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للأمم المتحدة

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Organización  
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para la  
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## COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

### First Session

Rome, 3 – 7 April 2006

### Report by the Chairperson of the ICPM Standards Committee

### Agenda Item 11.1 of the Provisional Agenda

1. In accordance with a decision at the Fifth session of the Interim Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (ICPM-5), the Chairperson of the Standards Committee (SC) is requested to make a report of the activities of the SC to the annual session of the ICPM. However, the Secretariat of the IPPC also makes a very detailed report of the sessions of the SC, which can be consulted on the International Phytosanitary Portal (IPP).

2. In the light of the above, the present report will therefore mainly highlight the most important activities of the SC which has met in April (Fifth meeting) and November (Sixth meeting) 2005.

#### I. Fifth meeting of the Standards Committee: 25-29 April 2005

3. Pursuant to the decision made at ICPM-6, the SC met for the first time in its extended composition, i.e. 25 members drawn from each FAO region. Nearly all FAO regions were fully represented. The new members were welcomed by the Chairperson (Mr M. Vereecke), who also welcomed the new IPPC Coordinator, Mr R. Ivess.

4. The SC reviewed and adopted the amended agenda and the report of the previous meeting with small changes resulting from comments made by SC members.

##### a) Review and assignment of stewards

5. The SC assigned stewards to new topics and made changes to stewards for some topics. The SC further agreed that stewards would draft specifications on their topics for presentation to the SC.

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**b) Specifications for ISPMs**

6. The SC examined several specifications for ISPMs presented to it. The committee agreed to the modifications suggested and approved the following specifications:

- specification No. 17: *Debarking of wood and bark-freedom*
- specification No. 30: *Guidelines for the recognition of pest free areas and areas of low pest prevalence*
- specification for Technical Panels (TP) No. 3 rev. 01: *TP on phytosanitary treatments*
- specification for TP No. 4: *TP on forest quarantine*

7. The discussions on draft specifications have again been time-consuming and extensive, in particular on the establishment of the tasks to be carried out by the Expert Working Groups (EWGs) and/or Technical Panels (TPs). Therefore, I would like to repeat my remark made last year that clear guidance from the ICPM on the concept of a draft standard is required before a specification is drafted.

**c) Draft ISPMs**

8. The original plan to split the SC into two sub-groups to review the draft ISPMs, as had happened in the previous year, was not followed. It was considered by many members of the SC that the entire SC would review the draft ISPMs, acknowledging that it would be a difficult and time-consuming exercise.

9. The SC also agreed not to have a complete redrafting of the documents presented to the SC, but to identify and address the main concerns.

10. The SC considered 9 draft ISPMs:

- *Guidelines for consignments in transit*
- Revision of ISPM No. 1: *Principles of plant quarantine as related to international trade*
- *Diagnostic protocols for regulated pests*
- *Requirements for the submission and evaluation of phytosanitary treatments*
- *Requirements for the establishment and maintenance of pest free areas for Tephrid fruit flies*
- Revision of ISPM No. 2: *Guidelines for pest risk analysis*
- *Guidelines for formatting pest specific data sheets*
- *Guidelines for formatting commodity specific standards*
- *The efficacy of phytosanitary measures: concept and application*

11. The SC approved the first five draft ISPMs with modifications for submission to countries in the country consultation process.

12. As regards the revision of ISPM No. 2: *Guidelines for pest risk analysis*, the SC recognized the good work achieved by the EWG in following the specifications given to it. However, the SC felt that the draft text was again not yet ready to be sent for country consultation. The new draft version was too lengthy, too complex and some important issues still needed clarification, in particular on the newly proposed concept of “phytosanitary risk analysis”, which is not used in the IPPC (1997).

13. After discussion several steps to move forward with this draft text were identified and agreed on, such as a presentation and a general discussion in the International Plant Health Risk Analysis Workshop jointly organised by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and the IPPC Secretariat, held in Niagara Falls, Canada on 24-28 October 2005, and in a special IPPC EWG organized after the above PRA workshop with members of the last EWG on this draft text and members selected from the Workshop Steering Committee. The draft text will be presented to the SC in May 2006.

