



Update from the 37th TC-RPPOs meeting

COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

TWENTIETH SESSION

UPDATE FROM THE 37TH TECHNICAL CONSULTATION AMONG REGIONAL PLANT PROTECTION ORGANIZATIONS (TC-RPPO) MEETING

AGENDA ITEM 16.1

(Prepared by the IPPC Secretariat and reviewed by the TC-RPPO Chairperson)

- [1] The International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) Secretary convenes regular Technical Consultations of representatives of regional plant protection organizations (RPPOs) to promote the development and use of international standards for phytosanitary measures and encourage inter-regional cooperation in promoting harmonized phytosanitary measures for controlling pests and in preventing their spread and/or introduction. The 37th Technical Consultation among Regional Plant Protection Organizations (TC-RPPO) met in Bangkok, Thailand on 23-26 September 2025 for the annual meeting.
- [2] The welcoming remarks were given by Rapihbat Chandarasrivongs, Director General, Department of Agriculture (DOA), Thailand; Yubak Dhoj GC Dhoj, Executive Secretary of the Asia and Pacific Plant Protection Commission (APPPC), Robert Simpson, FAO-Bangkok Deputy Regional Representative (pre-recorded), and Russell Caplen provided welcoming remarks for the IPPC Secretariat's office on behalf of Officer-In-Charge Avetik Nersisyan.
- [3] APPPC Executive Secretary Yubak Dhoj GC Dhoj co-chaired the 37th TC-RPPO meeting with IPPC Secretariat representatives, Russell Caplen and Mariam Almasri.
- [4] The TC-RPPO meeting agenda covered a range of regional topics encompassing IPPC activities to include updates from the IPPC's Implementation and Capacity Development Committee (IC) and Standards Committee (SC). Representatives from the IPPC Secretariat joined the TC-RPPO meeting virtually to provide updates on ePhyto Solution, Commodity Standards, Safe Provision of Food and Other Humanitarian Aid and Global Diagnostic Laboratory Networks. IPPC Secretariat staff present in Bangkok provided updates on IPPC Regional Workshop Discussions and Conclusions, Systems Approach Workshop, Regional Communication Networks, Africa Phytosanitary Programme (APP), Rotating RPPO Hosting of International Day for Plant Health (IDPH), IPPC Plant Health Campus, IPPC Observatory and ongoing focus group work on Sea Containers, Plant Health as a Component of One Health and Pest Outbreak and Response Systems (POARS).
- [5] Discussions involved regional presentations given by nine of the 10 RPPOs: Asia and Pacific Plant Protection Commission (APPPC), Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA), Comité Regional de Sanidad Vegetal del Cono Sur (COSAVE), European & Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization (EPPO), African Union Inter-African Phytosanitary Council (AU-IAPSC), Near East Plant Protection Organization (NEPPO), North American Plant Protection Organization (NAPPO), Organismo Internacional Regional de Sanidad Agropecuaria (OIRSA) and Pacific Plant Protection Organization (PPPO). The EPPO presentation was provided virtually due to a scheduling conflict that

prevent in-person participation. Additionally, the delegation from Comunidad Andina (CAN) was unable to attend or participate virtually.

