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COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

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Report on activities carried out by the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)
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Prepared by IICA



**Report on activities carried out by the
Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)
Eighth Session of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures**

IICA wishes to share with the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM), the Bureau Members, the IPPC Secretariat and the Observers, some of the activities carried out over the last year (April 2012- April 2013) in the area of plant protection.

1. Activities and hemispheric projects

1.a. Performance, Vision, and Strategy (PVS) for National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs). IICA developed the “**Performance, Vision, and Strategy (PVS) for NPPOs**” instrument to help strengthen such organizations by enabling them to gauge their level of performance, set priorities, and facilitate strategic planning. The instrument can also be used to share a vision with the private sector, to help it meet its obligations and tap the new opportunities. In 2012, the activities implemented involving this instrument included the following:

- IICA applied the PVS for NPPOs in Jamaica, Nicaragua, Suriname, and Guyana, working in collaboration with the NPPOs themselves and the corresponding ministries. In the case of Suriname and Guyana, it was applied with particular emphasis on the national activities for the prevention and control of the Carambola fruit fly.
- The PVS for NPPOs tool is in the process of being revised and updated by a team of IICA specialists. Consultations will be held with experts of other institutions.

1.b. Regional workshops for consultations on draft ISPMs. In September 2012, in coordination with the Secretariat of the IPPC, IICA organized two workshops to enable the NPPOs of Latin America and the Caribbean to discuss the proposed ISPMs that the Standards Committee was beginning to draft and develop. One of the workshops brought together the NPPOs of the English-speaking Caribbean countries, while the other was intended for the NPPOs of the Latin American and Spanish-speaking Caribbean countries. In the latter case, IICA coordinated the work with regional plant protection organizations (RPPOs) COSAVE and OIRSA, which covered the cost of their delegates’ participation in the meeting. For both workshops, the agenda suggested by the IPPC Secretariat was adopted, and comments on the draft standards were made via the online system. A report on the two meetings was subsequently produced. Fifteen countries and two RPPOs took part in the workshop involving the NPPOs of Latin America and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean; and delegates from 13 countries in the activity for the NPPOs of the Caribbean countries. In both cases, the level of participation and discussion was first rate.

1.c. Inter-American Coordinating Group on Plant Protection (ICPGG). The ICPGG is made up of a number of RPPOs – CAN, COSAVE, NAPPO, OIRSA, and the Caribbean body. IICA has served as the Technical Secretary since the group was created. Last year (2012) saw a significant reactivation of the group’s work, for which IICA provided technical and logistical cooperation. It promoted the holding of virtual and in-person meetings, and videoconferences. In 2013, support is being provided to the implementation of the ICPGG’s 2012-2013 Work Plan, which includes activities aimed at strengthening capabilities and creating consensus on major current issues.

1.d. Online Course on Pest Risk Analysis. The English and Spanish-language versions are available for implementation through the IPPC Secretariat. Versions of the course have been developed for the Southern, Andean, Central, and Caribbean regions, which include pests that are a concern for those regions.

1.e. Project - “Latin America: strengthening regional capacity to meet pesticides export requirements based on international standards.” IICA cooperated with the USDA/FAS and the participating countries in the design of a project whose objective is to “Enhance regional capacity in data generation and monitoring for establishing, implementing, and complying with international pesticide residue standards.” The USDA/FAS submitted the proposal to the WTO/STDF, which agreed to finance the project.

2. Regional projects and activities

2.a. Competitive Fund for Technical Cooperation Projects (FonTC). Under this initiative, IICA uses its own resources to finance multinational technical cooperation projects that can be complemented with resources of other member country or international organizations. It is a mechanism designed to improve the technical cooperation that IICA provides to its member countries, harnessing the institution’s competitive advantages, and promoting innovation and the creation of thematic and multidisciplinary networks that, in a coordinated manner, will help achieve the goals set in IICA’s 2010-2014 Medium-term Plan (MTP).

- **Project – “Regional Virtual School for Plant Health Inspectors” (ERVIF).** This project was prepared to meet the countries’ needs in this area. The proposal was submitted to FonTC’s 2012 Call with support from COSAVE and the endorsement of the IPPC Secretariat. It was selected and will be financed.

The general objective of the project is to help protect the plant health situation and thereby improve agricultural productivity and competitiveness in the Southern and Andean regions by increasing the technical capacity of the NPPOs and other government services, to ensure that an adequate standard of plant health inspection and certification.