14. As regards the draft texts on “*Guidelines for formatting pest specific data sheets*” and “*Guidelines for formatting commodity specific standards*” which were due to be discussed with a view to their subsequent submission in the country consultation process, the SC agreed that they would be inserted as Annex 2 and 3 respectively to the document entitled “*Administrative guidelines for the structure of standard – setting documentation*”. As these topics were part of the work programme for the ICPM, the SC decided to make a request at CPM-1 to delete these two topics from the work programme. However, due to lack of time, no discussion took place on the content of the draft texts and it was agreed that SC members would submit possible comments and remarks to the IPPC Secretariat.

15. As regards the draft on the *Efficacy of phytosanitary measures: concept and application*, the SC felt that the draft text was not ready to be sent for country consultation. The discussions focused on the practical application of the draft standard, and whether or not the draft standard is creating new obligations for NPPOs. It was agreed to “park” this draft standard awaiting further developments as regards the standard on sampling and the outcome of the TP on phytosanitary treatments.

***d) Administrative guidelines for the structure of standard – setting documentation***

16. The SC reviewed the above guidelines which outline the structure of standard-setting documentation, including specifications for ISPMs. It will now also include the above mentioned guidelines for formatting pest specific data sheets and commodity specific standards (see paragraph 14). As regards the issue of the use of “shall/should/must/may” in standards as discussed at ICPM-7, the SC agreed to mention in a footnote that further guidance would be given by the Secretariat in consultation with the Technical Consultation among RPPOs on this issue for discussion at CPM-1.

17. It should be recalled that this guideline is updated by the SC when necessary to take into account changes in the standard setting process as approved by the ICPM. As such it is an informal document and thus not intended for submission to countries in the country consultation process. However, it was agreed that the document will be integrated in the IPPC Procedural Manual.

***e) Explanatory documents for ISPMs, status and procedures***

18. The SC noted and discussed an overview of the status of explanatory documents under development prepared by the IPPC Secretariat, pursuant to a decision taken at ICPM-6 to allow explanatory documents, training guides and similar documents to be developed and distributed under the auspices of the Secretariat.

19. The SC agreed with a review by SC members of such documents by e-mail, with a 4-6-week deadline. Absence of reaction after this period will be considered as agreement. It should be outlined that the role of the SC will be to ensure that the texts are clear without inaccuracies.

***f) Exchange of views on the current standard setting process and possible improvements***

20. The SC noted a proposal from Mr Hedley “to extend the cycle for standard-setting for concept standards”. Lack of time did not allow a detailed discussion but most SC members welcomed the idea of an extension of the process, allowing more time throughout the whole process for the production of high quality ISPMs. Discussion has continued in the November session. See paragraph 39.

21. It was agreed to maintain the Standards Committee Working Group (SC-7) as a very useful element in the preparation of draft standards.

22. The SC also discussed the selection of SC-7; it was agreed that the existing members would continue on the SC-7.

23. The following representatives were nominated by SC members of their regions to serve on the SC-7: Mr A. Challaoui (Africa), Mr W. Fuxiang (Asia), Mr J.G. Unger (Europe), Mr O. Ribeiro e Silva (Latin America and Caribbean), Mr M.R. Katbeth Bader (Near East), Mr N. Klag (North America) and Mr J. Hedley (Southwest Pacific). The SC accepted the nominations and established the SC-7 on this basis.

***g) Proposal for a change to the methyl bromide fumigation schedule contained in Annex I of ISPM No. 15 (Guidelines for regulating wood packaging material in international trade)***

24. Under the advice of the TP on Forest Quarantine, the SC assessed and approved a change to the above schedule, i.e. to increase the treatment time to 24 hrs in order to facilitate penetration of the gas and ensure that adequate concentrations of the fumigant are maintained during the duration of the treatment. Moreover, the minimum temperature in the table should be reduced from 11°C to 10°C in order to make it consistent with the accompanying wording already present in the relevant Annex. These modifications will be submitted under the fast-track standard setting process to ICPM Members and Regional Plant Protection Organizations.

