Proposal of TC-RPPO virtual meetings

*(Prepared by IPPC Secretariat)*

1. The IPPC Secretariat has organized three informal meetings of RPPOs virtually (May, June, September 2020) since the originally planned Technical Consultation among RPPOs (TC-RPPO) in April 2020 was cancelled. It is unlikely that the next TC-RPPO can be convened as face-to-face meeting in the near future due to the restrictions related to COVID-19. The Article IX of the Convention stipulates that ‘the Secretary will convene regular Technical Consultations of representatives of regional plant protection organizations’ while the current Terms of Reference of TC-RPPO[[1]](#footnote-1) refers to ‘The frequency of meetings shall be annual, normally in the first half of September.’
2. In order to discuss the way forward to ensure the work of the TC-RPPO can be delivered, the IPPC Secretariat would like to propose to hold the TC-RPPO virtually, in one or more sessions starting in October 2020. We have begun to collect possible agenda items that could be discussed and will propose some possible timing for these virtual sessions.

**Possible agenda items that could be discussed at TC-RPPO virtual meeting**

1. **From previous meetings**
   1. **Amendments of Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of TC-RPPO**
2. The 2019 TC-RPPO discussed the proposal of the Terms of Reference (TOR) and Rules of Procedures (ROP) of the TC-RPPO.
3. The current TOR (and rules) of the TC-RPPO was finalized by the 8th TC-RPPO (1996) and submitted to FAO. In their following meeting, 9th TC-RPPO (1997), they were informed that the TOR (and rules) were approved by the organization (FAO) and this was noted in the report of the meeting.
4. Recently the TC-RPPO has proposed to update the TOR (and rules). When doing this, the TC-RPPO should also consider Roles and Functions of RPPOs in their relationship with the CPM[[2]](#footnote-2), which were adopted by CPM-12 (2017). The FAO legal office was consulted on the process for revising the TOR and they advised that once the TC-RPPO discussed and agreed to revisions of the TOR (and rules) they should be forwarded to FAO (via the IPPC Secretariat) for review. FAO would review and revise if needed to ensure they were in line with the rules of the organization and would be feasible. The TOR (and rules) would then be presented back to the TC-RPPO for final approval, noting that all other versions of the TOR (and rules) are superseded. It is recommended that the TC-RPPO approved TOR (and rules) be presented to the CPM for noting.
5. Ms Stephanie Bloem (NAPPO) had prepared a paper on the proposal for the revision of the TOR and ROP of the TC-RPPO, is being reviewed by the FAO legal office in consultation with the IPPC Secretariat. Comments will be submitted to Ms BLOEM and the above describe process will be followed.
   1. **Guidance for new heads of RPPOs to contribute to the IPPC mandate.**
6. Ms Stephanie Bloem (NAPPO) had proposed to prepare a presentation for the 2020 TC-RPPO meeting entitled ‘Ways in which RPPOs have contributed to the IPPC mandate’. This agenda point was added but the meeting was postponed. RPPOs could discuss this and consider developing some guidance for new heads of RPPOs. Some new RPPO representatives expressed an interest in learning how they could better contribute to the activities of the IPPC Community and understand their roles better.
   1. **Emerging pests**
7. In the 30th TC-RPPO (2018), the EPPO representative presented a paper on criteria for emerging pests and it was amended to include comments made during the meeting. The 31st TC-RPPO (2019) tested the model presented in the paper with specific pests selected by RPPOs to evaluate its usefulness/accuracy in setting global and regional priorities for emerging pests. It was concluded that the wording in the decision tree should be adjusted to be suitable for plants as pests as well and it should also incorporate environmental and trade issues. The 31st TC-RPPO (2019) also agreed EPPO, CAHFSA, NEPPO, PPPO and the IPPC Secretariat will improve the wording in the decision tree and subsequently share it with other RPPOs and present it to the next TC-RPPOs.
8. **Part of TC-RPPOs functions**
   1. **Review of ECOWAS’s application to be recognized as an RPPO**
9. The IPPC Secretariat received a request from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to be recognized as an RPPO, in the context of the IPPC. According to the CPM adopted Procedure for the recognition of new RPPOs[[3]](#footnote-3), the request is sent to the CPM Chair and FAO legal reviews and assesses that the organization is a legitimate legal entity (which they have done). The TC-RPPO assesses whether the prospective RPPO meets the criteria set out in the ICPM (CPM) Guidelines for the Recognition of RPPOs. The criteria was recently shared with ECOWAS and they are preparing a submission for review by the TC-RPPOs, this is expected to be submitted within the next few months.
10. **Suggestions from RPPOs**
11. RPPOs were invited to submit proposals for agenda items they would like to have discussed during the TC-RPPO meeting(s). No proposals were received by the deadline.
12. **Suggestions from the IPPC Secretariat**
    1. **Contingency plan to work in emergency situations**
13. The IPPC Secretariat is currently investigating how to ensure there is a contingency plan for the CPM, Bureau, SC and IC in order to ensure their work progresses in unusual situations such as COVID-19. The TC-RPPO will also need to consider a contingency plan to help ensure it is able to continue its work in these types of situations.
    1. **Pest outbreak Alert and Response System.**
14. A CPM Focus Group (FG) was established by the CPM Bureau in July 2020 and the FG will be soon convened to discuss this Developed Agenda (Pest outbreak Alert and Response System) of the IPPC Strategic Framework 2020-2030 and a call for experts for this FG will be issued soon. The TC-RPPO may discuss this topic later in 2021 when the CPM Focus Group would have met.
    1. **Coordination for 2021 Call for topics**
15. The 2020 IPPC Regional Workshops discussed the preparation for the 2021 Call for Topics. The call will be open from 1 May to 30 September 2021 and it was felt that RPPOs could play a key role to gather multi-regional support for submissions, the RPPOs could discuss how to coordinate this.
    1. **Global phytosanitary research coordination: next steps**
16. This is to discuss the next steps to advance the IPPC development agenda on research coordination. It should be noted that the first draft of the paper on “Science diplomacy for plant health” recently published on Nature Plants had been presented at the TC-RPPO. RPPOs are thus co-authors and actually the primary actors of such enterprise and should provide their views on the next steps to be taken in cooperation with the IPPC Secretariat. This topic will primarily be discussed to the next SPG, which the RPPOs are invited to attend.
    1. **National Reporting Obligations and DART tool**
17. This is to follow-up on last year’s TC-RPPO discussion on NROs to present ongoing discussions with UNEP and the Biodiversity Liaison Group (BLG) in relation to testing a common reporting tool for biodiversity-related conventions and other Multi Environmental Agreements and get the views of RPPOs.
    1. **Update on the proposal for the International Day for Plant Health**
18. This is to provide an update of the current status of the proposal and trigger RPPOs concrete support in advancing through the next stages until its sought proclamation.

