



Considerations on the potential role of the IPPC regional plant protection organizations (RPPOS) in supporting the work of the focus group on safe provisions of food and other humanitarian aid

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## THIRTY-SIXTH SESSION

### TECHNICAL CONSULTATION AMONG REGIONAL PLANT PROTECTION ORGANIZATIONS

#### Considerations on the potential role of the IPPC regional plant protection organizations (RPPOS) in supporting the work of the focus group on safe provisions of food and other humanitarian aid

#### AGENDA ITEM 7.1

*(Developed by IPPC secretariat, reviewed by the FG Vice-Chairperson)*

#### Background

- [1] The IPPC recognizes the necessity for international co-operation to prevent the global spread of plant pests. In emergency crisis situations, affected countries can be temporarily constrained in their ability to implement their phytosanitary responsibilities. Contracting parties that are donors of aid do have more capacity at that time and thus their commitment to comply with Article IV of the IPPC becomes critical.
- [2] During an emergency situation, conditions at borders can be very abnormal. There may also be increased unregulated movement of military personnel and refugees. Reduction or absence of inspection and diagnosis may occur due to personnel, equipment and infrastructure being inaccessible. Treatment and processing infrastructure may be damaged or inaccessible; water, electricity, manpower and other services are often cut, and roads and ports are often destroyed, preventing the use of dedicated facilities and requiring activities to occur outside of declared ports of entry. Inspection staff may be unable to travel to work or may be diverted to emergency tasks; and other government agencies and officials frequently urge the national plant protection organization (NPPO) and other agencies to release goods to people in need without delay. Thus, unless appropriately prepared to meet the phytosanitary import requirements of the recipient country prior to export, the provided aid can cause long-term damage to plant resources on which vulnerable people and communities depend.
- [3] Some examples of humanitarian aid being a pathway for the introduction and spread of plant pests are stated in the [FAO's State of Food and Agriculture report 2001](#), in which it identifies the introduction of the larger grain borer (*Prostephanus truncates*) into Tanzania as a result of food aid shipments and the introduction of the corn rootworm (*Diabrotica virgifera*) first into Yugoslavia and then Europe as a result of military movements ([FAO 2001](#)). The introduction of Strawberry Latent Ringspot Virus into Timor-Leste is another example of a serious exotic disease introduced into a country through aid consignments.
- [4] Other examples of invasive pests via the food aid pathway are reported in the Republic of Korea. Many new stored product pests invaded Korea during the period from the Korean War in 1950 to 1980. During this time, Korea imported a great quantity of rice, wheat, barley, and livestock feed to cover the shortage of food through aid from other countries. It should also be highlighted that most of the warehouses were first established after the Korean War due to the necessity of preserving a large quantity of imported grain. Thus, these warehouses provided alien insects, especially tropical and subtropical species (e.g.

*Rhyzopertha dominica*), with favorable breeding habitats. Most of the alien stored product insects in the families Cleridae, Nitidulidae, Tenebrionidae, and Pyralidae are considered to have invaded Korea by this pathway, as they similarly invaded Japan (cited in Hong et al., 2012).

- [5] The impact of pests is not limited to production agriculture. The weed known as giant mimosa (*Mimosa diplotricha*) was introduced to the Vava'u Islands (Tonga) with sand from Tahiti as part of reconstruction assistance following Cyclone Waqa in 2002. Parthenium is another example of an invasive weed introduced first into Ethiopia through humanitarian grain shipments that has since spread throughout the country (Murphy and Cheesman 2006). Additional examples of pest introductions through humanitarian assistance can be found in Reaser et al. 2003.
- [6] Despite the increasing knowledge of invasive pests and their impacts in general, there is relatively little data available for developing countries and even less for the food and other humanitarian aid pathway (or “emergency pathway”). The majority of people living in countries receiving aid are smallholders and are almost totally dependent on agriculture and natural resources for their survival. Thus, more information and assessments regarding the potential of invasive pests be carried by the aid pathway would be of great importance to help estimate, predict and potentially support the application of measures to help tackle this issue.
- [7] Although the IPPC has an adopted the [CPM Recommendation on “Safe provision of food and other humanitarian aid to prevent the introduction of plant pests during an emergency situation \(R-09\)”](#), no international standard currently exists to guide countries on the safe movement of aid during the unique pressures and logistical constraints of emergency situations. Given the predicted increase in frequency of natural disasters, potential human-made disasters, and the historical incidence of pest introductions through humanitarian aid, it is timely that actions are progressed to address this gap in robust phytosanitary processes. It is known that biosecurity policies and procedures are frequently intended to prevent the introduction, or slow the spread, of invasive alien species.

