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Page: 1/8

Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

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**REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL PLANT PROTECTION  
CONVENTION SECRETARIAT (IPPC)  
(AS OF 17 MARCH 2014)**

The following communication, received on 24 March 2014, is being circulated at the request of the International Plant Protection Convention secretariat (IPPC).

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

1.1. This report covers the period October 2013 – March 2014.

1.2. Preparations are nearly complete for the Ninth Session of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM-9), which will be taking place from 31 March to 4 April 2014. This report covers general activities which have taken place subsequent to our last report in October 2013. Activities taking place in the areas of Capacity Development and Implementation Review and Support System (IRSS) are presented separately.

1.3. The Committee is invited to note that the number of contracting parties to the IPPC has increased to 181.

1.4. The organizational placement of the Secretariat within FAO has officially changed from the Agricultural Production and Protection (AGP) staff to the staff of the Assistant Director General as of 1 January 2014.

## **2 STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK AND ISSUE SPECIFIC STRATEGIES**

### **2.1 STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK**

2.1. As previously mentioned in other reports, implementation of the IPPC Strategic Framework continues apace. The establishment of the four strategic objectives has provided the basis for outreach to non-traditional contracts and enhanced and/or renewed relationships with traditional partners. Following the adoption of the new communications strategy at CPM-8 (2013), the IPPC Secretariat embarked on a communications needs assessment, supported by funds from the United States to develop a communications work plan for the IPPC. This needs assessment has recently been completed and will be presented for review and comment to CPM9.

2.2. As mentioned at the last meeting of this Committee, there were two significant proposals for the Strategic Planning Group to consider as the result of a call for proposals: one on the topic of implementation, and the other related to the process of adopting recommendations by the CPM.

2.3. During the meeting of the Strategic Planning Group which took place from 8-11 October 2013, a simple process was proposed for the adoption of IPPC recommendations and after some additional discussion during the meeting it will be presented to the CPM in April 2014. The topic of implementation introduced by New Zealand also prompted several comments and suggestions. A paper reflecting the results of the Strategic Planning Group discussions and proposing a pilot implementation approach will be presented to the CPM as well. Expectations are that this will be a significant discussion for this year's CPM.

### 3 STANDARD SETTING WORK PROGRAMME

#### 3.1 FRAMEWORK FOR STANDARDS TASK FORCE

3.1. A Task Force to develop a Framework for IPPC Standards<sup>1</sup> met in September 2013 in Ottawa, Canada. Subsequently the following three elements were considered by the Standards Committee (SC) at its 2013 November<sup>2</sup> meeting:

- proposed framework;
- ways in which it could be used; and
- recommendations from the Task Force.

3.2. The SC agreed to use the structure proposed by the Task Force (according to areas in the Convention as the foundation for the framework) for pursuing the further development of the *Framework for standards* and for a gap analysis.

3.3. The SC reviewed the recommendations of the Task Force and mainly agreed with recommendations noting that some of them should be further analysed and this would be done by a SC subgroup. The subgroup was requested to:

- review, analyze and modify the proposed *Framework for standards* as needed;
- perform a gap analysis and make suggestions;
- consider how gaps should be brought to the next call for topics and review of the *List of topics for IPPC standards*, or processed as supporting documents;
- consider how the *Framework for standards* could be introduced in the overall prioritization process; and
- review, analyse and modify Task Force recommendations 5, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15 and decide how and to whom they should be addressed.

#### 3.2 INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES (ISPMs) RECOMMENDED BY THE SC TO CPM FOR ADOPTION

3.4. The IPPC would like to inform the SPS Committee that the following ISPMs as well as phytosanitary treatments were recommended to CPM for adoption by the SC:

- Appendix to ISPM 12 on *Electronic certification, information on standard XML schemes and exchange mechanisms* (2006-003);
- *Determination of host status of fruit to fruit fly* (Tephritidae) (2006-031); and
- Annex 1 to ISPM 26 on *Control measures for an outbreak within a fruit fly-pest free area* (2009-007).