The countries participating in the project are Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay, with the respective national plant protection organizations (NPPOs) serving as the direct counterparts.

The project gives priority to virtual activities (which marks an innovation) and has a participatory strategy in which the needs and opinions of the countries are used as the input for developing the concept of the ERVIF.

The ERVIF’s study program includes an international module, common to all the countries, complemented with a specific national module for each nation. The international module covers generic topics, while the national modules will address the issues most specific to each country. Hence, the topics covered in the international module will include the multilateral agreements, the International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures–ISPMs–and others, while the country modules will focus on national standards and procedures and specific technical issues. The project calls for partnerships with academia in the participating countries. Implementation of the project is just getting under way.

- **Project to Support the Control and Eradication of the Carambola Fruit Fly (*Bactrocera carambolae*).** The objective is to support the efforts to control this pest in the north of South America, where it is a concern. The project is designed to address the situation in some parts of the region where the pest is present but the necessary actions were not being taken. It is supporting the implementation of plant health measures by the governments of Guyana and Suriname, and promoting close coordination with the program that Brazil is carrying out within its territory.

2.b. Program on Plant Pest Risk Assessment. This initiative was implemented jointly by IICA, the IPPC, the USDA/APHIS, and the IDB. NPPO specialists in the Central American and Andean regions, plus Brazil and Paraguay (Southern Region) completed the three stages of the program, the online course that IICA adapted and updated for the IPPC, an onsite course, and two weeks of tutoring at the USDA/APHIS Plant Epidemiology and Risk Analysis Laboratory.

2.c. Control of coffee rust in Central America and the Caribbean. IICA began implementing activities to support the efforts of PROMECAFE and the Ministries of Agriculture to control the disease. Communication and prevention have been planned. In addition, IICA contributed to the preparation of a five- and ten-year regional strategy to enable coffee farmers in the Central Region, where many plants are old, to introduce rust-resistant varieties.

2.d. Regional articulation mechanisms

Andean Region

- **Andean Regional Project: “Development of the Technical Capacity for the Suppression of Fruit Flies using the Area Wide Pest Control System.”** This is a project of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), coordinated and supported by IICA. In 2013, the project work plan was modified.
- **Workshop on inspection and certification in agricultural health and food safety in the Andean Region.** Financed by the Government of Canada and organized by IICA in cooperation with the Government of Canada and the CAN. The objective of the workshop was to: a) provide the tools needed for analysis and decision-making in relation to the inspection and certification of animal and plant foods, and other regulated articles; b) strengthen the countries’ capabilities for developing inspection and certification procedures and protocols; c) establish the public and private framework for the official certification of animal and plant foods and other regulated articles; and, d) promote the implementation of the animal and plant health and food safety certification system by sensitizing and training all the stakeholders. Some 56 Andean region officials took part in the workshop. Specific follow-up activities for plant health got under way in March 2013 that identified the progress being made and the opportunities for improvement at the national and regional levels. These events have been carried out in coordination with Canada’s CFIA and the CAN.

Southern Region

- **COSAVE:** support for the management of the Steering Committee and the working groups on various technical issues. Cooperation was provided on certain logistical and technical aspects of the formulation of regional programs promoted by COSAVE for the prevention and control of specific pests (*e.g., Anthonomus grandis and Thaumastocoris peregrinus*, HLB).
- **Study: “Situation and outlook for Good Agricultural Practices in the Southern Region.”** This study was published as a result of the regional cooperation activity in South America. It focuses on the outlook with regard to regulatory, institutional, and technical issues. It is available in both digital (www.iica.int) and printed formats.

Caribbean Region

- **CGPC Meeting:** The 17th meeting of the Coordinating Group of Pesticides Control Boards of the Caribbean (CGPC) was held in June 2012. IICA is the technical secretary for this group. The CGPC meets annually to discuss issues concerning pesticide registration, use, disposal and other issues pertaining to pesticides in the Caribbean.

Over 50 persons were in attendance including participants from 18 countries and several regional and international organizations and chemical companies.