## References

- [8] IPPC Secretariat. 2021. Safe provision of food and other humanitarian aid to prevent the introduction of plant pests during an emergency situation. Commission on Phytosanitary Measures Recommendation No. 9. Rome. FAO on behalf of the Secretariat of the International Plant Protection Convention. (<https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/89786/>)
- [9] FAO (2001). State of Food and Agriculture 2001. <http://www.fao.org/3/x9800e/x9800e15.htm>
- [10] Hong, K.-J., Lee, J.-H., Lee, G.-S., and Lee, S. (2012). The status quo of invasive alien insect species and plant quarantine in Korea. Journal of Asia-Pacific Entomology, volume 15 (2012), pp. 521-532. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1226861512000702>
- [11] Murphy, S.T. and Cheesman, O.D. (2006). The Aid Trade: International Assistance Programs as Pathways for the Introduction of Invasive Alien Species. The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank, Washington, USA.
- [12] Reaser J.K., Yeager, B.B., Phifer P.R., Hancock A.K. & Gutierrez A.T. (2003). Environmental diplomacy and the global movement of invasive alien species: a US perspective. In Invasive Species: Vectors and Management Strategies (eds. G.M. Ruiz & J.T. Carlton), pp.362-381. Island Press, Washington DC, USA.

## CPM-16 (2022)

- [13] The CPM-16 (2022) established the Focus Group on safe provision of food and other humanitarian aid (FGSA) to explore ways to address this complex issue, as this topic was not supported to develop an international standard for phytosanitary measures (ISPM) at that moment as a result from the 2021 IPPC call for topics.

## **CPM Bureau June 2023 and IPPC Strategic Planning Group**

- [14] It was reported to the CPM Bureau in June 2023 that the focus group had concluded most of the tasks listed in its terms of reference: *i) it had revised the draft specification on Safe provision of food and other humanitarian aid (2021-020), ii) drafted a gap-analysis diagram for the “emergency pathway”, iii) and proposed that a webinar be held to raise awareness of the CPM recommendation on Safe provision of food and other humanitarian aid to prevent the introduction of plant pests during an emergency situation (R-09).*
- [15] Furthermore, the focus group had also proposed that the mandate of the focus group be extended, and an action plan developed in collaboration with World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH), the Codex Alimentarius Secretariat and the World Food Programme (WFP).
- [16] The bureau noted the update and that the WFP had only become involved in the focus group since CPM-17 (2023), and so, extending the mandate of the focus group would allow time for the Food Programme to engage with the work of the focus group. Thus, the Bureau *supported* an extension to the mandate of the focus group on the safe provision of food and other humanitarian aid.

## **CPM 18 2024 and updated FGSA ToR**

- [17] CPM 18 2024 subsequently approved the extended mandate of the FGSA until CPM-20 (2026) and approved the updated ToR with additional tasks [here](#).
- [18] As per the ToR the FGSA includes one member from an RPPO from the region that has been recipient of food and other humanitarian aid. The current representative on the FGSA is Mr. Visoni TIMOTE of the Pacific Plant Protection Organisation (PPPO).

## **The potential role of the IPPC Regional Plant Protection Organizations (RPPOs) in supporting the work of the focus group on safe aid**

- [19] Taking into consideration the important role that RPPOs play in achieving the objectives of the IPPC, an additional task for the FGSA is to consider the potential role of RPPOs in supporting the work of the FGSA.
- [20] There are a number of aspects where RPPOs may provide valuable support and contributions to ensure well considered and feasible outcomes for this work. As such, the FGSA would like to consider the potential roles which RPPOs may take in supporting the work of the FGSA.
- [21] The FGSA, as part of the approved ToR, is considering the development and delivery of a webinar, using the CPM Recommendation 9 as a basis, to raise awareness of the topic and promote the CPM Recommendation as a resource to contracting parties and donor coordination agencies. Consideration could be given to the involvement of an RPPO representative during the development process to ensure the information presented is relevant and suitable to the RPPO audience. This could also be considered in relation to the development of a video with learning and educational content for NPPOs to use in a crisis situation relating to safe food and other humanitarian aid, and of course in the promotion of these communication products.
- [22] The FGSA will also be focusing on continuing engagement and collaboration with the WFP, FAO emergency responses and other donor agencies. The provision of additional information, contact points and suggestions for areas of collaboration would be incredibly valuable. RPPOs may consider providing additional suggestions in this aspect.
- [23] RPPOs can also provide valuable insights as to areas where additional support and implementation material would be valuable, and what these may look like.
- [24] Therefore, the FGSA would like to invite members to consider the potential involvement and support which can be provided by RPPOs, taking into account the updated tasks within the FGSA ToR.

## **The TC-RPPOs is invited to:**

- (1) *Consider* the points in this paper, taking into account the tasks of the FGSA, and discuss any potential role of the RPPOs to support the work of the FGSA.