

**MATTERS OF INTEREST ARISING FROM THE WORK  
OF OBSERVER ORGANIZATIONS**

Statement by the International Plant Protection Convention Secretariat (IPPC)  
at the meeting of 28-29 October 2009

The following communication, received on 29 October 2009, is being circulated at the request of IPPC.

---

**1. Standard Setting**

*Member consultation*

1. Several standards were sent out for member consultation on 20 June 2009. One diagnostic protocol (on *Thrips palmi*) and eight cold treatments for fruit flies went out through the special process. The revision to ISPMs No. 7: Export certification system and No. 12: Guidelines for phytosanitary certificates, as well as a new draft ISPM on design and operation of post-entry quarantine stations, went out through the regular process. In addition, there was also a proposal to delete one term from the Glossary of Phytosanitary Terms.

*Compiling member comments 2009*

2. This year several contracting parties and one Regional Plant Protection Organizations (RPPO) volunteered to assist the secretariat in compiling member comments. Volunteers include Australia; COSAVE; Germany; Malaysia; Philippines; United Kingdom; and Zambia. We would like to thank WTO Members for this valuable contribution. In an attempt to streamline the process of compiling member comments, the secretariat is developing an online system, which is planned for the 2010 members' consultation period.

3. I have had a chance to review the compiled comments and we have received large volumes of comments on our proposed revisions to our draft ISPMs dealing with Export certification systems and Phytosanitary certificates, which may also be a reflection of the many concerns raised in this regard at this meeting of the SPS Committee.

4. It is anticipated that at least two specifications for new standards will go out for member consultation in early December, one on a phytosanitary inspection manual and another on how to determine host status of fruits to fruit fly (*Tephritididae*) infestation. Members and the SPS Secretariat are invited to review these specifications and submit comments to the IPPC secretariat via their National Plant Protection Organizations. These topics seem timely given some of the issues raised at this meeting.

### *Standards Committee*

5. Our Standards Committee will be meeting the week following next and it is hope that they will recommend to the CPM three new standards. The topics of these standards are potato microtubers, fruit fly trapping and post-entry quarantine stations. Members are reminded that there is one final comment period for urgent comments. These comments can be submitted through your NPPO and must be received by the IPPC secretariat at least 14 days prior to the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) meeting.

6. Earlier this month, funds were allocated to hold our regular semi-annual meetings of our Standards Committee as well as meetings of all five of our Technical Panels. In addition, two Expert Working Groups on the topics of import of plant breeding material and soil and growing media will also be convened in 2010.

7. The IPPC secretariat made a biennial call for topics for standards in May of 2009. The IPPC secretariat has received 21 submissions for new topics. The Standards Committee will review the IPPC standard setting work programme vis-à-vis these new submissions and propose adjustments to the CPM. In addition, the Standards Committee will consider reorganizing the presentation of our adopted ISPMs based on a consultant's study that also considered the way both Codex and OIE present their adopted standards.

8. A call for specific information and data for heat treatments for fruit flies was made in May 2009 with the deadline of 15 October 2009. The secretariat received nine submissions which are being considered by the Technical Panel on Phytosanitary Treatments (TPPT).

9. The programme for the development of explanatory documents was put on hold in 2006 due to lack of resources, with a few exceptions. CPM-3 asked that an explanatory document on ISPM No. 31 (Methodologies for sampling of consignments) urgently be developed. The explanatory document for ISPM No. 31 was finalized and posted on our website in September 2009.

## **2. Information Exchange**

10. The secretariat notes that there has been continued improvement in 2009 in updating and maintaining the IPPC Contact Point information, and we would like to thank WTO Members for their cooperation in this regard.

11. The secretariat is finalizing a complete makeover of the IPPC website, which we call the International Phytosanitary Portal (IPP: <http://www.ippc.int>). It is hoped that this improved website will be released near the end of November this year. These improvements include adding sections for RPPOs, International Organizations and the Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation tool (PCE). Feedback compiled from surveys, workshop evaluations, and other means was used to guide the re-design to make the website faster, more stable and provide a simplified layout, navigation and a Google quick search and refined advanced search function. We hope that a new dashboard for users with login access will enable users to manage their contact information, login information and access to targeted groups and events.

## **3. Dispute Settlement**

12. To date in 2009, there has been one request for assistance in resolving phytosanitary trade disputes.

#### 4. Capacity Building

13. In December of this year, a group of capacity building experts will meet in Rome to help improve the IPPC Strategy for National Phytosanitary Capacity Building (NPCB) and to finalize an operational and implementation plan.

##### *Capacity building projects*

14. In addition to assisting with the delivery of SPS workshops, the IPPC secretariat continued its collaboration with donor agencies and contracting parties in the delivery of technical assistance for capacity building in projects funded through various sources.

15. The main projects are outlined below:

- Biosecurity capacity building: this project is funded under the One UN basket funding to address national priorities. The secretariat assisted the government of the United Republic of Tanzania in identifying as well as addressing priorities in the context of national biosecurity under a one UN project.
- The secretariat, under a supervisory or implementation agreement signed between the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) and FAO, provided its services to the following three STDF projects:
  - (i) STDF 171- Establishment of a Centre of Phytosanitary Excellence (COPE) in East Africa, which is being established in Kenya to serve East African countries. This centre will help coordinate phytosanitary training and regional coordination of phytosanitary issues.
  - (ii) STDF 230- Establishment of a Lethal Yellowing Disease- free area for coconuts in Mozambique: the project is being implemented with technical support services from the IPPC secretariat to help in the management of this pest.
  - (iii) STDF 133- Capacity building in the use of the Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation Tool in the Pacific.

