**IPPC STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 2020-2030 DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME: ADVANCING WITH IPPC COMMODITY STANDARDS**

*(Prepared by IPPC Secretariat)*

1. INTRODUCTION

1. A key element of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC)’s work is to safeguard plant-based agriculture, the environment, and to facilitate safe trade. As part of this effort, the new IPPC Strategic Framework 2002-2030 includes the development of commodity and pathway specific standards. An expected key result area is that by 2030 commodity-specific standards, with harmonized phytosanitary measures, have facilitated and accelerated trade negotiations and simplified safe trade in plant products.
2. It is known that international trade supports economic growth and development, helping to reduce poverty around the world. Significant advances in the facilitation of safe trade can be made through the development and adoption of commodity-based international standards for phytosanitary measures (ISPMs) that established harmonized pest risk management options for the major pests or major groups of pests associated with a commodity or a pathway. It is expected that many new ISPMs with accompanying diagnostic protocols and phytosanitary treatments to support implementation, will be adopted in the upcoming years.
3. The CPM-14 noted that the strategic value and purpose of commodity standards included facilitation of safe trade, harmonization of measures, optimization of efficiency of resource usage, support and assistance to developing countries, and maintaining the relevance and influence of the IPPC. It is certain that commodity standards present a new direction for the IPPC. While this new direction is being set, it also represents a challenge for the international phytosanitary community. Although in this challenging year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the greater need to ensure food security, progress on the topic for commodity standards was made. The [IPPC Standard Setting Unit (SSU)](https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/2463/) was assigned to coordinate the activities to achieve this development agenda and in this document it is outlined the activities carried out in 2020 and some possible future activities.

2. WHAT HAPPENED SO FAR IN 2020?

1. The outcomes of the second focus group meeting on “commodity standards” were to be presented to the CPM-15[[1]](#footnote-1) ([document CPM-15\_2020/18](https://www.ippc.int/static/media/files/publication/en/2020/02/18_CPM_2020_CommodityStandards_body_compiled-2020-02-12_ZCGxdUG.pdf)), including the “overarching standard” and the draft specification for the technical panel for approval for consultation. It is important to highlight that commodity standards are designed to facilitate market-access negotiations and that they are intended to neither impose any new obligations on importing countries nor undermine the need for pest risk analysis (PRA).
2. As CPM-15 was cancelled, the CPM Bureau is taking some decisions on behalf on the CPM. And in its June 2020 extraordinary meeting[[2]](#footnote-2), the CPM Bureau agreed to include the “overarching standard” and the technical panel to the [*List of topics for IPPC standards*](https://www.ippc.int/en/core-activities/standards-setting/list-topics-ippc-standards/list), as follows:

* Commodity-based standards for phytosanitary measures (2019-008), with priority 1, and
* Technical Panel on Commodity Standards (TPCS) (2019-009), with priority 1.

1. The CPM Bureau also approved the draft ISPM for consultation period as well as the draft specification for the TPCS. Moreover, the CPM Bureau also agreed that the development of the draft ISPM and the draft specification for the Technical Panel be transferred from the Bureau to the SC and to follow the normal Standard Setting procedure.

**Consultation period**

1. The consultation period for the draft specification for the Technical Panel on Commodity Standards (TPCS) closed on 30 August 2020 and received a total of 92 comments. More information is available at <https://www.ippc.int/en/core-activities/standards-setting/member-consultation-draft-specifications-ispms/>.
2. The consultation period for the draft ISPM Commodity-based standards for phytosanitary measures will close on 30 September 2020. More information is available at <https://www.ippc.int/en/core-activities/standards-setting/member-consultation-draft-ispms/>.
3. The draft ISPM was discussed in all seven IPPC 2020 Regional Workshops, and a [presentation](https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/88617/) was prepared by the IPPC Secretariat in order to facilitate the discussions, outlining the main points in the draft. For further information about the discussions at the regional workshops, please refer to the reports available [here](https://www.ippc.int/en/core-activities/capacity-development/regional-ippc-workshops/2020-ippc-regional-workshop/)[[3]](#footnote-3).

