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Food and
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COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

Eighth Session
Rome, 08 - 12 April 2013
Report of the activities of the Standards Committee
Agenda item 8.1.1
Prepared by the Chair of the Standards Committee

I. General issues

1. As in previous years, the Standards Committee (SC) was busy in 2012. I would like to thank members of the SC and technical panels (TPs), various experts (especially those involved in drafting diagnostic protocols (DPs) and in expert working groups (EWGs)) and the Secretariat for all their inputs. The standard setting process is dependent on the considerable efforts of all these people. I urge contracting parties to continue to support the involvement of experts in the standard setting processes and to ensure that they are given sufficient time and resources to be able to contribute fully as agreed in the statement of commitment. The issue of engagement of experts in the standard setting process was raised by the Secretariat at the meeting of the Strategic Planning Group in 2012 and during 2013 the SC and TPs will consider ways to promote further engagement of experts.

2. The SC addressed a number of procedural issues in 2012, in particular, CPM-7 (2012) adopted changes to the standard setting process (CPM 2013/09). The online comment system was used for new "Substantial Concerns Commenting Period" (SCCP) and the SC provided input into the proposals for dealing with determining if formal objections are technically justified (CPM 2013/04). The SC considers that the drafts for CPM-8 (2013) are ready for adoption and I hope that the new process for adoption of ISPMs will progress smoothly.

3. The SC continued to work between sessions using electronic communications and for the first time agreed on the order of the agenda for the April meeting, as well as deciding issues such as the participation of experts in expert drafting groups. The use of e-Decisions allows the SC to discuss and make decisions without taking up valuable meeting time. Developments with the online comment system and e-decision making have improved the efficiency of the standard setting process and I congratulate the Secretariat on these developments. Also several TPs have been successfully holding

regular virtual meetings by using modern internet technology (e.g. Skype, go-to-meetings.com). The SC will continue to ensure as many decisions as possible are made electronically.

4. The SC continued to benefit from having, as a standing agenda point for SC meetings, a regular update from additional teams in the IPPC Secretariat (e.g. information exchange, capacity development and the implementation review and support system (IRSS)). These updates are essential to ensure that we are all aware of the work being done and to allow sharing of ideas.

5. In 2011, due to financial constraints, most TP meetings were cancelled, so limited progress was made by the TPs during 2012. Although there were some virtual meetings, these only allow consideration of straightforward issues and as a result there were fewer technical documents presented during 2012 than in previous years.

II. April 2012 meeting

6. After the CPM, the Bureau requested the SC to provide input into the development of guidance on how to determine if formal objections are technically justified. The SC considered the formal objections to cold treatments received at CPM-7 (2012) and these were passed to the TPPT for detailed review. The SC reaffirmed that adoption of phytosanitary treatments does not mean that other treatments are unsuitable for use in international trade.

7. In relation to the work of the IRSS, the SC was updated on progress and was asked to make proposals for further work. Three proposals were made (central hub for electronic certification (priority), review of the use of DPs, survey on pest interceptions on sea containers) and passed to the Bureau for consideration.

8. The steering group on sea containers updated the SC on work done in preparation for the EWG meeting. The SC had agreed by e-decision that conveyances should be removed from the title and that the scope should focus initially on empty containers. The SC recognised that the issue was complex, involving a large number of international organizations and stakeholders. It was agreed that there should be coordination and collaboration with the industry bodies and seek input from other bodies such as the CBD, OIE, WHO and IMO.

9. The SC approved the five draft ISPMs for member consultation in June 2012 (see IPP for details).

10. The draft revision to Annex 1 to ISPM 15: *Approved treatments associated with wood packaging material* was approved for the SC-7 to consider and is presented for adoption at CPM-8 (2013) (CPM 2013/03-2). However, the draft Annex to ISPM 28: *Heat treatment of wood packaging material using dielectric heat* was given pending status until after the revision to Annex 1 to ISPM 15 was adopted and more operational guidance is available. Drafts on *Phytosanitary pre-export clearance* and *Phytosanitary procedures for fruit fly (Tephritidae) management* were discussed and issues were raised with both drafts. SC members will revise them taking into account the comments raised.

11. After discussion, the SC approved draft specifications on *International movement of cut flowers and branches* and *International movement of grain* for member consultation. The term *cut flowers and branches* was also added to the work programme of the TPG in order to clarify that this commodity was for decorative purposes, not intended for propagation and include fruit and other propagules.

