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INTERIM COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

Seventh Session

Rome, 4 – 8 April 2005

Guidelines for the Operation of Expert Working Groups

Agenda Item 7.2.3 of the Provisional Agenda

1. In 2004, ICPM-6 adopted improvements to the standard setting procedure of the ICPM. ICPM-6 decided that brief guidelines on the operation of expert working groups/technical panels should be produced by the Secretariat in consultation with SC for approval by ICPM (Appendix IX, point 9.1 of the report of ICPM-6), and that this guideline should be provided to all expert working group/technical panel participants.
2. A working group of the SC which met in July 2004 discussed draft guidelines for the operation of expert working groups.
3. The SC reviewed a draft at its meeting in November 2004, and submits it for adoption to ICPM-7 (Annex 1).
4. The ICPM is invited to:
 - Adopt* the guidelines for the operation of expert working groups laid down in Annex 1.

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.
Most FAO meeting documents are available on Internet at www.fao.org

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Annex 1**GUIDELINES FOR THE OPERATION OF EXPERT WORKING GROUPS**

(Approved by SC-5, November 2004)

1. Introduction

These guidelines have been prepared to aid those assisting, involved in organizing or attending an Expert Working Group (EWG) meeting. The guidelines cover most of the requirements and procedures for the successful operation of an EWG. They are general guidelines so not all parts apply to every EWG meeting and some very specific requirements of some groups may not be included.

2. Funding

The main funding for EWG meetings comes from the FAO IPPC budget. This is normally supplemented by member countries or organizations covering participants' expenses [travel and daily subsistence allowance (DSA)]. In some instances, member countries or organizations have funded, or partially funded, an EWG on a specific subject. A member country, organization or agency offering such funding or providing any level of assistance in operating an EWG is referred to as a collaborator in this document.

Participation of the IPPC Secretariat is funded by FAO.

3. Organization

EWG meetings can only be organized for those topics which have been adopted under the topics and priorities for standards at the ICPM. The organization of EWG meetings is normally done by the IPPC Secretariat with varying levels of assistance from a collaborator.

3.1 Composition of the EWG

See the IPPC Procedural manual, first edition, 2004, section 4.3.

3.2 Meetings held at FAO Rome or other FAO Offices

The IPPC Secretariat in general uses FAO offices to make logistical arrangements, including travel and DSA.

For a meeting at FAO in Rome, the IPPC Secretariat does not make hotel bookings, but names and addresses of accommodation are provided on the IPP (www.ippc.int).

3.3 Meetings held outside of FAO offices

Meetings held outside the FAO offices are usually arranged with the assistance of a collaborator. The collaborator may take various levels of involvement. A commonly operated system is where FAO enters into a letter of agreement with the collaborator (after agreeing on a budget) and transfers the funds needed for the meeting. The letter of agreement generally covers participants' expenses (travel and DSA) and may cover other items as appropriate. The collaborator is expected to make arrangements for participants' expenses, meeting rooms, photocopying, field trip etc.

In other cases the collaborator may fund the entire meeting (including participants' expenses, meeting room, photocopying, field trip etc.) or part of the meeting.

4. Roles of meeting organizers and participants**4.1 IPPC Secretariat**

The Secretariat is expected to:

- plan a meeting date and seek a collaborator
- provide resources for the meeting, if held on FAO premises
- approve budget being paid by the IPPC and, if necessary, prepare a letter of agreement
- send a letter of invitation to participants (especially for the purpose of obtaining visas) and interact with the FAO visa office if needed
- liaise with collaborator, steward and EWG participants as appropriate
- arrange with the steward for the production of discussion papers
- attempt to find a replacement if an EWG participant approved by the SC is not able to attend the meeting (and inform the SC of such changes)
- describe and explain the mode of operation of the EWG and the roles and responsibilities of participants (ICPM-6 Report, Appendix VIII *Improvement in the current standard setting process*)
- coordinate the organization of the meeting and be responsible for the production of the draft ISPM and meeting report.

4.2 Collaborator

The collaborator is expected to:

- select location, make local arrangements, make hotel bookings, book meeting rooms and arrange for coffee breaks, official dinner (if appropriate) and field trip (if appropriate)
- interact with embassies as needed for the purpose of obtaining visas
- provide meeting resources (see item 5)
- provide, where possible, a rapporteur (who could be regarded as a resource outside of the EWG)
- arrange for local transportation as appropriate, including airport transfer and transfer from the hotel to the meeting room (or provides suitable information)
- provide, as necessary, information on local transportation, local conditions, address of the hotel(s) and meeting venue, map, medical information etc.
- have facilities to provide copies of working papers and of documents drafted during the meeting, as appropriate.

4.3 Steward

The steward is expected to:

- explain the requirements of the specification to the EWG at the time of its first meeting. Hence, the steward should have a good understanding of the specification for the standard. If some issues are unclear, the steward should discuss the matters with the Secretariat or members of the SC.
- liaise with the Secretariat to ensure that discussion papers are produced for the EWG meeting
- assist with the running of the meeting. In some instances, the steward may take the role of the chair of the group or of the discussion facilitator
- assist the Secretariat to complete the draft standard
- assist the Secretariat in the preparation of the meeting report.

