



Sixth Meeting of the ICPM Informal Working Group on Strategic Planning and Technical Assistance

11-15 October 2004 - FAO, Rome

Report

1. Opening of the meeting

The 6th meeting of the ICPM Informal Working Group on Strategic Planning and Technical Assistance (SPTA) was chaired by Mr Canale, Vice-Chairman of the Interim Commission for Phytosanitary Measures (ICPM). A list of participants is provided in Appendix 1.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The provisional agenda is presented in Appendix 2. The agenda was adopted as amended.

3. Focus Group Report

Mr. Lopian, Chair of the ICPM, gave a brief overview of the output of the Focus Group that had met in July 2004.

Strategic Direction 5: The maintenance of an effective and efficient administrative framework

4. Issues arising from the Focus Group on SPTA matters

4.1 Strategic Plan

The SPTA reviewed proposals made by the Focus group on SPTA matters with regard to the strategic plan, and reviewed the plan as amended by the Focus group.

Structure, presentation and maintenance of the strategic plan

The SPTA agreed to the new structure of the strategic plan, which includes outputs and deadlines for each goal. It also agreed that the plan would be presented to the ICPM without the operational part (which includes outputs and deadlines). This operational part would be reviewed annually by the Bureau and Secretariat, discussed by the SPTA and placed on the IPP. The SPTA understood that the annual report of the IPPC Secretariat to the ICPM will be based on the outputs described in the strategic plan.

With regard to the maintenance of the plan, the SPTA recommended that the ICPM:

1. review the vision statement, strategic directions and mission statements when the IPPC 1997 comes into force, and after that when needed.
2. review the goals as needed based on recommendations made by the SPTA
3. update the subgoals annually based on recommendations made by the SPTA
4. agree that the SPTA review the operational part of the plan (outputs and deadlines) annually.

Interpretation or clarifications of ISPMs

The FG had discussed a suggestion that draft guidelines be developed for providing official ISPM interpretations, with the idea that such interpretations could help countries to avoid entering into a dispute-settlement procedure. It had concluded that the Subsidiary body on dispute settlement (SBDS)

could discuss this at its next meeting on the basis a discussion paper to be prepared by Brazil. The SPTA agreed to the FG recommendation.

Regionalization

The SPTA discussed regionalization. It noted that this topic was under discussion in the SPS Committee. The issues of discussion in the SPS Committee concerned administrative measures (in particular undue delays in the procedures leading to bilateral recognition of pest free areas) and the multilateral recognition of pest free areas. It was also noted that the issue of regionalization was addressed in several ISPMs and draft ISPMs, and that the draft revised ISPM No. 1 proposed new language covering undue delays.

The SPTA recognized that further action was required to meet the concerns raised in the SPS Committee, and it recommended that the general role of the IPPC with regard to regionalization and administrative delays should be discussed by an open-ended working group during ICPM-7. Discussion papers for this working group would be developed by the Bureau and the Secretariat. The discussion papers would include the issues related to the SPS Committee and the experience of OIE on the recognition of disease-free areas. Representatives of OIE and SPS will be invited to present the views or prospective of their respective organizations during the ICPM plenary, and will also be invited to participate in the open-ended working group.

Other issues

The SPTA will consider the characterization of priorities (high, medium, low) in the strategic plan at its next meeting.

The Secretariat was asked to report to ICPM-7 on its activities concerning the preparation of explanatory documents.

The SPTA considered a proposal to introduce a subgoal under Strategic direction 5 (The maintenance of an effective and efficient administrative framework), which would provide for the monitoring of the effectiveness of the IPPC. It welcomed the proposal but recommended that it be postponed until a comprehensive evaluation of the IPPC (see section 4.3) has been carried out.

The SPTA recommended that the ICPM:

1. adopts the Strategic Plan, as amended.

4.2 Business Plan

The SPTA recognized the quality of the business plan. Some general changes were suggested. They include:

- In the executive summary, differentiate between the revenues for the FAO regular programme and the extra budgetary revenues
- Stress the consequences if the IPPC Secretariat only receives regular programme revenues
- Add the value of the global agriculture/forestry exports
- Present a stronger link between the IPPC and the SPS, and its relationships to Codex and OIE
- Match the revenues and expenditures in the appendix with the budget proposal for 2005.

There were also a number of editorial comments that SPTA members were requested to submit directly to the Secretariat.

The SPTA recommended that the ICPM:

1. endorses the Business plan.

