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INTERIM COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

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Improvements to the Standard Setting Procedure

Agenda Item 8.7 of the Provisional Agenda

1. In 2002 the Chairperson of ICPM invited members of the ICPM to specify their wishes for standards to be developed by the ICPM. The request resulted in a list containing over 140 topics proposed for new standards. Many of the standards proposed were on specific technical issues. To date most of the standard setting activities of the ICPM have focussed on conceptual standards but this list clearly demonstrated a need for specific technical standards.
2. In response to the requests by ICPM members regarding standards development and the current slow standard setting procedure, ICPM 5 decided to establish a Focus Group to examine the current standard setting mechanism with a view to improving the standard setting procedure and to make draft recommendations for a fast track standard development and adoption procedure. ICPM 5 further decided that the report of the Focus Group be considered by the 15th Technical Consultation among RPPOs and the Informal Working Group on Strategic Planning and Technical Assistance before being considered at ICPM 6 in 2004.
3. The Focus Group meeting was held in Rome, 7-10 July 2003. The Group considered a range of problems that had been identified with the current process and possible new approaches to standard setting that would increase the rate of adoption of standards. The Focus Group made recommendations relating to improvements in the current process and recommendations on a new "fast-track" method of standard development and adoption. The final Focus Group report is available in all FAO languages as a separate document.
4. The Focus Group recommended changes to improve the efficiency of the current system of standard setting that covered the following issues:
 1. Additional rounds of formal consultation.
 2. Use of Technical Panels.
 3. Procedures for comments on standards at ICPM.

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4. Regional technical assistance/consultation.
 5. Use of regional coordinators.
 6. Expanded role of stewards.
 7. Transparency to and from the Standards Committee (SC).
 8. Use of modern communications and timing of meetings – improving procedures for working.
 9. Use of annexes.
 10. Guidelines for expert working group members.
 11. Length of formal consultation period.
 12. Guidelines for Standards Committee members.
5. The Focus Group considered that a fast-track system would be especially appropriate for standards of a technical or non-conceptual nature. The main features of the proposed fast track process are:
1. ICPM specifies subject areas for the fast track procedure.
 2. Technical Panels are formed on specific subject areas.
 3. Technical Panels work to specifications set by SC that provide general guidance on the technical standards required.
 4. Technical Panel submit specific draft standards to the SC at any time.
 5. As far as possible SC would clear these (check that they are in the correct format and that they meet the specifications) by email.
 6. The Secretariat would send draft standards that have been cleared by the SC to all ICPM Members in appropriate official FAO languages.
 7. If no formal objections had been received after 120 days then the Secretariat would notify all ICPM Members and publish the standard in the normal manner.
 8. If one or more formal objections were received the standard would not be adopted at this stage.
 9. The Secretariat would request the SC examine the comments and modify the standard if needed in consultation with the relevant Technical Panel.
 10. The revised standard would be placed on the agenda for the next ICPM meeting for adoption in the normal manner.
6. The Focus Group report was considered by the 15th Technical Consultation among RPPOs in Fiji, 29 September – 3 October 2003 and by the Informal Working Group on Strategic Planning and Technical Assistance (SPTA) in Rome, 13-17 October 2003. Annex A contains a list of the Focus Group Recommendations and the responses of the 15th Technical Consultation among RPPOs and the SPTA to these recommendations.
7. The 15th Technical Consultation among RPPOs largely accepted the recommendations of the Focus Group. However, there were some concerns about the proposed shortening of the consultation period and the recommendation that detailed feedback to countries on how comments have been dealt with should not be provided due to resource constraints.
8. The SPTA supported many of the recommendations of the Focus Group. However, it did not support the proposed “out-of-session” adoption process. The SPTA considered that adoption of fast-track standards should occur at the annual meeting of the ICPM. The SPTA proposed that if possible fast-track standards should be adopted as a group with no discussion. The SPTA also recommended that for transparency all comments provided by countries should be published on the International Phytosanitary Portal (IPP) but supported the recommendation by the Focus Group not to provide detailed feedback to individual countries. Annex B contains recommendations from the SPTA for improvements to the current standard setting process based on the recommendations of the Focus Group. Annex C contains recommendations from the SPTA on a proposed fast track system of standard development and adoption.

