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COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

Second Session

Rome, 26 – 30 March 2007

Report of the First Meeting of the CPM Informal Working Group on Strategic Planning and Technical Assistance

Agenda Item 10.2.1 of the Provisional Agenda

1. The first meeting of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) Informal Working Group on Strategic Planning and Technical Assistance (SPTA) was convened in Rome on 2-6 October 2006. This report provides a summary of the major topics discussed under the specific Strategic Directions. Items that require decisions by CPM-2 are dealt with in more detail under separate agenda items.

I. Strategic Direction 1: The development, adoption and monitoring of the implementation of ISPMs

2. An update on the status of topics on the standard setting work programme was given, plus a summary of activities to date in 2006. The Secretariat presented a draft Annex 1 of the Rules of Procedure of the CPM on development and adoption of international standards. The fast-track process had been incorporated in the annex and presented side-by-side with the regular process. Some standard setting procedures currently adopted were under revision (such as *Outline of procedures for elaboration of ISPMs*, Report of ICPM-2, Appendix VII), and the revised annex was drafted to reflect the redrafted procedures. SPTA agreed that the proposed annex would be the framework for the standard setting process.

3. The Secretariat introduced three topics areas for phytosanitary treatments to be added to the work programme by CPM-2 (2007). It was agreed that if a technical panel (TP) wanted to suggest a topic for a standard outside their particular subject area, the SPTA would evaluate that as in the normal process, but as treatments were within the subject area of the TP, the SC could determine their applicability to the work programme. It was agreed that at each session the CPM should be informed of the standard setting work programme, including topics that the SC had approved for TPs.

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II. Strategic Direction 2: Information exchange

4. Regional International Phytosanitary Portal (IPP)/Information Exchange workshops had progressed well in the past 12 months with the only regions not to have received training being the Near East (due to funding restrictions and translation of the IPP into the Arabic) and North America. There had been a significant improvement in maintaining and updating national contact point information albeit there was still room for further improvement.
5. A very significant proportion of the programme was ongoing and there was concern that the current Secretariat resource constraints would have a negative impact on the use and value of the IPP and the CPM information exchange work programme. Momentum had been reached in the IPP usage and needed to be maintained.
6. A number of countries had entered data in the IPP and the Secretariat was beginning to refine data extraction procedures. However, it was obvious that some countries had not utilized the IPP.
7. The proposed detailed CPM information exchange work programme was presented to the SPTA. It was based on that presented to the previous meeting in 2005 as many of the topics were ongoing and/or updated annually. The Secretariat noted that the work programme would be adjusted as and when resources became available.

III. Strategic Direction 3: The provision of dispute settlement mechanisms

8. The Dispute Settlement Manual and advocacy document had been finalised. The Dispute Settlement Manual had been published on the IPP and funding was being sought from FAO to translate and publish paper copies.
9. The FAO legal department had reviewed the Dispute Settlement Manual and had recommended that activities undertaken by FAO in the past that could be determined as being IPPC dispute settlement activities be highlighted in the document.
10. Amended Rules of Procedures for the Subsidiary Body on Dispute Settlement (SBDS) were discussed and agreed. The SPTA unanimously agreed that holding the SBDS in the 5 FAO languages was neither practical nor cost effective given the current severe resource constraints and the size of the SBDS. The reference to the Rules of procedure of the CPM in the Rules of procedure of the SBDS was removed as a number of the CPM provisions did not apply operationally to the SBDS.
11. The SPTA discussed an IPPC compliance mechanism based on the information paper presented to CPM-1 (2006). It was agreed to use savings from the existing work programme to arrange for an open ended working group (OEWG) on the subject in 2007. Draft terms of reference for the OEWG were discussed and finalized.

IV. Strategic Direction 4: The development of the phytosanitary capacity of members by promoting the provision of technical assistance

12. The importance and positive feedback relating to the regional workshops on draft ISPMs were noted and the in-kind assistance from the Republic of Korea, USA, Cook Islands and Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture were acknowledged. Japan was looking to increase the sanitary and phytosanitary capacity in Asian countries and was planning to place a full time officer in Bangkok (who would also cover zoosanitary and food safety) and an officer in Rome.
13. An informal working group (IWG) on the review of the PCE tool was scheduled to meet in December and would include the study undertaken by CAB-International. The IWG would

review and update the current modules of the PCE, consider possibilities for further updating of the PCE and consider maintenance and updating issues with respect to incorporating new ISPMs.