## **II. Sixth meeting of the Standards Committee: 7 – 11 November 2005**

### **A. WORKING GROUP (SC-7): 31 OCTOBER- 4 NOVEMBER**

25. The Sixth meeting of the SC was preceded by a meeting of the SC-7 chaired by Mr Klag. The SC-7 primarily considered and redrafted the draft standards as a result of comments received during the country and regional consultation process.

26. Notwithstanding the large number (over 2300) and/or complexity of the comments received, the SC-7 managed to complete its work on all draft standards, except the draft standard on “*Requirements for the submission and evaluation of phytosanitary treatments*”. The latter was held back due to major concerns from some regions that could not be resolved in the timeframe available. It should be noted that this huge work could only be carried out as a result of the advanced study by the stewards of the comments received before the meeting.

### **B. STANDARDS COMMITTEE: 7 – 11 NOVEMBER**

27. The meeting was held under the chairmanship of Mr M. Vereecke. It was noted that 6 members could not attend, which was disappointing.

28. The report of the Fifth meeting of SC was considered and adopted.

29. On the request of a Member of the SC, a discussion took place on the SC access to working documents with a view to preparing for the SC meeting. It was recognized that some documents made available to the SC-7 were not made available to the entire SC, and it was agreed that in the future all documents will be made available to the entire SC.

***a) Draft ISPMs***

30. The SC noted the excellent work done by the SC-7 and in particular the huge preparatory work by the relevant stewards who had gone through the comments, identifying the important or contentious issues within the comments and making recommendations and suggestions for the draft standards.

31. The SC approved the following draft ISPMs for submission to CPM-1:

- *Diagnostic protocols for regulated pests*
- *Establishment of pest free areas for fruit flies (Tephritidae)*
- *Phytosanitary principles and concepts for the protection of plants*
- *Consignments in transit*

**b) Specifications for ISPMs**

32. The SC was presented with the following 16 specifications:
- *Plants for planting*
  - *PRA for plants as pests*
  - *Guidelines for pre-inspection and pre-clearance for regulated articles intended for export*
  - *Import of organic fertilizers*
  - *Supplement to ISPM No 5: appropriate level of protection*
  - *Supplement to ISPM No 5: not widely distributed*
  - *Soil and growing media*
  - *Guidelines for regulating stored products in international trade*
  - *Inspection manual*
  - *Import of breeding material*
  - *Guidelines for the establishment and maintenance of pest free places of production and pest free production sites for fruit flies of the family Tephritidae*
  - *Trapping procedures for fruit flies of the family Tephritidae*
  - *Area –wide suppression and eradication procedures for fruit flies of the family Tephritidae*
  - *TP for review for the Glossary of phytosanitary terms and related activities*
  - *Review of ISPMs*
  - *Revision of ISPM No 15 (Guidelines for regulating wood packaging material in international trade)*

33. Due to a lack of time the SC was not in a position to examine the above specifications but it was agreed that the members of SC would examine them through an e-mail procedure to be completed by 1 January 2006. The specifications will subsequently be posted on the IPP for a 60 day country comment period and possible further consideration by the stewards.

**c) Standard setting work programme**

34. The SC considered various elements of the work programme such as topics which emerged from the SC discussions, selected suggestions for topics for standards identified by the SPTA, priorities for the work programme, topics which should be removed from the work programme or their priority changed and topics proposed for the fast-track procedure. The topics agreed on will be submitted to CPM-1.

**d) Administrative documents**

35. The SC considered in detail the following documents which came back from ICPM-7:
- Guidelines on the duties of members of the SC
  - Guidelines on the role and responsibilities of a steward of an ISPM
  - Criteria for the formation of supplements, annexes and appendices to ISPMs
  - Procedures for the development and adoption of ISPMs
36. A long discussion took place on suggestions made in the meeting, comments received for submission to the ICPM through the SPTA and comments made by members of the ICPM.
37. In nearly all cases, the SC was in a position to agree on suggestions made, but unfortunately due to lack of time it was not possible to agree on final texts.
38. The SC had an exchange of views on several documents presented to it in its meeting of April 2005 and for which SC members were asked to comment by 1 July 2005. The documents contained procedures proposed by the various TPs on:
- the production of diagnostic protocols,
  - the production of phytosanitary treatments,

