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COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

First Session

Rome, 3 – 7 April 2006

Report by the ICPM Chairperson

Agenda Item 7 of the Provisional Agenda

I. Introduction

1. The activities of the Interim Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (ICPM) and the IPPC Secretariat can be found in the various reports provided to the first session of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM-1). This report aims at identifying specific subjects of importance which have been addressed during the last twelve months and notes several issues which will be discussed by CPM-1. The report also discusses possible future developments.

II. Entry into Force of the IPPC

2. It is perhaps the most pleasurable act of a chairperson to be able to report that the international convention represented by him/her has come into force. Ladies and gentlemen, in April last year you elected me as chairman of the ICPM. Six months later the New Revised Text of the IPPC entered into force and the ICPM ceased to exist. I am happy that it was such a short chairmanship!

3. The entry into force of the IPPC will have considerable repercussions for plant protection in the world. The provisions of the IPPC are in force, which will provide to the contracting parties legal certainties on their application. The danger of shipping plant pests through international trade will be reduced by having a large number of IPPC contracting parties applying phytosanitary standards and IPPC provisions. And finally, the IPPC is now constitutionally and structurally a full partner to the other standard setting organizations OIE and Codex Alimentarius.

III. Financial Situation

4. Many of the activities of the ICPM Bureau were focused on the improvement of the financial situation of the IPPC. To recall, during the last budget biennium a considerable part of

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the IPPC allocation was not a component of the FAO regular programme budget but came from contributions that had become available from earlier budget periods. The resources from such arrears considerably increased the financial resources of the IPPC. Such arrears are, however, not available for the budget period 2006/2007. In order to promote an IPPC budget which compensates for the loss of arrears, the ICPM Bureau undertook activities to inform the chairpersons and members of the FAO Programme and Finance Committees about the financial situation of the IPPC.

5. The 33rd Session of the FAO Conference agreed to a budget which does not compensate for the arrears funds which were available to the IPPC over the last two years. This leaves the IPPC Secretariat and the CPM no other choice than to reduce their activities substantially. The seventh meeting of the Informal Working Group on Strategic Planning and Technical Assistance undertook an analysis of the IPPC Secretariats activities and recommended to hold off many activities until financial resources to undertake them are available. It is especially worrying that technical assistance and information exchange activities are curtailed by these savings.

IV. Long Term Funding Options

6. Again in 2005, the ICPM Bureau organized a meeting of a Focus Group to develop long term funding strategies for the ICPM to secure sufficient funding in the future. Again, no solid proposals were recommended. The activities of the IPPC are not sustainable without a solid and sufficient funding for the future. This solid and sufficient funding cannot be limited to cover activities in standard setting. They must also cover activities which will assist the developing world in implementing the standards adopted by the CPM. As an international organization we cannot allow that International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs), which are a benchmark in the international trade of plants and plant products, exclude developing countries from international trade because they do not have the capacity to implement them.

7. Therefore, I would like to draw your attention to agenda item 12.5.2 on potential funding arrangements. It is of importance for the IPPC and all its contracting parties to set the tracks for a financially and programmatically sustainable future of the IPPC.

V. IPPC Trust Fund

8. Within this context it is especially disappointing that the Trust Fund for the IPPC has not received substantial contributions. Only two countries, Canada and New Zealand, were generously contributing to the trust fund. The Bureau would like, once again, to invite CPM Members and IPPC observer organizations to contribute to the Trust Fund for the IPPC. Members should consider that the effective participation of developing countries in the activities of the CPM will raise the understanding and application of the IPPC and its ISPM provisions and consequently lead to better phytosanitary situation in both developed and developing countries.

VI. IPPC Workshops

9. During 2005 a number of workshops were organized by the IPPC Secretariat. The IPPC workshop on PRA in Niagara Falls, Canada, was an excellent example of how the IPPC can contribute to the understanding of ISPMs, not only in developing countries. Also many regional workshops on draft ISPMs were organized by the IPPC Secretariat. The members of the Bureau assisted the Secretariat and attended a number of these regional workshops to help out with their expertise. The results of these regional workshops are encouraging. Developing countries have been successfully participating in the standard setting process, and the many valuable comments received through these regional workshops have improved the draft standards and introduced specific developing country perspectives. It would awkward if, because of the lack of funds, this could not be continued in the future.

VII. Cooperation with other International Organizations

10. The cooperation between the IPPC and the CBD has continued in 2005. In October a meeting took place in Montreal between the secretariats and Bureaus of the IPPC and CBD. Also initial contacts with the OIE and the Codex Alimentarius took place. For the IPPC it is important to develop and maintain a strong cooperation with its “sister” organization and this should be continued in 2006.