4.3 Long term funding options and proposed evaluation

There was great concern expressed in that the funding of the IPPC Secretariat may fall back in 2006-2007 to some 75% of the 2004-2005 level and to half of what would be needed according to the Business Plan as arrears would not be available for the next biennium. The FG had considered several funding options but had not reached a conclusion for consideration by the SPTA and submission to the ICPM. The SPTA agreed to the two stage approach recommended by the FG. The first stage would be to recruit a consultant to study various funding options. The consultant would be supported by an extended Bureau to deal with phytosanitary considerations in the proposal. The second stage would be undertaken at a later time, and would be an evaluation of the ICPM infrastructure, the IPPC Secretariat, and the outputs and outcomes of the system.

In relation with the evaluation of funding, the SPTA recommended that the ICPM:

1. agree to the two step approach proposed by the FG, including a consultant and a group.
2. decide that the first stage of the evaluation should be carried out in 2005, and reported to ICPM-8 in 2006, through the SPTA in 2005.
3. decide that the group assisting the consultant in its task should be a new Focus group composed of an extended Bureau.
4. adopt the terms of reference for a new Focus group to conduct an analysis of the potential funding arrangements of the IPPC

Regarding the evaluation of the IPPC and its structures, the SPTA noted the report of the FG and recognized the usefulness of such an evaluation. It recommended that the ICPM:

1. decide that this evaluation should be carried out before the entry into force of the IPPC 1997
2. decide that, dependent on the availability of resources including the resources from the FAO evaluation service, this evaluation should take place in 2007.

4.4 Budget

4.4.1 Proposed revenues and expenditures for 2005

IPPC Trust Fund

The Secretariat presented an overview of IPPC trust funds. It was noted by the SPTA that it was difficult to plan expenditures when the donations to the IPPC Trust Fund were not fully confirmed, especially for 2006. The SPTA noted that the ICPM had determined that the first \$500,000 (US) donated to the IPPC Trust Fund should be used to fund ICPM participation, regional workshops to review draft ISPMs and technical assistance for implementing ISPMs. It was also noted that the New Zealand contribution to the IPPC Trust Fund from 2004 was not recorded as part of the first \$500,000. The Secretariat agreed to make these adjustments and to also present a budget for 2006 showing the known donors and proposing anticipated expenditures to help show that extra contributions to the IPPC Trust Fund were needed.

The SPTA recommended that the revenues and expenditures proposed for the IPPC Trust Fund be adjusted as stated above and submitted to the ICPM-7 for consideration and adoption. The SPTA requested the ICPM to clarify the interpretation of paragraph 73 of the report of ICPM-6.

FAO budget

The SPTA considered the revenues and expenditures for the IPPC Secretariat. The SPTA noted that some adjustments would have to be made to these figures to reflect the discussion on the IPPC Trust Fund. The SPTA also suggested that costs (both non-staff and staff) that were from other sources should be shown to reflect the resources needed to deliver the existing work programme. It also noted that there would have to be some slight adjustments to reflect some of the other discussions which had taken place during the week, notably the inclusion of the costs for a consultant to study the long term funding issues and the costs of a meeting on liaison with research and teaching organizations.

The SPTA noted the proposed revenues and expenditures for the IPPC Secretariat and recommended that these adjusted figures be presented to the ICPM for information.

4.4.2 Financial guidelines for the IPPC Trust Fund

The ICPM at its sixth session had agreed that updated financial guidelines for the IPPC Trust Fund be submitted to its next session, in consultation with the SPTA and the Bureau. The financial rules were presented by the Secretariat for discussion and further amended by the SPTA. The SPTA recommended that these financial guidelines should now be submitted to the ICPM, after final clearance by the relevant FAO Departments.

4.5 Draft terms of reference for the Informal working group on strategic planning and technical assistance

The FG had drafted terms of reference for the SPTA, as requested by the ICPM. The SPTA welcomed these draft terms of reference, which attempted to address all concerns voiced over the years on the operation of the SPTA.

