPCC. Three meetings have been held in September 2021. The first task of the focus group is to present an action plan with a schedule to the CPM-16 (2022). The focus group will remain effective until CPM-19 (2025).

1.5 FG on Communications

1.11. The Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) Focus Group on Communications was formally established by the CPM Bureau in July 2021, following a recommendation of the Strategic Planning Group in October 2020 and the subsequent endorsement by CPM-15 in April 2021. Some of the key functions of the CPM Focus Group on Communications include the development, monitoring and implementation of a new IPPC Communications Strategy (2022-2030) to be aligned to the IPPC Strategic Framework 2020-2030 and to be presented to CPM-16 (2022) for adoption. The group is currently composed of ten members with relevant expertise in communications and knowledge of the IPPC, and will remain effective until 2023, subject to a possible CPM Bureau decision to extend its mandate. The focus group started meeting in September and currently held three meetings where it reviewed its terms of reference and the background documentation (IPPC Strategic Framework 2020-2030, the IPPC communications strategy 2013-2018, the IYPH communication strategy and action plan, and the communication reports to CPM from 2016 to 2021); elected a Chairperson and a Co-chairperson; agreed on strategic directions; initiated discussions around the communication objectives to enhance IPPC's visibility, engagement and impact; and submitted its update to the 2021 Strategic Planning Group that meets in mid-October.

1.6 FG on Implementing the IPPC Strategic Framework Development Agenda Items

1.12. The CPM Focus Group on the Strategic Framework 2020-2030 Development Agenda Items (SFDAI) held three virtual meetings in early September and October 2021. The 11 focus group members reviewed the terms of reference, and requested a background summary from the secretariat on development agenda items already underway, as well as any resources available for the development agenda items.

1.13. The background information from the secretariat was reviewed, with notations made for next steps necessary to produce an implementation outline for each development agenda item.

1.14. To date the focus group has:

- reviewed background information provided by the IPPC secretariat;
- received updates on the current state and planning for each of the SFDAIs;

- developed a process with steps for the focus group to develop the integrated implementation plan;
- produced a draft outline of the key components that will be needed in the implementation plan.

1.15. The SFDAIs are each at different stages of implementation. Each of the SFDAIs are using the suggestions for activities contained in the IPPC Strategic Framework 2020-2030 as a guide. Some have clear plans for the next 12–24 months and others do not. Rightly, some are in the very early stages of scoping and not yet able to produce a detailed plan. Some have resources secured to fund the anticipated work and others do not. The focus group is not aware of any SFDAIs that have clear goals, deliverables and budgets for the next five years.

1.16. To produce an overarching, integrated, and sequenced implementation plan with clear milestones and timelines, the focus group will need to request more information from each of the SFDAI lead persons in the secretariat. A clear plan for each SFDAI will need to be developed using a consistent methodology. The focus group is developing a method for this.

1.17. The focus group has some concern over its ability to produce all of the deliverables requested by the CPM in time for CPM-16 (2022). The focus group is committed to doing as much as is possible and delivering a full update for the CPM.

1.7 Focus Group on Pest Outbreak Alert and Response Systems

1.18. The CPM Focus Group on Pest Outbreak Alert and Response Systems met virtually every month from January until September 2021 and will share its main conclusions with the Strategic Planning Group to then be presented to CPM in 2022. A study on existing systems will be published in 2022, as well as the detailed conclusions for each task from the terms of reference (TORS) of the Focus Group. Membership, TORs and meeting reports are all available on the dedicated IPP Webpage.¹

1.8 Task Force on Topics

1.19. The CPM Task Force on Topics (TFT) was established by the CPM to help streamline and access the process of calling for topics for standards and implementation materials. Call for topics: Standards and Implementation, launched by the secretariat, was open 4 May – 15 September 2021. By the end of the call, the secretariat has received 17 following submissions:

- seven standards;
- three implementation materials (one without draft specification for proposed IPPC guides and training);
- seven diagnostic protocols.

1.20. The TFT virtual meeting reviewed these submissions on 4-6 October 2021, and the subsequent SC and IC review of TFT recommendations is scheduled for November 2021.

2 STRATEGIC PLANNING GROUP (SPG)

2.1. The Strategic Planning Group (SPG) virtual meeting is scheduled for 19 and 21 October 2021 in two sessions per day (10am to 12pm; and 2pm to 4pm Rome time). The main topics to be discussed are discussion items from CPM focus groups (FGs), emerging topics such as IPPC and one health, partnership strategy and IYPH legacies as well as framework for standards and implementation and revised IC terms of reference and rules of procedure.

