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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

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REPORT OF INTERNATIONAL PLANT PROTECTION CONVENTION (IPPC)

The following communication, received on 8 March 2019, is being circulated at the request of the International Plant Protection Convention secretariat (IPPC).

1 THE COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES, SUBSIDIARY BODIES AND GROUPS

1.1 Preparations for The Commission on Phytosanitary Measures are well underway

1.1. The fourteenth meeting of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) will be 1-5 April 2019 at FAO HQ in Rome, Italy. Most CPM-14 (2019) papers are now posted on the IPP.¹ In 2019, Plant Health and Capacity Development will be the theme for the IPPC Community.

1.2 CPM subsidiary bodies

1.2. The IPPC CPM subsidiary body, the Standards Committee (SC) met in November 2018, recommended two draft ISPMs to CPM-14 (2019) for adoption (Requirements for the use of fumigation as a phytosanitary measure and the 2017 amendments to ISPM 5 (*Glossary of phytosanitary terms*)) and reviewed one draft ISPM and one draft Specification. They discussed outcomes of the Focus Group on commodity and pathway standards and welcomed the proposals to be put forward to CPM-14 (2019). They reviewed the recommendations of the Task Force on Topics and added several subjects to the *List of Topics for IPPC standards*.

1.3. The IPPC CPM subsidiary body "Implementation and Capacity Development Committee (IC) met in November 2018 and reviewed the work of the Sea Containers Task Force and the Sub-group on Implementation, Review and Support Systems and revitalized the work on Dispute Avoidance and Settlement. Several projects were reviewed with partners, a strategy and process for developing IPPC guides and training materials was approved as well as the finalization of procedures which are published in an Implementation and Capacity Development Procedure Manual.

1.3 Task Force on Topics

1.4. During a teleconference in January 2019 the Task Force on Topics finalized their recommendations on topic submissions from the first joint Call for Topics: Standards and Implementation to be presented to CPM-14 (2019) for inclusion in the IPPC work programme. They noted the benefit of increased collaboration between standard setting and implementation activities within the IPPC secretariat and governing bodies and recommended that the process of the joint call be revised based on lessons learned. They also highlighted the need for building normative capacity and suggested that training sessions for submitting topics be included in IPPC regional workshops.

2 STANDARD SETTING

2.1. In 2018 ten standards were adopted², including four ISPMs, one phytosanitary treatment (PT) and five diagnostic protocols (DPs). In July, three consultations were carried out: one on four draft

¹ CPM-14 (2019) papers: <https://www.ippc.int/en/core-activities/governance/cpm/>.

² Adopted Standards: <https://www.ippc.int/en/core-activities/standards-setting/ispm/>.

ISPMs, one on a draft Specification and one on a CPM recommendation, as well as a DP notification period. One objection was received to a draft DP on *Bactrocera dorsalis* complex (2006-026), which was subsequently revised and resubmitted to the DP notification period in January 2019 as *Bactrocera dorsalis* (2006-026). It has now been officially adopted, increasing the number of IPPC diagnostic protocols to 29.

2.2. The Expert Working group produced a draft ISPM *Guidance on pest risk management* (2014-001), which will be further discussed during the SC May 2019 meeting. The Technical Panel on Phytosanitary Treatments (TPPT) has been working on submissions to the ongoing call for PTs and is recommending several PTs to be submitted for consultation in 2019. The Technical Panel on the Glossary met in December 2018 to review draft ISPMs for consistency and reviewed specific terms.

2.3. The approach proposed by the Focus Group on Commodity and Pathway standards will be discussed during CPM-14 (2019). In view of the draft Strategic Framework 2020-2030, it will be important that the IPPC community agrees on a way forward that addresses both needs and concerns about this important issue.

3 IMPLEMENTATION AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluations

3.1. The IPPC secretariat facilitated the application of the Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation (PCE) in countries (Nicaragua, Palestine, Tunisia, Uzbekistan) through different projects to develop national capacity development strategies and action plans and review phytosanitary legislation in place in accordance with the project goals. The availability of the national capacity development strategy and action plan to address gaps in the phytosanitary system of a country positions countries well for taking advantage of funding opportunities at the national and/or international level and helps international organizations and donors to understand countries' needs and to focus resources on the identified priorities.

3.2. A PCE strategy is being developed under the oversight of the Implementation and Capacity Development Committee (IC) in order to improve the PCE tool and its implementation and to further promote it.

3.2 Guides and training material

3.3. The IPPC secretariat finalized the development of two IPPC Guides: (i) IPPC Guide on Pest Free Areas and (ii) IPPC Guide to Pest Risk Communication in collaboration with experts from all over the world. The Guides are meant to assist countries and NPPOs in the better and more efficient implementation of the provisions of the Convention and relevant ISPMs.

3.4. The future plans include the development of the IPPC Guides on the Pest status and implementation of ISPM 15 *Regulation of wood packaging material in international trade*.

3.3 Projects

3.5. The IC November 2018 meeting represented an opportunity for donors and project managers to report on their phytosanitary projects and seek synergies to best implement activities and find synergies to promote their outputs. The IPPC secretariat is currently in the process of setting a procedure to best develop, coordinate and share experiences on phytosanitary projects.

3.6. Five main Implementation and Capacity Development (ICD) projects are managed by the secretariat under the oversight of the IC.

3.4 Implementation and Capacity Development web based resources

3.7. The secretariat is currently working on reorganization of the IPP (www.ippc.int) to help ensure easy access to the implementation and capacity development resources. The new landing page for those web based resources will have several categories of phytosanitary activities and each category will bring all together relevant ISPMs, CPM recommendations, Guides, training materials and other materials. This new structure will help users reach those materials comprehensively.

