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REPORT

Mid-Year Report of the IPPC Secretariat for 2017

**Rome, Italy
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IPPC Secretariat

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THE MID-YEAR REPORT OF THE IPPC SECRETARIAT FOR 2017

(July, 2017)

[1] Since assuming his duties as the Secretary to the IPPC, Mr Jingyuan Xia continues to articulate his vision for the IPPC and the IPPC Secretariat as a whole. With full support from the IPPC Governing Bodies and FAO senior management, Mr Xia continues to change the modus operandi of the IPPC Secretariat. Key tasks continue to be more focused and operational mechanisms are being optimized on an ongoing basis, while an increasing emphasis is being placed on the standardization of operational procedures and processes. The renewal of the IPPC Secretariat continues to build on the good foundations established in 2015 with a focus on moving towards "One IPPC". In the first semester of 2017, a number of achievements were attained under the five categories listed below.

1. Governance and Strategy

1.1 Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM)

[2] The Twelfth Session of the CPM (CPM-12) took place in 2017 from 5-11 April in Incheon, Republic of Korea and resulted in a number of significant outcomes including:

- a) adoption of 15 standards (four ISPMs, one Annex, ten PTs) and noting of ten DPs that were adopted by the SC on behalf of the CPM, which means that a record number of ISPMs adopted in the IPPC history for a single year;
- b) support to the continued progress in implementing the ePhyto project and in particular to urge countries to financially support the project through donations to operate the hub and generic system following the pilot;
- c) support for 2017 IPPC theme "Plant Health and Trade Facilitation" and "International Year of Plant Health (IYPH)" in 2020, including adoption of envisaged outputs and outcomes for the IYPH;
- d) adoption of the revised version of the RPPOs' roles and functions;
- e) agreement on the IPPC Communication and Advocacy activities planned for 2017;
- f) organization of a special topics session on e-commerce webcasted to the world;
- g) Holding of five side sessions on the following topics (Benefits of the IPPC, IPPC in Asia, Trade facilitation and ePhyto, Facilitation of international trade and safeguarding biodiversity from the outspread pathways, and The new Plant Health Regime in the European Union);
- h) agreement that the Implementation and Capacity Development Committee be established under the adopted Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure, that the IC should start operations in the second half of 2017;
- i) agreement that the National Reporting Obligations Advisory Group (NROAG), Triennial Review Group (TRG) and Subsidiary Body on Dispute Settlement (SBDS) be dissolved at the same time as the IC is established and the functions and procedures of these committees be transferred to the IC; and
- j) agreement that the call for topics be delayed so that a joint SC/IC call for topics for standards and issues for implementation can be held.

1.2 CPM Bureau and Finance Committee (FC)

[3] The CPM Bureau met twice; one in Incheon, the Republic of Korea in April and a second time in Washington DC, USA in June. The Bureau meeting in April mainly discussed the preparation and agenda for CPM-12 with regard financial documents. The Bureau meeting in June discussed both a long and short term strategy for IPPC efforts, the annual work plan and budget for the IPPC Secretariat for 2018 and 2019. A key outcome of the meeting was that the Bureau proposed changes to the IPPC Secretariat annual work plan and budget and way forward on sustainable funding initiative. Bureau also proposed that the budgeting process is moved one year ahead starting for 2018.

- [4] The FC met twice in Incheon, the Republic of Korea in April and also in Washington DC, in June. In April, the discussion focused mainly on the 2016 financial report and 2017 work plan and budget of the IPPC Secretariat and the financial management of the IPPC Secretariat. In June, the focus was on IPPC Secretariat Work Plan and Budget for 2018 and sustainable funding initiative for the IPPC Work Programme.

