



REPORT

Rome, Italy
28 July 2015

The Mid-year Report of the IPPC Secretariat in 2015



Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations

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(September 2015)

A major milestone during the first half of 2015 was the arrival of the Secretary to the IPPC as head of the IPPC Secretariat (hereafter “Secretariat”). With the full support from the CPM Bureau and FAO senior management, the new Secretary Mr Jingyuan Xia (PhD) has assumed duty smoothly. Under his strong leadership and through the dedicated efforts of all the staff, the developmental direction of the IPPC Secretariat is now clearer, key tasks are more focused, and the operational mechanisms are being optimized. In the first semester, a number of achievements were attained under the six categories listed below.

1. Governance and Strategy

A. Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM). The Tenth Session of the CPM took place from 16-20 March at FAO headquarters in Rome and resulted in a number of significant outcomes including: (a) adoption of eight new annexes to International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs) and the revision of the Glossary (ISPM 5); (b) implementation of a pilot project on surveillance was approved; (c) discussion of the Enhancement Evaluation of the IPPC Secretariat; (e) endorsement for the development of an ePhyto hub system; (f) support to pursue an International Year of Plant Health in 2020; and (g) organization of a set of highly appreciated side activities as well as the IPPC photo contest. In addition, the Capacity Development (CD) and the National Reporting Obligation (NRO) teams worked closely to prepare and deliver pre-CPM NRO training, and reviews were positive.

B. CPM Bureau. The CPM Bureau met twice in Rome (March and June), and both meetings were chaired by the CPM Chairperson, Ms Kyu-Ock Yim. The meeting in June was the first official meeting with the participation of the new Secretary to the IPPC. A key topic of the meeting was the CPM Bureau’s discussion on the report of IPPC Secretariat Enhancement Evaluation. The CPM Bureau endorsed the evaluation’s recommendations, supported the efforts to develop an ePhyto hub, encouraged the work to realize an IYPH 2020, and considered the possibility of holding next year’s CPM in the Republic of Korea. The CPM Bureau was made aware of the weak financial position of the IPPC Secretariat with regard to the IPPC Multi-donor Trust Fund and encouraged the IPPC Secretariat to engage in more active resource mobilization. The CPM Bureau requested the IPPC Secretariat to prepare an annual work plan and budget of the IPPC Secretariat in 2016 for approval by its meeting in October.

C. CPM Financial Committee (FC). The CPM FC met twice in Rome (March and June) and was chaired by CPM Bureau member, Mr John Greifer, to discuss the IPPC Secretariat’s financial situation. In the March meeting, the FC primarily discussed the IPPC Secretariat

2014 financial report and introduced the practice that CPM decisions should be weighed against their financial implications, which would increase transparency and strengthen financial management of the IPPC Secretariat. In the June meeting, the CPM FC was made aware of the weak financial position of the IPPC Multi-donor Trust Fund, with the FC strongly emphasising the need for resource mobilization. The FC also agreed on a draft work plan and budget format that would contain several improvements, compared to the previous budget document.

D. Standards Committee (SC). The SC held one face-to-face meeting and two working group meetings in May and conducted a large part of its work virtually. The main outcome of the May meeting was the review of five draft standards, of which three were approved for member consultation. The SC-7 working group reviewed member comments on the draft standard for the *International movement of seed*; due to the complexity of the issue, the SC-7 was not able to finish the revision in the time allocated. A second SC working group reviewed and proposed adjustments to the IPPC standard setting procedure.

E. Capacity Development Committee (CDC). The CDC review was completed in June. The review supported the continuation of the CDC, its business model and its role in implementation, and made a recommendation to elevate it to a body that covers implementation and possibly other areas. Several recommendations will be made for CPM decision in terms of the evaluation. The 6th meeting of the CDC revised the IPPC Secretariat CD work plan, reviewed the management of current projects while considering key, strategic CD issues, and considered suggestions and requests by the CPM Bureau and the CPM.

F. Subsidiary Body on Dispute Settlement (SBDS). A virtual meeting of SBDS took place in March to discuss the dispute avoidance and settlement activities of the SBDS and the IPPC Secretariat. The SBDS continued working virtually on a number of advocacy documents and other information products.

G. Strategic Planning Group (SPG). Preparations for the 17th SPG meeting were initiated, and the meeting will take place in Rome, Italy, October 2015.

2. Standard Setting

A. Work Programming. The IPPC Secretariat established a Service Level Agreement with FAO translation services to help ensure timely translations. A biennial call for topics was launched in June. The Standard Setting Team (SS) has proactively implemented efficient and quality-based work management systems and tools, which help the team in delivering high quality products. Several meetings were organized including the meeting on the Concept of a Commodity Standard. Migration of the Online Comment System (OCS) to a new platform was initiated thanks to generous support from the Codex Alimentarius Secretariat, which is an excellent example of cooperation and collaboration between the two Secretariats.