¹ Pest Outbreak Alert and Response Systems IPP Webpage <https://www.ippc.int/en/core-activities/governance/cpm/cpm-focus-group-reports/strengthening-pest-outbreak-alert-and-response-systems/>.

3 STANDARDS COMMITTEE

3.1. In a series of focused virtual meetings, the IPPC Standards Committee (SC) is progressing its work in developing international standards for phytosanitary measures (ISPMs) and having strategic discussions related to the implementation of the new IPPC Strategic Framework.

3.2. In August 2021, the SC on behalf of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) adopted the thirtieth Annex to ISPM 27 (*Diagnostic protocols for regulated pests*) for *Striga* spp.

3.3. *Striga*, commonly known as witch weed, is a genus of parasitic plants that naturally occur in tropical and subtropical regions. Some species of *Striga* are major pests and can cause major damage to agricultural crops in these regions. Due to the minute and almost dust-like nature of *Striga* seeds, they can disperse over long distances and can contaminate seeds or grain by multiple pathways during transportation, storage and trade.

3.4. It is foreseen that by the end of the year, the specification on the re-organization of PRA standards be approved and that the work commences in 2022.

3.5. It is foreseen that the following ISPMs will be presented to the CPM-16 (April 2022) for adoption:

- 4 draft ISPMs: Commodity-based standards for phytosanitary measures (2019-008), Audits in the phytosanitary context (2015-014), Focused revision of ISPM 12 in relation to re-export (2015-011), and 2019 and 2020 Amendments to ISPM 5;
- 5 draft phytosanitary treatments (PTs): Irradiation treatment for Tortricidae on fruits (2017-011), Cold treatment for *Bactrocera zonata* on *Citrus sinensis* (2017-013), Vapour heat - modified atmosphere treatment for *Cydia pomonella* and *Grapholita molesta* in fruit of *Malus pumila* and *Prunus persica* (2017-037/038), Irradiation treatment for *Sternochetus frigidus* (2017-036), Irradiation treatment for *Zeugodacus tau* (2017-025).

3.6. Technical Panels work under the oversight of the SC, updates on the following are provided:

- The Technical Panel on Diagnostic Protocols (TPDP) met on 22 July and had some discussions via electronic forums (e-decisions) to select DP authors to advance their work programme. In the meantime, one draft DP on "*Genus Ceratitis*" was submitted to the [IPPC Expert Consultation Period](#), with a deadline on 25 October 2021;
- The Technical Panel on Phytosanitary Treatments (TPPT) met virtually on the 28 July 2021. They discussed their workplan and the remaining phytosanitary treatments on their work programme. They agreed on the actions needed in order to move these forward. They also discussed and approved how to simplify the submission form in order to facilitate the submission of new treatments;
- The Technical Panel for the Glossary (TPG) will hold its next virtual meeting in December 2021 to review its work programme and address comments raised during the consultation period on draft ISPMs.

4 IMPLEMENTATION AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (IC)

4.1. Since June 2021, the Implementation and Capacity Development Committee (IC) has held two virtual meetings (VMs), the VM15 on 9 July and the VM16 on 29 September.

4.2. During these meetings, the IC discussed different options to streamline the review process of contributing resources and revised criteria related to this process. The IC established an IC Team to deal with Banana *Fusarium* Wilt (TR4), see below section on emerging pests. They also discussed and adjusted the framework for standards and implementation.

4.3. After the closing of the 2021 consultation, the IC reviewed the comments received and approved the three following draft specifications for guide and training materials:

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

4.4. In the framework of the collaboration between the IC and SC, an update was provided to the IC on the activities and main decisions of the SC. The IC was also updated on the ongoing process of transition to a sustainable IPPC Implementation Review and Support System (IRSS).

4.5. Reports from these meetings will be posted soon on the IPP.²

4.1 IPPC Guides and training materials

4.6. The following IPPC Guides and training materials were published in July 2021 and are available on the International Phytosanitary Portal:

- *Prevention, preparedness and response guidelines for Spodoptera frugiperda*. Rome.³ Published by FAO on behalf of the secretariat of the International Plant Protection Convention;
- *Pest status guide – Understanding the principal requirements for pest status determination*. Rome.⁴ Published by FAO on behalf of the secretariat of the International Plant Protection Convention.