1.3 Standards Committee (SC)

- [5] The SC and the SC-7 met in May in Rome, Italy. The SC is responsible for overseeing about 80 topics (including five technical panels, regular standards (International Standards on Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs), diagnostic protocols (DPs), phytosanitary treatments (PTs) and Glossary terms). Of these, four draft ISPMs were presented to the SC in their May 2017 face-to-face meeting, of which three were approved for consultation (1 July-30 September 2017). The SC-7 discussed in detail four draft ISPMs, of which all were approved for the second consultation (1 July-30 September 2017). Through 14 e-decisions held in the first semester of 2017, the SC approved six draft DPs for member consultation and two draft DPs for the DP Notification period, three draft specifications for consultation, one specification and selected experts for the EWG on *Authorisation of entities to perform phytosanitary actions* (2014-002). The SC, in its May meeting, also selected experts for the EWG on the Revision of ISPM 8: *Pest status in an area* (2009-005), members for the Technical Panel for the Glossary (Arabic, English and Chinese). The Framework for standards and implementation was updated, a promotional paper for the IYPH was discussed, and SC representatives for the new Implementation Committee selected, as well as for the 2017 IPPC Regional Workshops.

1.4 Capacity Development Committee (CDC).

- [6] The CDC remained active through mid-year and reviewed 20 technical resources for posting on the phytosanitary resources page. The 10th CDC meeting (also the last) was held in Tokyo, Japan in May which was a preparatory meeting for the transition to the new Implementation and Capacity Development Committee (IC) approved at CPM-12 in April. The group discussed the Terms of Reference for the IC operational framework, priority tasks for the IC were also discussed. Another major highlight of the meeting included the CDC's development of a proposal for the Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedures for the IPPC Sea Containers Task Force (SCTF).

1.5 Subsidiary Body on Dispute Settlement (SBDS).

- [7] CPM-11 agreed to maintain the SBDS until the IC was constituted. They would continue to work through e-mail. The future of the SBDS was discussed at the CDC in May 2017 and proposals for its integration into the IC were made to the Bureau. The Bureau deliberated the recommendations and agreed to integrate it into the new IC and proposed actions to be taken.

2. Standard Setting

2.1 Identification and Prioritization of Topics

- [8] The *List of topics for IPPC standards* posted on the IPP in six languages was updated twice (January and June). One new topic was added to the List of topics for IPPC standards by CPM-12 (2017) and assigned a priority. In February 2017, a call for phytosanitary treatments was launched, which is soliciting submissions for: a) Phytosanitary treatments to be adopted as international standards, as annexes to ISPM 28 (Phytosanitary treatments for regulated pests); and b) Phytosanitary treatments used in international trade, to be posted on the Phytosanitary Resources page. Up to 05 June, the IPPC Secretariat received a total of 25 treatments submissions. The Technical Panel on Phytosanitary Treatments (TPPT) will review the submissions and proposed recommendations to the SC.

2.2 Drafting and Expert Input

- [9] The Standard Setting Unit (SSU) prepared meeting documents, organized, facilitated and finalized outcomes of the following meetings: a) two face-to-face meetings, one on the Technical Panel on Diagnostic Protocols (TPDP) and the other one on EWG on *Authorization of entities to perform phytosanitary actions* (2014-002); b) two virtual meetings on the Technical Panel on Phytosanitary Treatments; c) one virtual meeting on the TPFQ; and seven TP e-decisions meetings.

2.3 Consultation

- [10] The SSU organized one consultation on draft standards and one on draft specifications planned to run in the second semester of 2017 (1 July to 30 September and 1 July to 30 August, respectively). One DP notification period (1 July to 15 August), was also organized. Comments received during the consultations are compiled and posted on the IPP.

2.4 Adoption and Publication

- [11] 16 draft ISPMs were presented for adoption to the CPM-12 in 2017 as well, the CPM noted the adoption of ten DPs by the SC on behalf of the CPM. Out of the draft ISPMs presented, the following were adopted: five regular ISPMs; ISPM 38 on the *International movement of seeds*; Annex 1 *Arrangements for verification of compliance of consignments by the importing country in the exporting country* (2005-003) to ISPM 20 (*Guidelines for a phytosanitary import regulatory system*); ISPM 39 on the *International movement of wood* (2006-029); ISPM 40 on the *International movement of growing media in association with plants for planting* (2005-004) and ISPM 41 on the *International movement of used vehicles, machinery and equipment* (2006-004) and ten annexes to ISPM 28 (PTs). One draft phytosanitary treatment concerning dielectric heating received an objection prior to CPM-12 (2017). This number of adopted ISPMs exceeded the planned outcomes indicated in FAO's Strategic Objective 4. Most publications are posted on the IPP in the six FAO languages.
- [12] All ISPMs submitted to CPM-12 (2017) via the Language Review Group (LRG) process were noted, and all ISPMs adopted at CPM-12 (2017) have been posted on the IPP in the six FAO languages. CPM-12 (2017) approved the modified LRG process proposed by the IPPC Secretariat and agreed that it would take immediate effect. The IPPC Secretariat will post the modified ISPMs on the IPP and notify all contracting parties. The CPM-13 (2018) agenda will include a standing item for noting that the specific standards were adjusted and previously adopted versions of the ISPMs revoked. Ink amendments to the currently adopted ISPMs were also noted by CPM-12 (2017). These ink amendments will be translated into all languages and will be incorporated into the language versions of the concerned standards as resources permit.