12. The SC reviewed the work of TPs, which had been mostly working by email or virtual meeting. As a result of concerns raised by the TPDP, the IPPC Secretariat sent comments to ISO (in its role as an observer to the relevant ISO committee) on a draft ISO standard. The SC raised this issue of standards developed by other organizations that have an impact on the IPPC with the Bureau. For a number of phytosanitary treatments the Secretariat had requested further information from submitters, but no information had been provided. The treatments concerned were therefore removed from the work programme.

13. The SC further discussed cold treatments and agreed that a meeting of cold treatment experts would be beneficial and such a meeting should be organised to discuss issues associated with such treatments. It was noted that the International Forestry Quarantine Research Group (IFQRG) had facilitated the work of the TP on forest quarantine (TPFQ) and a similar approach might be useful for other types of treatments and could help facilitate the work of the TPPT.

III. November 2012 meeting

14. The SC considered comments as a result of the SCCP and approved two draft ISPMs for adoption by CPM (CPM 2013/03) and ink amendments to ISPMs (CPM 2013/19 Rev 1). Regarding methyl bromide treatments for wood packaging material, the SC discussed concerns raised on the possible effects on penetration of methyl bromide and the efficacy of treatments by high moisture content of wood packaging. The SC asked the TPFQ, with input from IFQRG, to consider this issue further and produce concrete proposals.

15. Specification 56 on *International movement of cut flowers and branches* was approved. The SC considered the member comments on the draft Specification on *International movement of grain*. The majority of comments supported production of an ISPM on the topic and the draft specification was adjusted to take into account the majority of comments raised. A small number of issues remain and three options have been proposed to enable progress with this important topic (CPM 2013/06).

16. A draft ISPM on *Minimising pest movements by sea containers* was considered and the issues raised are covered in a document which will be presented under Agenda item 8.1.4, List of Topics (LOT) for IPPC Standards 8.1.4 (this document will be posted only a few weeks prior to CPM 8 (2012)). This paper also includes a proposal to undertake a survey on pests associated with sea containers, which had originally been proposed for an IRSS study. In addition, the SC called on the CPM Chair to help solicit guidance from contracting parties and a dedicated web page on the IPP (<https://www.ippc.int/index.php?id=1111165>) was set up to facilitate this. As there has been little response to date, I hope that the evening session on this topic will help provide further guidance.

17. The SC revised the Bureau's proposals for formal objections and agreed to criteria to help determine if formal objections were technically justified (CPM 2013/04). Changes to the Rules of Procedure for the SC were proposed in relation to observers (CPM 2013/08).

18. The SC was updated by the steward and the IPPC Information Officer on the progress the e-Phyto steering group was making with electronic phytosanitary certification (CPM 2013/INF/02). Some of the member comments received in 2012 raised some issues on the use of codes and field testing. It is anticipated that the draft Appendix to ISPM 12. 2011. (*Phytosanitary certificates*) on electronic certification will be sent for the SCCP in 2013 and for adoption in 2014. The SC had recommended that a study should be made of the feasibility of implementing a Global E-phyto Hub for electronic certification through the IRSS. The Bureau approved a consultant study under the oversight of the Information Exchange Officer in October. The SC strongly supports this initiative.

19. Following on from the proposal for an IRSS study, in May 2013 the SC will consider feedback from the Technical Consultation of Regional Plant Protection Organizations, 2012 regional workshops and the TPDP on how widely diagnostic protocols are used and which language versions are most used. The SC will then decide whether a study on this subject would be useful.

20. The Bureau had made a decision on the respective roles of the Capacity Development Committee (CDC) and the SC. The SC is concerned with standard-setting and the feasibility of implementation of ISPMs, whereas the development of manuals for implementation of ISPMs is under the remit of the CDC. SC members thought the two groups should work together and use could be made of the experience of experts in expert drafting groups. In relation to classification of documents, the SC briefly discussed explanatory documents, which are drafted by an individual and explain an ISPM. They do not fit into the category of phytosanitary resources and a new category will be added to the classification of documents under standard setting. The SC will consider explanatory documents again at the May 2013 meeting.

21. Regarding cooperation with other standard setting organizations, the SC agreed that ISO standards are not mandatory for the implementation of ISPMs and in the phytosanitary area ISPMs take precedence (CPM 2013/09).

22. This is the end of my three year term as SC chair and it has been a privilege to have held this position. In 2012, a large number of SC members were new and SC colleagues and the IPPC Secretariat have been working hard to ensure that everyone is familiar with procedures and new members benefit from the expertise of more experienced members. This will continue in 2013. In addition, the SC will tackle new challenges, including adopting the first DPs on behalf of the CPM; progress draft ISPMs on stretching subjects (e.g. sea containers, electronic certification, phytosanitary treatments); and oversee development of new draft ISPMs on international movement of seed and movement of used equipment.