Comments were made in particular on the proposed composition of the SPTA. The proposed structure was: a core group of 10 persons (participation funded), composed of the bureau, plus four representatives from the regions not represented by the bureau members, plus the immediately preceding bureau chair (if not in the bureau), plus the chairpersons of the Subsidiary body on dispute settlement and of the Standards Committee; other interested persons (participation not funded). The SPTA welcomed the attempt to introduce balance between developing and developed country, but diverging opinions were expressed on the proposed composition. In particular, some questions were:

- whether the bureau members could be considered as representatives from their regions, and whether it would not be better to have 1 representative from each FAO region (instead of 4).
- how to deal with the fact that the preceding bureau chair might have left for reasons which would prevent him/her to attend meetings
- whether the chairs of subsidiary bodies should be part of the core group, or should be invited when subjects required it (although it was noted that the review of the strategic plan meant that their area of expertise would be discussed at each meeting)
- what would be the duration of mandates (although it was noted that this structure was intended to remain only until the IPPC 1997 came into force, in a few years).

The SPTA revised the Terms of reference taking into account the above questions. In regard to the question raised by the FG on the name of the SPTA, it was thought that no name change would be necessary.

The SPTA recommended that the ICPM:

1. adopts the Terms of reference as amended.

Strategic Direction 1: The development, adoption and monitoring of the implementation of ISPMs

5. Matters referring to the Standards Committee

5.1 Standards Committee report

The Secretariat presented a brief overview of the standard setting process, and explained that the process for selection of expert working group members involved the approval of both the Standards Committee and the bureau. Once the selection was complete, the names of expert working group members were posted on the IPP. It was emphasised that the work load of the Standards Committee was continually growing, and stated that the first two Technical Panels (TP) had met and that their meetings had been successful. The Secretariat noted that more permanent membership for TPs would be determined next year; the expertise needed would be refined based on recommendations from TP members. It also noted that the working groups of the ICPM worked in English and that it was very difficult when experts were nominated who did not have a working level of English.

The SPTA noted that there were 23 standards under development, and that 4 technical panels had been established, which oversaw the development of an additional 4 standards and 19 diagnostic protocols. The Secretariat would report on progress on these standards at the next ICPM.

It was noted that some countries, in their response to the draft ISPMs on transit that had been circulated during this year's country consultation, had replied with "no comments, return to expert working group", while giving only a general reason for the rejection of the standard. The Standards Committee had set up a new process this year and was using the steward to review and respond to comments received, and to give a recommendation to the Standards Committee on whether to proceed or not. The major concern was that if the steward believed that the draft ISPM could be modified to address the concerns expressed in specific country comments, the Standards Committee might move the draft standard forward but there would be a possibility that the concerns of countries which had not sent specific comments might not be addressed. The SPTA noted this concern and recommended that the Standards Committee proceed and review comments taking into account the recommendation of the steward.

5.2 Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the Standards Committee

The Secretariat introduced a document containing revisions to the Terms of Reference (TOR) and Rules of Procedure (ROP) of the Standards Committee, based on decisions at ICPM-6 and discussions in the Standards Committee. The suggested revisions addressed, among other topics, the new structure of the Standards Committee as agreed at ICPM-6 and the question of how to replace members of the Standards Committee who have resigned or are no longer able to attend the necessary meetings.

The SPTA also reviewed and proposed modifications to other sections of the TOR and ROP, pursuant to the request of ICPM-6 that SPTA analyzes the TOR and ROP and submits resulting changes to ICPM-7. The proposed modifications cover, among others, rules and period of membership (rules 1 and 3), replacement of members (rule 2), chair (rule 4), sessions (rule 5) and reports (rule 8).

The SPTA recommended that the ICPM:

1. adopts the terms of reference and rules of procedure as amended.

6. Topics and priorities for standards

The Secretariat introduced this point, explaining that new topics and priorities, although not needed for the following year's work programme would be required to build a proper work programme. A framework for standards and procedures of the ICPM was presented. The SPTA welcomed it and thought that it would be useful to help identify priorities.

The SPTA found some difficulties in applying all the criteria for identifying topics and priorities for standards as laid out by the ICPM, in the absence of relevant statistical information. Nevertheless it established a list and recommended that the SC draw from that list when determining priorities for standard development to be submitted to the ICPM for inclusion in the work programme. The list is not in any priority order. However, the SPTA identified three strategic areas of work: PRA for weeds; propagating material; and soil and growing media. The SPTA recommended that a TP on surveillance for specific pests be considered by the SC.

The SPTA recommended that the Secretariat update the procedures for identifying topics and priorities for standards as presented in the IPPC Procedural Manual (first edition 2004) to reflect the changes to the standard setting process, modify dates as needed and include the submission form (modified to include a section on IPPC criteria for setting topics for the work programme). John Greifer from the USA agreed to review these modifications before the modified procedures would be presented to ICPM.