#### Phytosanitary treatments

- Cold treatment for *Ceratitis capitata* on *Citrus sinensis*;
- Cold treatment *Ceratitis capitata* on *Citrus reticulata* x *C. sinensis*;
- Cold treatment for *Ceratitis capitata* on *Citrus limon*;
- Cold treatment for *Bactrocera tryoni* on *Citrus limon*;
- Cold treatment for *Bactrocera tryoni* on *Citrus sinensis*;
- Cold treatment for *Bactrocera tryoni* on *Citrus reticulata* x *C. sinensis*;
- Cold treatment for *Ceratitis capitata* on *Citrus paradise*; and
- Vapor heat treatment for *Bactrocera cucurbitae* on *Cucumis melo* var. *Reticulatus*.

3.5. However, 14 days prior to CPM-9 (2014), the IPPC Secretariat received formal objections<sup>3</sup> to the draft ISPM on *Determination of host status of fruit to fruit fly* (Tephritidae) (2006-031) and all seven of the cold treatments. These formal objections have now been forwarded to the Standards Committee.

<sup>1</sup> Framework for Standards Task Force meeting report: <https://www.ippc.int/core-activities/standards-setting/framework-for-standards-task-force>.

<sup>2</sup> Standards Committee November 2013 meeting report: <https://www.ippc.int/core-activities/standards-setting/standards-committee>.

<sup>3</sup> CPM 2014/INF/05: <https://www.ippc.int/publications/formal-objections-draft-ispms-presented-adoption-cpm-9-2014>.

### 3.2.1 Diagnostic protocol adopted by the SC on behalf of CPM

3.6. Two draft Diagnostic Protocols were approved by the SC for the 45-days notification period<sup>4</sup>, which closed on 30 January 2014. The one draft Diagnostic Protocol for *Phyllosticta citricarpa* (McAlpine) Aa on fruit (2004-023), a proposed Annex to ISPM 27:2006, received a formal objection. This draft will now be returned to the Technical Panel on Diagnostic Protocols (TPDP), who will review the formal objection and advise the SC on how to proceed. The second draft, the Diagnostic Protocol on *Tilletia indica* Mitra (Annex 4 to ISPM 27:2006 (*Diagnostic protocols for regulated pests*)), received no formal objection, and was, for the first time in history, adopted by the SC on behalf of the CPM.

### 3.3 DRAFT SPECIFICATIONS APPROVED BY THE SC

3.7. The SC at its November 2013 meeting approved the following specifications:

- Specification 57: International movement of wood products and handicrafts made of wood (2008-008);
- Specification 58: Revision of ISPM 4:1995 Requirements for the establishment of pest free areas (2009-002); and
- Specification 59: Revision of ISPM 8:1998 Determination of pest status in an area (2009-005).

3.8. Specifications for ISPMs outline the content and scope of a future ISPM and provide the Expert Working Group or Technical Panel what to consider while drafting or revising the ISPM.

### 3.4 DRAFT SPECIFICATIONS APPROVED BY THE SC FOR MEMBER CONSULTATION IN 2014

3.9. The SC at its November 2013 meeting approved the following draft specifications for member consultation:

- Draft specification on the International movement of grain (2008-007); and
- Draft specification on the Revision of ISPM 6:1997 *Guidelines for surveillance* (2009-004).

3.10. Comments must be submitted through the IPPC contact point using the Online Comment System.<sup>5</sup>

3.11. This consultation period lasted 60 days, from 20 December 2013 to 20 February 2014.

### 3.5 2013 MEMBER CONSULTATION ON DRAFT ISPMs

3.12. The member consultation period on draft ISPMs closed on 1 December 2013 and compiled member comments were posted on the IPP <https://www.ippc.int/core-activities/standards-setting/compiled-member-comments-draft-standards>. These comments will be considered by stewards and/or technical panels and a revised version of the draft ISPM will be presented to the Standards Committee Working Group (SC-7) meeting in May 2014. However, member comments on the preliminary draft ISPM on *Minimizing pest movement by sea containers* (2008-001) will be considered by the SC in their 2014 May meeting; this is exceptional as it was the first time a preliminary draft standard was sent for member consultation to gather general conceptual comments.

### 3.6 EXPERT CONSULTATION ON DRAFT DIAGNOSTIC PROTOCOLS

3.13. The expert consultation on draft diagnostic protocols<sup>6</sup> is an expert comment system on the International Phytosanitary Portal (IPP) with the objective to ensure improvement in quality for the development of a draft diagnostic protocol, through inputs and feedback, on a scientific basis, from

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<sup>4</sup> Notification period for diagnostic protocols: <https://www.ippc.int/core-activities/standards-setting/draft-ispms/notification-period-dps>.