4.7. The following IPPC Guides and training materials are under development and expected to be available later in 2021:

- *Plant pest surveillance guide, revision (2017-049)*;
- *Pest risk analysis e-Learning course (2020-002)*;
- *Phytosanitary export certification system e-Learning course (2020-003)*.

4.2 IPPC webinar series

4.8. The IPPC secretariat will host a series of webinars between October and December 2021. The webinars will be held in English with simultaneous interpretation into Arabic, French and Russian. Additional information is available on the IPP⁵:

- Fall armyworm training (Part 1: 22 October; Part 2: 19 November; Part 3: 10 December);
- Pest status, surveillance and systems approaches: Webinar on the new IPPC guides (22 October);
- Export certification and pest risk analysis: Webinar on the new IPPC e-learning materials (19 November).

4.3 National Reporting Obligations

4.9. The IPPC secretariat provides regular assistance to IPPC contact points and their IPP editors throughout the year to facilitate reporting through the IPP. The [Pest reports bulletin](#)⁶ is being maintained and updated. The Integration Support Team (IST) continues to collaborate with the FAO Intelligence and Coordination Unit of the Food Chain Crisis Management Framework (FCC-ICU) to streamline pest reports.

4.4 Sea Containers Task Force

4.10. The Sea Containers Task Force (SCTF) was established by the CPM-12 (2017) to guide the work of the Sea Containers Programme, facilitate the efficient implementation of the Complementary Action Plan for Assessing and Managing the Pest Threats associated with Sea Containers. SCTF's original key tasks were measuring the impact of the CTU Code⁷ and increasing awareness of pest risks of sea containers. In 2021, additional guidance from CPM-15 (2021) was received.

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

³ <http://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cb5880en>.

⁴ <https://doi.org/10.4060/cb6103en>.

⁵ IPP Webinar Page: <https://www.ippc.int/en/news/workshops-events/webinars/>.

⁶ Pest reports bulletin: <https://www.ippc.int/en/countries/reportingsystem-summary/all/>.

⁷ The CTU Code is the Code of Practice for Packing of Cargo Transport Units jointly published by the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).

Namely the SCTF was requested to consider and communicate viewpoints on the potential value of an international workshop (or open-ended technical consultation) that could be held in late 2022 and develop a draft terms of reference (ToR) for a prospective CPM Focus Group. During the remaining period the SCTF will be working on outlining potential core aspects that the SCTF would consider important for inclusion in: a) a potential revision of CPM Recommendation No. 6 on Sea Containers and b) a potential ISPM on sea containers

4.5 Web-based information for Implementation and Capacity Development

4.11. A phytosanitary systems landing page⁸ has been developed in collaboration with the IC. The component of the phytosanitary system page on systems approach⁹ is newly updated to include information on the Beyond Compliance project tools. The Beyond Compliance project tools were developed and funded by the STDF to support the use of systems approach by the NPPOs because combining measures for managing pest risk is complicated. The infographic video¹⁰ was developed to illustrate with colorful animations how systems approach works and how it can be implemented.

4.12. SPS members are encouraged to visit these webpages and provide comments to support continual improvements to these pages (ippc@fao.org).

4.6 Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation

4.13. The Bureau agreed that the Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation (PCE) processes need improvement. In addition, the software to deliver the PCE, the PCE tool also needs to be modernized. The IC Team on PCE advanced on setting a policy for PCE facilitators and is integrating the conclusions of the ex-post evaluation on the STDF project STDF/PG/401 "Training of phytosanitary capacity evaluation (PCE) facilitators¹¹" into a PCE strategy. Discussions are also in progress with the United Nations International Computer Centre (UNICC) to improve the PCE tool with the possibility of offering a new platform.

5 EPHYTO

5.1. Since June 2020, the IPPC ePhyto Solution continues to grow – 46 countries are now exchanging phytosanitary certificates via the IPPC ePhyto Solution. A few more countries have gone live, including Guatemala, Colombia and Uganda. The first training in French was conducted for Tunisia and subsequent training is being planned for Nigeria. New countries are also being engaged through collaboration with the World Economic Forum's Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation including Madagascar, and the Alliance is also setting up a training for field staff on ePhyto in order to help increase awareness in other countries where the Alliance operates. The World Bank is also becoming more active and is investigating the implementation of ePhyto in connection with efforts to establish a single window in Zambia. The IPPC was pleased to participate in a successful STDF-sponsored webinar on ePhyto on 23 September. Nearly 250 attendees from around the world actively participated in the webinar.

