Trade Facilitation Action Plan

1. At its meeting in October 2017, the Strategic Planning Group (SPG) endorsed the draft Trade Facilitation Action Plan (TFAP) for submission to CPM-13 for approval. The link to the CPM paper is <https://www.ippc.int/static/media/files/publication/en/2018/03/34_CPM_April_2018_Trade_facilitation_ActionPlan-2018-03-14.pdf>.
2. The TFAP brings together a number of existing and proposed priorities that facilitate safe trade and reflects implementation elements of the Trade Facilitation Agreement of the World Trade Organization.
3. CPM was reminded that ePhyto and SCTF are funded, whereas e-Commerce and the International Trade Facilitation Conference need project proposals developed and funding identified. Contracting parties requested more time to consider the subject and that the draft TFA be presented for review and discussion at the next SPG meeting in October 2018.
4. The Bureau briefly discussed the draft TFAP during its pre-CPM meeting in April 2018. Some concerns were noted regarding the scope and intent of actions proposed for e-Commerce and it was agreed that the TFAP would be updated when this had been considered further.
5. The e-Commerce project work plan and budget has been drafted and has been incorporated into the revised TFAP for Bureau and SPG consideration in October 2018. Relevant elements of the draft IPPC Strategic Framework 2020-2030 and the associated draft 5-year investment plan have also been incorporated into this amended draft TFAP.
6. The Bureau and SPG are invited to:
7. *Discuss* the revised draft TFAP and
8. *Agree* that the TFAP is presented to CPM-14 in 2019 for adoption.

Attachment 1

**Trade Facilitation Action Plan 2020 – 2021**

**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 was completed. Following the SPG discussions, the plan has been prepared for review and approval by the CPM. The plan directs 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 2021 conference/symposium to be dedicated to plant health and the implementation of the TFA.

**II. Strategic context/alignment**

1. This action plan provides a summary of IPPC activities that facilitate safe trade. It draws on the draft Strategic Framework 2020 – 2030 and 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**

1. 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***

1. The Cooperation Agreement between the Secretariats of the IPPC and WCO was signed on 19 June 2018. 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.
2. A joint action plan will be developed and agreed in late 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***

1. 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.
2. Priority areas for the development and integration of ePhyto in trade are harmonization, collaboration, implementation and sustainability. Actions to 2021 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
* CPM adoption of a five year implementation plan (2019 – 2023), including development and implementation of an ePhyto business model, including funding options
* Implementation targets
* An International Symposium in 2020
* Collaboration with the World Bank including 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. e-Commerce***

1. In April 2017, the twelfth meeting of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures held a special topics session on e-Commerce and requested the Bureau to develop a way forward in the June 2017 meeting, including resource considerations. Following a teleconference on e-Commerce 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.
2. The Bureau agreed [June 2017, Bureau report] that the TFA provided a platform for working through e-Commerce issues and a range of actions.
3. The IPPC e-Commerce Project Work Plan and Budget (e-Commerce plan) has been developed to coordinate international efforts to address the spread of pests and pest host material sold through e-Commerce and distributed through mail and courier pathways. This objective is aligned with those of the IPPC Strategic Framework 2020 – 2030.
4. The implementation of the e-Commerce plan through collaborative partnerships between NPPOs, the IPPC Secretariat and WCO Secretariats and commercial operators involved in e-Commerce will demonstrably reduce the incidence of pests and other phytosanitary risks on and in goods traded through e-Commerce. Key outcomes include:

* The phytosanitary risks associated with e-Commerce are identified and defined
* NPPOs and relevant stakeholders are informed of these risks
* Measures that NPPOs can take to raise awareness in the public and e-Commerce participants of risks from on-line trading and the responsibilities that these stakeholders have to comply with laws to protect crop/food production, natural environment and trade, are identified and described
* IPPC activities link with and ultimately support a multidisciplinary and integrated approach across NPPOs, Customs and other relevant government agencies to facilitate safe trade via e-Commerce transactions.

1. An ad hoc working group, known as the e-Commerce Task Force (ECTF), will be established to direct, supervise and direct the implementation of the e-Commerce plan. It will benefit from a coordinator to support and drive the activities of the ECTF and requires sufficient resources to cover IPPC Secretariat costs including staffing resources. All resources must be extra-budgetary.

***4. Sea Container Task Force***

1. 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.
2. Central to the Complementary Action Plan endorsed by the CPM is the Sea Container Task Force (SCTF), which is operating 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) until 2012, increase awareness of pest risks of sea containers and facilitate the collection and sharing of information to assist NPPOs better manage these risks.
3. The SCTF is supervising actions in the Sea Container Complementary Action Plan and is complementing them with other actions including:

* 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 IC, updates on its activities to be presented annually to the CPM, as well as a final report for presentation to CPM-16 (2021).

1. A five year action plan of the SCTF was developed in November 2017 at its first meeting. 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 2021***

1. An IPPC hosted conference/symposium in 2021that 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, e-Commerce and sea containers.

**IV. Benefits**

1. 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**

1. 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**

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

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Action** | **Who** | **When** |
| 1 | ***IPPC-WCO Cooperation Agreement***  ***Joint work plan*** | Secretariat | June 2018  July 2018 |
| 2 | ***ePhyto***  Hub – go live  GeNS prototype available for piloting  GeNS – go live  ePhyto 5-year plan - draft  International Symposium  Expansion of country participation  Scope expansion of Hub to eSPS | ePhyto Steering Group | Mid- 2018  Late- 2018  Early – mid-2019  October 2018  2020  2019  Ongoing |
| 3 | **eCommerce**  Draft project plan  Convene ad hoc working group  Implement the agreed work programme | Bureau | October 2018  May 2019  Ongoing |