4 PROMOTING TRADE FACILITATION

4.1 ePhyto

4.1. The IPPC secretariat's ePhyto Hub is fully operational. Thirty-one countries are currently registered to the Hub, and a number of others will be joining this year, including EC member States. The Generic ePhyto National System (GeNS) has been deployed to the three pilot countries of Sri Lanka, Samoa and Ghana, and initial results of the pilot indicate that the system is working as intended; Sri Lanka has already transmitted ePhytos to the US, Ghana recently hosted an expert team to facilitate operations and Samoa should be exchanging ePhytos soon as well. The IPPC intends to establish a five year strategic plan for ePhyto in April, hopes to conduct a regional workshop on ePhyto for Africa and the Near East this year, and plans for an ePhyto Global Symposium for 2020.

4.2 e-Commerce

4.2. The IPPC secretariat has proposed a project on e-Commerce to CPM-14 (2019) in the framework of the Trade Facilitation Agreement that involves collaboration with the World Customs Organization (WCO).³ The project is planned for five years for a total budget of USD 530,000. Governance and activities related to e-commerce will be funded and operate using extra-budgetary resources provided for this purpose

4.3 Sea Containers Task Force (SCTF)

4.3. The SCTF held its second meeting from 5 to 9 November 2018 in Shenzhen, China. Key messages and highlights from the meeting include:

- Underlining the importance of the packing stage for avoiding pest contamination. Future actions should account for all possible 'touch points' for inspections to guarantee the cleanliness of sea containers;
- Need for raising awareness of sea containers and related best practices. A communication strategy, as well as materials targeted to specific audiences, will thus be developed;
- The Sea Containers Cleanliness Guidelines and Survey were approved and will be issued shortly to CPs.

4.4. Setting success indicators for measuring the implementation of the IPPC Complementary Action Plan for Assessing and Managing Pest Threats Associated with Sea Containers.

5 STRENGTHENING COMMUNICATION AND ADVOCACY

5.1 Scaling up IPPC communications

5.1. Over the past months, the IPPC secretariat worked closely with FAO's Office for Corporate Communication to increase the quality and outreach of its communications. These efforts resulted in an increased media outreach and increased users' interactions on social media.

5.2. The IPPC secretariat concluded events related to the 2018 IPPC annual theme on "Plant Health and Environmental Protection" by organizing a thematic seminar during its Strategic Planning Group meeting in October 2018, and a meeting of Public Information Officers of biodiversity-related conventions, which served to gather ideas on a global communications campaign.

5.3. The IPPC secretariat collaborated in 2017 with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), within the UN Environment Multilateral Environment Agreements Knowledge Management Initiative, on the creation of an e-learning course "Introduction to the International Plant Protection Convention". The course is available on the InforMEA e-learning platform.⁴

³ CPM 2019/16 IPPC e-Commerce proposed project work plan and budget: https://www.ippc.int/static/media/files/publication/en/2019/02/16_CPM_2019_eCommerce_project_proposal-2019-02-01.pdf.

⁴ eLearning course Introduction to the International Plant Protection Convention: <https://e-learning.informea.org/course/view.php?id=43>.

5.4. This newly created two-hour course is free of charge. The course is comprised of four lessons; each lesson includes an interactive module, additional materials and a pdf hand-out. The core content of these lessons is complemented with videos, publications and other web resources. This course was created for learners without any prior knowledge of the IPPC, such as new employees of NPPOs, governmental officials, scientists, journalists, etc. and can be useful in preparations to the International Year of Plant Health 2020. Upon successful completion of the course, participants receive a certificate of completion.

5.5. The IPPC secretariat has also been working on an e-learning course on National Reporting Obligations for IPPC contact points and their editors that should be made available this year.

5.2 The International Year of Plant Health (IYPH)

5.6. Communications and advocacy activities also helped pave the path towards the proclamation of the International Year of Plant Health (IYPH) 2020 by the United Nations General Assembly in December 2018. These included several events, a well-attended reception at the Finnish Mission at the United Nations in New York, and a side event at the 14th Conference of Parties to the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD).

5.7. The IYPH will raise awareness of the role plant health plays in achieving the sustainable development goals. It will also raise awareness of, and strengthen, the role of the IPPC secretariat and National and Regional Plant Protection Organizations in protecting plant health.

5.8. The third meeting of the IPPC International Year of Plant Health Steering Committee (IPPC IYPH StC) was held in November 2017, at FAO Headquarters, Rome Italy. The steering committee progressed substantively on the IYPH communications work plan and the IYPH programme development. Governments were encouraged to support the proposal by Finland to declare 2020 as the International Year of Plant Health when it is presented at the 2018 meeting of the UN General Assembly.

6 THE YEAR AHEAD

6.1. The year 2019 will be another important year for the IPPC, as it will be the year for implementation of the next IPPC annual theme "Plant Health and Capacity Development" towards 2020. Among the many tasks and activities planned for 2019, the following are some of the key activities:

- *Advocate* the IPPC annual theme "Plant Health and Capacity Development";
- *Promote* IPPC strategic planning for 2020-2030 which will be presented to CPM-14 (2019) for conditional approval;
- *Set* a strategy for the PCE;
- *Consider* how to move forward on Commodity and Pathway Standards.

6.2. 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.

Prepared by the IPPC secretariat, covering activities from November 2018 to February 2019.