9. If the ICPM adopts the recommendations concerning the formation of Technical Panels minor changes in Terms of Reference Section 5 of the Standards Committee may be appropriate. The proposed changes are shown in Annex D.

10. The ICPM is invited to:

1. *Note* the report of the Focus Group.
2. Note the recommendations on the Focus Group report from the Technical Consultation of RPPOs and the SPTA summarized in Annex A.
3. *Adopt* the recommendations of the SPTA on improvements in the current standing setting process as shown in Annex B.
4. *Adopt* the recommendations of the SPTA on the proposed fast-track standard adoption process as shown in Annex C.
5. *Adopt* the appropriate proposed changes to the Terms of Reference of the Standards Committee shown at Annex D.

Annex A.

Comparative Table of Recommendations of the Focus Group on Standard Setting and Comments by the 15th technical Consultation among RPPOs and the Informal Working Group on Strategic Planning and technical Assistance

I. Recommendations for the improvement of the current standard setting procedure

<i>Recommendation of the Focus Group</i>	<i>Comment of 15th TC of RPPOs</i>	<i>Comment of SPTA</i>
3.1. Additional rounds of formal consultation		
<i>That the SC initiates a further round of consultation on standards that have undergone extensive changes as a result of formal country consultation. In such cases the SC should report to the ICPM their justification for sending a standard for a second round of consultation but could use its judgement in regard to this matter.</i>	Endorsed	Endorsed
<i>The SC should draw up criteria/guidance that it proposes to apply in determining the need for a further round of formal consultation on a draft standard.</i>	Endorsed	Endorsed
<i>That in cases where a standard was submitted to the ICPM but not adopted the ICPM could decide if another round of consultation is needed.</i>	Endorsed	Endorsed
3.2. Use of Technical Panels		
<i>That the SC establish Technical Panels (TP) in specific areas to assist the work of the SC.</i>	The TC recommended that the differences between technical panels and expert working group should be more clearly stated.	Endorsed with a request to clearly establish their role and clarify the differences between Expert Working Groups and Technical Panels.
<i>That these Technical Panels should work under general specifications established by the SC, according to TOR 5, with membership according to</i>	Endorsed	Endorsed