2.5 Online Comment System (OCS)

- [13] A new OCS short guide and a presentation on the Online Comment System (OCS) for the 2017 IPPC Regional Workshops have been developed; several training sessions were organized (at the May Standards Committee meeting and twice for IPPC Secretariat staff); and over 500 user requests for training and support were addressed. Consultations on 13 draft standards were launched on 1st July 2017 through the OCS. The OCS was first used for other document types than draft standards during consultations, including specifications being reviewed by Standards Committee members at an early stage. The IPPC Secretariat is finalizing the development of user requirements for an online registration system which will include the management of data on IPPC meeting participation, memberships and the list of topics for IPPC standards.

3. Implementation Facilitation

3.1 Capacity Development (CD)

- [14] Sixteen implementation projects from FAO, STDF and others were carried out in over 15 contracting parties, with the coverage of national, regional and global levels. The STDF project 401 to develop a cadre of Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation (PCE) facilitators has been extended to end of 2017, where a sub-pool of 4 selected PCE Facilitators would worked in the field, gaining practical experience facilitating PCEs with the support of the IFU. This project as well as its predecessor, project STDF350 have produced manuals, technical, and training resources that are considered to be the building blocks of a long term capacity development strategy for the IPPC.
- [15] A joint IPPC-CIHEAM training entitled "Building Phytosanitary Capacities" was conducted in Bari, Italy, in June 2017. The training was provided to 15 Master students of the Sustainable Pest Management Technologies Programme of CIHEAM-Bari, and was open to 10 NPPO staff worldwide. The training built upon several IPPC technical guides developed under the STDF 350 project.

3.2 Implementation Review Support System (IRSS)

- [16] The IRSS in close collaboration with the FAO foresight group was involved in an initiative to develop methods for identifying issues, their impacts and ways to mitigate associated risk. Information on current and emerging risks will be collected from contracting parties during the 2017 IPPC Regional Workshops. The development of a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework was commenced in collaboration with the Centre of Development and Innovation (CDI) of Wageningen University.
- [17] The IRSS study *analyzing the benefits of implementing the IPPC* was conducted and illustrate how contracting party implementation of the IPPC provides multilevel benefits, in the form of protecting global plant resources, international cooperation, food security, environmental protection and trade facilitation. In an effort to facilitate contracting parties' ongoing implementation of the Convention, ISPMs and CPM recommendations, the IRSS supported an initiative to obtain funding through the Global Environmental Fund (GEF).

3.3 Dispute Avoidance and Settlements (DAS)

- [18] The IPPC Secretariat and the SBDS continue to be active in producing a number of documents and material to support the IPPC DASS dispute avoidance component. The IPPC Secretariat continues its involvement in phytosanitary dispute avoidance activities, primarily working with the FAO Investment Centre (TCI) on a project. Progress is being made to the nature of the phytosanitary issues.

