**Update on the International Year of Plant Health (IYPH)**

(Drafted by the IPPC Secretariat and IYPH ISC Chairperson)

# Implementation of IYPH action plan

1. As of September 2020, the IYPH International Steering Committee[[1]](#footnote-1) reached its tenth meeting to advance the IYPH action plan, which continues to be implemented through coordinated efforts with the IYPH Secretariat.
2. When first conceived, the IYPH action plan included many global, regional and national events, to be held face-to-face. The launch of the IYPH, which was held at the FAO headquarters in Rome on December 2, 2019 had been a great success and included a high-level global participation. More events like this had been planned but the current global health crisis has prompted the IPPC Secretariat and FAO to postpone them, including the fifteenth session of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (currently scheduled on 15-19 March 2021) and the International Conference on Plant Health and associated IYPH closing event (currently scheduled on 28 June to 1 July 2021). As a direct consequence to the COVID-19 related impacts, the IYPH ISC discussed and decided with FAO and the IPPC to prolong IYPH 2020 activities and to close the IYPH on July 1st 2021. This should give NPPOs and other plant health actors an additional window to possibly organize meetings and events in a time when COVIC-19 may not be so prevalent.

On national levels, many physical activities and events had to be curtailed and virtual initiatives are being organized, in which all operators in the agricultural sector and the public are called to participate. Countries stepped up in promoting advocacy initiatives like the minting of commemorative coins (by Belgium, Italy and Mexico), the issuing of postage stamps (by fifteen countries and counting)[[2]](#footnote-2) and the organization of national plant health days and weeks, among others. National plant health champions are being nominated following the call from the IPPC Secretariat.[[3]](#footnote-3)

1. [Seven IPPC Regional Workshops](https://www.ippc.int/en/core-activities/capacity-development/regional-ippc-workshops/2020-ippc-regional-workshop/) took place in seven regions. Participants to each workshop discussed about the IYPH legacy.
2. A full list of IYPH events at all levels is being maintained by the IPPC Secretariat[[4]](#footnote-4) currently including almost four hundred events. An IYPH friends page features the websites of partner organizations dedicated to the IYPH 2020[[5]](#footnote-5).
3. Another key initiative is the development of a scientific study and related summary for policy makers on the impact of climate change on plant health commissioned by the IYPH International Steering Committee. A group of experts led by Prof. Maria Lodovica Gullino (University of Turin) has been selected, and is expected to provide a first draft for review by October 2020[[6]](#footnote-6). The publishing process will also involve review by experts from relevant FAO divisions, peer review by a pool of experts and editing by a professional editor. The study is expected to be launched in conjunction with the International Plant Health Conference in Helsinki.
4. Another initiative in the context of the IYPH has been the publication of the paper “Science Diplomacy for Plant Health” by Nature Plants, which is expected to mark the start of the implementation of the IPPC development agenda on global phytosanitary research coordination.[[7]](#footnote-7)
5. Other commentaries and scientific papers are being developed and published throughout the IYPH both by the IPPC Secretariat and IPPC contracting parties, and are being collected for recording purposes.

# Communication

1. Many communication initiatives are being implemented by FAO, the IPPC Secretariat and partners to promote the International Year of Plant Health (IYPH).
2. Among these, FAO and the IPPC Secretariat launched a photographic contest: healthy plants and unhealthy plants[[8]](#footnote-8), an art and drawing competition for children[[9]](#footnote-9) and a call for plant health professionals videos[[10]](#footnote-10).
3. Twelve human-interest stories on plant health were selected from a call and are being published on the IYPH website in the six FAO languages.[[11]](#footnote-11)
4. The IYPH social media campaign is ongoing, using the #PlantHealth and #IYPH2020 messages. The IYPH Trello Board[[12]](#footnote-12) and the IYPH playlist[[13]](#footnote-13) on the FAO YouTube channel are available for use.
5. A number of engaging videos were produced including the IYPH animation, Dr. Jingyuan Xia’s message and the IYPH promotional video, and four videos for various stakeholder groups in at least all the six FAO languages and are being shared on FAO and IPPC accounts on social media, while the video to launch the “A day in the life of a plant health professional” campaign and a promotional video on TikTok are available in English.
6. Members of the IYPH ISC and the IYPH Secretariat have been actively involved in many physical and virtual events worldwide, delivering speeches and presentations. A number of popular articles and editorials were written to promote plant health, the IYPH 2020 and to educate about the benefits of healthy plants.
7. Following the issuing of monthly IYPH updates to the IPPC contact points by the IPPC Secretariat, a monthly IYPH newsletter has been established and issued since June 2020, which all those interested can subscribe and contribute to.[[14]](#footnote-14)
8. The production of a number of gadgets with the IYPH visual identity, now available in over 30 languages, is currently under consideration and the estimates have been presented to this ISC meeting for consideration.
9. The appointment of IYPH Goodwill Ambassadors has been delayed, with two nominees accepting their role in principle. A number of influencers has been approached to support the IYPH social media campaign.

# IYPH legacy

1. Zambia tabled the proposal and draft resolution to proclaim 12 May as the International Day of Plant Health. The proposal encountered the support of the CPM Bureau and IYPH International Steering Committee and has been tabled at the upcoming session of the FAO Committee on Agriculture.[[15]](#footnote-15)
2. The SPG is invited to:
3. *Note* the update on IYPH 2020.
1. Ref. <https://www.ippc.int/en/ph/iyphisc/> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Ref. <https://www.ippc.int/en/news/ippc-contracting-parties-step-up-in-issuing-postage-stamps-to-promote-the-international-year-of-plant-health-in-2020/> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Ref. <https://www.ippc.int/en/news/nomination-of-national-plant-health-champions-to-promote-the-international-year-of-plant-health/> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Ref. <http://www.fao.org/plant-health-2020/events/en/> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Ref. <http://www.fao.org/plant-health-2020/friends/en/> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Ref. <https://www.ippc.int/en/news/iyph-study-on-the-impact-of-climate-change-on-plant-health-lead-author-and-co-authors-selected/> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Ref. <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41477-020-0744-x> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Ref. <http://www.fao.org/plant-health-2020/photo-contest/enter-the-contest/en/> [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Ref. <http://www.fao.org/plant-health-2020/art-competition/enter-the-contest/en/> [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Ref. <https://youtu.be/O46byF1HKa4> [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Ref. <http://www.fao.org/plant-health-2020/my-story/en/> [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Ref. <https://trello.com/b/3Q6b26IO/international-year-of-plant-health> [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Ref. <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLzp5NgJ2-dK4cmV7gTSNPk6y6V9AAr52q> [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Ref. <http://newsletters.fao.org/k/Fao/iyph_subscription_form_en> [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Ref. <http://www.fao.org/about/meetings/coag/coag-27/list-of-documents/en/> [↑](#footnote-ref-15)