**Standards Committee (SC) July and August meetings 2020[[4]](#footnote-4)**

1. The Standards Committee (SC) had an informal virtual session, on 14 July 2020 (meeting report available [here](https://www.ippc.int/static/media/files/publication/en/2020/07/Report_SC_Tel_2020_Jul_2020-07-22.pdf)). The SC briefly discussed its work programme, which includes the topics on commodities, the draft “overarching standard” and the technical panel, as the CPM Bureau had transferred to the SC and thus, it should follow the standard setting process.
2. Regarding stewardship, the SC considered whether it was better to have one steward who covered both the concept standard and the TPCS specification, or one steward for the standard and one for the TPCS specification. One SC member suggested that the latter might be better as there are likely to be many comments on the draft standard, but that it might be a good idea for each of the two stewards to also act as the assistant steward for the other topic. This was supported by several other SC members, one also highlighting that this would mean that the work could be done in a harmonized way.
3. The SC made recommendations for the stewardship and asked the Secretariat to open e-forums to formalize the SC’s decisions on the selection of stewards. Based on e-forum discussions, the SC agreed to the following:

* Draft ISPM on Commodity-based standards for phytosanitary measures (2019-008): Mr Samuel BISHOP (United Kingdom) as Steward, and Ms Joanne WILSON (New Zealand) and Mr Ezequiel FERRO (Argentina) as Assistant Stewards
* Technical Panel on Commodity Standards (2019-009): Mr Ezequiel FERRO (Argentina) as Steward, and Ms Joanne WILSON (New Zealand) and Mr Samuel BISHOP (United Kingdom) as Assistant Stewards

3. EXPECTED UPCOMING WORK

1. Since this year all meetings will take place in virtual mode, during the 35th meeting of the SC on 23 September 2020 (meeting report not yet available), the SC agreed that the draft specification for the TPCS will be initially revised by the SC electronically, either via OCS or via e-forum, prior to be discussed at the SC November 2020 meeting. The SC November meeting will be held on the week from 16 to 20 November 2020 over 4 days, with two hours session per day. It is expected that the draft specification for the TPCS be approved in November 2020 and that the IPPC Secretariat issues a call for experts at first quarter of 2021. However, the opening of the call depends on the progress with the draft ISPM, the call for topics, and directions from the SC and other strategic groups.
2. Regarding the draft ISPM on Commodity-based standards for phytosanitary measures, the SC will be revising it also via electronic means, prior to the SC-7 meeting. It is expected that the draft will be submitted for another round of consultation in July 2021.

4. WHAT’S NEXT?

1. According to the IPPC Strategic Framework 2020-2030 the future standard setting work will focus more and more on commodity- or pathway-specific topics rather than on broad conceptual and foundational issues.
2. The development of commodity- and pathway-specific standards may also require additional activities with regard to new phytosanitary treatments, which could be readily applied by NPPOs and have a very low environmental impact while still being efficacious against target pests. For this reason, it could be necessary for the Commission to intensify its activities relating to the adoption of new phytosanitary treatments. It is also envisaged an increment in the need for diagnostic protocols, as commodity- and pathway-specific standards will increase the need for proper faster, accurate and reliable pest diagnosis.
3. **Phytosanitary treatments, diagnostic protocols and a streamlined standard setting process.**
4. A phytosanitary treatments search tool has been developed and it is now being expanded to include treatments used in international trade but not necessarily adopted by the CPM. This is an opportunity for a positive interaction between the SC, the [IPPC Technical Panel on Phytosanitary Treatments](https://www.ippc.int/en/core-activities/standards-setting/expert-drafting-groups/technical-panels/technical-panel-phytosanitary-treatments/) (TPPT) and the Implementation Committee (IC). The current version of the search tool is an online tool that lists currently available phytosanitary treatments that are annexes to ISPM 28. The tool allows to screen for a particular treatment type or a target pest. Treatment types are aligned with the ePhyto treatment types[[5]](#footnote-5) and the target pests are linked with the EPPO Global Data base for Pest Scientific Information[[6]](#footnote-6).
5. While the importance of the development of a comprehensive database for phytosanitary treatments is acknowledged, the commitment of the necessary resources to this activity had to be balanced against other priorities, thus the current version of the tool does not provide a wide enough selection. The tool is available at the following link: <https://www.ippc.int/en/core-activities/standards-setting/technical-panels/technical-panel-phytosanitary-treatments/phytosanitary-treatments-tool/>.
6. A possibility is to work on developing a similar tool or database for diagnostic protocols, with the main objectives being that would be to allow the screen for a diagnostic protocol for a pest, its host range and commodity and pathways association. This is depending on human resources of the Secretariat and the [IPPC Technical Panel on Diagnostic Protocols](https://www.ippc.int/core-activities/standards-setting/expert-drafting-groups/technical-panels/technical-panel-diagnostic-protocols/) (TPDP), in which it would need to revert to the SC.
7. The IPPC Secretariat has an ongoing [call for phytosanitary treatments](https://www.ippc.int/en/core-activities/standards-setting/calls-treatments/)[[7]](#footnote-7), and diagnostic protocols are called upon together with the [call for standards and implementation material](https://www.ippc.int/en/core-activities/standards-and-implementation/call-for-topics-standards-and-implementation/). However, not only new topics are needed, but a streamlined standard setting procedure to enable that treatments and protocols are made available to the contracting parties to support the implementation of the commodity- and pathway-specific standards.
8. The TPPT and the TPDP provided some suggestions and recommendations to the SC on possible ways to streamline the standard setting process. For example, having two consultation periods per year, as secretariat resources permit (noting that this has been done in the past for diagnostic protocols) and phytosanitary treatments undergoing only one round of consultation in if there is no substantive comments provided by contracting parties. Moreover, it was suggested that an ongoing call for diagnostic protocols be made, similar to the one for treatments, to allow contracting parties to submit diagnostic proposals any time and to streamline the assessment process, in which would be directly reverted to the TPDP instead of the Task Force for Topics (TFT), noting that the TFT also made this proposal.
9. The SC has already expressed the need to streamline the standard setting process for the specific commodity-based standards. This is to ensure that sufficient standards are developed in a robust and timely fashion to keep up with the international needs on trade andto ensure that revisions to the standards, when needed, are made without delay to ensure that the list of pests and phytosanitary measures are kept relevant. The initial plan was to start the discussions at the SC working group (SC-7) in 2020, but the cancellation of the meeting due to the COVID-19 pandemic means these discussions have alsobeen postponed.
10. **Calls for topics, materials and guidance to commence the work with specific commodity standards.** It is important to mention that a call for topics and implementation is planned for 2021[[8]](#footnote-8), and that the focus group on commodities had made some recommendations in order to ensure submissions for topics on specific commodities and pathways standards. The focus group had recommended the following to the Task Force for Topics (TFT) for their consideration when prioritizing topics to be submitted to CPM:

* multiple countries and regions recognize the necessity and usefulness of the topic
* the topic should benefit developing countries, as one of the main purposes of commodity standards is to provide support and assistance to developing countries
* the topic should contribute to food security
* the topic should contribute to plant health
* the topic should contribute to trade facilitation.

1. Moreover, the focus group recommended that there should be a general ongoing request for information on aspects relating to commodity standards and, in addition to this, a specific Call for information on pests and measures whenever a topic is prioritized. This would help in identifying or obtaining PRAs on pests linked with commodities, for consideration when considering which pests and measure to list in commodity standards (see document [CPM 2020/18](https://www.ippc.int/static/media/files/publication/en/2020/02/18_CPM_2020_CommodityStandards_body_compiled-2020-02-12_ZCGxdUG.pdf)). Additionally, the focus group recommended that the membership of the TFT be expanded to include the Steward of the Technical Panel on Commodity Standards (TPCS).
2. If any submissions on commodity specific topic will come, the CPM still needs to add them to the SC work programme. Guidance on which commodity specific topics to start the development of a draft standard needs to be taken, and therefore some discussions around this still needs to take place.
3. **Communication and Advocacy.** Development of information material with the aim to communicate and advocate on this new direction of the IPPC work is necessary to increase visibility, to raise awareness of the process and to inform the IPPC activities to contracting parties and stakeholders. Examples are brochures, factsheets and news items.
4. **Partnerships and networks – how to engage stakeholders**. It is important to recall that the implementation of standards needs the commitment of all stakeholders. With the precedent of the ePhyto Industry Advisory Group (IAG)[[9]](#footnote-9) with the objective to provide practical guidance and advice to the IPPC Secretariat on the design, development and deployment of an ePhyto solution, a similar approach could be taken with the commodity-based standards, to ensure that the standards are considering all aspects of the international trade and for their implementation. Another possibility is also to form an informal network, as the example for the work being carried out for e-commerce, in which has the purpose to support the Secretariat’s work on phytosanitary related cross-border e-commerce and to enhance information exchange and improve collaboration among the IPPC Secretariat, NPPOs, RPPOs, different international organizations and e-commerce stakeholders.
5. Discussions on these possibility are welcome to take place. An initial plan could be made to explore this possibility, formed by the Secretariat, representatives of IPPC bodies such as the Bureau, SC and IC.
6. **Implementation plan**. A solid and robust implementation plan needs to be ensured, with adequate allocation of resources and with baseline information on NPPOs capacity development. The production of guides, manuals, training and learning materials should be worked upon, not only for the specific commodity standards, but to all activities that underpins a national system to ensure safe trade. An integrated and efficient work mechanism between the SC and IC needs to be put in place to guarantee the success of the implementation plan.
7. As indicated in the strategic framework, as part of performance monitoring after implementation, it is needed to evaluate the economic, trade, food security and environmental benefits delivered by a selection of commodity- or pathway-specific standards. The success needs to be measured by monitoring its progress of the implementation.
8. **Finances.** The work on the commodity and pathways standards received from the European Commission (EC) EUR 300,000 of contribution, in a co-funding agreement, to the IPPC Multi-donor trust fund dedicated to the work on commodity and pathway standards over a three year period. Additional contributions were provided by France (71,023 USD), by New Zealand (50,000 USD) and Canada (73,683 USD).
9. The following budget is proposed based on the IPPC Investment plan 2020-2024 and to be re-visited according to the actual expenditures, the decisions made and also once the Secretariat presents the figures of the costs to keep the work programme on commodity-based standards.