These duties are discussed in more detail in the *Guidelines for the role of a steward of an ISPM*.

4.4 Chair

The EWG chairperson is selected at the meeting. The function is that of a normal chair - to keep the meeting running smoothly and ensure participation by all experts - with some additional duties. The chairperson is expected to:

- act as facilitator of the group in its production of draft text
- assist the Secretariat, steward and rapporteur to prepare the EWG report

- be involved, where appropriate, with the steward in incorporating EWG comments into the draft standard.

4.5 Experts

The experts in an EWG should:

- take responsibility for their travel and accommodation arrangements and visa requirements as requested by the meeting organizer. Experts are expected to be in attendance for the entirety of the EWG meeting and should plan to arrive before the meeting starts and depart after the meeting concludes. They should undertake whatever needs to be done in a timely manner so there are no urgent arrangements to be made by the organizers.
- prepare discussion papers, possibly consulting with national or regional experts, as requested
- actively participate in the EWG meeting and in e-mail discussions prior to and after the meeting, if appropriate
- study discussion papers prior to the meeting and develop specific comments and text as appropriate
- in reflecting their individual viewpoints, aim to produce a globally acceptable standard
- assist stewards as needed, particularly when reviewing country comments
- respond, as appropriate, with comments to draft ISPMs within the agreed time.

4.6 Rapporteur

Each EWG requires a rapporteur to take down the text for the draft standard and, where possible, to take notes on the meeting discussions. The rapporteur should have facility with the English language and be able to use a computer for note taking. This is an extremely important supporting function of the EWG. Where possible the rapporteur should not be a member of the EWG but be part of the supporting team. If a member of the EWG does have to act as rapporteur, that expert's contribution to the meeting discussions tends to be severely restricted. The rapporteur should, where possible, assist the Secretariat with the meeting report.

5. Meeting resources

The usual meeting resources are required for an EWG meeting. These include:

- a quiet room large enough to accommodate up to 10 people
- white boards, flip charts and marker pens
- computer and, preferably, a projector for the computer and an internet connection
- coffee/tea making facilities for work breaks
- copies of ISPMs, ICPM reports, dictionary.

6. Time schedule for meeting

The meeting is scheduled by the Secretariat in coordination with interested parties and participants after the ICPM has agreed to the work programme. Meeting dates are posted on the IPP. Experts are nominated by member countries and RPPOs and the specific experts for any particular EWG are selected by the SC. Following this, the nominated Secretariat person and the steward arrange:

At least 3 months prior to the meeting

The Secretariat:

- makes a call for discussion papers.

At least 2 months prior to the meeting

The Secretariat:

- sends the discussion papers to the EWG members
- announces the meeting to participants by e-mail, indicating the date and place of the meeting, and sends out early personal invitations by e-mail and surface mail (in some cases via courier) to those members known to have less rapid national administrative procedures.

At least 1 month prior to the meeting

The Secretariat:

- asks experts to exchange comments on discussion papers
- sends a personal invitation letter by e-mail to each expert announcing the meeting (if not already done). When the meeting is in Rome, and for experts from countries not requiring a visa, paper copies of the letter of invitation may be sent only on request.
- asks experts if they have any specific needs
- forwards information provided by the collaborator.

The collaborator:

- sends a personal invitation letter
- provides to the Secretariat information as outlined in section 4.2.

EWG members:

- undertake to obtain authorization from their authorities, if appropriate
- reply to the IPPC Secretariat and request financial assistance for their expenses, if needed, immediately after they receive a copy of their e-mail invitation
- reply to the organizers as stated in the letter of invitation to acknowledge receipt of the invitation and inform the organizer of their attendance (this requirement facilitates the obtaining of building passes etc.)
- ensure their visa and travel arrangements are completed in time.

At least 2 weeks prior to the meeting

The Secretariat forwards to the EWG members:

- an agenda for the meeting
- time and venue of the meeting
- planned meeting hours.

7. Output of the meeting

The EWG should finish the meeting with a draft standard. Occasionally, this is not the case and further discussions via e-mail are required. However, these should be limited to one month after the EWG meeting and the draft should then be released to the Secretariat.

Where substantial work still needs to be done on the draft standard the Secretariat, in consultation with the steward and SC, arranges for a further meeting.

Each EWG meeting should produce a draft standard and a report (made available on the IPP) of the meeting (noting major discussion points or contentious issues). The steward should be familiar enough with the issues of the draft standard to be able to attend a SC meeting (often the steward is a SC member) and discuss the draft with the SC.

8. Post-meeting consideration of the draft ISPM

The Secretariat will distribute draft ISPMs to EWG members and request them to submit comments within the agreed period of time. The EWG members will submit their comments as appropriate to the Secretariat within this agreed time.