3.4 Trade Facilitation Actions

- [19] The ePhyto Steering Group (ESG) and Project Technical Committee (PTC) met from 13 – 17 March in Geneva. During the meeting members reviewed and finalized the specifications for hub and provided input into the development of the specifications of the generic ePhyto national system (GeNS). The ESG and PTC members also began to develop the evaluation criteria for assessment of a contractor to provide the GeNS system. Subsequent to the meeting, the United Nations International Computing Centre (UNICC) which is the provider of the ePhyto hub was later asked to develop a proposal for the GeNS. They also finalized mapping of the data included in the electronic phytosanitary certificate to the components of a paper certificate. They also met with other international organizations to further discuss harmonization of electronic certificate approaches and ongoing collaboration.
- [20] The IPPC Secretariat working with FAO Legal Services completed developing the legal standards for countries to use the hub and these will be tested during the pilot of the hub which should commence in late September. The Secretariat also engaged a consultant in June 2017, who is undertaking to identify the costs and potential recovery approaches for financing the ePhyto Solution. A support officer was also hired to assist the Secretariat with the developing workload in implementing the ePhyto Solution. The new staff member is supporting the work of the ePhyto groups and committees and also providing technical support in the development of the hub and GeNS.
- [21] The ePhyto Industry Advisory Group (IAG) met on June 27 in Washington. The Secretariat briefed the IAG on the progress of the project and also obtained their feedback on next steps in development and on identifying the benefits of ePhyto to industry sectors. The IAG will continue to further identify the links between electronic certification and the benefits to the trade of plants and plant products. The Secretariat also began working with the World Bank and Samoan Quarantine authorities on a project to evaluate the benefits of ePhyto implementation in facilitating trade. The project is intended to use the data provided by ePhyto to assist Quarantine Customs authorities to better manage imports by improving risk-based controls. Finally, the development of the hub commenced in early June and initial testing of the system was underway by July with the expectation that the pilot would commence in late September or early October.

3.5 Phytosanitary Resources Page

- [22] Twenty technical resources were reviewed by the CDC for posting on the phytosanitary resources page. The phytosanitary.info website is being maintained as a key resource for implementation support.

4. Integration and Support

4.1 National Reporting Obligations (NRO)

[23] The NRO Year of Pest Reporting was completed in March 2017 with great success. In 2017 alone contracting parties provided 60 pest reports on the IPP. In April 2017 the NRO Year of Phytosanitary legislation was initiated. The educational NRO newsletter “NROs Update” kept being published in English, French, Spanish, Russian and Arabic (3 issues). The IPPC Secretariat provided detailed statistical analysis for the period 2005-2016 of all reporting available on the IPP. A new Guide to NROs with supplementary NRO guidance material (fact sheets, leaflets and table summaries) was made available in French, Spanish and Russian by the IPPC Secretariat for contracting parties. In addition, NRO automatic reminder system kept functioning and works were carried out on NRO e-learning.

4.2 Information Management

[24] Maintenance of all IPP websites including OCS and Phytosanitary Resource Page) and their functions was provided and some improvements to the existing pages were implemented, including: a review of the standard setting landing page, of the IPPC Seminar, Cooperation and Media pages, and an initial review of the IYPH web page. Requirements for the Phytosanitary Facility Search Tool and the Online Registration System were laid out, and work on the development of the first tool has started. The IPPC Secretariat started using Skype for Business, the new FAO corporate call and web conference tool.

4.3 Communications and Advocacy

[25] A series of activities were organized to showcase the IPPC theme “Plant health and Trade Facilitation” for 2017, such as a key note address delivered by Secretary of WCO at CPM-12 in Republic of Korea. One IPPC Seminar was held on the Red Palm Weevil with presence of over 100 participants. The IPPC headline news released from January to June amounted to 68. The 2016 IPPC Annual Report and three factsheets: on IPPC, *Xylella fastidiosa*, and ISPM 5 were published and widely distributed.

[26] The IPPC Secretariat supported the promotion of the International Year of Plant Health in 2020 by working closely with Finland for the FAO Conference approval of the draft resolution proclaiming IYPH 2020. One video and factsheet on IYPH were prepared and presented at the reception co-hosted at FAO HQs by the IPPC Secretariat and the Finnish Permanent Representation to FAO. A new IYPH communications plan was developed at the second IYPH StC meeting and refined by the IPPC Secretariat.

4.4 IPPC Community Activities

[27] The IPPC Secretariat made significant efforts to strengthen its partnership with Regional Plant Protection Organizations (RPPOs). The Secretariat met with RPPOs represented at CPM-12 and followed up with virtual meetings. Preparations are well underway with EPPO for the hosting arrangements for the annual technical consultation (TC) among RPPOs. Seven IPPC Regional Workshops are planned with each Secretariat team leader responsible for running one Regional Workshop. The IPPC Secretariat continued to work with RPPOs and FAO decentralized offices and the FAO regional and sub-regional plant protection officers through joint implementation of projects or joint organization of specific activities.

