



COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

TWENTIETH SESSION

RESOURCING CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PEST OUTBREAK ALERT AND RESPONSE SYSTEMS (POARS)

AGENDA ITEM 13.5

(Prepared by the IPPC Secretariat in collaboration with the POARS SG)

1. Introduction

- [1] This paper complements paper [CPM 2026/17](#) and provides CPM with an overview of resourcing considerations for implementing POARS, focusing on the outputs delivered by the mechanism and the conditions required to ensure their timely and proportionate delivery.
- [2] This paper does not present a detailed financial plan. Rather, it provides indicative workload and cost ranges linked to POARS outputs, to support CPM's understanding of the operational conditions needed to maintain and scale the mechanism in a timely and proportionate manner.
- [3] POARS is a mechanism designed to identify emerging pests of potential international concern at an early stage and to translate early warning into harmonized technical products that support preparedness, prevention, and coordinated response by National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs).

2. POARS outputs and delivery model

- [4] POARS delivers a set of defined outputs that translate early warning for emerging pests into harmonized technical products supporting NPPOs' preparedness, prevention and coordinated response to those pests. Indicative resourcing considerations are presented to reflect the relative scale of effort required for each output category. The activities described from 2.1 to 2.4 describe the main POARS functions implemented through coordinated support by the IPPC Secretariat in coordination with the POARS Steering Group

2.1 Identification and assessment of emerging pests of global concern

- Identification of potential emerging pests through horizon scanning and pest reporting under National Reporting Obligations (NROs).
- Nomination of potential emerging pests by NPPOs, Regional Plant Protection Organisations (RPPOs) and the IPPC Secretariat
- Assessment of potential emerging pests against criteria, with those pests that meet the criteria being designated as emerging pests of global concern
- Maintenance of an updated list of emerging pests of global concern.

2.2 POARS alerts and targeted horizon scanning

Following identification and assessment activities described in section 2.1, POARS supports the dissemination of early warning information and ongoing monitoring through alerts and targeted horizon scanning.

- Development and dissemination of POARS pest alerts for emerging pests and watch list pests.
- Alerts of new outbreaks through the IPPC newsletter.

[5] Ongoing monitoring and targeted horizon scanning to track developments related to emerging pests and watch list pests.

2.3 Development of technical tools and provision of preparedness support

- Analysis of available technical tools and identification of gaps related to emerging pests and watch list pests. Where gaps are identified, POARS may support the development of additional outputs, including:
 - a) Dedicated technical tools and materials (e.g. diagnostic decision aids, surveillance protocols, practical tools supporting prevention and preparedness).
 - b) Virtual or hands-on training activities in diagnostics or surveillance (virtual, hybrid or in-person).
 - c) Simulation or table-top exercises to test preparedness and response arrangements.
 - d) Technical support for the preparation or refinement of pest-specific contingency plans.
- Creation and maintenance of pest-specific POARS Toolboxes consolidating existing guidance, tools and learning resources, which will be communicated via the POARS webpage.
- Networked coordination with relevant international, regional, and national organizations involved in prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery.

[6] To support the development of tools for selected emerging pests, expert working groups will be established that operate under the guidance of the POARS Steering Group and are coordinated by the IPPC Secretariat. These groups will be subject to CPM Bureau approval. Typical EWG outputs include:

- Consolidated technical dossiers synthesizing current knowledge.
- Gap analyses across prevention, preparedness, response and recovery.
- Development of tools, materials, training content and exercises.

2.4 Governance, coordination and communication

- Strategic oversight through the POARS Steering Group.
- Annual work planning, implementation reporting to the CPM Bureau, and coordination with relevant IPPC bodies and programmes, as relevant.
- Technical advice on communication products and engagement with RPPOs, NPPOs and partners.

3. Indicative resourcing considerations

[7] To facilitate clarity, indicative resourcing considerations are presented in two tables:

- Table A covers the core Secretariat functions required to keep POARS operational, with indicative staff effort expressed in full-time equivalents (FTEs), a workload measure corresponding to one person working full-time for one year and not implying a specific number of staff, posts or contracts.
- Table B covers modular, hands-on activities, implemented on a project or priority basis and potentially involving direct costs.

Table A. Core POARS Secretariat functions and indicative staff effort

POARS function	Indicative unit	Staff effort (indicative)
Identification and assessment	Annual cycle	~1.2 FTE
POARS alerts and targeted horizon scanning	Across pests (annual)	~0.5 FTE
POARS Toolbox development and maintenance	Across pests (annual)	~0.8 FTE

Governance, coordination and reporting	Annual cycle	~0.3 FTE
Total indicative core Secretariat effort	Annual	~2 – 3 FTE

- [8] This total of 2 to 3 FTEs represents the core Secretariat capacity required to keep POARS operational, based on current implementation experience. The indicative FTE values reflect workload needs only and are not linked to specific budget amounts, as staffing costs vary depending on FAO employment modalities, duty station, grade structures and cost-recovery policies. For this reason, no indicative funding figure is provided here. Formal costing of Secretariat staff time is handled through FAO's internal budgeting processes and reported separately to CPM through the IPPC Secretariat's annual financial report.