- [6] Five TC-RPPO partner organizations also gave presentations: (1) Thailand Department of Agriculture (DOA), (2) Asia Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI), (3) World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH), Bangkok Sub-Regional Office, (4) United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA-APHIS), Bangkok Office, and (5) Japan International Research Center for Agricultural Sciences (JIRCAS).
- [7] TC-RPPO delegates identified four items for further follow-up: (1) Information sharing among RPPOs, (3) Side session on artificial Intelligence at CPM-20, (3) Rotating RPPO Hosting of IDPH and (4) Funding.
- [8] **(1) Information Sharing Among RPPOS:** In follow-up to the testing of two draft information sharing templates (one for events and one for pests' information) finalized at the 36th TC-RPPO meeting, delegates:
- [9] *Agreed* that emerging pest information should also be coordinated with the CPM POARS Focus Group and *invited* the Bureau to consider asking the POARS FG and/or IC to coordinate with the TC-RPPO on pest-related information sharing.
- [10] *Invited* the IPPC Secretariat to explore establishing a centralized platform to facilitate information sharing between RPPOs on events and activities and pests of concern on the International Phytosanitary Portal (IPP). Ideally this platform would be hosted by IPPC, modelled after NAPPO's Microsoft Teams Channel and access would be restricted to RPPOs.
- [11] *Encouraged* RPPOs to share near-term major events with the IPPC Secretariat for pilot dissemination.
- [12] **(2) Side Session on Artificial Intelligence at CPM-20 (2026):** Pending from the 36th TC-RPPO is a proposal to conduct a side session on artificial intelligence (AI) for the phytosanitary community at CPM. After a brief discussion delegates:
- [13] *Agreed* to recommend that an AI side session at CPM-20 should be organized.
- [14] *Invited* the IPPC Secretariat to explore including an AI side session for the phytosanitary community on the agenda for CPM-20 in March 2026 and *invited* the Secretariat to present a Concept Note it to the CPM Bureau.
- [15] **(3) Rotating Hosting of IDPH:** OIRSA hosted the International Day of Plant Health (IDPH) in San Salvador, El Salvador on May 12, 2025. This was the first time that IDPH was hosted by an RPPO. The success of the IPPC-OIRSA partnership resulted in a proposal presented at the June 2025 Bureau Meeting to replicate with another RPPO in 2026 and establish rotational RPPO responsibility for hosting IDPH. TC-RPPO members discussed this proposal and:
- [16] *Invited* the IPPC Secretariat to provide a more formal proposal that clearly outlines scope of work, administrative and logistical requirements and available IPPC funding to support a rotating RPPO hosting of IDPH over the next three years (2026, 2027 & 2028).
- [17] **(4) Funding:** The APPPC Executive Secretary highlighted the recurring challenges faced in participating in three key IPPC events: (1) the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM), (2) the Technical Consultation among RPPOs (TC-RPPO), and (3) the IPPC Regional Workshop for Asia, which is held annually in the Republic of Korea.
- [18] These funding challenges occur because the APPPC Secretariat is hosted by the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RAP) in Bangkok, unlike other RPPOs that operate independently. In other regions, the respective technical commissions provide the necessary financial support to their RPPOs. However, the

Advisory Group of the APPPC does not allocate financial resources to enable the participation of its Executive Secretary in IPPC events. Because they are IPPC events, APPPC does not support beyond their biennium activities. When the mission Terms of Reference (ToR) are submitted for approval, RAP has consistently advised that these three important IPPC events should be financed by the IPPC rather than through FAO RAP's regular budget.

In the subsequent discussion RPPOs were:

- [19] *Encouraged* to include participation in the CPM, TC-RPPO, and Regional Workshops within their annual budget plans to ensure consistent representation and, if necessary, clarify with the IPPC Secretariat what funding options may be available.¹

Regarding APPPC identified funding concerns, RPPOs:

- *Suggested* that future IPPC invitation letters for APPPC participation in TC-RPPO, CPM, and Regional Workshops be addressed to the Head of FAO RAP, Bangkok, instead of the APPPC Executive Secretary, since FAO RAP provides support to member nations. The letter should also clarify that, under FAO's agreements with member countries, the costs for the Executive Secretary to represent APPPC at these IPPC events should be covered by either the FAO Regional Office or the IPPC Secretariat. As APPPC is funded through mandatory member contributions, it can only support its own biennial activities, and FAO staff cannot be financed from those contributions.
- [20] Rounding out the TC-RPPO meeting in Bangkok was a field trip to mango orchards and a fresh mango packing house in Chachoengsao Province and DOA's plant quarantine station at Suvarnabhumi airport.
- [21] In closing the 37th TC-RPPO meeting, TC-RPPO members confirmed that the 38th TC-RPPO meeting will be co-chaired by NEPPO and be convened in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia on October 6-9, 2026. Additionally, the Pacific Plant Protection Organization (PPPO) expressed interest in hosting the 39th TC-RPPO meeting in October 2027.