<sup>5</sup> Member consultation on draft specifications for ISPMs: <https://www.ippc.int/core-activities/standards-setting/member-consultation-draft-specifications-ispms>.

<sup>6</sup> Expert consultation on draft diagnostic protocols: <https://www.ippc.int/core-activities/expert-consultation-draft-diagnostic-protocols>.

a wider number of experts worldwide not part of the Diagnostic Protocol drafting group. A wider consultation of experts on draft protocols in earlier stages of development is crucial to ensure the quality of the protocol and to facilitate the adoption process.

3.14. Currently the IPPC Secretariat opened two draft diagnostic protocols for comment until 24 March 2014:

- Draft DP on *Xanthomonas fragariae* (2008-026), proposed Annex to ISPM 27:2006 *Diagnostic protocols for regulated pests*; and
- Draft DP on *Sorghum halepense* (L.) Pers. (2006-027), proposed Annex to ISPM 27:2006, *Diagnostic protocols for regulated pests*.

### 3.7 CALL FOR TOPICS 2013

3.15. The IPPC Secretariat issued a call for topics in 2013. Thirty-four submissions had been received in response to the call. The compiled submissions received are posted on the IPP<sup>7</sup>. The submissions were discussed at the 2013 November SC meeting and priorities were assigned. Submissions that did not have supporting justification or accompanying data were not considered.

3.16. The CPM-9 (2014) will be invited to adopt new topics as recommended by the SC and will adjust the List of topics for IPPC standards<sup>8</sup> as needed, including assigning a priority for each newly added topic.

### 3.8 CALL FOR EXPERTS

3.17. The IPPC made several calls for experts since October 2013:

- a. Expert Working Group (EWG) on International movement of cut flowers and branches (2008-005);
- b. EWG on Safe handling and disposal of waste with potential pest risk generated during international voyages (2008-004);
- c. EWG on International movement of wood products and handicrafts made from wood (2008-008);
- d. Technical Panel on Phytosanitary Treatments (TPPT);
- e. Technical Panel for the Glossary (TPG); and
- f. Diagnostic Protocol authors.

3.18. The EWG meeting to develop an ISPM on *International movement of cut flowers and branches* (2008-005) is scheduled for 16-20 June 2014, in Naivasha, Kenya.

3.19. The EWG meeting to develop an on *International movement of wood products and handicrafts made from wood* (2008-008) is scheduled for 15-19 September 2014, in Rome, Italy.

3.20. As only two expert nominations were received for the EWG on *Safe handling and disposal of waste with potential pest risk generated during international voyages* (2008-004), the SC at its 2013 November meeting agreed that this topic should be proposed to CPM for deletion from the work programme.

3.21. Any changes to the EWGs and Technical Panels meeting dates will be published on the IPPC Calendar (<https://www.ippc.int/calendar/year/2014>).

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<sup>7</sup> Call for topics: <https://www.ippc.int/core-activities/calls-topics>.

<sup>8</sup> List of topics for IPPC standards: <https://www.ippc.int/core-activities/standards-setting/list-topics-ippc-standards>.

### 3.9 PROCEDURE MANUAL

3.22. The IPPC Secretariat updated the IPPC Procedure manual for standard setting<sup>9</sup> (2013-12 version). The manual is revised regularly to include any new decisions and procedures and to amend existing decisions and procedures as necessary. This edition of the manual includes all decisions and procedures made at the 2013 November SC meeting and prior.

### 3.10 THE EXPERT CONSULTATION ON COLD TREATMENTS

3.23. The IPPC Secretariat facilitated an Expert Consultation on Cold Treatments<sup>10</sup> (ECCT). This was held in December 2013, in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The ECCT participants discussed several issues related to the development of cold phytosanitary treatments as well as the experimental design and review of the science supporting cold treatments.

3.24. The experts provided an overview of cold treatments they have developed and identified the main issues that need to be considered by researchers, who will provide data to National or Regional Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs or RPPOs). ECCT participants discussed practical issues related to the development of cold treatments and gaps in the research and methodologies used, including statistical analyses of data and the limitations of these analyses. Participants discussed the ways to facilitate collaboration to conduct future research and identified critical requirements for researches to be addressed.