B. Expert Input. Four Expert consultations on draft diagnostic protocols (DPs) were conducted. These consultations help improve the quality of the draft DPs by soliciting

scientific input at an early stage. Five draft DPs were thoroughly discussed at the meeting of the Technical Panel on Diagnostic Protocols (TPDP) held in Shanghai, China, in June. The TPDP also reviewed the work programme which is comprised of 27 DPs, and it is expected that a very high volume of DPs will be processed for adoption in the next three years.

C. Consultation. Member comments were received on four draft specifications (15 December 2014–20 February 2015), five draft diagnostic protocols were submitted to member consultation (30 January 2015–30 June 2015), and two draft ISPMs were submitted to the substantial concerns commenting period (1 June 2015–30 September 2015).

D. Adoption. CPM-10 adopted eight new annexes to existing ISPM 28 and ISPM 26 and the revised version of the Glossary of Phytosanitary Terms (ISPM 5). This exceeded the planned outcomes indicated in FAO's Strategic Objective 4.

3. Implementation Facilitation

A. Capacity Development (CD). The CDC review was completed, the CDC and CD Business model was fully implemented, and the Phytosanitary Resources database was effectively managed and updated. Field projects were completed in the Comoros, a first phase finalized in Palestine, and Project STDF 350 is being finalized. Four phytosanitary-related manuals were being finalized under this project aimed at national plant protection organizations (NPPOs) and other associated stakeholders. The manuals and other technical resources were developed in collaboration with international experts and with a number of technical institutions and try to capture best practices. Two new projects were planned including one on training-of-trainers for Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation (PCE) and one on ePhyto. The CD team is also involved in new FAO and external projects in the ASTF, Central Asia, East Europe, Gambia, Lebanon and the second phase of the Palestine project. Projects that were launched include STDF 401, a project in Moldova and a regional project for MENA countries. In addition, the CD, with support from the Standards Setting and the NRO teams, prepared a concept note for the funding of the Pilot implementation programme on surveillance and submitted this to the CPM Bureau and a potential donor.

B. Implementation Review Support System (IRSS). The monitoring and evaluation activities under IRSS were combined with the implementation and facilitation activities. With new recruits in place the teams were busy preparing both the CD work plan and the integrated IRSS work plan. Some IRSS specific activities were developed that are linked to the Pilot implementation project on surveillance. Other IRSS activities that are linked more broadly with the IPPC (IRSS studies, etc.) are under development. Three IRSS proposals were prepared with NRO and Standards Setting inputs and submitted to the CPM Bureau.

C. National Reporting Obligations (NRO). The NRO Year of Official Contact Points (OCPs) was completed with great success as the IPP now has the most accurate set of OCP data since its inception. The monthly NRO newsletter and the "NROs Update", published in five languages, continue to be well received by contracting parties. The IPPC Secretariat initiated the detailed statistical analysis of pest reports and emergency measures, which allows

to improve the IPP in regards pest reporting and to provide feedback to the NROAG on the apparent underreporting of emergency actions. The NRO Quality Control Programme was initiated. The pre-CPM-10 training session on NROs was well received and formed the core information that was developed for the IPPC Regional workshops training session on NROs. In addition, supplementary NRO guidance material was well prepared for training purposes.

D. Dispute Avoidance and Settlement System (DASS). The IPPC Secretariat and the SBDS were active in producing a number of documents and material to support the IPPC DASS. Such progress was only possible due to the support from Japan in providing a consultant as an in-kind contribution for six months to work on dispute settlement. The IPPC Secretariat increased its involvement in phytosanitary dispute avoidance activities, which implicated working with a number of FAO divisions.

E. Technologies and Tools. Many projects undertaken by or with the support of the IPPC Secretariat involved use of the PCE tool, such as the projects in Comoros and Moldova. The ePhyto steering group met in Rome (May) and discussed a number of issues, including the project proposal to the STDF for funding, the common interest with representatives of the United Nations International Computing Centre (UNICC), and the proposed agenda for the upcoming International Symposium on ePhyto in Korea (November).

4. Communication and Advocacy

A. Information management. The IPPC Secretariat launched a redesigned IPP website, and the data entry (including posting national reports) was made easier and more user friendly. A notification tool was developed to allow contracting parties to notify other contracting parties, RPPOs or the IPPC Secretariat of any new or changed information. To facilitate the use of the revised IPP, the User and Editor Guide to the IPP was updated. It is available in Arabic, English, French, Spanish and Russian. The other IPPC information management systems (www.phytosanitary.info, www.APPPC.org, IRSS, e-Learning and PCE) were maintained and developed based on requests from the IPPC Secretariat (e.g. the photo contest pages, CPM side session videos, new layout for the phytosanitary resources pages and security updates). The IRSS website was migrated onto the IPP software platform. Support for the maintenance of the IPPC online comment system (OCS) was provided through bug fixing and migration of data to a new Linux based server.

