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COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

Eighth Session

Rome, 8 - 12 April 2013

Report by the Chairperson of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures

Agenda item 5

Prepared by the CPM Chair

1. After the events of the last CPM it was with some trepidation that I started into my first year as Chair. The first challenge was to ensure that I could work well with the Secretariat and other Bureau members and that we should respect each other's views. Through regular contact I believe we have established a good relationship between Bureau members and the Secretariat.
2. In the Bureau meetings we've worked to consider our role and to meet the CPM's wish that we should develop Rules of Procedure. We listened to the legal advice that most Bureaux operate without Rules of Procedure but recognise that CPM want these to be developed - a draft is presented to this meeting. There are of course some issues which need to be reflected in the CPM Rules of Procedure and again you have a paper on this for this CPM. The issue of election of the chair in the future, which of course took so much of our time and energy reserves last year has been carefully considered in the Strategic Planning Group and with goodwill on all sides I hope we can agree on how to proceed with this. Regrettably, we have a few procedural issues to sort out at this meeting - I know CPM prefers to spend its time more profitably, but once they are done they are out of the way for a few years. And of course we still have the issue of recognising credentials and the reports from the Credentials Committee to look forward to.
3. Given the change in the Standard Setting procedures it looks like we won't be having the traditional evening discussions at this year's CPM on the final drafting of International Standards. I for one won't miss them, but think there will be other issues which will benefit from the evening session treatment. We're planning to have discussions on information exchange and international accreditation, and there may be other issues which need more discussion.
4. As I said at the last CPM, I see raising awareness about the IPPC and the vital importance of plant health as key to increasing awareness and support for our work, both in terms of resources and raising our profile. I didn't know at the time that in my country we would receive more attention in the national media than at any other time in my 18 years in plant health. This was because of the

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finding of Ash dieback, a disease caused by an organism we didn't know was present in the UK, but which now threatens to wipe out most of our Ash trees – *Fraxinus excelsior* - one of the most frequently found and popular trees in my country. Perhaps this was not the sort of awareness I was seeking, but it has concentrated the minds of the public and politicians and should lead to greater awareness of the risks associated with moving plants as well as the need for a change in behaviour. Our chief plant health officer appeared regularly on national television. A well known phrase is that “there is no such thing as bad publicity”.

5. Linked to this, I am pleased to see that we should be able to adopt a communications strategy for the IPPC. Taking this forward will need your help in terms of providing case studies to help tell the story. This is also an area in which we need more financial and human resources to help with implementation.

6. But that applies to all areas. So whilst you are going to see some good figures in terms of what is in the Trust Fund, and you are going to hear about the Capacity Building Team's success in getting new funds, and about new staff in the standard setting team, this doesn't mean we are flush with people or funds. So please keep working on this – considering how you can help.

7. Personally, in addition to the frequent trips to Rome, I've enjoyed trips to Malaysia to take part in the Sea Containers Expert Working Group and to Brazil for the E-Phyto workshop. These are both issues of major importance for the future and whilst there are some issues to deal with before we can reach agreement at a future CPM on these issues I think both meetings were really helpful in raising awareness and understanding amongst participants. People who came to the E-Phyto workshop were mostly from South America, and I think that similar workshops in other parts of the world would be really useful to raise understanding of this issue.

8. Finally, I'd like to thank the other members of the Bureau for their constructive approach, help and support in Bureau meetings and in between meetings. And of course I'd like to thank all members of the Secretariat for their endless work on behalf of the IPPC. I'm not sure if all CPM members appreciate the long hours and effort you all put in for this organisation, facing the challenges of working within the massive Bureaucracy which is FAO as well as dealing with the demands of 177 members.

9. So let's have a good meeting, working together for the common good, and taking a few more steps on the long path towards achieving protection for the world's plants.

Thank you.