3.25. The ECCT participants agreed to continue this work and established an independent network of researchers in order to share information and data to develop more globally acceptable cold treatments.

3.26. The participants established the Phytosanitary Temperature Treatments Expert Group<sup>11</sup>, an independent group that approved a work plan for future collaboration and proposed to meet again in August 2015.

### 3.11 EXPERT CONSULTATION ON PHYTOSANITARY TREATMENTS FOR THE *BACTROCERA DORSALIS* COMPLEX

3.27. The value of holding an expert consultation on phytosanitary treatments for *Bactrocera dorsalis* complex was discussed with the NPPO of Japan, the Technical Panel on Phytosanitary Treatments, the Technical Panel on Fruit Flies and the SC. All felt it would be a good opportunity to gather experts together to discuss technical issues related to the development of experimental data supporting these treatments. After further discussion between the IPPC Secretariat and the NPPO of Japan, it was agreed to organize this expert consultation, hosted by Japan in Okinawa in December 2014.

### 3.12 QUESTIONNAIRE ON ENGAGING EXPERTS IN THE STANDARD SETTING PROCESS

3.28. The IPPC Secretariat released in January 2014 a survey on the *Participation of experts in the standard setting process*. This survey was sent out to NPPOs and RPPOs in an effort to identify possible constraints of NPPOs and RPPOs regarding the participation of their experts in the IPPC standard setting process.

## 4 NATIONAL REPORTING OBLIGATIONS

### 4.1 Contact points

4.1. Most IPPC contact points have updated their information with the Secretariat. Any contracting parties communicating with other IPPC contact points should visit the IPP frequently to ensure

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.ippc.int/core-activities/ippc-standard-setting-procedure-manual>.

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.ippc.int/partners/international-organizations/phytosanitary-temperature-treatments-expert-group>.

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.ippc.int/partners/international-organizations/phytosanitary-temperature-treatments-expert-group>.

they have the latest contact information. In addition, the Secretariat continues to work with a small number of countries that need to officially nominate their IPPC contact points.

#### **4.2 International Phytosanitary Portal (IPP) <https://www.ippc.int>**

4.2. We encourage countries to visit the IPPC website for updates as there continues to be a lot of information being made available by countries, along with news and information from the Secretariat. The Secretariat is constantly seeking ways to improve the IPP to increase its efficiency and improve the appearance and responsiveness. While this has caused some technical issues, the ultimate result will be a much more responsive and informative IPPC webpage.

4.3. Usage of the webpage continues to increase but it is clear that this can be improved in certain regions and in certain countries. Countries that are reporting certain 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.

4.4. The IPPC continues to believe that a lack of coordination and/or communication between SPS authorities and IPPC contact points in countries is of concern. Governments do not understand 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.

4.5. The information available through the IPP has substantially increased the number of information 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:

- a. Newly updated Resources in Support of IPPC Implementation: <http://www.phytosanitary.info>
- b. IRSS: <https://www.ippc.int/index.php?id=1111059&L=0#irssactivities>
- c. IRSS Help Desk: <https://www.ippc.int/index.php?id=1111059&L=0#helpdesk>
- d. IPPC Projects Database: <http://projects.phytosanitary.info>
- e. eLearning: <http://elearning.phytosanitary.info>
- f. A summary of IPPC Publications: <https://www.ippc.int/about/mediakit>

#### **4.3 Pest reporting**

4.6. National pest reporting continues to improve but there is still potential for further improvement. The Secretariat is working on this information to allow users to access this information in a more constructive and analytical manner.

4.7. The Secretariat is also working with EPPO to allow countries to undertake pest reporting through the RPPOs (as agreed in CPM) and once this pilot project is functional it will be made available to other RPPOs. This should significantly increase the number, accuracy and timeliness of pest reports received.

4.8. The Secretariat is exploring with CABI ways of ensuring "Plantwise" does not undermine pest reporting and other IPPC processes. Without significant adjustments, the risk of this happening is very high.

