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Food
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des
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pour
l'alimentation
et
l'agriculture

Organización
de las
Naciones
Unidas
para la
Agricultura
y la
Alimentación

INTERIM COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

Seventh Session

Rome, 4-8 April 2005

Format, Publication and Distribution of ISPMs

Agenda Item 7.1.3 of the Provisional Agenda

A. FORMAT AND PUBLICATION OF ISPMs

1. At its 5th session in November 2004, the Standards Committee considered the format of standards. The Standards Committee endorsed the suggestion of the Glossary Working Group that ISPMs should be published in one volume in a book format, similar to the format used by OIE. Some of the issues that would be addressed by publication in one volume include:
 - a) The present green booklets are very inconvenient for users and practically indistinguishable from each other at first glance.
 - b) Each booklet includes several pages which are repeated in all standards, and would only be needed once in a book format.
 - c) The current A5 format increases the number of pages for each standard (by comparison to a possible A4 format), and production costs would be lowered by publishing in A4 format instead of A5 (thus reducing the number of pages).
 - d) Publication in a book format would allow greater consistency with regard to the "Definitions" section and format. The task of ensuring such consistency could be given to the Glossary Working Group.
 - e) Such a book would have a more distinct identity. It could more conveniently be handled, distributed and cited.
 - f) The new format would facilitate the use of electronic capabilities to search for information in the standards or to navigate through different areas of text within the book.
2. Possible disadvantages to publication of ISPMs one volume book format include:
 - a) The whole book would have to be formatted and edited each year, and staff costs for editing and preparation for publication may increase.
 - b) The entire book would need to be updated and reprinted each year (but could also be distributed electronically).
 - c) Everything would have to be done in parallel for the 5 FAO languages.

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- d) Publication in a book may increase translation costs at least in the first year, in particular due to the review of the English version and adjustments in the "Definitions" section.
3. The Standards Committee considered issues linked to format, content and publication, and recommended that:
- a) ISPMs be published together as one volume in a book form in an A4 format, with one volume per FAO language.
 - b) the compiled volumes of standards should be published during 2005-2006, and subsequently submitted to ICPM-8 for review and any further consideration.
 - c) the English version of the book be reviewed by a group before publication, in relation to the section "Definitions" and any changes be carried over to other languages. The Glossary Working Group should function as this review group.
 - d) ISPM No. 5 (*Glossary of phytosanitary terms*) should remain separate in multilingual format. ISPM No. 5 in the relevant language would also be part of each language version of the book of standards. The "definitions" section in each ISPM would refer to ISPM No. 5 within that book and not contain any definitions, except as follows:
 - Where a Glossary definition was amended subsequent to the adoption of the ISPM, and the new definition does not conform to the use of the term in that ISPM. In this case, the original definition will be retained in the individual ISPM with an indication that it is for the purposes of that ISPM only.
 - When a term is specific to the use of a particular standard and not used in other IPPC documents (e.g. many terms in ISPM No. 18: *Guidelines for the use of irradiation as a phytosanitary measure*). These specific definitions would not appear in ISPM No. 5.
 - e) the book be made available electronically and that individual ISPMs would still be available electronically (but not in printed form), as extracts from the book.
 - f) appropriate formatting should be considered to enable the use of electronic capabilities (e.g. electronic searches; navigation).
 - g) this publication be prepared on a yearly basis, depending on the availability of resources, and separation into several volumes be considered in the future as appropriate, after the adoption of further standards.
4. Regarding country consultation and adoption of ISPMs, the SC noted that the process for developing and adopting standards would not change. Individual new and amended ISPMs will be distributed for country consultation, and adopted by ICPM, following the approved procedures. Any new or revised terms and definitions generated as a result of the new and amended ISPMs would be part of the changes to ISPM No. 5, and circulated for country consultation and adopted by ICPM according to established procedures.

B. DISTRIBUTION OF ISPMs

5. A change of format and publication of ISPMs in a book format would give the opportunity to review and make recommendation on their distribution. The Standards Committee:
- a) noted that currently printed ISPMs are distributed in an ad-hoc manner to contact points, at various IPPC meeting and made available at the ICPM. All adopted ISPMs are also placed on the IPP, normally as PDF files.
 - b) noted that given the lead times on final translation, formatting and printing, ISPMs are generally available on the IPP many months before the printed versions are available. Some languages are available before others.
 - c) recommended that the use of electronic means for distributing ISPMs should be promoted. Contact points should be notified when electronic versions are available and should be encouraged to make use of electronic versions wherever possible. Contact

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- points with adequate electronic communication systems should be encouraged to make use of the electronic version of the book and circulate it internally in electronic form.
- d) recommended that there be an adequate number of paper copies of the book to meet requests and needs that might arise.
6. The ICPM is invited to:
1. *Consider* and, if appropriate *adopt*, the recommendations on the format, publication and distribution of ISPMs as provided in this paper.
 2. *Note* that, if the ICPM agrees to publish the ISPMs in book format, the compiled volumes of standards in all languages will be published during 2005-2006 and subsequently submitted to ICPM-8 for further consideration and review.