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INTERIM COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

Fourth Session

Rome, 11-15 March 2002

Technical Assistance

Agenda Item 6.3 of the Provisional Agenda

1. The Informal Working Group on Strategic Planning and Technical Assistance met 4-6 December 2001 in Bangkok to consider points raised by the Third Session of the ICPM as regards technical assistance (paragraph 61, Report of the Third Session of the ICPM).
2. The Third Session of the ICPM:
 - recommended that the role of the ICPM in technical assistance be fully considered in strategic planning and in decisions regarding the work programme
 - adopted recommendations regarding the Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation (PCE) and future activities of the ICPM in technical assistance
 - agreed to establish an ad hoc working group to implement recommendations.
3. The Informal Working Group recommended that it continue to act as the ad hoc Working Group on Technical Assistance. However, some members of the Informal Working Group noted the difficulty in dealing with the issues of technical assistance at one meeting that also dealt with strategic planning for the ICPM. It was noted that the Informal Working Group could be used to develop recommendations for meeting priority needs as related to strategic planning processes but that the implementation and operational aspects of technical assistance initiatives were best handled by technical assistance experts.
4. The Informal Working Group considered a number of issues concerning the PCE as noted in the recommendations of the Third Session of the ICPM and recorded in Appendix XVI, Paragraph 10 of the report. The group supported updating the PCE to take into account the new standards and to add other analysis components. It noted that the PCE was to be translated into other FAO languages after the English language version is updated. Plans also call for the creation of a CD-ROM with the PCE and other phytosanitary information of a general nature that is relevant to assist countries in the use of the PCE. A further aspect of the PCE development is a proposal for the addition of a format within the PCE to assist countries in identifying donors of technical assistance.
5. The Informal Working Group noted that although the PCE is a self-assessment tool for use by all countries, it is most effective when used with the assistance of an expert facilitator and

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with the involvement of relevant high-level government officials. It was recommended that a team of expert facilitators be organized to assist with PCE updating and to assist countries with implementation.

6. The ICPM is invited to:
 1. *Endorse* the use of the Informal Working Group on Strategic Planning and Technical Assistance as the ad hoc Working Group on Technical Assistance recognizing the need for certain aspects of technical assistance to be handled by experts.
 2. *Endorse* the updating of the PCE to take into account the new standards and the addition of other analysis components.
 3. *Endorse* the preparation of the PCE in other FAO languages after the English language version is updated.
 4. *Recommend* the creation of a CD-ROM with the PCE and other phytosanitary information of a general nature that is relevant to the ICPM and to develop guidelines to assist countries in the use of the PCE.
 5. *Recommend* the addition of a format within the PCE to assist countries to identify donors of technical assistance.
 6. *Recommend* the development of a team of expert facilitators to assist countries in their use of the PCE.