



THE IPPC IN 20 YEARS

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Framework for Standards and Implementation

The basic Framework for Standards and Implementation has been in use for nearly 20 years and forms an underpinning structure for all IPPC activity. All concept standards within the Framework have been reviewed and revised where needed. Many operational standards have been adopted covering a wide range of phytosanitary issues. As standards on key topics were agreed, the emphasis on developing standards shifted towards greater effort on helping countries to implement them and monitoring implementation. A series of annexes on requirements for surveillance of different pests and pest groups, commodity standards and effective measures to combat different pests and pest groups were adopted.

The IPPC has produced a series of handbooks and training materials concentrating on the main requirements for effective implementation of the IPPC by contracting parties and NPPOs. After initiatives on surveillance and diagnosis of pests, emphasis was given to basic systems for operation of NPPOs, pest management measures and systems for recording and reporting information.

More mandatory requirements

It has been noticeable that there has been a shift to developing mandatory requirements for key pests. In particular this is due to decreasing resources in NPPOs. This reduces the need for individual PRAs and separate technical justifications of measures. However, these minimum measures require extensive record keeping and auditing, so resources need to be spent by companies and other stakeholders. NPPOs will have more of an oversight function.

IPPC standards look more like OIE standards and there has been an agreement that trade in certain key commodities should be carried out in similar ways across the world. Auditing systems will have been implemented and ISO standards will run alongside IPPC standards. There will be agreement about minimum requirements for diagnosis of pests and cheap rapid diagnostic methods will have been developed for a range of high profile pest species.

Prioritization

Many pests have established in new areas and the focus for NPPOs is on key "priority pests". Measures have therefore been put in place for these and other measures will focus on protecting priority crops.

Many countries have decided that risks for certain commodities are too high, for example plants for planting, and have closed their borders to large scale trade. Instead, post-entry quarantine systems apply for planting material of many crop plant relatives and woody species. Even the EU has decided that its "open system" of trading has had too many adverse consequences and has imposed restrictions. The public and horticultural trade were disappointed, because it takes longer to introduce new varieties of many plants. Also, woody planting material is more expensive because it will have been grown locally and takes longer than being shipped from tropical or subtropical areas.

Competition for land use

Agricultural land in countries is under pressure to reduce acreage to allow more trees and biofuel crops to be planted. Vegetable-based diets are being promoted and synthetic meat is now grown widely, allowing land to be freed for crop production, biofuels and trees.

Co-operation

Countries have decided that by combining with others, activities can be better focussed. Within regions, activities will be coordinated against the relevant high profile pests in the region. There is a growing emphasis on developing specialist diagnostic laboratories on a regional basis.

Treatments

There has been a concerted effort to develop innovative treatments and several have become widely used. These rely on physical parameters to kill pests rather than chemicals and all are effective alternatives to methyl bromide and related compounds. They are applied to dormant or relatively tough plant parts, seeds and grain, fruit, growing media etc. with little adverse effect on quality.