- the submission of treatments for forest quarantine,
- instructions to authors of diagnostic protocols for pests,
- request form for treatments to be considered in the work programme of the TP on phytosanitary treatments for adoption as an international treatment, as well as administrative guidelines for the structure of standard-setting documentation and guidelines for formatting and drafting pest/commodity specific ISPMs.

e) **Exchange of views on the current standard-setting process and possible improvements**

39. The SC continued its discussion on possible improvements of the current standard setting process based on a document prepared by the Secretariat with the assistance of Mr Hedley, pursuant to a decision made at the Fifth meeting of the SC. Although due to a lack of time it was again not possible to complete the discussion, some important aspects were put forward, such as:

- the quality of the drafts sent for country consultation could be improved by the use of a professional editor who could review drafting groups' texts prior to the SC meeting. The Secretariat agreed to investigate with a view to making use of this extra person in due course;
- the discussion on draft standards and draft specifications should be done with the entire SC and not with small groups as appropriate;
- if the SC does not find a draft ISPM satisfactory, it should be more prepared to return the draft text to the expert drafting group rather than redrafting the text at the SC meeting;
- the working conditions of the SC, SC-7, EWGs, TPs or stewards should be improved by reconsidering the time schedules involved in all of the steps in the process of adoption of ISPMs, in particular compilation by the Secretariat, consideration and analysis of comments by stewards, screening by SC-7, time between SC-7 and SC meetings to consider drafts prepared by SC-7;
- the management of draft ISPMs separately for their consideration and adoption. To this end it was proposed that a schedule-setting component should be included to allow thorough examination and consideration of the draft ISPM. The schedule should remain flexible.

40. The fast-track procedure was used for the first time this year. Based on a report of the steward containing responses to comments on the proposed revision to the methyl bromide fumigation schedule in Annex I of ISPM No. 15, the SC considered an important concern identified by the steward that could have an impact on trade and cause problems, i.e. the implementation of the proposed fumigation schedule.

41. In this respect the SC recommends that if the proposed fumigation schedule is approved by CPM-1, CPM-1 should recommend to contracting parties *“that in the case of adoption of a revised fumigation schedule for methyl bromide, wood packaging material fumigated and marked under the previously applied treatment schedule approved in ISPM No. 15, should be considered as validated with no need to be retreated with methyl bromide, re-marked or re-certified”*.

42. As regards the activities of the four TPs, the SC considered them as very satisfactory, although they were only established at ICPM-5. Indeed the reports produced on meetings held in 2004 and 2005 and the additional information provided during the SC meeting on the TP on phytosanitary treatments, TP on forest quarantine, pest free areas and systems approach for fruit flies and TP on diagnostic protocols was impressive.

43. They all produced working procedures which are included in the updated 2005 IPPC Procedural Manual. TPs developed documents or forms to be used, such as instructions to authors of diagnostic protocols for pests, steps to be taken for submission of treatments for forest quarantine and a submission form for phytosanitary treatments.

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44. Draft ISPMs were prepared by different TPs such as *The establishment of pest free areas for fruit flies*, *Diagnostic protocols for regulated pests*, and *Requirements for the submission and evaluation of phytosanitary treatments*.
45. The TP on forest quarantine recommended a modification to the methyl bromide fumigation schedule in Annex I of ISPM No 15.
46. However, concern was raised about the possible overlap between different TPs. Hence a clear description of the specifications and in particular of the tasks is required.
47. As already mentioned under paragraph 32, a specification for the establishment of a new (Fifth) TP for review for the Glossary of phytosanitary terms and related activities is being considered.
48. Finally, I would like to mention that during 2005, the SC has again performed very well in a constructive and friendly atmosphere, although the working conditions were not always appropriate to the large workload that was imposed on the SC. I would also like to underline the excellent co-operation with the IPPC Secretariat. Its contribution before and during the meetings has largely facilitated the work of all those involved in the standard setting process, and in particular the work of the SC.