**TC-RPPO virtual sessions**

1. Based on these possible agenda items, the IPPC Secretariat would like to propose that the TC-RPPO could be held virtually in three sessions (other sessions could be held if needed):
2. **30 October 2020** to discuss

* Contingency plan to work in emergency situations
* Update on the proposal for the International Day for Plant Health
* Emerging pests
* Global phytosanitary research coordination: next steps
* National Reporting Obligations and DART tool

1. **27 November 2020** to discuss**:**

* Amendments to Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of TC-RPPO

1. **29 January 2021** to discuss:

* Pest outbreak Alert and Response System (after Focus Group meeting)
* Review of ECOWAS’s application to be recognized as an RPPO (once package submitted)
* Guidance for new heads of RPPOs to contribute to the IPPC mandate
* Coordination for 2021 Call for topics

1. RPPOs are invited to:

* *Discuss* ways to continue to progress the work of the TC-RPPO and proposed agenda points.
* *Agree* to agenda points to be discussed at the TC- RPPO meeting and a meeting (s) schedule.

1. Terms of Reference of TC-RPPO is available at: <http://www.ippc.int/en/publications/88719/> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Roles and Functions of RPPOs in their relationship with the CPM is available at: <https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/88182/> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Procedure for the recognition of new RPPOs is available at: <https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/88704/> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)