<p><i>current expert working group membership rules. Under the direction of the SC, Technical Panels should provide the SC with: draft technical standards, advice on draft technical standards, advice on country comments and advice on topics and priorities for technical standard development in their field of activity and other task as requested by SC. Technical Panels may draw on specialised expertise, the work of other working groups, other appropriate standards and the work of other relevant organisations in their work as appropriate. The chair of the Technical Panel should act as the steward for the subject area of the Technical Panel.</i></p>		
<p><i>That potential areas for the formation of Technical Panels may include technical matters such as diagnostics, seed pathology, specific pest free areas, organism or commodity specific standards or treatments.</i></p>	Endorsed	Endorsed
<p><i>When the specific work of a Technical Panel is completed SC should disestablish the group.</i></p>	Endorsed	Endorsed
<p>3.3. Procedures for comments on standards at ICPM</p>		
<p><i>The drafting of guidelines on submission of comments at meetings of the ICPM.</i></p> <p><i>These guidelines should include the following points:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Parties should endeavour to provide comments in writing to the Secretariat at least 14 days before the ICPM. The Secretariat will provide a copy of all comments received, in original form at the start of the ICPM.</i> • <i>Parties should indicate comments that are strictly editorial (do not change the substance) and could be incorporated by the Secretariat as considered appropriate and necessary.</i> • <i>The Secretariat should provide a format/matrix for country comments. It would be preferable that comments be provided electronically using the standard format/matrix to allow comments to be collated.</i> 	<p>The TC commented that Parties should concentrate on comments involving substantive changes and recommended that this should be clearly stated in a new bullet point.</p>	<p>SPTA – Endorsed the proposal of the Focus Group and suggested the addition of a new first bullet point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Parties should endeavour to submit only substantive comments at meetings of the ICPM.</i>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The same matrix should also be used for comments provided on standards during the formal consultation period.</i> • <i>The matrix should be available on the IPP and the current guidance on comments on standards already present on the IPP should be modified to request that countries use the matrix.</i> 		
		<p>For the adoption process of ISPMs at ICPM meetings SPTA recommended an additional component to the Focus Group Report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In cases where there were no substantial comments received on a draft standard, and therefore no substantial changes made to the draft by the Standards Committee, the Chair of the ICPM should propose that these standards be adopted without discussion. • The chairperson of the ICPM should use this tool at their discretion. • Criteria for such a system should be developed.
<p>3.4. Regional technical assistance/consultation</p>		
<p><i>That as many as possible regional technical consultations should be conducted and that the ICPM should investigate potential mechanisms to expand these consultations as well as seek to build opportunities for regional consultations through the trust fund or voluntary contributions.</i></p>	<p>The TC considered that the regional technical consultation should be renamed Capacity Building Workshop on draft ISPMs. The TC recommended that as many as possible FAO regions with developing country members be provided the opportunity to have a capacity building workshop on draft ISPMs.</p> <p>The TC also indicated that RPPOs could further assist in the organisation of such capacity building workshops.</p>	<p>SPTA – Endorsed the proposal of the Focus Group and suggested that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The term “Regional technical Consultation” should be changed to “Regional Workshops on Draft ISPMs”. • RPPOs should play a role, as appropriate, in regional workshops within their region.

3.6. Expanded role of stewards		
<i>That the SC should make greater use of stewards. Guidelines for the roles and responsibilities of a steward should be developed by the SC. Stewards should be invited to relevant SC meetings to assist the work of the SC on the standard that the steward is responsible for. The Secretariat should supply editorial expertise to assist stewards in carrying out their role.</i>	Endorsed	Endorsed
3.7. Transparency to and from the SC		
<i>That more formal feedback mechanisms on country comments may not provide a benefit that outweighs the cost of the very resource intensive process that would be necessary to address this in a more formal way.</i>	The TC discussed this and noted that opinions diverged among participants.	To improve the transparency the SPTA made a number of recommendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All country comments should be published in the IPP. • The IPPC Secretariat should produce and make accessible a generic summary of SC reactions to classes of comments made in the country consultation. • Members of the SC should act as rapporteurs for countries in their regions. • The to be developed guidelines for members of the SC should incorporate guidance on the rapporteur function of SC members.
3.8. Use of modern communications and timing of meetings – improving procedures for working		
<i>That email, teleconferencing, and other modern communication methods should be used where possible to advance discussion on standards. However, the Focus Group recommends that face to face meetings of experts be continued with email communications used to supplement these meeting but not replace them.</i>	Endorsed	Endorsed

