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COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

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Trade Facilitation Action Plan
Agenda item 11.7
Prepared by the IPPC Secretariat

1. During the October 2017 meeting of the Strategic Planning Group (SPG), the SPG endorsed the draft Trade Facilitation Action Plan (attached) for submission and approval by the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) in April 2018.
2. The Trade Facilitation Action Plan is a product of research and review into the best means for Contracting Parties to implement the Trade Facilitation Agreement of the World Trade Organization, as well as to improve efforts to facilitate trade in general.
3. The CPM is invited to:
 - 1) *approve* the Trade Facilitation Action Plan for 2018-2020

Trade Facilitation Action Plan

2018 – 20

I. Description

1. The World Trade Organization (WTO) Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) was ratified on 22 February 2017. The Agreement prescribes the rights and obligations on signatories to harmonise border actions to facilitate the movement of goods. The World Customs Organization (WCO) has taken the lead in facilitating the global implementation of the TFA.
2. Activities of National Plant Protection Organisations (NPPOs) to implement their commitments under the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) will intersect with those of other border agencies, particularly around the inspection and clearance of goods, passengers, mail and courier parcels.
3. The TFA includes elements that are already practiced or under development by the IPPC. These include risk-based intervention, authorization of third parties, e-commerce, electronic transmission of phytosanitary certificates (ePhyto) and systems approaches (safe or trusted traders). The international movement of sea containers is of common interest to many countries.
4. The IPPC Bureau agreed in June 2017 that a summary of the TFA, with an IPPC Action Plan for the next 3 years be drafted for discussion by the Strategic Planning Group in October 2017 and this has taken place. Following the SPG discussions, the plan has been prepared for review and approval by the CPM. The plan will direct implementation of the TFA with regards to ecommerce, ePhyto, sea containers, the IPPC-WCO Cooperation Agreement and collaboration in capacity building. The plan will culminate in an IPPC-hosted 2020 conference/symposium to be dedicated to plant health and the implementation of the TFA.

II. Strategic context/alignment

5. This action plan draws on the draft Strategic Framework 2020 – 2030. It incorporates actions and outcomes through 2018 to 2020 for new or existing projects including ePhyto, eCommerce, risk based inspection and activities of the Sea Container Task Force.

III. Outcomes

6. This action plan will give visibility to activities that are undertaken by the IPPC, alone and potentially in collaboration with the WCO, to facilitate safe trade in plants and plant products, to reduce the international spread of pests.

1. *IPPC-WCO Cooperation Agreement*

7. The Cooperation Agreement between the Secretariats of the IPPC and WCO will be signed in the near future. It promotes cooperation on matters of common interest that help facilitate the international trade of plants and plant products in a safe and efficient manner. It supports the exchange of documents and publications, and information on events and activities that may be of mutual interest, and provides a platform for regular consultation on policy issues. Each organization will participate as an observer at relevant meetings or events and may also agree to engage in joint activities in accordance with internal regulations and rules and subject to available resources.

8. A joint action plan will be developed and agreed in 2018. This will likely include:

- Joint recognition of roles and opportunities to facilitate trade at a global level, with specific reference to the outcomes directed by the TFA

- Collaboration in the development and implementation of capacity building activities of common interest, to include training on the principles and implementation of risk-based inspection schemes.
- IPPC participation in the Safety and Security subgroup facilitated by WCO to support the global implementation of the TFA and any other relevant forums
- Collaboration to support implementation of this action plan, particularly the recognition of ePhyto in the development of single window systems, access to data systems in support of the tracking and recording of clean sea containers and shared activities with courier service providers to reduce the global movement of regulated plants and plant products through ecommerce

2. *ePhyto*

9. The IPPC ePhyto Hub will facilitate multilateral electronic certificate exchanges based upon a single communication protocol, eliminating the cost and complexity of bilateral exchange protocols. A simple generic web-based system (GeNS) to issue, send and receive electronic phytosanitary certificates, for those countries that do not have an existing national system, is also being developed for global implementation. Ultimately, the combination of these two systems, known as ‘the ePhyto solution’, will make it easier for countries - especially those with limited resources - to exchange electronic phytosanitary certificates.

