Update on the Implementation Review and Support System and future plans

*(Prepared by the Secretariat)*

For the remainder of the second project cycle of the IRSS, which concludes on 31 March 2017, the following activities are currently under way.

1. Launch of the new IRSS webpage

The IRSS helpdesk, located in the International Phytosanitary Portal (IPP), has been in use since 2011 to support contracting parties’ implementation of the IPPC and its ISPMs. The helpdesk is an online platform that includes three main features - the Question and Answer (Q&A) Forum, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and the Phytosanitary Resources webpage, where further resources are available. However, use of some of the helpdesk has been limited due to restricted access and a lack of awareness of the features available.

An analysis concluded that improvements were needed to enhance user experience and friendliness, access to content, organization and structure of features and ease of navigation to and within the helpdesk. As such, the IRSS helpdesk has been updated with the following improvements:

* Access to the Q&A Forum is now open to all plant health professionals who register for an IPP username and password;
* The IRSS homepage has been re-designed with new introductory text;
* The IRSS Activities webpage has been re-designed with briefs available for each activity;
* The IPP and IRSS FAQs have been amalgamated, reviewed and updated;
* A direct link to the IRSS is now on the new IPP under Projects and it can also be accessed under the Core Activities tab – Standards and Implementation; and
* A ‘Help’ function, linking to features that help a user gain further information (this appears on all IPP webpages).

The updated IRSS webpage was launched at the 2016 IPPC Regional Workshops.

2. 2016 IPPC General Survey

The 2016 IPPC General Survey was launched on 9 September and sent to all contracting parties and regional plant protection organizations (RPPOs). The survey is designed to capture information on contracting parties’ implementation of the obligations and responsibilities a described in the Convention, implementation of international standards for phytosanitary measures (ISPMs) and the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) recommendations.

Results of the second IPPC General Survey will be compared against the first survey in 2012. Contracting parties who show their commitment to the IPPC by completing the survey will be acknowledged at CPM 12.

The survey runs until 11 November 2016.

3. Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

The development of a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system has been commenced in collaboration with the Centre of Development and Innovation (CDI) of Wageningen University.

The IRSS is the IPPC’s tool to undertake review activities of contracting parties’ implementation of the Convention, and therefore will both complement and feed into the M&E framework, which is being developed to allow for responsiveness and continuous improvement at three levels:

* Implementation of IPPC frameworks;
* IPPC policies and procedures; and
* IPPC Secretariat work areas.

The development of the M&E system includes the following activities

* a needs assessment on the three system levels;
* a three day training course for all Secretariat staff (28-30 November 2016);
* a draft M&E system prepared with categories of indicators identified; and
* scoping of the second phase of the M&E system, for implementation.

4. Global emerging risks

As part of the FAO organizational foresight group, the IRSS prepared a questionnaire on Plant Health Emerging Issues that was sent to all IPPC Regional Workshop participants. The questionnaire asked participating contracting parties to list the five most important emerging issues related to plant health in the next two to five years.

Responses were received and discussed at the regional workshops and will be collated by the IRSS to present to CPM 12 as Global emerging issues of 2016. This information will help the IPPC understand national, regional and global emerging issues and trends between the different levels. It will also contribute to the FAO foresight initiative to understand risks at the higher organizational level.

5. Global funding support initiative (GEF)

In an effort to facilitate contracting parties’ ongoing implementation of the Convention, ISPMs and CPM recommendations, the IRSS will be supporting an initiative to obtain funding through the Global Environmental Fund (GEF). This will include the IRSS organizing a meeting of representatives to discuss and scope a proposal for contracting parties’ to access GEF funding.

6. IRSS study – Analyzing the benefits of implementing the IPPC

The IRSS study – *Analyzing the benefits of implementing the* IPPC, seeks to identify the benefits at the national, regional and global level, while also considering benefits to different stakeholders in the IPPC community. The different aspects to be considered are in relation to the Convention, international standards for phytosanitary measures (ISPMs) and achieving the IPPC strategic objectives, but also with a particular emphasis on the economic benefits of implementing the IPPC and ISPMs at the national level.

7. Contracting party donor guidance

Contracting party access to funding for implementation of the Convention, ISPMs and CPM recommendations can be challenging and has been identified as an area where contracting parties need support. The IRSS has previously undertaken work to analyse existing and potential donors who fund plant health activities, under the IPPC Secretariat Resource Mobilization Task Force (RMTF). However, the use of this information has been to fund work of the CPM programme by the IPPC Secretariat.

To provide contracting parties with specific guidance for how to access funding both within their countries and externally, the resource mobilization analysis will be used to develop *Contracting party donor guidance,* which is anticipated to be completed in March 2017.

8. CPM 12 side session – Benefits of the IPPC

With the strategic focus of the IPPC on different themes each year between now and 2020, the IRSS is undertaking the study – *Analyzing the benefits of implementing the IPPC,* to contribute to the 2017 theme of Plant Health and Trade Facilitation. The outcomes of this study will be presented at CPM 12, along with its feature case study on the Mexican avocado industry at the Saturday side session – Benefits of the IPPC. A third component of the side session on ISPM 15 will also be presented.

The IRSS is coordinating the first two components of the side session, through oversight of the aforementioned study and engagement with the Mexican avocado industry.

The TC-RPPO is invited to:

1. *Note* the IRSS activities planned for the remainder of the second project cycle.