3.9. Use of annexes		
<i>That technical annexes (such as treatment schedules, e.g. wood packaging) should be used as much as possible, where appropriate. Annexes should be open to revision separately to the main standard. Revisions could be by a fast track procedure.</i>	Endorsed	Endorsed
<i>That Annexes should only contain highly specific information that may need to be changed over time and that does not affect the principles incorporated in the primary standard.</i>	Endorsed	Endorsed
<i>That criteria for the formation and content of annexes should be developed by the SC.</i>	Endorsed	Endorsed
3.10. Guidelines for expert working group members		
<i>That a brief guideline for the operation of expert working groups is produced by the Secretariat in consultation with SC. This should be provided to all expert working group participants.</i>	The TC welcomed the development of these guidelines.	Endorsed but recommended that any guidelines developed should be approved by ICPM.
<i>That when each expert working group is convened the chair spends time to discuss and explain the mode of operation and the roles and responsibilities of participants.</i>	Endorsed	Endorsed
3.11. Length of formal consultation period		
<i>That the current 120 day formal consultation period should be reduced to 90 days to allow sufficient time for the SC and the Secretariat to deal with comments.</i>	Several RPPOs expressed concerns about shortening the consultation period, however, the TC finally concluded that priority would have to be set between a longer consultation period and fewer standards developed.	Endorsed but recommended that distribution of draft standards should be improved and that countries should be informed when draft standards for consultation are put on the IPP.
3.12. Guidelines for Standards Committee members		
<i>That a brief guideline on the role and responsibilities of SC members and the SC procedures is produced by the Secretariat in consultation with the SC. This should be provided to all SC members.</i>	The TC welcomed the development of these guidelines.	Endorsed but recommended that any guidelines developed should be approved by ICPM.

II. Recommendations for the “Fast Track” procedure

<i>Recommendation of the Focus Group</i>	<i>Comment of 15th TC of RPPOs</i>	<i>Comment of SPTA</i>
4.1. Criteria for a fast track procedure		
<p><i>The Focus Group concluded that the fast track system should be used:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Where specific technical material and resources are available or simple to develop.</i> • <i>Where non concept or technical standards of potential global interest that are approved by RPPOs or other organisations are available.</i> • <i>Where technical annexes to concept and other existing standards are needed.</i> • <i>For minor revisions to existing standards where these revisions are not of a conceptual nature.</i> • <i>Where specifically authorised by ICPM.</i> 	<p>Endorsed. In relation to the second bullet point the TC commented that some existing RPPO standards are complex or may be controversial and would not be appropriate for a fast-track procedure.</p>	<p>Endorsed</p>
4.2. Elements of a fast track procedure		
<p><i>That consultations resulting in out-of-session adoption would be a useful mechanism for standards that are developed using the Fast Track procedure as set out above and in the Table 1 and in the Flow Chart.</i></p>	<p>As a general comment the TC considered numbers 1-10 of item 4.2 to be important points that should be considered as recommendations so they are not lost as just a narrative part of the report. It should be made clear that the 10 steps, the flow chart and Table 1 are all considered as part of the recommendations.</p>	<p>SPTA did not agree to the proposed out-of-session adoption procedure in the fast track approach. Instead it recommended a modified procedure, based on a “No-discussion” adoption of fast track standards at meetings of the ICPM.</p>
<p><i>1. ICPM specifies subject areas for the fast track procedure.</i></p>	<p>Endorsed</p>	<p>Modified to:</p> <p><i>1. ICPM specifies subject areas for the fast track procedure (such as diagnostic, seed pathology, specific pest</i></p>

		<i>free areas, organism or commodity specific standards or treatments).</i>
<i>2. Technical Panels are formed on specific subject areas.</i>	Endorsed	Modified to: <i>2. Technical Panels are formed on the specific subject areas endorsed by the ICPM according to the rules endorsed for forming expert working groups.</i>
<i>3. Technical Panels work to specifications set by the SC that provide general guidance on the technical standards required.</i>	Endorsed	Modified to: <i>3. SC sets specifications that provide general guidance on the technical standards required (e.g. format, type of information required, method of dealing with uncertainties, etc).</i> <i>4. Technical Panels work to the specifications set by SC.</i>
<i>4. Technical Panels submit specific draft standards to the SC at any time.</i>	Endorsed	Modified to: <i>5. Technical Panel submits specific draft standards, via the Secretariat, to the SC at any time.</i>
<i>5. As far as possible SC would clear these (check that they are in the correct format and that they meet the specifications) by email.</i>	Endorsed	Endorsed as point 6 in the procedure.
<i>6. The Secretariat would send draft standards that have been cleared by the SC to all ICPM Members in appropriate official FAO languages.</i>	Endorsed	Endorsed as point 7 in the procedure.
<i>7. If no formal objections had been received after 120 days then the Secretariat would notify all ICPM Members and publish the standard in the normal manner.</i>	The TC also highlighted the need of clarification of ‘formal objections’ versus comments, as well as the need to describe what is necessary to stop the adoption of the standard. The TC noted that a formal objection is an objection presented by an NPPO.	Modified to: <i>8. If no formal objections are received after 90 days then the standard is included on the agenda for the next ICPM plenary session for adoption</i>

