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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

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## **REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL PLANT PROTECTION CONVENTION SECRETARIAT (IPPC)**

The following communication, received on 7 February 2018, is being circulated at the request of the International Plant Protection Convention secretariat (IPPC).

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The year 2017 marked a milestone in the IPPC's history<sup>1</sup> with the 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Convention. The IPPC focused efforts on the thematic year of "Plant Health and Trade Facilitation" set by the phytosanitary community. This report provides an overview of the main IPPC Secretariat activities in 2017.

### **1 DISSEMINATING THE 2017 IPPC ANNUAL THEME "PLANT HEALTH AND TRADE FACILITATION"**

1.1. The IPPC Secretariat organized and delivered two IPPC seminars on plant health and trade facilitation at FAO-HQ in addition to those already reported to the SPS committee meeting:

- The World Trade Organization (WTO), Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF), the World Bank (WB) and FAO presented their perspective on plant health and trade facilitation, experiences and lessons learned;
- Plant health standards and safe trade facilitation seminar highlighted experiences from the NPPOs of Malawi and Japan.

### **2 PROMOTING IPPC GOVERNING BODIES, STRATEGIES AND RELATED ISSUES**

#### **2.1 The IPPC CPM subsidiary body "Implementation and Capacity Development Committee (IC)"**

2.1. The new IPPC CPM subsidiary body "Implementation and Capacity Development Committee (IC)" was established based on the decision of CPM 12 (2017) reflecting the need to strengthen efforts to implement the IPPC and International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs) and develop the capacities of contracting parties to do so.

2.2. The establishment of the IC is significant in the history of the IPPC. The IC, under the guidance of the CPM, will provide technical oversight of IPPC activities to enhance the capacities of contracting parties to implement the IPPC and ISPMs and meet the strategic objectives agreed by the CPM through: (i) identifying and reviewing the baseline capacity and capability required by contracting parties to implement the IPPC; (ii) analyzing issues constraining the effective implementation of the IPPC and developing innovative ways to address impediments; (iii) developing and facilitating delivery of an implementation support programme to enable contracting parties to meet and surpass baseline capacity and capability levels; (iv) monitoring and evaluating the efficacy and impact of implementation activities and reporting on progress which indicates the State of Plant Protection in the World; (v) overseeing dispute avoidance and

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<sup>1</sup> The IPPC - <https://www.ippc.int/en/who-we-are/>.

settlement processes; and (vi) overseeing national reporting obligation processes as per its Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure<sup>2</sup>.

## **2.2 The Focus Group (FG) on developing joint criteria for the Call for Topics: "Standards and Implementation"**

2.3. A FG was established to review the process for the Call for Topics for Standards to include a call for topics for implementation issues.

2.4. The FG met in October 2017, FAO Headquarters, Rome Italy. The FG agreed on the title, process, and criteria of the call and agreed on the establishment of a Task Force on Topics to review the submissions for topics and to provide relevant recommendations (including proposed priorities) to both the SC and the IC. The proposed Call for Topics: Standards and Implementation should be under the remit of the SC and IC respectively.

2.5. The outcomes of the FG meeting are to be presented to the CPM-13 (2018) for further discussions.

## **3 STRENGTHENING STANDARDS SETTING**

3.1. In 2017 a record number of standards (22) were adopted, including five ISPMs, ten Phytosanitary Treatments (PTs) and seven Diagnostic Protocols (DPs). In July, two consultations were carried out: one on 13 draft ISPMs and one on three draft Specifications as well as a DP notification period.

3.2. An expert working group on the Revision of ISPM 8 *Determination of pest status in an area* (2009-005) met in September and produced a revised standard. The Technical Panel on the Glossary also met in December 2017 to review draft ISPMs for consistency and reviewed specific terms. Output from these meetings along with two additional draft ISPMs will be submitted to the SC in May 2018.

3.3. The Standards Committee met in November 2018. It recommended two draft ISPMs to CPM-13 (2018) and agreed to the reorganization of the suite of fruit fly standards as well as had an in depth discussion on commodity standards and will be seeking guidance from CPM-13 (2018) on how to progress on this issue.

## **4 IMPLEMENTATION AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT**

### **4.1 PCE application**

4.1. The IPPC Secretariat facilitated the application of Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation (PCE) in ten countries (Barbados, Botswana, Georgia, Guinea, Kenya, Uzbekistan, Madagascar, Namibia, Somalia and Zambia) 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.

### **4.2 IPPC Guides on Pest Free Area and Risk Communication**

4.2. The IPPC is working on the production of guides on Pest Free Areas and Pest Risk Communication with the involvement of phytosanitary experts from several FAO regions. The development of these technical resources is driven by gaps identified through the IPPC IRSS General Surveys of 2012 -2013 and 2016, as well as the IPPC Framework for Standards and Implementation.

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<sup>2</sup> Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedures of the IC - <https://www.ippc.int/en/core-activities/capacity-development/implementation-and-capacity-development-committee-ic/>.

## **5 PROMOTING TRADE FACILITATION**

### **5.1 ePhyto**

5.1. The IPPC Secretariat finalized the requirements for deployment of the IPPC ePhyto hub and the generic ePhyto national system (GeNS), and started the testing and demonstration of both IPPC ePhyto solutions.

### **5.2 eCommerce**

5.2. The IPPC Secretariat is also initializing a work plan on eCommerce in the framework of the Trade Facilitation Agreement that involves collaboration with the World Custom Organization (WCO).

### **5.3 Sea Containers Task Force**

5.3. The first meeting of the Sea Containers Task Force (SCTF) was held in November 2017, in Shanghai, China.

5.4. The main outcomes of the meeting are the development of the IPPC SCTF Five-Year Action Plan and Work plan for 2018 to guide implementation of the Sea Container Complementary Action Plan for Assessing and Managing the Pest Threats Associated with Sea Containers. The SCTF and Complementary Action Plan aim to reduce the pest risks associated with sea containers and measure the impact of the IMO/ILO/UNECE<sup>3</sup> Code of Practice for Packing of Cargo Transport Units (CTU Code) during the next five years, as well as to increase awareness of pest risks of sea containers and information to assist NPPOs better manage these risks.

## **6 STRENGTHENING COMMUNICATION AND ADVOCACY**

6.1. The IPPC Secretariat collaborated in 2017 with 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.<sup>4</sup>

6.2. 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.

6.3. 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.

### **6.1 The International Year of Plant Health (IYPH)**

6.4. The third meeting of the IPPC International Year of Plant Health Steering Committee (IPPC IYPH StC) was held November 2017, at FAO Headquarters, Rome Italy. The steering committee progressed substantively on the IYPH communications work plan and the IYPH programme development. Governments are 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.

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<sup>3</sup> IMO – International Maritime Organization; ILO - International Labour Organization; UNECE - The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe.

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

## **7 THE YEAR AHEAD**

7.1. The year 2018 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 Environment Protection" towards 2020. Among the many tasks and activities planned for 2018, five are key:

- *Advocate* the IPPC annual theme "Plant Health and Environment Protection";
- *Promote* IPPC strategic planning for 2020-2030;
- *Promote* the implementation of the IPPC trade facilitation action plan, and the adoption of the IPPC ePhyto platform;
- *Endorse* the IYPH resolution by UN General Assembly; and
- *Enhance* the IPPC network at regional and national levels, and the international cooperation with relevant technical, trade, environment and industry organizations.

7.2. 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.

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