



منظمة الأغذية
والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

联合国
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Food
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des
Nations
Unies
pour
l'alimentation
et
l'agriculture

Organización
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Naciones
Unidas
para la
Agricultura
y la
Alimentación

INTERIM COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

Fourth Session

Rome, 11-15 March 2002

Information Exchange and the International Phytosanitary Portal (Report of the Secretariat)

Agenda Item 4.2 of the Provisional Agenda

The dissemination of official information

1. The report of the Third Session of the ICPM was distributed to all Members following the meeting. International standards for phytosanitary measures (ISPMs) adopted by the ICPM at its Third Session were included in the report and have also been made available to Members through the Secretariat and RPPOs in electronic and hard copy formats. Copies of new ISPMs in “green book” format will be distributed as soon as they are available.

Translation

2. FAO provides the primary source of translation services contracted by the Secretariat. Assistance from other organizations and individuals are also contracted on an as-needed basis.

3. Valuable assistance has been provided by the North American Plant Protection Organization (NAPPO) in the review, editing, and translation of documents from English to Spanish in 2001. NAPPO has drawn upon its own substantial expertise and also consulted widely with phytosanitary officials and other organizations on Spanish translation issues. As a result, a number of inconsistencies and errors in Spanish translations have been identified across the range of ISPMs. NAPPO has recommended to the Secretariat that a comprehensive review be undertaken with the aim of modifying the Spanish texts for consistency and accuracy. NAPPO has indicated its willingness to contribute to such an initiative.

4. The Secretariat notes that similar initiatives may be undertaken for other language versions of ISPMs. In particular, there is a substantial need for assistance with Arabic translation.

IPPC advocacy

5. The Secretariat is pleased to report that 2,000 copies of the IPPC advocacy brochure *Guide to the International Plant Protection Convention* introduced in 2001 have been distributed (in English only). Comments from Members and others have been very positive. The Secretariat

For reasons of economy, this document is produced in a limited number of copies. Delegates and observers are kindly requested to bring it to the meetings and to refrain from asking for additional copies, unless strictly indispensable.

has therefore undertaken to revise and update the brochure. Several short (two page) brochures that highlight special aspects of the IPPC have also been developed. The revised Guide and new documents are being translated into the FAO languages. It is anticipated that the new advocacy publications will be available in 2002.

Official contact points

6. The Secretariat continues to provide information to Members through official contact points where these have been identified. The ICPM is reminded that FAO policies require certain documents such as invitations and correspondence from the Director General of the Organization to follow a particular distribution that may not include the designated official contact points. Where it is relevant, such material is also provided to official contact points by the Secretariat.

7. Printed material, such as ISPMs and other correspondence, provided by the Secretariat directly to official contact points is not copied by the Secretariat to other offices in the government of the Member, or to other parties within the country. It is the responsibility of the official contact point to ensure that relevant information is disseminated to officials or others as appropriate within their country.

8. The Secretariat maintains a list of updated official contact point information. This information is available on the IPPC Web site (<http://www.ippc.int>), and the list is published and made available in printed form at each session of the ICPM. The Secretariat also makes official contact point information available upon request.

9. The Secretariat notes that many Members have still not designated their official contact point (note paragraph 46(b) of the report of the Third Session of the ICPM). In addition, certain Members that have designated official contact points have not provided the Secretariat with updated information where official contact point details have changed. Members are requested to provide such information as soon as practically possible.

Information exchange obligations of the Convention

10. The Secretariat notes that a very limited number of Members have provided information to the Secretariat as specified in the IPPC and noted in paragraph 46(f) of the report of the Third Session of the ICPM. The Secretariat sent a reminder to this effect in November 2001 referring in particular to details regarding:

- Pest reports (Articles IV 2(b) & VIII 1(a))
- Description of the National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs) (Article IV 4)
- Phytosanitary restrictions, requirements and prohibitions (Article VII 2(b))
- List of regulated pest (Article VII 2(i))
- Emergency actions (Article VII 6)
- Official contact points (Article VIII 2)
- Specified points of entry (Article VII.2d).

Communication in electronic format

11. The Secretariat continues to accept and encourage the submission of official information in electronic form. However, all official communication between the Secretariat and Members continues to be primarily through printed correspondence with duplicate information provided electronically wherever possible. A few Members have informed the Secretariat that they are willing to accept electronic correspondence as official communication.

The International Phytosanitary Portal

12. The Secretariat has continued to develop and improve the IPPC Web site (<http://www.ippc.int>). Information from the Secretariat is made available through the IPPC website or by e-mail as soon as practically possible. This frequently results in information and documents being available electronically before they are distributed in print. In addition, certain

language versions of official documents may be available electronically before other language versions, as translation times vary.

13. The ICPM will recall the adoption of the International Phytosanitary Portal (IPP) at the Third Session of the ICPM. The IPP is currently scheduled to replace the IPPC Web site beginning 01 March 2002.

14. The implementation of the IPP experienced delays due to difficulties with access to technical expertise within FAO. As a result, an anticipated Working Group meeting on Information Exchange was not held in 2001. The Secretariat greatly appreciates the assistance provided by the IPP Support Group, and will continue to develop the IPP with their cooperation and input.

15. The IPP Web site offers significant improvements for Members, including:

- remote updating of official information by Members
- the ability to upload information into the IPP, or link to existing information
- the ability for Members to create their own web pages should they not have this capability already
- improved access to other Members official information
- increased security
- search/query capability
- database capabilities (e.g. official contact points)
- discussion fora and
- a global pest reporting system (under early development pending the adoption of the relevant ISPM).

16. The IPP can be linked, where relevant, with other existing official international information exchange systems, such as the Clearinghouse Mechanism for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, and the WTO. In addition, the IPP is being developed as an integral part of FAO's Biosecurity Portal where similar information and functions will also be available for food safety and animal health concerns.

17. Members will be provided with a CD-ROM of the IPP to facilitate access to IPPC information for those Members without or with limited Internet access, and those who wish to have stand-alone access to this information. Members should note that Internet links do not work unless there is Internet access. For this reason, a significant amount of information may not be available to IPP CD-ROM users. Members with restricted, or without, Internet access, or who do not wish to use electronic information systems, can have information from the IPPC website provided to them in printed form by request to the Secretariat.

18. The Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation (PCE) adopted by the ICPM at its Third Session is currently being updated and will be included in the IPP as soon as this update has been completed and arrangements are made for its transfer to FAO.

19. The ICPM is invited to:

1. *Express* its gratitude to NAPPO for their assistance with translation.
2. *Endorse* the recommendation by NAPPO for a comprehensive review of ISPMs in Spanish with the aim of proposing modifications for consistency and to correct errors.
3. *Urge* Members to assist the Secretariat wherever possible with the translation of official documents.
4. *Encourage* Members to provide official contact points or to ensure that information provided on contact points is updated.
5. *Remind* Members that official contact points have the responsibility for the dissemination of information as appropriate in their country.

6. *Recall* information exchange obligations of Members under the IPPC and *urge* Members to provide and update required information as appropriate.
7. *Urge* Members to notify the Secretariat whether they accept electronic correspondence in place of printed material.
8. *Comment* on the IPP and *recommend* modifications or enhancements.
9. *Urge* Members to support the IPP by providing relevant information and links.