4.5 Partnership and Liaisons

[28] The IPPC Secretariat continued to attend meetings of Technical Working Group of the WTO-STDF, the WTO-SPS Committee, and a conference call for the Biodiversity Liaison Group members. The IPPC Secretariat actively engaged with the Ozone Secretariat for collaboration on issues related to Methyl Bromide. The IPPC Secretariat continuously cooperated with the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) through the working group (WG4) that is drafting the ISO standard called ISO/TC 34/SC 16/ 13484. The IPPC Secretariat closely cooperation with the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization (EPPO) Secretariat, particularly with the IPPC Programme on diagnostic protocols. The IPPC Secretariat also focused on liaisons with FAO offices for continued internal coordination, such as with Food Safety (AGFF), Codex Unit (AGDC) and relevant regional and sub-regional Offices.

[29] In addition, the IPPC Secretariat has been working with CBD on the Joint Work Plan (2017-2020) and with WCO on the MoU for the bilateral cooperation

4.6 Resource Mobilization

[30] The IPPC Secretariat continues to emphasize resource mobilization due to its challenging financial position. An innovative approach for resource mobilization through “Supplementary Contribution” was proposed to the June 2017 Bureau meeting and supported for further discussion at the October SPG. The IPPC Secretariat conducted resource mobilization activities through maintaining and building relationships with donors and partners, especially with EU (DG SANTE, DG TRADE, DG ENV, DG DEVCO), STDF, Australia, Canada, China, France, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, Switzerland, USA, and other international organizations (CBD, WCO, IAEA) and regional organizations. In the first Semester of 2017, the IPPC Secretariat received a record amount of contributions to the IPPC Multi-donor trust fund (USD 853,000; which is 30% more than in 2016 and almost double compared to 2015) provided by Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand and Republic of Korea.

5. Internal Management

5.1 Operational Management

Building upon the operational foundation established in 2015, the IPPC Secretary continues to drive the optimization of processes and procedures through the development of standard operating processes (SOPs) for all Secretariat activities and a focus on increased effective communication and awareness-raising. Central to this are the weekly Core Team Member Meetings (CTMM), the monthly staff briefing meetings, the quarterly IPPC Seminars, the mid-year Secretariat meeting, and the annual Secretariat meeting. In the first Semester of 2017, Ten items on Communication and Advocacy of the IPPC Secretariat were standardised and implemented: a) the renewed IPPC logo, b) the template for visiting cards, c) the email signature template, d) the meeting report cover template, e) the official letter template, f) the documents folder, g) the SOP for Publication Workflow, h) the template for meeting agendas, i) the template for PPT presentations, and j) the template for PEMS Planning.

5.2 Planning and Finance

[31] Substantial financial analysis was conducted to understand how best to address the funding needs determined by planned changes in the IPPC Secretariat. IPPC Secretariat Financial report for 2016 and IPPC Secretariat Work Plan and Budget for 2017 were successfully presented and adopted/noted by CPM-12. The IPPC Secretariat continues to work with SP2 and SP4 for monitoring and reporting the implementation of the IPPC-related projects.

5.3 Human Resources Management

[32] Staff's PEMS were planned and monitored, and staff development plan was approved and implemented. Two professional posts were under process in recruitment, and over staff (i.e. Interims, TAPs, PSAs and Consultants) were recruited for supporting the increased work of the IPPC Secretariat. The daily management of HR issues were closely followed up based on the various requests.

5.4 Teamwork

[33] The annual theme of the IPPC Secretariat for 2017 was set as “Teamwork”, where the work for various task forces was greatly promoted. The task force for resource mobilization (TFRM) successfully put together the IPPC project on the capacity development under the Framework of the FAO-China South-South Cooperation and also put forward a restructured proposal for resources to the European Commission. The task force for communication and advocacy (TFCA) managed to increase the visibility of the IPPC with a number of news articles on the web page as well as facilitating the communications efforts of the various components of the IPPC Secretariat.