Constrains to participation in and response to IPPC activities.

(Prepared by the IPPC Secretariat with input from the Bureau)

Background

1. The Bureau at their June 2019 meeting noted that there is a continuous lack of participation in and response to IPPC activities by contracting parties. It thus suggested that the IPPC Secretariat prepare a paper on why there is limited engagement from contracting parties and NPPOs and suggest possible ways to address it.
2. The IPPC Secretariat has found it increasingly difficult to engage participants in some IPPC Secretariat organized activities. Some steps have been taken to motivate experts (Certificates, acknowledgements of experts in CPM reports, etc.) and the IPPC Secretariat introduced mandatory statement of commitments, but the problem persists. Regrettably, the continued lack of sufficient participation, especially in view of increasing threats to plant health globally is significantly diminishing the ability of the IPPC Community to play the designated role of the protector of plant health. This is a critical issue, especially in view of the fact that International Year of Plant Health (IYPH) is intended to put a spotlight on plant health, while at the same time a lack of participation in critical activities by representatives of IPPC Contracting Parties and/or NPPOs increasingly gives the appearance of their lack of interest and commitment.
3. While some of the work can be described as not as interesting as some would like, it nevertheless is an important part of protecting plant health. Lack of participation also means that if decisions taken within the IPPC framework are not acceptable by some contracting parties, and they did not participate in making them while having the opportunity to do so, obviates accepting any negative comments from them in an adoption or acceptance exercise. Participation in activities also ensures that all contracting parties keep abreast with new and ongoing issues discussed at global level.
4. This paper presents some examples of lack of participation, some brainstormed ideas for the possible reasons why and suggests some possible solutions to enhance active participation in IPPC activities.
5. Examples:
6. Response to some e-Decisions in some committees are very low.
7. Continuous soliciting is needed for experts to submit discussion papers for some of the working groups.
8. Some experts come to meetings without reading papers beforehand and are unprepared for discussions.
9. Calls generally have a low response, in particular:
   1. Calls for resources on the IPP rarely result in contributions (eg ISPM guide, e-Commerce, Surveillance);
   2. Calls for case studies on the use of IPPC guides resulted in zero response;
   3. Calls, when responded to, are usually nominations from the same countries;
   4. Call for experts for the Implementation and Capacity Development (IC) Sub-group on Dispute Settlement and Avoidance resulted in only two nominations were received;
   5. Nominations submitted to the Secretariat are incomplete and require repeated follow up, with no response in some cases.
10. The recent survey conducted by the IPPC Secretariat on Monitoring of Sea Container Cleanliness had a very low response rate for such an important survey. IPPC Guidelines on Sea Container Surveys for NPPOs were developed to assist NPPOs in completing the survey and an IPPC factsheet on the Sea Containers Cleanliness was publish to highlight the importance of this work, yet only on 63 of the 183 contracting parties completed the survey.
11. Some of the reasons for this may be:
12. Poor acknowledgment of contributions of experts.
13. NPPOs are understaffed, existing staff lack time and resources and and have no time to prepare or respond.
14. Some participants may feel they lack the capacity to provide papers, comments or responses.
15. Lack of communication and transfer of information between the IPPC contact point and the CPM participants – when these are not the same officer. IPPC contact point and CPM participants are sometimes also from different ministries (e.g. Ministry for Foreign Affairs vs Ministry responsible for agriculture)
16. IPPC Contact points may be inappropriate for the task of getting participation (i.e., getting the message passed from the very highest authority, in some cases a minister is the IPPC Contact Point, takes too much time and the result is the message never gets to the appropriate recipient).
17. Some countries have poor access to internet and it is difficult to participate in a digital world.
18. Experts have no incentive to participate, their names are not recorded in documents as a contributor and there are no honorariums.
19. High volume of e-mails from IPPC could be that important messages are ignored.
20. Lack of visibility of the importance of our work.
21. Lack of personalized follow-up.
22. IPP is difficult to navigate and find information.
23. You can’t subscribe to calls or announcements on the IPP.
24. IPP e-mail utility might go directly to spam and experts do not received.
25. IPPC Contact point is too high level and has no time to pass information on to appropriate experts or vice versa.
26. The feeling that my contribution does not matter.
27. Experts provide input but do not have feedback, nor can they see how their contribution impacted.
28. The topic is not applicable nationally or regionally.
29. The topic is not a current priority.
30. Governments around the world have less and less resources, so are not able to free up staff to contribute to IPPC Secretariat organized activities.
31. Lack of interest in the topics.
32. Not enough time to respond to calls are not sure when calls will be made.
33. NPPOs may be disorganized or too big to identify the appropriate expert.
34. NPPOs may forgot to nominate experts outside the NPPO.
35. Input from NPPOs may be too frequent, necessitating continuous interruptions to routine work.
36. The outcome of the input is not always clearly understood and also outcome / results take long to be made known.
37. Some suggested solutions:
38. Statement of Commitments need to be more precise with expected commitment.
39. Reorganize the IPP with input from professional web designers making access to information user friendly and quick.
40. Have more personalized follow up, with more reminders
41. Invite SC/IC/Bureau and RPPOs to help disseminate information and follow up, especially for countries in their region.
42. Find resources to do a full analysis of the date on meeting participant and see if there are any significant factors that could be addressed.
43. Discuss this issue further at IPPC Regional Workshops.
44. Circulate calls to a broader audience other than just IPPC contact points.
45. Allow the ability to subscribe to the IPP calls and announcements without being an IPP register user.
46. Have more personal follow up with countries to solicit response to calls
47. Try to be clearer on expectations for participation in SC, IC, Expert groups, Bureau, etc.
48. Assign mentors to countries who do not submit nominations.
49. Assign mentors to all experts selected to participate in meetings.
50. Increase collaboration with NPPOs.
51. CPM clearly defines the role and requirements for IPPC Contact points in order to eliminate at least some bureaucracy
52. The SPG is invited to:

* *Brainstorm* more ideas.
* *Discuss* and determine how to increase participation.
* *Identify* some prioritize solutions and assign various stakeholders (SPG participants, IC member, SC member, Secretariat staff) to try to action them.