- **Workshop on DNA-based detection of plant pathogens:** A workshop on DNA-based detection of plant pathogens was held in Barbados. This workshop was planned and executed jointly by the University of the West Indies (Cave Hill Campus), IICA Barbados and the Barbados Ministry of Agriculture. Twelve participants from the Barbados Ministry of Agriculture benefitted. The three day workshop was designed to introduce DNA based techniques such as the use of molecular databases in primer design and real time PCR, thereby providing personnel with a variety of phytosanitary tools. The main objective of the workshop was to significantly enhance the diagnostic capacity in the country.
- **Regional Training Course on Plant Quarantine Principles and Procedures:** The second Regional Training Course on Plant Quarantine Principles and Procedures was held at the University of the West Indies (UWI) St. Augustine Campus in Trinidad and Tobago July 23-August 3. There were 26 participants from a total of 21 Caribbean countries in attendance. The course included lectures, laboratory sessions and field trips. A new feature of this year's course was that participants were required to do a post-course project as part of their evaluation. It is expected that this course will be offered annually. Collaborators in this activity are: IICA, FAO, USDA/APHIS, CABI and the UWI. IICA delivered lectures on several topics during the course.
- **The 5th meeting of the Caribbean Plant Health Directors (CPHD):** IICA participated in the planning and execution of the 5th meeting of the Caribbean Plant Health Directors. Approximately 60 persons attended representing a total of 26 countries from across the Caribbean. Other collaborators involved in the planning and execution of this meeting were USDA-APHIS, FAO, CARICOM secretariat and the government of the British Virgin Islands who hosted the meeting.
- **Black Sigatoka Virtual Conference:** A virtual Conference on Black Sigatoka disease of bananas was held in August. Several countries in the Region joined this conference.
- **Seminar on the Red Palm Mite of Coconuts:** A Caribbean regional seminar on the Red Palm Mite of Coconut was held in Trinidad and Tobago. The major presentations at the seminar were delivered by a consultant from India who was based in Trinidad and Tobago for a year (February 2012 – February 2013) under the Indian Technical Economic Cooperation Programme to assist in the control of the Red Palm Mite pest affecting the coconut industry in Trinidad and Tobago. Research was centered on multiplication of the red palm mite and its natural enemy for biological control as well as for integrated pest management. The next stage will be the mass release in the field of the natural enemy and assessment of the impact on the RPM population.

3. National projects and activities

Argentina

- **Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs).** The IICA Office in Argentina is providing direct technical cooperation to SENASA for the implementation of its National GAP Program. The program calls for training and sensitization activities for technical personnel and producers in the fruit and vegetable subsector. In 2012, the two institutions organized six training days in the provinces of Misiones, Chaco-Formosa, Chubut, and Buenos Aires. More than 300 producers and local technical personnel received training.

- **Fundación Barreras Patagónicas (FUNBAPA) and IICA organized the Updating Seminar on Multilateral Agreements and International Trade in Foodstuffs.** Targeted at professionals and producers, it focused on the updating of the multilateral agreements related to the production of and international trade in fruit, and international standards governing trade in food.

Barbados:

- IICA, working with the UWI (Cave Hill Campus) and the Ministry of Agriculture of Barbados held a workshop on DNA-based detection of plant pathogens. Twelve of the Ministry's technical officers were trained in DNA-based techniques, such as the use of molecular databases in primer design and real time PCR. The workshop significantly enhanced the diagnostic capacity in the country.

Costa Rica:

- IICA continues to assist the State plant health service with the preparation of its strategic plan.

Ecuador:

- In response to a request from the NPPO and producer associations, IICA coordinated the visit of two international experts in mollusks. Some 700 producers and 200 technical personnel were trained, and the country's programs for the control of the apple snail and giant snail were defined.

Paraguay:

- The local IICA Office supported the initiative of the National Plant Health and Seeds Service, in coordination with School of Agronomy of the Universidad Nacional de Asunción, aimed at designing a postgraduate diploma course in plant health inspection.

Dominican Republic:

- The IICA Office assisted the Ministry of Agriculture in carrying out a survey, part of a Caribbean-wide effort, to determine the status of pests and diseases, especially on coconut plantations (basically, Lethal Yellowing of Palm Trees).
- The IICA Office in the Dominican Republic continues to produce concrete results under the Project to Strengthen International Quarantine in Haiti/Dominican Republic. It completed two specialized training activities on plant quarantine principles and procedures; and implementation of the assessment of the quarantine inspection service provided in international ports and airports in the Dominican Republic is at an advanced stage.