	Step 7 needed to indicate clearly that this was an adoption process. The TC proposed to add that the standard would be considered to be adopted and published in the normal manner.	<i>without discussion. If objections to adoption are raised at ICPM then ICPM would need to decide to either try and resolve them in the current ICPM session or refer them back to the Secretariat and Standards Committee for further work.</i>
<i>8. If one or more formal objections were received the standard would not be adopted at this stage.</i>	Endorsed	Modified to: <i>9. If one or more formal objections are received during the 90 day consultation period, the Secretariat tries to resolve the issue(s) with the country(ies) concerned, and if these issues are resolved, submits the standard to the ICPM for adoption without discussion.</i>
<i>9. The Secretariat would request the SC examine the comments and modify the standard if needed in consultation with the relevant Technical Panel.</i>	Endorsed	Modified to: <i>10. If the issues cannot be resolved, the Secretariat requests the SC examine the comments and modify the standard if needed in consultation with the relevant Technical Panel.</i>
<i>10. The revised standard would be placed on the agenda for the next ICPM meeting for adoption in the normal manner.</i>	Endorsed	Endorsed as point 11 in the procedure.

Annex B**Recommendations by the Informal Working Group on Strategic Planning and Technical Assistance to improve the current standard setting process.**

The following recommendations by the Informal Working Group on Strategic Planning and Technical Assistance to improve the current standard setting process are structured to correspond with the relevant chapters in the report of the Focus group on standard setting. Numbers in square brackets at the end of each heading identifies the corresponding section in the Focus Group report.

1. Recommendations for additional rounds of formal consultation [3.1.]

1. The SC should initiate a further round of consultation on standards that have undergone extensive changes as a result of formal country consultation. In such cases the SC should report to the ICPM their justification for sending a standard for a second round of consultation but could use its judgement in regard to this matter.
2. The SC should draw up criteria/guidance that it proposes to apply in determining the need for a further round of formal consultation on a draft standard.
3. In cases where a standard was submitted to the ICPM but not adopted the ICPM could decide if another round of consultation was needed.

2. Recommendations for the use of Technical Panels [3.2.]

1. The SC should establish Technical Panels (TP) in specific areas to assist the work of the SC.
2. These Technical Panels should work under general specifications established by the SC, according to Section 5 of the TOR of the SC, with membership according to current expert working group membership rules. Technical Panels should be permanent groups responsible for the development of multiple standards in their specific allocated subject area.
3. Under the direction of SC, Technical Panels should provide the SC with: draft technical standards, advice on draft technical standards, advice on country comments and advice on topics and priorities for technical standard development in their field of activity and other task as requested by SC. Technical Panels may draw on specialised expertise, the work of other working groups, other appropriate standards and the work of other relevant organisations in their work as appropriate. The chair of the Technical Panel should act as the steward for the subject area of the Technical Panel.
4. Potential areas for the formation of Technical Panels may include technical matters such as diagnostics, seed pathology, specific pest free areas, organism or commodity specific standards or treatments.
5. When the specific work of a Technical Panel is completed the SC should disestablish the group.

3. Recommendations on procedures for comments on standards at ICPM [3.3.]

1. Guidelines on the submission of comments at meetings of the ICPM should be drafted.
2. These guidelines should include the following points:
 - a) Members should endeavour to provide only substantive comments at meetings of the ICPM.

