



COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

TWENTIETH SESSION

COVER PAPER: REPORT FROM THE CPM FOCUS GROUP ON GLOBAL PHYTOSANITARY RESEARCH COORDINATION

AGENDA ITEM 13.7

(Prepared by the focus group members)

1. Background

- [1] The Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) Focus Group on Global Phytosanitary Research Coordination was tasked with conducting a scoping study to identify and build an understanding of phytosanitary research coordination mechanisms that currently exist, determine if existing mechanisms are sufficient to ensure effective global coordination of phytosanitary research needs, and determine how these mechanisms could contribute to and support the research needs of the IPPC community. If existing mechanisms were not sufficient to ensure coverage, the focus group was also tasked with identifying how research gaps could potentially be filled by IPPC bodies.
- [2] The above tasks were set by the CPM with the recognition that international phytosanitary research collaboration across nations, institutions and disciplines leads to higher quality science, efficiencies of resource use, better outcomes, and wider adoption of results. However, these benefits of collaboration only occur when there is mutual vision in alignment of research goals and collaboration. The need to develop a balanced portfolio of research work, ranging from strategic to applied research, is essential in creating synergistic collaboration.
- [3] The need for development of an implementation plan and the continuation of the focus group's work is contingent on the outcome of the scoping study and subject to a CPM decision based on this work.

2. Stocktaking

- [4] As an initial step, the focus group members conducted a stocktake and compiled a register of 101 research networks. Focus group members then evaluated each network against four criteria: (1) network scope, (2) geographical coverage, (3) phytosanitary relevance, and (4) policy relevance. Each network was assigned a score from one to three for each criterion, based on publicly available information, direct communication with network representatives, and the experience of individual focus group members. Research networks that achieved a total score of nine or higher were selected for further assessment. Ultimately, this process identified five research networks that were interviewed by focus group members: (1) the STAR-IDAZ International Research Consortium,¹ (2) Euphresco, (3) the International Forestry Quarantine Research Group (IFQRG), (4) the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and (5) the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO). A questionnaire was provided to each of the five networks in advance of the interviews to help ensure a greater awareness of the purpose of the interview and to help facilitate a more consistent interview format.

¹ STAR-IDAZ is an abbreviation for Global Strategic Alliances for the Coordination of Research on Major Infectious Diseases of Animals and Zoonoses.

- [5] The focus group distributed a targeted survey to IPPC contracting parties. The survey aimed to identify key challenges faced by national plant protection organizations (NPPOs) in determining research needs, establishing an international research framework, and pinpointing areas where improved research collaboration would be most beneficial. By collecting data directly from country representatives, the survey sought to uncover actual gaps in legislative, technical, financial and human capacities. The resulting dataset enables the focus group to anticipate future strategic developments, ensuring that its proposed research coordination model will directly address countries' practical needs. The collected information provides an overview of the survey's findings, highlighting regional perspectives and overarching cross-regional themes.

3. Outcomes

- [6] The above stocktaking exercise resulted in focus group members identifying different types of organizational structures, gaps in coverage, and suggested solutions to address these gaps.
- [7] **Organizational structures.** Four types of organizational structures to support phytosanitary research coordination were explored:
- in-kind supported networks (e.g. IFQRG);
 - funded networks (e.g. CGIAR);
 - hybrid in-kind and funded networks (e.g. Euphresco, STAR-IDAZ); and
 - an “umbrella” structure in which individual research networks interact together on priority setting and which would include inputs from risk assessors, technical institutes and scientific societies.
- [8] **Gaps in coverage.** The analysis conducted by the focus group highlights the following gaps in research structures and coordination:
- limited coordination among existing networks in phytosanitary research;
 - inconsistent responses to global phytosanitary needs by existing research networks;
 - lack of standardized procedures and effective communication mechanisms to address research needs identified by policy makers;
 - no global catalogue of current research needs required to enable attainment of IPPC strategic priorities;
 - some countries do not participate or have only limited participation in research networks;
 - limited information sharing on ongoing phytosanitary research; and
 - insufficient funding to sustain comprehensive global phytosanitary research.
- [9] **Suggested solutions.** To address these gaps the following could be considered by the CPM:
- Compile and maintain a list of research needs. .
 - Explore mechanisms to better communicate research needs and outcomes in a proactive manner (e.g. social media, communication via regional plant protection organizations (RPPOs) and NPPOs, annual reports, scientific journals).
 - Develop a centralized global dashboard tool to enable compilation of existing phytosanitary research needs.
 - Establish processes to engage with existing research networks and scientific societies in priority-setting activities to focus more directly or explicitly on research that would address global phytosanitary needs.
 - Support RPPOs and NPPOs not connected to existing networks to have access.
 - Ensure coverage of existing networks across commodities, regions and pests.
 - Identify the availability of in-kind support to address global phytosanitary priorities.

4. Conclusion and recommendations

[10] As noted above, the focus group's analysis highlighted existing gaps in current research-network coordination mechanisms that could limit the CPM's ability to deliver the 2020–2030 Strategic Framework development-agenda item on global phytosanitary research coordination. To address these gaps, the focus group members propose that the CPM Bureau and CPM review the list of recommendations below. When considering the conclusions and recommendations below, the focus group members encourage the CPM to consider potential costs in time and resources. The focus group notes that this report and recommendations took approximately one year to complete and anticipates that the development of an implementation plan would also require about 12 months to complete. Initiation of any further work would first be contingent on approval of a new or amended terms of reference as outlined in the second recommendation below.

[11] The full report from the focus group is attached to this CPM paper CPM 2026/19_01 and is presented in English only.

Recommendations from the focus group

- (1) **Consider** establishment of an IPPC-led research network framework to enhance communication between existing networks and NPPOs and RPPOs, to collaboratively address shared research priorities.
- (2) **Consider** amending the focus group's terms of reference to extend until the end of CPM-21 (2027) and task the focus group with:
 - finalizing a proposal for a policy and research framework, and
 - developing an implementation plan for the above proposed policy and research framework.
- (3) **Consider** addressing the following items in the implementation plan:
 - how the funding model options described in the focus group's report (Attachment 1) could be appropriately integrated into the IPPC-led framework of research networks,
 - opportunities for other IPPC groups (e.g. Implementation and Capacity Development Committee, RPPOs) to support and participate in an IPPC-led research framework as part of their ongoing work programmes,
 - developing a communication and engagement plan to actively facilitate engagement, promote phytosanitary research and foster collaboration,
 - developing criteria to evaluate inclusion of candidate networks in an IPPC-led framework of research networks,
 - identifying resources required to support implementation, and
 - further analysis of how to progress the potential solutions identified by the focus group as part of the IPPC-led research framework.

Recommendation

[12] The CPM is *invited* to:

- (1) *note* the report of the CPM Focus Group on Global Phytosanitary Research Coordination (Attachment 1); and
- (2) *consider* the focus group's recommendations.