10. Priority areas for the development and integration of ePhyto in trade are harmonization, collaboration, implementation and sustainability. Actions for 2018 – 20 are:

- Completion of the STDF project, proof of concept of hub and GeNS
- Guidance for implementation, e.g. legislation, technical specifications, operating model, capacity development and business process change tools
- ePhyto business model, including funding options
- Implementation targets
- An International Symposium in 2020
- Collaboration with World Bank – integration with single window concepts through global partnerships (WB and WCO)
- Consideration of expanding the scope of the hub to include eSPS certificates (animal health, food safety)

3. *eCommerce*

11. In April 2017, the twelfth meeting of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures held a special topics session on eCommerce and requested the Bureau to develop a way forward in the June 2017 meeting, including resource considerations. Following a teleconference on eCommerce with a number of organisations, it became evident that a lack of knowledge on phytosanitary import and export regulations amongst stakeholders plays a major role in non-compliance of goods that are purchased on-line.

12. The Bureau agreed [June 2017, Bureau report] that the TFA provided a platform for working through eCommerce issues and suggested the following actions:

- Prepare a concise factsheet on eCommerce addressed to NPPOs
- Collate a contact list of stakeholders/websites involved in eCommerce in cooperation with the United States of America NPPO, to be posted on the IPP on restricted pages
- Contact other eCommerce players, like Amazon to raise the importance of the issue
- Engage the Universal Postal Union in cooperation
- Draft standardized information for those stakeholders with a list of key commodities that are commonly regulated, and advice to contact relevant NPPO

- Consider adopting a common set of Harmonized System codes (International Convention on the Harmonized System) for global application to detect consignments of commonly traded regulated articles purchased on-line, which present a high phytosanitary risk
- Participate in the WCO subgroups for traders representing different stages in trade chains – the IPPC ICDC to select champions for watch topic or use FAO Representatives
- Create an umbrella work programme on eCommerce, ePhyto, PCE, etc. with the World Bank and the 3 sisters, organize an additional IPPC Seminar during the 2018 SPG with the World Bank after which a review of developments and additional concrete actions should be discussed by the Bureau
- Prepare a joint publication with WCO based on the WCO manual on eCommerce.

13. An ad hoc working group could be convened to establish a work plan and coordinate these and other activities that develop an harmonised global approach for reducing the entry of regulated plants and plant products through mail and parcel courier services from on-line purchasing. The work plan might include:

- A list of commonly regulated goods
- Harmonisation of HS codes for these goods
- A framework for international cooperation with on-line traders
- A formal collaboration mechanism with couriers
- Common communications and advice packages for NPPOs to assist in addressing the phytosanitary issues arising from eCommerce
- A collaborative approach with WCO for sharing intelligence and establishing harmonised or consistent actions in relation to areas of common interest.

4. *Sea Container Task Force*

14. At the twelfth meeting of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures in April 2017, the CPM agreed a "set of complementary actions", which offer value in assessing and managing the pest threats associated with sea containers. The actions complement the implementation of the IMO/ILO/UNECE CTU Code and CPM Recommendation 10/2015_01 on Sea Containers to address the risks of sea containers being contaminated and introducing pests and diseases to new areas as they move in trade.

15. Central to the Complementary Action Plan endorsed by the CPM is the Sea Container Task Force (SCTF), which will operate under the oversight of the CPM Implementation and Capacity Development Committee (IC). The SCTF will measure the impact of the IMO/ILO/UNECE Code of Practice for Packing of Cargo Transport Units (CTU Code) during the next five years, increase awareness of pest risks of sea containers and facilitate the collection and sharing of information to assist NPPOs better manage these risks.

16. The SCTF will supervise actions in the Sea Container Complementary Action Plan and complement them with any other actions through:

- providing information on pest risks of sea containers and their management;
- coordinating with CPs, RPPOs, industry and other international organizations;
- establishing a mechanism for CPs to report to CPM on their progress and achievements;
- providing advice on how the CTU Code or any other instrument could be updated;
- providing, through the CDC/IC, updates on its activities to be presented annually to the CPM, as well as a final report for presentation to CPM-16 (2021).

