Prioritisation and staging of the Development Agenda programmes across the ten years of the IPPC Strategic Framework

*Prepared by the United States*

1. The recent Strategic Planning Group (SPG) meeting held on October 8-9, 2020, allowed for the exchange of views on the new Strategic Framework, including the eight initiatives on the Development Agenda. However, no consensus view was formulated about how to prioritize and fund these initiatives.
2. As agreed at that meeting, members would be given an opportunity to provide comments and recommendations on the prioritization and sequencing the development agenda items. Accordingly, the United States makes the following observations and recommendations.
3. First, most, if not all members, recognize that the pandemic has significantly altered the global operating environment, and that 2021 is expected to be much the same. This has implications for CPM operations and delivery of the IPPC mission. This involves reaching consensus on the few but most strategic or urgent issues for the next two years.
4. Second, each of the eight initiatives on the Development Agenda are significant and complex topics and will require further elaboration and funding. Some initiatives are already well underway and have a funding source.
5. The U.S. advocates the following priorities over the next two years:
6. Protect the IPPC’s core standard setting program: We are concerned about resources, especially regular program funding, being drained away from the IPPC’s core standard setting function to support other initiatives. That would be a mistake. The IPPC’s primary and unique role in the world is to develop plant health standards. This work needs to be maintained.
7. With respect to the development agenda topics discussed by the SPG, we believe that the most urgent or strategic issues for next two years are:

* ePhyto: We need to maintain the momentum in this area, but we also need to devote 2021 to addressing the funding and governance scenarios and options for the long term. A working group needs to be established to develop and present recommendations for CPM.
* e-Commerce: We need to proceed with the development of a strategy that identifies some practical actions that can be taken through the IPPC and by NPPOs in their regions to better regulate accelerating digital trade. This will involve working with other international organizations, including internet and postal carrier entities, to develop efficacious approaches.
* Commodity Standards: We need to progress and finalize the various existing draft ISPMs and other technical standards, which are already in the standard setting pipeline. This includes finalizing the overarching commodity standard. The next biennial call for new standard setting topics will give members an opportunity to identify potential commodities for possible development.
* Pest Alert and Response: We need to explore the development of a framework for pest emergency and response, but with intensified effort to develop a clear working relationship with other FAO divisions responsible and resourced for pest emergency response activity. The newly formed Focus Group on pest outbreak-response should provide further analysis of the issues and potential path for advancing in this area.

1. Regarding some of the other initiatives, the United States believes that more work is needed to elaborate and clarify the overall purpose, goals, suggested operational activities, and projected costs and funding sources needed to support those initiatives. This work could be outsourced to interested NPPOs or RPPOs and re-introduced at later time. Certainly, care needs to be taken to avoid loading the work program with these partially developed ideas to prevent confusing and diluting the work of the Secretariat.