Table B. Targeted hands-on POARS activities and indicative direct costs

Activity	Indicative unit	Staff effort	Direct / tangible costs (USD)*
Expert Working Group (EWG) outputs	Per EWG	~6–12 staff-weeks	Primarily staff-driven; meeting and facilitation costs vary depending on format and participation
Misellaneous tools and materials	Per tool or material	~4–8 staff-weeks	15,000 – 30,000
Hands-on technical training (virtual)	Per activity	~2–4 staff-weeks	10,000 – 15,000
Hands-on technical training (in-person)	Per activity	~4–6 staff-weeks	40,000 – 60,000
Simulation or table-top exercises	Per exercise	~3–5 staff-weeks	40,000 – 60,000
Contingency planning support	Per country / region	~3–6 staff-weeks	20,000 – 30,000
Webinars	Per event	~1-2 staff-weeks	5,000 – 10,000

* Direct costs reflect incremental expenditures (e.g. facilitation, materials, interpretation, limited travel and DSA) and exclude regular staff costs.

4. Current resourcing context

- [9] Initial implementation of POARS has been supported through a combination of time-bound project resources and Secretariat contributions. These arrangements have enabled the establishment of core processes and the delivery of initial outputs during a pilot phase.
- [10] Current sources supporting POARS-related activities include:
- the European Union-funded project GCP/GLO/1238/EC, which supports selected POARS-related activities over a three-year period ()
 - a voluntary contribution from Ireland supporting specific technical outputs; ()
 - Secretariat technical work supported through the regular budget, the IPPC multi-donor trust fund and other ongoing projects, as part of broader IPPC implementation activities, contributing an estimated ~1–1.5 FTE equivalent
- [11] Current resources will allow the Secretariat to deliver most of the planned outputs over an initial implementation period of approximately two years. Additional resources may be required to support further pest-specific activities, depending on priorities and implementation needs.
- [12] As POARS progresses through its initial implementation phase, and depending on the number and complexity of emerging pests identified, additional targeted technical support may be required to ensure timely and coherent delivery of agreed outputs.

- [13] As requested by CPM-19, the Secretariat is therefore in the process of establishing a dedicated POARS trust fund, which will provide a mechanism to consolidate voluntary contributions and support the phased implementation of POARS outputs in line with CPM guidance and emerging risk priorities.

5. Strategic considerations and way forward

- [14] POARS implementation relies on a combination of core Secretariat capacity, voluntary financial contributions, and substantial in-kind engagement. Technical expertise, data sharing, participation in Expert Working Groups, and collaboration among NPPOs, RPPOs, international organizations, academia and partners are central to the effectiveness and cost-efficiency of the mechanism.
- [15] Over time, POARS is expected to facilitate South–South cooperation and peer-to-peer knowledge exchange among countries and regions facing similar emerging pest concerns, enabling them to share practical solutions, reduce duplication, and accelerate preparedness through adapted, context-appropriate approaches.
- [16] Looking ahead, POARS will continue to operate through its core Secretariat function, complemented by modular, project-based activities. This approach allows specific outputs, such as Expert Working Group deliverables, technical tools, targeted training, simulation exercises, or contingency planning support, to be delivered in a time-bound, proportionate, and responsive manner, without expanding the core structure of the mechanism.
- [17] The dedicated POARS Trust Fund requested by CPM-19 will provide a framework for consolidating voluntary contributions in support of this model. As it becomes operational, the Secretariat will maintain a prioritized pipeline of defined POARS activities, enabling donors to support those elements that align with their interests and capacities, while preserving technical coherence and alignment with the IPPC scope and priorities.

Information and next steps

- [18] This paper is provided to CPM for information to support a shared understanding of the POARS delivery model and indicative resourcing considerations. Key elements highlighted for CPM awareness include:
- POARS operates through a combination of core Secretariat coordination functions and modular, time-bound activities implemented according to emerging priorities and available resources.
 - Resource mobilization efforts are ongoing to support prioritized POARS outputs, including voluntary financial and in-kind contributions from contracting parties, RPPOs and partners.
 - Initial implementation has been enabled through contributions from the European Union and Ireland, alongside Secretariat technical support and stakeholder engagement.
 - As implementation progresses, continued feedback from CPM and its subsidiary bodies may help inform the evolution of POARS priorities and delivery approaches.