| **Action** | **Funding**  **Source** | **Estimated budget (USD)** | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **2020** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** |
| Develop and pilot processes for commodity and pathway standards | RP | 60 K |  |  |  |  |
| Analyse and address implementation challenges | IRSS |  | 20K | 20K | 20K |  |
| Identify priority pathways | RP | 20 K |  |  |  |  |
| Establish and implement a work plan for commodity and pathway standards | RP |  | 50 K | 50 K | 50 K | 50 K |
| 1. Establish evaluation criteria and analyse impacts of commodity and pathway standards | IRSS | 20 K |  | 30 K |  | 20 K |
| Establish and operate working groups on alternative risk management approaches   * 40% RP FTE (SSU) * Meetings | RP  MDTF | 50 K  60 K | 50 K  60 K | 50 K  60 K | 50 K  70 K | 50 K  70 K |
| 1. Identify top priority treatments needs | IRSS  RP | 20 K  50 K | 50 K | 20 K  50 K | 50 K | 20 K  50 K |
| Intensify current treatment activities   * Coordinator * Expert meetings or analysis | MDTF | 150 K | 150 K | 200 K | 200 K | 200 K |
| **Total** | **Various** | **430 K** | **380 K** | **480 K** | **440 K** | **460 K** |
| FTE (estimate) | Various | 2.5 | 2.5 | 2.5 | 2.0 | 2.0 |

Recommendation

1. The SPG is invited to:
2. *note* the document;
3. *discuss* possible next steps on the development of commodity based standards;
4. *discuss, and if possible, provide advice* on how to approach the development of phytosanitary treatments, diagnostic protocols and a streamlined standard setting process;
5. *discuss, and if possible, provide advice* on possible ways to prioritize the development of specific commodity standards;
6. *discuss*, *and if possible, provide advice* on a possible approach to increase the network with other partners, including the industry;
7. *discuss*, *and if possible, provide advice* on a future implementation plan;
8. *discuss*, *and if possible, provide advice* on the finances and possible ways to mobilize resources.

1. See document 2020/18: <https://www.ippc.int/en/cpm-sessions/cpm-15/> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. 2020-06 CPM Bureau – Extraordinary session on Standard Setting Process report: <https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/88572/> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. IPPC 2020 Regional Workshops: <https://www.ippc.int/en/core-activities/capacity-development/regional-ippc-workshops/2020-ippc-regional-workshop/> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. SC meeting reports are available at: <https://www.ippc.int/en/core-activities/standards-setting/standards-committee/> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. ePhyto Technical Information: <https://www.ephytoexchange.org/doc/mapping/IPPC_Specific_Treatment_Types.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. EPPO Global Database: <https://gd.eppo.int/> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. IPPC call for phytosanitary treatments: <https://www.ippc.int/en/core-activities/standards-setting/calls-treatments/> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. IPPC call for topics: standards and implementation: <https://www.ippc.int/en/core-activities/standards-and-implementation/call-for-topics-standards-and-implementation/> [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. ePhyto Industry Advisory Group (IAG): <https://www.ippc.int/en/ephyto/ephyto-industry-advisory-group/> [↑](#footnote-ref-9)