V. Strategic Direction 5: The maintenance of an effective and efficient administrative framework

A. RULES OF PROCEDURE AND TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE SPTA AND BUREAU

14. The SPTA (including a FAO legal officer) considered the revision of Rule II.1 (Officers) of the Rules of Procedure of the CPM. The SPTA agreed that the Commission should elect a Chairperson and not more than two Vice-Chairpersons and other persons from among the delegates to form a Bureau of seven persons, so that each FAO region was represented. The term of office would be for two years and the main purpose would be to provide guidance to the CPM on the strategic direction and financial and operational management of its activities. The meetings of the Bureau would not be open-ended and the Bureau would set its own rules of procedure. The SPTA suggested that the “additional” members of the Bureau be elected with the new Chair and Vice-chairpersons at CPM-3 (2008). It was noted that “from among the delegates” meant that the intended members of the Bureau would have to be present at the CPM at the time of election.

15. Terms of reference for the Bureau were incorporated into the revision to Rule II.1.

16. The SPTA agreed that the SPTA should continue and be kept informal until such a time that the effectiveness of the “enlarged” Bureau could be evaluated. It was recommended that the membership include the Bureau, the Chairpersons of the two CPM subsidiary bodies and other interested persons from contracting parties. There would be no observers and all representatives would be present on an equal basis.

B. UPDATE OF THE 2006 BUDGET (FAO REGULAR PROGRAMME AND TRUST FUNDS)

17. The Secretariat was working on the understanding that the IPPC could not carry unspent FAO Regular Programme funds forward into 2007. It was continually tracking the actual costs against budgeted costs with the view to using any potential FAO Regular Programme surplus to implement programmes that had been put on hold at the start of the year due to lack of funding.

18. The SPTA discussed the funding and utilization of the FAO regional plant protection officers. Part of the FAO IPPC budget was allocated to the salaries and activities of the seven officers and this had been shown in the budget. The activities undertaken in 2006 would be recorded in the Secretariat report to CPM-2 and future Bureau meetings could determine areas in which the officers could most usefully assist.

C. REVISED BUSINESS/STRATEGIC PLAN

19. The Secretariat presented the draft business plan for the CPM. The Bureau had reviewed the strategic directions at their June 2006 meeting and with the assistance of the Secretariat had revised the business plan, which included the strategic plan. A broad approach had been taken, with the idea that the business plan would be used for several different target audiences both within and outside FAO, and within and outside the CPM. The business plan included an introduction and overview of the IPPC, CPM and strategic goals covering a five year period. It was intended that an operational plan with an associated budget would be developed on an annual basis.

20. The SPTA made various modifications to the document. Suggestions were also made to include mention of the in-kind contributions (for workshops, peoples’ time, etc.) and a brief analysis of the current staffing practices and situation. It was noted that the resources for the

standard setting programme did not include input into standard implementation (part of Goal 1) and that a note needed to be made to that effect.

21. With regard to technical assistance, the question was raised as to how much the Secretariat needed to be involved and that FAO regional plant protection officers could be more involved. The SPTA believed that it was important for the Secretariat to know what was going on in order to avoid duplication.

22. The SPTA recognised the need for the extra staff to meet the requirements of the business plan and the associated need for extra finance. It was recalled that currently, especially in connection with the standard setting process, much of the work was carried out by stewards (at least the equivalent of 2 full time staff), a consultant and a contract employee.

D. PROPOSED UPDATE OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN IN RELATION TO TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

23. The SPTA considered the modifications proposed by the Informal Working Group on Technical Assistance (IWG-TA) and the Informal Working Group on Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation (IWG-PCE) that had been referred to it by CPM-1 (2006). The SPTA noted the value of the paper in identifying the range of technical assistance activities required by developing countries. However many of the activities identified the Secretariat as being the means of implementation, which posed resource problems.

24. It was agreed that the Secretariat would consider what aspects could go into the 2007 operational plan and that the document be reconsidered by the IWGs to ascertain what activities should be coordinated through the Secretariat, and what could be done by FAO regional plant protection officers and donors, as many of the projects could be bilateral. The SPTA felt that the role of the Secretariat should be facilitation (i.e. regional, global).

E. DRAFT 2007 OPERATIONAL PLAN/PRIORITIZATION OF ACTIVITIES FOR 2007

25. The SPTA considered the list of planned activities and the associated budget prepared by the Secretariat. Income was estimated at approximately US\$ 3.15 million based on FAO Regular Programme (RP) of US\$2.3 million, European Commission US\$ 0.25million, IPPC Trust fund carryover of US\$ 0.35 million and USA Associate Professional Officer programme of US\$ 0.25 million. The staff cost was calculated on the current 2006 level of US\$ 1.076 million.