Updates for December 2025 Bureau Meeting

- [22] In October and November 2025, the following three issues were addressed in follow-up to September 23-26, 2025, TC-RPPO discussions in Bangkok:

Information Sharing Among RPPOs:

- [23] The IPPC Secretariat confirmed that a dedicated Microsoft Teams Channel could be established by the Secretariat as a centralized platform to facilitate information sharing between RPPOs. It is anticipated that the Teams Channel will be developed, tested and implemented in January 2026. Access to this Teams Channel will be restricted to RPPOs.

Side Session on Artificial Intelligence at CPM-20:

- [24] A Concept Note for a CPM Side Session on "Smart Plant Health and Artificial Intelligence" was developed in conjunction with the North American Plant Protection Organization (NAPPO) and presented to the Bureau for consideration in October 2025.
- [25] The Bureau reviewed the Concept Note and decided against a stand-alone side session at CPM-20 in March 2026 due to the Concept Note's similarity with another Concept Note that was submitted. Instead, the Bureau approved a poster session combining "Successes and Challenges" with an "Innovation Forum," which is where Smart Plant Health and Artificial Intelligence can be showcased. The Innovation Forum

¹ Current funding criteria included as Attachment I to this report.

(which includes a poster session) has now been scheduled for Friday, March 13, 2026, from 10:00 – 13:00 at CPM-20.

Hosting of International Day of Plant Health (IDPH) 2026:

- [26] The IPPC Secretariat will post a Call for Proposals inviting either RPPOs or NPPOs to host IDPH in May 2026. The Call will include a Terms of Reference which will provide details on administrative, logistical, financial, and communication requirements that will be required from the host country or regional organization.

Recommendation

- [27] The CPM is invited to:

- (1) *note* the TC-RPPO update.

Attachment I

Appendix 3 from the IPPC Financial Committee Report -- 17 December 2024

Appendix 3: Criteria for receiving financial support for attendance at SPG and TC-RPPO meetings:

Funding has been approved by the IPPC Financial Committee to be provided up to a total allocation of USD 60k from the IPPC Multidonor Trust Fund unearmarked funds (subject to funding availability) to support greater global representation and participation at the Strategic Planning Group (SPG) and meetings of the Technical Consultation among Regional Plant Protection Organizations (TC-RPPO). This will be reviewed by the Financial Committee on an annual basis.

For the SPG meeting:

- Current IPPC criteria for financial support based upon world bank country development status will be applied.
- Up to two eligible NPPO representatives per region may be supported per meeting.
- Attendance must be approved and arranged in advance with expressions of interest seeking support submitted for consideration ahead of the June CPM Bureau meeting in advance of the annual SPG meeting.
- Expressions of interest must include a short paragraph outlining the key benefits of attending the SPG for the participant, their NPPO and region, including how they propose to actively contribute to the SPG meeting.
- Once selected for financial support to attend the meeting, the participants are expected to prepare ahead of the meeting by reading SPG papers and submit at least one suitable paper of a strategic nature relevant to the SPG agenda or IPPC Strategic Framework.
- Supported participants are expected to fully participate and be actively engaged at SPG meeting.
- Supported participants are expected to report back to their NPPO and RPPO, sharing useful information, learnings and insights gained from attendance, within six months of attendance.

For the TC-RPPO meeting:

- Current IPPC criteria for financial support based upon world bank country development status will be applied. Eligibility will not extend to all RPPO representatives, as some will not meet the World Bank criteria for financial support.
- One participant from each RPPO (the RPPO secretary or chair) may be eligible for support to participate in the annual meeting of the TC-RPPO.
- The participant's attendance must have the endorsement of the RPPO.
- Once selected for financial support to attend the meeting, the participant is expected to prepare for the meeting by reading the meeting papers and contributing at least one item to the agenda in addition to a report from their region.
- Supported participants are expected to fully participate in the meeting and be actively engaged during the meeting.
- Supported participants are expected to report back to their RPPO, including sharing useful information, learnings and insights gained from attendance, within six months of attending the TC-RPPO meeting.
- Attendance must be approved and arranged in advance, with expressions of interest seeking support submitted for consideration at least two months ahead of the TC-RPPO meeting.