- b) Members should endeavour to provide comments in writing to the Secretariat at least 14 days before the ICPM. The Secretariat will provide a copy of all comments received, in original form at the start of the ICPM.
- c) Members should indicate comments that are strictly editorial (do not change the substance) and could be incorporated by the Secretariat as considered appropriate and necessary.
- d) The Secretariat should provide a format/matrix for country comments. It would be preferable that comments be provided electronically using the standard format/matrix to allow comments to be collated.
- e) The same matrix should also be used for comments provided on standards during the formal consultation period.
- f) The matrix should be available on the IPP and the current guidance on comments on standards already present on the IPP should be modified to request that countries use the matrix.

4. Recommendations for regional technical assistance/consultation [3.4.]

1. As many as possible regional technical consultations on draft ISPMs should be conducted and the ICPM should investigate potential mechanisms to expand these consultations as well as seek to build opportunities for regional consultations through the trust fund or voluntary contributions.
2. The term “Regional Technical Consultation on Draft ISPMs” should be changed to “Regional Workshops on Draft ISPMs”.
3. RPPOs should play a role, as appropriate, in such regional workshops within their region.

5. Recommendation for an expanded role of stewards [3.6.]

1. The SC should make greater use of stewards. Guidelines for the roles and responsibilities of a steward should be developed by the SC. Stewards should be invited to relevant SC meeting to assist the work of the SC on the standard that the steward is responsible for. The Secretariat should supply editorial expertise to assist stewards in carrying out their role.

6. Recommendations for an improved transparency to and from the SC [3.7.]

1. To improve the transparency:
 - a) All country comments should be published in the IPP.
 - b) The IPPC Secretariat should produce and make accessible a generic summary of SC reactions to classes of comments made in the country consultation.
 - c) Members of the SC should report back to countries in their regions.
 - d) Guidelines for members of the SC to be developed should incorporate guidance on this reporting function of SC members.

7. Recommendation on the use of modern communications [3.8.]

1. E-mail, teleconferencing, and other modern communication methods should be used where possible to advance discussion on standards. However, face to face meetings of experts should be continued with e-mail communications used to supplement these meeting but not replace them.

8. Recommendations on the use of annexes [3.9.]

1. Technical annexes (such as treatment schedules, e.g. wood packaging) should be used as much as possible, where appropriate. Annexes should be open to revision separately to the main standard. Revision of annexes could be by a fast track procedure.
2. Annexes should only contain highly specific information that may need to be changed over time and that does not affect the principles incorporated in the primary standard.
3. Criteria for the formation and content of annexes should be developed by the SC.

9. Recommendations on guidelines for expert working group/technical panel members**[3.10.]**

1. A brief guideline for the operation of expert working groups/technical panels should be produced by the Secretariat in consultation with SC for approval by ICPM. This guideline should be provided to all expert working group/technical panel participants.
2. When each expert working group/technical panel is convened the chair spends time to discuss and explain the mode of operation and the roles and responsibilities of participants.

10. Recommendations on the length of the formal consultation period [3.11.]

1. The current 120 day formal consultation period should be reduced to 90 days to allow sufficient time for the SC and the Secretariat to deal with comments.
2. The distribution of draft standards should be improved and countries should be informed when draft standards for consultation are put on the IPP.

11. Recommendations on guidelines for Standards Committee members [3.12.]

1. A brief guideline on the role and responsibilities of SC members and the SC procedures should be produced by the Secretariat in consultation with SC for approval by ICPM. This should be provided to all SC members.

12. Recommendations for the adoption process of ISPMs at ICPM meetings

1. In cases where there were no substantial comments received on a draft standard, and therefore no substantial changes made to the draft by the Standards Committee, the Chair of the ICPM should propose that these standards be adopted without discussion.
2. The chairperson of the ICPM should use this tool at their discretion.
3. Criteria for such a system should be developed.