B. Communications and Advocacy. The monthly IPPC Newsletter is an important tool to communicate the primary news items and activities with the IPPC official contact points (OCPs). The news items were posted on the IPP regularly and on a number of occasions news articles were made available through the FAO communications system. Some IPPC Secretariat staff was interviewed for a radio programme and this, combined with the news items mentioned above, resulted in broad and good coverage of some of the IPPC activities. The promotion of the IYPH 2020 was emphasized, and the “IPPC Seminar” series was established to increase the Secretariat’s presence and visibility.

C. International Year of Plant Health in 2020 (IYPH 2020). At CPM-10, Finland proposed to establish an International Year of Plant Health in the year 2020. The proposal received strong support from CPM-10 and it was decided to pursue the establishment of the IYPH 2020 under the leadership of Finland. At the 39th FAO Conference held in Rome (June 2015), the Finnish delegation informed the Conference about its proposal to the CPM for an IYPH in 2020. The Conference welcomed the proposal of Finland to establish an International Year of Plant Health 2020. The Secretariat complemented these activities working closely together with Finland and by developing papers informing about the benefits and procedures of IYPH 2020.

5. Partnerships and Resource mobilization

A. Internal Partnerships. The Secretariat focused on liaisons with FAO offices for better internal coordination, such as with AGDF, AGP, EST, OCC, TCI and EMPRES. In particular, linkages were established with FAO Soils group for preparing a paper on “Soils and Relationship to Plant Health”. The Secretariat underscored the partnerships with regional plant protection organizations (RPPOs), and considered the annual Technical Consultation (TC) among RPPOs as the top priority for development of partnership with RPPOs. The preparations for 27th TC-RPPOs to be held in USA this November were initiated. The Secretariat strengthened the partnerships with NPPOs through organizing annual IPPC Regional Workshop. This year, seven IPPC Regional Workshops were planned, and each team leader was responsible for running one specific Regional Workshop. The early workshop agreements were finalized in terms of dates, venues and attendance, and internal training was provided to the IPPC Secretariat staff involved.

B. External Partnerships. The Secretariat developed partnerships with a large number of organizations and institutions for better external cooperation, such as with CBD, CIHEAM, IAEA, IMO, ISF, ISO, OIRSA, PMRG, STDF and WTO-SPS. Special attention was paid to strengthen the cooperation of the IPPC Secretariat with WTO-SPS, SDTF, WCO and CBD, as well as with CABI. As part of an effort to ensure less duplication of effort, as well as to create greater awareness of the IPPC globally, the Secretariat intends to continue a focus on strengthening relationships where they already exist and establish relationships with those organizations with which the IPPC has common ideals.

C. Resource Mobilization. A Task Force for Resource Mobilization (TFRM) was established with a priority to replenish the IPPC Multi-donor Trust Fund to a level that is able to fund existing short-term and temporary staff. To this end, the TFRM prepared a table of potential donors with a profile of their specific interests, initiated drafting a resource mobilization strategy and sent letters to traditional and potential donors inquiring about funding opportunities. As the year winds down, the TFRM is establishing a set of travel plans to pursue, on a face-to-face basis, additional resources from possible donors who have either expressed interest in specific areas of the IPPC’s work, or may represent positive potential for future collaboration.

6. Internal Management

A. The IPPC Secretariat Renewal. Based on the recommendations from the Enhancement Evaluation of the IPPC Secretariat and on request from both CPM Bureau and FAO Senior management, the Secretary initiated the process of the IPPC Secretariat's renewal. This is composed of four key elements: (a) moving towards "One IPPC"; (b) increasing internal cohesion and external influence; (c) taking actions to reshape the structure of the Secretariat, regrouping the responsibilities, and renewing the operational mechanisms; (d) showcasing the new structure, new mechanism, new performance, and new image.

B. Administrative management. A series of standard operating processes (SOPs) for meetings have been established, such as the weekly Core team member meeting (CTMM), the monthly staff briefing meeting, the quarterly Seminar, the mid-year Secretariat meeting, and the Annual Secretariat meeting. Some SOPs for internal communication have also been developed.

C. Human resource management. Staff resources were increased with the addition of three P-staff positions, one consultant position and one G-staff position. Additional work was focused on identifying the appropriate number of personnel necessary for continuity of IPPC Secretariat operations.

D. Planning and finance. Substantial financial analysis was conducted to understand how best to address the funding needs determined by planned changes in the IPPC Secretariat. Routine financial reporting took place during CPM-10 and meetings of the CPM Bureau and the FC. The Task Force for Work Plan and Budget (TFWPB) was established. Significant effort went into preparing a consolidated budget and work plan that shares resources responsibilities equitably across the Secretariat. This work plan and budget will be presented to the CPM Bureau in October.

E. Team and culture building. A process of renewal of the IPPC Secretariat was initiated with a view to improve the effectiveness and efficiencies of operations. Several task forces were established while specific management behaviour was encouraged to ensure greater cooperation, integration and team work. The work of Integration and Support (IS) team was especially strengthened for integrating and coordinating the IPPC Secretariat common activities in a more transparent and synergistic manner.