26. The total cost for the projected ideal programme (staff and non-staff) was US\$ 4.33 million giving an unfavourable variance of US\$ -1.16 million. After prioritization of activities, the total cost was reduced to US\$ 3.5 million, giving an unfavourable variance of US\$ -0.33 million, which was approximately 10%. Due to the uncertainty of income, some planned 2007 activities being funded from the 2006 budget and further possible additions from the FAO Regular Programme and in-kind contributions, the SPTA recommended that a 10% variance in budget was a reasonable approach to budgeting for the future work programme. The Secretariat would track the financial system closely and modify activities to be implemented or otherwise accordingly.

27. Notable reductions in planned activities of the IPPC Secretariat as a consequence of the prioritisation exercise included reductions in the number of standard setting expert working groups, only having the SC Working Group (SC-7) meet in May 2007 instead of the full SC, reduction in the funding available for regional workshops to review draft ISPMs, and a reduction in the planned assessments and follow-ups of the IPP workshops.

F. FUNDING THE ACTIVITIES OF THE IPPC

28. The Secretariat presented a paper on the funding of other organisations, i.e. the International Seed Testing Association (ISTA), the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the Rotterdam Convention. For ISTA, each member laboratory had to pay an annual

membership fee of US\$ 3,000/laboratory. Members had to pay for the services of ISTA (e.g. accreditation, meetings) which were calculated on a cost covering basis and for their own attendance. ISTA did not provide translation services.

29. The OIE used a category system where contributions were calculated according to which of six different categories a State may choose to be registered. The annual total contribution was defined and for each State consisted of the basic annual contribution plus an additional complementary annual contribution fixed by the OIE International Committee.

30. For the Rotterdam Convention, the financial rules for the Conference of the Parties, its Subsidiary Bodies and Convention Secretariat detailed the contributions, which consisted of assessed contributions made each year by parties on the basis of an indicative scale adopted by consensus by the Conference of the Parties, and voluntary contributions made by parties including those made by the Government(s) hosting the Convention Secretariat.

31. The SPTA, joined by an FAO legal officer, discussed both voluntary assessed contributions and fees. The SPTA believed that collection of fees would not be practical, as the infrastructure in most instances would cost more to administer and maintain than the amount collected. The FAO legal officer said that as countries already contributed to FAO, and the IPPC was part of FAO, the only solution was to voluntarily contribute to the IPPC trust fund, or contribute in-kind. Collecting funds through voluntary assessed contributions was supported by several SPTA members.

G. ROLE OF NON-CONTRACTING PARTIES IN IPPC ACTIVITIES

32. The SPTA noted that one member of the Standards Committee was from a non-contracting party (the person had been nominated by their FAO regional group). There was nothing in the Rules of Procedure of the CPM that prevented a person from a non-contracting party from taking part and FAO would be obliged to provide support to relevant meetings if requested. The Secretariat noted that non-contracting parties had no voting rights and any comments on draft ISPMs could be put aside.

H. DEVELOPMENT OF CRITERIA FOR THE SELECTION OF RECIPIENTS OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO ATTEND IPPC MEETINGS

33. The Secretariat suggested that an amount of funding be allocated to a specific meeting and that prioritization of funding for attendance be undertaken using the World Bank classification scheme (based on gross national income per capita). Depending on the funds allocated for the particular meeting, the Secretariat would approve assistance for the least developed country representative upwards until the funds were exhausted.

34. It was agreed that there should be no set rules. A flexible guideline should be developed and used as needed. If required for a particular meeting, the Secretariat would apply the guidelines under the auspices of the Bureau. The flexible guideline could take into account: no assisted funding for OECD countries for attendance at IPPC related meetings; possibility for shared funding (e.g. pay for flights only and not for DSA); consideration of the size of an economy; and poorest countries. The process should be internal, albeit transparency should exist.

I. GUIDANCE FOR FAO REGIONS ON REGIONAL PROCEDURES FOR SELECTING CPM SUBSIDIARY BODY MEMBERS

35. At CPM-1 (2006), all subsidiary bodies were re-established and new members confirmed. The process allowed for the chair of each FAO region to coordinate with countries to find suitable nominations and replacements. However, since there was no formal process in place so there was little guidance for FAO regions to carry out this task. It was thought that optional guidelines could be drafted and supplied to assist the nomination process.

36. The SPTA felt that optional guidelines were not necessary. Since the regions had not expressed concern, it was thought that the matter was best left until concerns were raised.

J. DEVELOPMENT OF A DECLARATION OF INTERESTS AND STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT FOR SUBSIDIARY AND AD-HOC BODIES

37. The Director General of FAO had introduced a directive stating that all experts attending FAO meetings needed to sign a Declaration of Interests form. In the future, nominees for and members of subsidiary bodies and other working groups would need to sign the declaration at least 21 days prior to the meeting. It was agreed that if someone refused to sign the form they could be denied attendance at the meeting. The SPTA noted the form, which would be used in the future.