Annex C

Recommendations by the Informal Working Group on Strategic Planning and Technical Assistance on a fast-track standard setting process

The following recommendations by the Informal Working Group on Strategic Planning and Technical Assistance for a fast-track standard setting process are structured to correspond with the relevant chapters in the report of the Focus group on standard setting. Numbers in square brackets at the end of each heading identifies the corresponding section in the Focus Group report.

1. Recommendations for criteria on the application of a fast track procedure [4.1.]

1. The fast track system should be used:
 - a) Where specific technical material and resources are available or simple to develop.
 - b) Where non-concept or technical standards of potential global interest that are approved by RPPOs or other organisations are available.
 - c) Where technical annexes to concept and other existing standards are needed.
 - d) For minor revisions to existing standards where these revisions are not of a conceptual nature.
 - e) Where specifically authorised by ICPM.

2. Recommendation on the drafting of ISPMs [4.2.1.]

1. The Informal Working Group on Liaison with Research and Educational Organisations should investigate ways to coordinate and create linkages with relevant organisations that could assist in developing technical standards.

3. Recommendations for a fast track procedure [4.2.2.]

1. ICPM specifies subject areas for the fast track procedure (such as diagnostic, seed pathology, specific pest free areas, organism or commodity specific standards or treatments).
2. Technical Panels are formed on the specific subject areas endorsed by the ICPM according to the rules endorsed for forming expert working groups.
3. SC sets specifications that provide general guidance on the technical standards required (e.g. format, type of information required, method of dealing with uncertainties etc).
4. Technical Panels work to the specifications set by SC.
5. Technical Panel submits specific draft standards, via the Secretariat, to the SC at any time.
6. As far as possible SC clears these (check that they are in the correct format and that they meet the specifications) by email.
7. The Secretariat sends draft standards that have been cleared by the SC to all ICPM Members in appropriate official FAO languages.
8. If no formal objections are received after 90 days then the standard is included on the agenda for the next ICPM plenary session for adoption without discussion.
9. If objections to adoption are raised at ICPM then ICPM would need to decide to either try and resolve them in the current ICPM session or refer them back to the Secretariat and Standards Committee for further work..
10. If one or more formal objections are received during the 90 day consultation period, the Secretariat tries to resolve the issue(s) with the country(ies) concerned, and if these issues are resolved, submits the standard to the ICPM for adoption without discussion.

11. If the issues cannot be resolved, the Secretariat requests the SC examine the comments and modify the standard if needed in consultation with the relevant Technical Panel.
12. The revised standard is placed on the agenda for the next ICPM meeting for discussion and adoption in the normal manner.

4. Recommendation on the definition of a formal objection

1. A formal objection should be a technically supported objection to the adoption of the draft standard in its current form, sent through the official contact point (IPPC contact point or if not available, FAO contact point). The Secretariat would not make any judgement about the validity of the objection – an objection with some technical discussion of the issue would be accepted as a formal objection.

Annex D**Proposed changes in Standards Committee Terms of Reference Section 5**

The following changes shown in *[italics in square brackets]* are proposed in the Standards Committee Terms of Reference Section 5 to allow for the establishment and disestablishment of technical panels.

5. Functions of the Standards Committee

The Standards Committee serves as a forum for:

- approval of draft specifications or amendment of specifications;
- finalization of specifications;
- designation of the members of the SC-7 and identify tasks of the group
- *[establishment and disestablishment of working groups and technical panels as appropriate;]*
- designation of membership of working groups, *[technical panels]* and drafting groups as required;
- review of draft ISPMs;
- approval of draft standards to be submitted to ICPM Members for consultation;
- establishment of open-ended discussion groups where appropriate;
- revision of draft ISPMs in cooperation with the Secretariat taking into account comments of ICPM Members and RPPOs;
- approval of final drafts of ISPMs for submission to the ICPM;
- review of existing ISPMs and those requiring reconsideration;
- assigning stewardship for each ISPM; and
- other functions related to standard setting as directed by the ICPM.