7. Electronic certification

The SPTA noted the work being undertaken on e-certification under the UN initiative on trade facilitation, UN/CEFACT, presented to the recent Technical Consultation (Nairobi, September 2004), and recommended that the Secretariat:

- establish contacts with those responsible for e-certification within OIE and Codex to ensure a common strategic position on the subject among the international standard-setting bodies
- prepare a paper for consideration at an informal working group at ICPM-7, in collaboration with the UN/CEFACT project

Strategic Direction 2: Information exchange

8. Information exchange work programme

The SPTA took note of the planned IPPC information exchange activities for 2004, the plans for 2005 and the detailed work programme according to the headings in the 2004 strategic plan. It noted the complications concerning an official FAO contact point and the national IPPC contact point. It welcomed the development of a paper to be provided to the SPTA on defining the role of IPPC and FAO contact points.

The SPTA welcomed the work undertaken in recent months, under the guidance of the IPP support group, to improve the IPP. It endorsed the plan, as amended during the meeting, for the roll-out of the IPP during 2005 and recommended that the overall workplan on information exchange and the workplan of the IPP be updated to mid-2006 and submitted to the ICPM for approval.

Strategic Direction 3: The provision of dispute settlement mechanisms

9. Dispute Settlement

The chair of the SBDS provided an update of activities of the SBDS. Three items are under preparation: an advocacy document; a manual on the IPPC dispute settlement process; and a roster system that may be used for listing experts for dispute settlement procedures. The SPTA discussed possibilities to use the SBDS to facilitate resolution of disputes and address issues of non-compliance, and considered lessons that might be drawn from other fora in this regard. The Chair of the SBDS expects to present one or more documents to ICPM-7 on these matters.

Strategic Direction 4: The development of the phytosanitary capacity of members by promoting the provision of technical assistance

10. Technical Assistance

10.1 Expert working group on technical assistance

The Secretariat introduced a paper proposing an agenda for a meeting of a new Expert Group on Technical Assistance in March 2005. The paper highlighted the importance of technical assistance. The SPTA agreed on the importance of this action.

Following discussion, three agenda items were agreed upon for the meeting: (1) IPPC implementation needs assessment; (2) development of a strategy for IPPC implementation; (3) short term action plan. A possible fourth agenda item on evaluation or monitoring was discussed, and referred back to the Secretariat for further consideration. On this item, some suggested that a focus should be on evaluating the effectiveness of technical assistance in addressing capacity needs of developing countries, rather than on monitoring implementation (or compliance) more generally.

10.2 Role of RPPOs with regard to the Convention

The SPTA reviewed the proposal made by the FG and 3 RPPO representatives on the roles and functions of RPPOs, and subsequently amended by the Technical Consultation of RPPOs in September. The SPTA welcomed this text. It recommended that it should be adopted by ICPM-7. It suggested however that the ICPM should consider making the following amendments:

- *2nd paragraph of the introduction:*

Delete the reference to the Focus Group. Rewording proposed:

~~"The Focus Group recommends that a~~Areas of cooperation between RPPOs and the IPPC, ..."

- *Standard setting process, 5th bullet point:*

Take account of the fact that explanatory documents are developed under the auspices of the Secretariat and reviewed by the SC. Rewording proposed:

"preparation of **draft** explanatory documents on ISPMs according to paragraph 111 of the Report of the Sixth Session of the ICPM, **under the auspices of the IPPC Secretariat**"

- *Standard setting process, 6th bullet point:*

Avoid confusion between regions and RPPOs. Rewording proposed, taking into account the fact that the text includes "as appropriate"

"as appropriate, provision of technical and administrative support to Standards Committee members ~~in their region.~~"

- *Technical assistance, 3rd bullet point*

It would be important to report also on successes of implementation. Rewording proposed:

"Report on implementation difficulties **and successes**"

The SPTA also reviewed a paper proposed by the TC on the organization of TCs. It welcomed this proposal which would improve the contribution of TCs to the work of the ICPM, and acknowledged the need for such procedures. It noted that the ICPM would receive these as part of the report of the TC. It considered that the development and adoption of such procedures was a matter between the IPPC Secretariat and RPPOs.