38. A Statement of Commitment form, for nominees to subsidiary bodies, expert working groups, technical panels and other IPPC meetings (except the CPM), was also introduced. The form was intended to ensure that both the nominees and their superiors were aware of the nominations and work involved in participating in the bodies. The SPTA agreed to the use of the form.

K. REVISION OF CPM ROPs RULE VII ON OBSERVERS, TO ALLOW CONTRACTING PARTIES TO SEND OBSERVERS TO MEETINGS OF SUBSIDIARY BODIES

39. Rule 7 of the Rules of Procedure for the SC on observers referred to Rule VII of the Rules of Procedure of the CPM, also on observers. As a result, subsidiary bodies, such as the Standards Committee, could not have contracting parties attend as observers. To rectify this, the Secretariat suggested adding an additional point to Rule VII of the Rules of Procedure of the CPM indicating that contracting parties could request to attend subsidiary bodies as observers.

L. INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION OF PEST FREE AREAS

40. CPM-1 requested that the Secretariat undertake a survey of members on the use and challenges associated with the implementation of pest free areas (PFAs) as there was little information on their use as a phytosanitary measure. The CPM felt that more information was required before it could make a decision on further work on the international recognition of PFAs. Replies to the survey had been received from all FAO regions and covered a wide range of pests and host material. The deadline of 30 September 2006 was extended to 30 November 2006 as a number of countries were still collecting information.

41. The SPTA agreed that for the purpose of reporting to CPM-2, countries should not be identified individually and data kept general. The SPTA recommended that the working group on the international recognition of PFAs proceed.

VI. Strategic Direction 6: Promotion of the IPPC and cooperation with relevant international organizations

42. The Secretariat outlined the main areas for cooperation in 2006 which included: International Forestry Quarantine Research Group, International Seed Testing Association, Montreal Protocol, WTO-SPS Committee, Standards and Trade Development Facility and Convention on Biological Diversity. Informal ongoing liaison was maintained with the World Organisation for Animal Health and Codex Alimentarius. The Secretariat noted the very full programme being handled and the difficulty with some follow up, particularly with the ISTA symposium and CBD/IPPC joint work plan.

43. The SPTA discussed the activities of the informal working group on liaison with research and education institutes. There was broad support for the objectives of the programme. However,

it was strongly felt that a more focused proposal needed to be provided to CPM-2 with specific objectives, time frames and resource implications.

VII. Specific topics outside the Strategic Directions

A. INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS RELATED TO INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES

44. The Parties to the CBD agreed in 2004 to explore gaps and inconsistencies in the international regulatory framework for invasive alien species and an expert group met and made a number of observations and recommendations. The CBD Secretariat was interested in collecting the views of the IPPC Secretariat, Bureau, etc. In discussing the issue, the SPTA felt that individual countries would already have means of ensuring border control against the gaps identified, albeit such control may not necessarily be covered by phytosanitary legislation.

45. The SPTA agreed that it would be useful to invite the Secretariat of the CBD to give a presentation at an evening session of CPM-2. This would allow individual CPM members to put forward their views and give possible guidance for further involvement by the IPPC Secretariat and Bureau.

B. CAB-INTERNATIONAL

46. A study was being undertaken by CAB-International on the phytosanitary capacity evaluation (PCE) tool. CAB-International sought clarification from the SPTA regarding phytosanitary capacity and the objectives of phytosanitary capacity evaluation. The SPTA decided that the informal working group (IWG) on the PCE should consider the questions when it reviewed the draft report of the CAB-International study in December 2006. The final report would be presented at CPM-2 in 2007 with recommendations.

C. UPDATE ON THE CARIBBEAN AGRICULTURAL, HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY AGENCY

47. The SPTA was updated on the status of the regional plant protection organization in the Caribbean. The proposed structure and function of the Caribbean Agricultural, Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA) was described. The goal of CAHFSA was to facilitate increased safe production, consumption and trade in plants, animals and their products and should be operational by 1 June 2007. The Caribbean Community Secretariat would assist in coordinating IPPC matters in the region and regional representation in the international fora, in the interim.

48. The SPTA identified some issues that needed to be resolved, including whether CAHFSA would take over the RPPO functions of the current Caribbean Plant Protection Commission and, if so, the need for recognition by the CPM and the membership of the RPPO.

D. IPPC EVALUATION

49. The Evaluation team leader informed the SPTA that the evaluation was about one third completed. A long questionnaire had been sent to all contracting parties and a draft report on the IPPC evaluation would be presented to CPM-2, for discussion and comment. The SPTA also addressed a number of questions in connection with the evaluation.