17. A five year action plan of the SCTF was developed in November 2017 at its first meeting. However, there are several areas where the implementation of the SC Action Plan potentially connect with the WCO. This includes access to the container database maintained by the WCO to record container maintenance and safety; integrating any proposed programs to better manage container hygiene at sea ports with Customs operations; identifying and using any shared communications and/or messaging with national governments for safe and secure movement of sea containers.

5. *International Trade Facilitation Conference 2020*

18. An IPPC hosted conference/symposium in 2020 that is dedicated to plant health and the implementation of the TFA will provide a focal point for short to medium term outcomes that may be included in the joint IPPC-WCO Cooperation Agreement, as well as providing a mechanism to assess the current status and future directions of programs such as ePhyto, eCommerce and sea containers.

19. The conference in 2020 could be recognised as an element of the global focus on plant health and trade facilitation in the International Year of Plant Health and one of the strategic outcomes of the IPPC.

IV. Benefits

20. The outcomes sought will contribute to harmonising management of phytosanitary risks in the interests of facilitating trade, along with establishing a collaboration platform with other border agencies, particularly Customs.

V. Approach

21. This action plan will provide the frame of reference for activities that will contribute the effective implementation of the TFA in collaboration with other border agencies, including Customs.

VI. Products

22. Products developed from priority activities in the lead up to proposed the September 2020 International Trade Facilitation Conference are as follows:

<u>Action</u>	<u>Who</u>	<u>When</u>
1 <i>IPPC-WCO Cooperation Agreement</i>	Secretariat	2018
<i>Joint work plan</i>		July 2018
2 <i>ePhyto</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hub prototype available for piloting • GeNS prototype available for piloting • International Symposium • Hub – go live • GeNS – go live • ePhyto business model • Expansion of country participation • Scope expansion of Hub to eSPS 	ePhyto Steering Group	October 2017 June/July 2018 January 2018 Mid-late 2018 late 2018 2019 Ongoing
3 <i>eCommerce</i>	Bureau	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft project plan • Convene ad hoc working group 		February 2018 May 2018

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and implement work program. Activities may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A list of commonly regulated goods ○ Harmonisation of HS codes for these goods ○ International cooperation framework with on-line traders ○ Formal relationship with couriers - possibly through the Global Express Association ○ Common communications and advice packages ○ Collaborative approach with WCO for harmonisation, common elements and approach re intelligence sharing 	Ad hoc working group June 2018
4 <i>Sea Container Task Force</i>	SCTF
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the 5-year work plan agreed in November 2017 	Per work plan
5 <i>International Trade Facilitation Conference</i>	Secretariat
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek expressions of interest to host the conference • Establish a coordination committee • Formulate program 	September 2020 (tbc) May 2018 July 2018 September 2019

VII. Dependencies

23. A number of activities are integrated into existing or developing projects. Delivery of trade facilitation outcomes may be dependent on completion of these projects. Similarly, a number of activities will be dependent on availability of extra-budgetary resources and relevant expertise.

VIII. Risks

Description	Treatment
Lack of available resources	Extra-budgetary resources required, identify and engage with non-traditional funding sources eg. World Bank and others
Shortage of available expertise	Develop strategic partnerships with other organisations with a common interest in facilitating trade eg. Exporters, other regulators, transport industry

IX. Budget

		Proposed Expenditure (USD)		
		Year – 2018 - 2020		
	Source	2018	2019	2020
IPPC-WCO Cooperation Agreement				
Joint work plan	Secretariat	US\$15000	US\$15000	US\$15000
ePhyto				
[Insert proposed activities]	STDF and extra-budgetary	US\$540000	US\$540000	US\$540000
eCommerce				
[Insert proposed activities]	Extra-budgetary	US\$30000	US\$30000	US\$30000
Sea Container Task Force				
As agreed in the SCTF work plan	Extra-budgetary	US\$25000	US\$25000	US\$25000
International Trade Facilitation Conference				
Planning and organising Conference	Extra-budgetary	In-kind	50,000	200,000
Total		US\$610,000	US\$660,000	US\$810,000

X. Governance

24. The Bureau will oversee actions in the work plan, and a summary report will be provided in the Secretariat annual report. More detail on actions are provided to CPM through the specific projects.