#### **4.4 Communications**

4.9. The IPPC Communications Strategy was adopted by CPM-8 (2013). The Secretariat is now engaged in an effort to develop and implement a communications workplan. A communications needs assessment was recently completed. This will provide the IPPC a clearer understanding of who the audiences are and the messages that are needed for them. It is intended that the needs assessment will drive the work plan and allow the Secretariat to have a greater focus in its communications activities into the future.

4.10. The following social media pages for the IPPC are available:

- a. Facebook: [http://www.facebook.com/pages/International-Plant-Protection-Convention-IPPC/113230338690380?ref=tn\\_tnmn](http://www.facebook.com/pages/International-Plant-Protection-Convention-IPPC/113230338690380?ref=tn_tnmn)
- b. Twitter: <https://twitter.com/#!/ippcnews>
- c. LinkedIn: [http://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=3175642&trk=hb\\_side\\_g](http://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=3175642&trk=hb_side_g)
- d. Flickr: [http://www.flickr.com/groups/international\\_plant\\_protection\\_convention/](http://www.flickr.com/groups/international_plant_protection_convention/)
- e. YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/IPPCnews>

## 5 DISPUTE SETTLEMENT

5.1. With regard to dispute settlement, even while the IPPC is in the process of reviewing the IPPC Dispute Settlement system, the Secretariat offers the IPPC dispute settlement mechanism as a reasonable approach for the resolution of phytosanitary disputes. In fact, plans are currently under way for the formation of an expert panel to resolve an outstanding phytosanitary dispute.

5.2. The review of the IPPC Dispute Settlement system is ongoing, but the services of the IPPC remain available to those wishing to utilize them in an effort to resolve a dispute.

## 6 RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

6.1. The Secretariat would like to thank all those contracting parties and other donors who contributed to the 2013 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>.

6.2. 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. The Secretariat staff continues to engage in discussions with the governing body, as well as traditional and non-traditional partners, to improve the situation.

6.3. 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.

6.4. 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.

## 7 ELECTRONIC CERTIFICATION IN THE IPPC (EPHYTO)

7.1. ePhyto is a high priority for CPM and the revised Appendix 1 (*Electronic certification, information on standard XML schemes and exchange mechanisms* (2006-003)) to ISPM 12:2011 is out for member consultation (See above, paragraph 3.12). The IPPC Secretariat has created an ePhyto web page (<http://ephyto.ippc.int/>) on the IPP containing information on codes and schema to be used in ePhytos.

7.2. A feasibility study on the establishment of an ePhyto hub has just been completed. The IPPC believes this represents a potential opportunity for future collaboration with OIE and Codex. The study will be provided to the CPM for additional review and discussion.

7.3. General information on ePhyto can be found on the IPPC Website at: <http://www.ippc.int/index.php?id=1111140> or obtained from the IPPC Secretariat ([ippc@fao.org](mailto:ippc@fao.org)).

## **8 COOPERATION WITH THE WTO STANDARD SETTING ORGANIZATIONS**

8.1. The IPPC secretariat would like to draw attention to the following current on-going activities with Codex and OIE:

- a. Codex and the IPPC continue explore ways of addressing their IT needs in a more sustainable manner and share tools and skills when appropriate;
- b. Codex and the IPPC are now collaborating fully in the operational maintenance and improvement of the On-line Comment System;
- c. 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;
- d. There is ongoing cooperation between the "three sisters" on SPS-related capacity development projects, if and when appropriate;
- e. The Secretariat continues to participate in coordination meetings between the "three sisters" to improve coordination and collaboration in SPS Committee meetings;
- f. Ad-hoc consultations are undertaken as and when subjects arise that are of mutual interest; and
- g. The Secretariat is committed to sustaining the deeper relationship between the "three sisters" to address future issues in the SPS Committee Secretariat and beyond.

## **9 OTHER ACTIVITIES WITH THE WTO**

9.1. The IPPC is pleased to report that it is considering formally requesting the opportunity to become a member of the Preparatory Committee for the Agreement on Trade Facilitation. Due to the nature of the work, and the significance of the relationships between Customs officials and Plant Health officials in ensuring the smooth flow of trade, the IPPC looks forward to working with its colleagues in ensuring that this agreement can be as successful as the SPS Agreement. The opportunity to collaborate and cooperate on the global level with our Customs brethren offers us an opportunity to focus on reducing impediments to the smooth flow of trade while assuring national governments that all phytosanitary concerns have been addressed.

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