5.2. Next steps for the IPPC ePhyto Solution include system enhancements, additional messaging for exchanging and continued outreach to other interested organizations to discuss possible collaboration to transform the IPPC ePhyto Solution into an "SPS Digital Solution". The IPPC is also very interested in collaborating with colleagues in UNCTAD's Asycuda effort to establish a sound relationship which will enhance the single windows concept through a relationship between ePhyto and Asycuda.

5.3. More information can be found on the ePhyto webpage¹² on the IPP.

⁸ Phytosanitary System landing page is available at: <https://www.ippc.int/en/core-activities/capacity-development/phytosanitary-system/>.

⁹ <https://www.ippc.int/en/core-activities/capacity-development/phytosanitary-system/systems-approach/>.

¹⁰ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iHXAx7IhYo&t=1s>.

¹¹ STDF Project Webpage "Developing a network of PCE facilitators" <https://www.standardsfacility.org/PG-401>.

¹² ePhyto webpage: <https://www.ephytoexchange.org/landing/>.

6 EMERGING PESTS

6.1 Banana Fusarium Wilt (TR4)

6.1. The IC team on TR4 was successfully established. Qualified experts from around the world form this new team which met for the first time on 30 September 2021. The [membership list of the new IC Team on TR4](#) is available on the IPP.

6.2. This IC Team will develop a brief plan in line with the CPM Focus Group on Pest Outbreak Alert and Response Systems recommendations, compile information on TR4, develop global materials for the TR4 prevention, preparedness and response, and review contributed resources on TR4. It will support the development of a questionnaire to assess the national capacities to respond to pest outbreaks.

6.3. The IPPC secretariat opened a call for phytosanitary technical resources on *Fusarium oxysporum* f. sp. *cubense* Tropical Race 4 (TR4), requesting guidelines and tools for diagnostic, surveillance, containment measures, biosecurity implementation, emergency actions and response, contingency plans, simulation exercises, and risk communication. Twelve resources were contributed by Australia, Costa Rica, Mexico, Netherlands, and Turkey. The IC team on TR4 will assess these contributed resources based on the criteria and procedure established in the procedures for reviewing and approving contributed phytosanitary resources for posting on the IPP.

6.4. Also, the IPPC secretariat has compiled forty-six resources on TR4, including technical situational reports, guidelines, and training materials. This information will help the IC Team on TR4 to identify the necessities of developing non-existent global materials.

6.2 Fall armyworm (FAW)

6.5. The [Prevention, preparedness, and response guidelines for *Spodoptera frugiperda*](#) were published in July. These guidelines aim to help NPPOs take suitable actions at the proper time against Fall armyworm (FAW) through timely detection to prevent or slow the spread of the pest and reduce its negative impact.

6.6. The FAO/IPPC Technical Working Group on FAW will deliver the three-webinar series "[Fall Armyworm, a global threat to prevent](#)" focused on prevention, preparedness and response. This activity will promote the implementation of the guidelines and create opportunities to network and share expertise and information on FAW risk analysis, management, and communication.

6.7. The three sessions will be held on 22 October, 19 November, and 10 December. The language will be in English with simultaneous interpretation into French, Arabic and Russian.

6.3 Red Palm Weevil (RPW)

6.8. The IPPC secretariat supported the Near East Plant Protection Organization (NEPPO) in the development of a questionnaire to assess the necessity of training on RPW.

7 IPPC REGIONAL WORKSHOPS

7.1. Seven IPPC regional workshops (RW) have been delivered virtually in 2020. Dates, agendas, schedules, documents and presentations are all posted on the IPP.¹³ Reports are also posted on the IPP, as they are finalized.

8 IPPC COMMUNICATIONS AND ADVOCACY

8.1. Since June 2020, the IPPC secretariat has coordinated and posted 36 IPP headline news items, and produced two videos on IYPH, all translated into six FAO languages, as well as social media work especially in relation to the IYPH. The IPPC secretariat organized a side event at the World Food Forum flag ship event and is planning two more webinars: one on plant health and remote sensing

¹³ IPPC Regional Workshops: <https://www.ippc.int/en/core-activities/capacity-development/regional-ippc-workshops/2020-ippc-regional-workshop/>.

with Euphresco and the European Space Agency; one on the contribution of plant health to the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The IPPC secretariat is monitoring the process to establish the International Day of Plant Health and has engaged in negotiation with an IPPC contracting party to host the first ever International Plant Health Conference in May 2022.

8.2. The IPPC secretariat would like to take this opportunity to express its sincere gratitude to the WTO-SPS Secretariat for the strong support and close cooperation.