##### *Workshops*

- The IPPC in collaboration with Codex Alimentarius and OIE, participated in a Train-the-Trainers workshop organized by the STDF under the project Participation of African Nations in Sanitary and Phytosanitary Organizations (PANSPSO). This project is being implemented by the African Union -InterAfrican Bureau of Animal Resources (AU-IBAR). The IPPC secretariat is a member of the steering committee.
- The IPPC supported five (5) regional workshops to review draft ISPMs. These were: the Southwest Pacific, Africa, Near East, Caribbean and for the first time Russian-speaking countries of the Baltic, Central Asia and Eastern Europe regions. Latin America, Europe, North America and Asia FAO regions now conduct reviews of draft ISPMs independently and do not require IPPC support.
- An additional workshop is being held this week for Russian-speaking countries which will help countries understand how to meet their IPPC obligations and implement ISPMs.

- The Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation tool is currently being upgraded, taking into account suggestions for improvements provided by users and a group of PCE facilitators.
- The International Advisory Group on Pest Risk Analysis has continued to help in the development of Phytosanitary Pest Risk Analysis training material which is posted on the IPPC website and free for anyone to use. I am also pleased to inform you that, thanks to the assistance from both Canada and France, the training material is also available in French.

#### *Guide for Foresters on ISPMs*

16. The FAO Forestry Department has initiated a two year project to develop a guide on good forest health practices that minimizes the movement of invasive forest species and provides a simplified understanding of the concepts contained in the international standards for phytosanitary measures (ISPMs). The guide is intended to assist forestry managers and other forestry professionals in both understanding the concepts and applying them to practices in a manner that improves NPPO implementation of standards internationally.

17. The IPPC secretariat is working closely with FAO Forestry Department staff and selected experts to ensure that the guide accurately reflects the standards. Where assistance is required, adequate technical expertise is proposed and utilized. The secretariat is supporting a side event during the World Forestry Congress in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in October 2009 by developing a presentation on the subject and the work of the IPPC secretariat

#### *The Secretariat*

18. The secretariat faced significant challenges in 2009. The increasing demand for activities directed at all IPPC Goals combined with the resignation of a number of secretariat staff meant that the full 2009 programme could not be delivered.

19. I am pleased to announce that a full time Secretary has been chosen and we hope to be able to announce who the successful candidate is very soon, and to have him on the job in early 2010. The final selection of an Implementation Officer is in the final stages. In addition the IPPC secretariat has established some short term posts for some temporary assistance in Standard Setting, Information Exchange and Capacity building. In addition, we hope to soon be posting a Vacancy Announcement (VA) for both a Coordinator and a position to fill the Help Desk for the IPPC Implementation Review and Support System (IRSS).

20. We would like to thank both Canada and the United States for providing us with staff. The United States has provided us with two consultants and an APO and Canada has provided us with a part time staff. In some cases, these staff have remained in their home countries, which the secretariat is finding to be a viable alternative to meet our staffing needs.

#### *International Liaison*

21. The secretariat was represented at a range of meetings with international and regional organizations and a summary of these interactions is outlined below:

##### Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

22. The secretariat continues to liaise with the CBD, including contribution to and participation of CBD secretariat staff on the International Advisory Group on Pest Risk Analysis as well as continuing

work with the CBD through a joint work programme which covers issues mostly related to Invasive Alien Species and Living Modified Organisms.

#### International Advisory Group on Pest Risk Analysis

23. This group continues to develop PRA training material. A version of the Participants manual in French language is available now and posted on IPP at <https://www.ippc.int/id/191903?language=en>. Some members of this group have been active and have attended PRA training sessions as a resource person.

#### Quarantine and Pre-Shipment Task Force of the Montreal Protocol's Technology and Economic Assessment Panel (QPSTF)

24. The secretariat hosted a meeting of the QPSTF in Rome on 7-9 September 2008. The QPSTF, in consultation with the IPPC secretariat, has been requested to review all relevant, currently available information on the use of methyl bromide for quarantine and pre-shipment (QPS) applications and related emissions, to assess trends in the major uses, available alternatives, other mitigation options and barriers to the adoption of alternatives. The QPSTF will determine what additional information or action may be required to meet those objectives in order to finalize a report on these issues, which will be presented at a workshop on this topic to be held next week in Egypt. The IPPC secretariat will give a presentation at this workshop which it hopes will highlight the efforts both the IPPC and NNPOa are making to help mitigate climate change by making efforts to reduce methyl bromide emissions.

#### International Forestry Quarantine Research Group (IFQRG)

25. The International Forestry Quarantine Research Group met from 14 – 18 October 2009 in Rome. The meeting focused on reviewing forest quarantine research, most of which is related to research work needed to support the development of standards by the Technical Panel on Forest Quarantine (TPFQ). This meeting was attended by forestry scientists, representatives of national and regional plant protection organizations and industry from Europe, North America and Africa. Several scientists presented technical reports on collaborative work carried out in many regions of the world.

#### Second World Trade Seed Conference

26. The IPPC secretariat gave a presentation entitled "Phytosanitary Measures and the International Seed Trade" at this conference held 8-9 September 2009 at FAO Headquarters in Rome. The presentation highlighted the importance of working together, overviewed ISPMs of relevance to the seed trade, and addressed questions from the audience about how topics for standards are developed.

#### *Electronic Certification*

27. The IPPC secretariat attended the workshop on Electronic Certification organized by the North American Plant Protection Organization (NAPPO) in Ottawa, Canada. This seems to be an area that is of concern to WTO Members and may also be an area where the three sisters could work together to coordinate a harmonized approach. All the meeting documents and full report can be found at NAPPO's web site (<http://www.nappo.org>).

---