The SPTA noted that this paper would be available to the ICPM as part of the report of the TC. It recommended that the ICPM should decide on how to proceed further, and recommended that the Secretariat work with RPPOs to review the proposed procedure in order to ensure the feasibility of the proposal. In particular, there was a need to consider resource issues.

Strategic Direction 6: Promotion of IPPC and cooperation with the relevant international organizations

11. Liaison with research and teaching organizations

A preliminary paper providing a description of a programme to liaise with research and teaching organizations concerning phytosanitary matters was presented to the SPTA. The Secretariat reported that a contract would be concluded at the beginning of 2005 to start investigate what could be done in this area.

The SPTA expressed concerns on the decline in availability of diagnostic services. It stressed that it was important to make progress in this area, and noted the paper presented to it. It took note that

activities would start in 2005 and would include a meeting of an expert working group on liaison with research and teaching organizations. The SPTA would review outcomes at its next meeting.

12. Closer cooperation between IPPC and the COP of the CBD

The meeting had before it the report of the joint meeting of the Chairmen and the Secretariats of the IPPC and Convention on Biological Diversity, which was held on 20 May 2004 in Montreal, Canada. The SPTA noted the large number of possible joint actions that had been identified during the meeting and expressed some concern that there might be no staff resources available in the IPPC Secretariat to meet these requests. Concern was also expressed on the differences in the use of terms between the IPPC, the CBD and the Cartagena Protocol, particularly in the field of alien invasive species. It recognized that it would be impossible to harmonize terms fully and agreed that it would be worthwhile to develop an anthology of terms across a number of conventions. The SPTA stressed the need for cooperation with the Secretariat of the CBD, in particularly in relation to the COP decision which had clearly recognized the role of the IPPC in the management of alien invasive species. The SPTA welcomed the cooperation with the CBD/Cartagena Protocol Secretariat on the website and information sharing. The SPTA recommended that the report of the joint meeting be submitted to the ICPM for information.

13. Relations with OIE and Codex

The SPTA considered a paper on the relationships with OIE and Codex prepared by the Chair of the ICPM. It was noted that the three standard-setting organizations are all involved on some issues (arising in the context of the SPS Agreement), but had not always been able to coordinate these activities. The paper suggested that the three organizations could try to work together to make a general framework on standards, and could then develop more specific standards within that framework. The SPTA noted that subjects such as liaison with research and teaching organizations and electronic certification could also be of interest for the three organizations.

The SPTA noted the paper, accepted the proposals made in it, and took note that a paper would be presented to the ICPM.

Other business

14. ISPM No. 15

The issue of implementation of ISPM No. 15 with additional phytosanitary measures was raised. Two members of the SPTA believed that if countries continued to do this, it would send a message that contracting parties might not be committed to implementing standards as adopted by the ICPM, thus undermining the objective of international harmonization.

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PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Opening of meeting
2. Adoption of agenda
3. Report of the Focus Group on SPTA issues

Strategic Direction 5: The maintenance of an effective and efficient administrative framework

4. Consideration of report of the Focus Group
 - 4.1 Update of Strategic Plan
 - 4.2 Update of Business Plan
 - 4.3 Analysis of long-term funding options
 - 4.4 Budget documents for:
 - (i) Regular Programme and
 - (ii) Trust fund.
 - 4.5 Draft terms of reference - Expert working group to conduct an analysis of the potential funding arrangements of the IPPC
 - 4.6 Draft Terms of reference for the Informal working group on strategic planning and technical assistance
5. Matters referring to the Standards Committee
 - 5.1 Report of the SC (April-May 2004)
 - 5.2 Changes in the Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedures of the Standards Committee
6. Structure of the SPTA
7. Role of RPPOs with regard to the Convention

Strategic Direction 1: The development, adoption and monitoring of the implementation of ISPMs

8. Proposals for standard development
9. Electronic certification

Strategic Direction 2: Information exchange

10. Information exchange work programme

Strategic Direction 3: The provision of dispute settlement mechanisms

11. Oral report by chair of Subsidiary Body on Dispute Settlement on status/recently prepared documents

Strategic Direction 4: The development of the phytosanitary capacity of members by promoting the provision of technical assistance

12. Update on goal 4.1.1 – Maintain and update PCE

Strategic Direction 6: Promotion of IPPC and cooperation with the relevant international organizations

13. Liaison with research and teaching organizations
14. Closer cooperation between the ICPM and the COP of the CBD
15. Closer cooperation with OIE and Codex Alimentarius
16. Other business
17. Close