



***REPORT***

Rome, Italy  
01 July – 03 July 2014

# **First Meeting of the National Reporting Obligations Advisory Group**



**Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations**



## NROAG Action Items

July 2014

Topic	Action	Responsible	Deadline	Priority	Done
<b>1 Administration</b>	1.1 Develop /revise NRO work programme	Secretariat: NRO	15/08/2014	Immediate term (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10)	
	1.2 Comments from NROAG after their consideration	NROAG	30/08/2014	Immediate term (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10)	
	1.3 Agree on terminology to use in classifying the various NROs	Secretariat: NRO, NROAG	15/09/2014	Immediate term (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10)	
	1.4 Submit for SPG /Bureau for advice	Secretariat: NRO	15/09/2014	Immediate term (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10)	
	1.5 3rd draft for NROAG for comments	Secretariat: NRO	15/10/2014	Immediate term (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10)	
	1.6 Comments from NROAG	NROAG	30/10/2014	Immediate term (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10)	



	1.7 Country consultation of NRO work programme	Secretariat: NRO, NPPOs	15/11/2014	Immediate term (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10)	
	1.8 Submit to CPM  Develop paper/s for CPM on reporting procedures, hosting on IPP and in particular pest reporting.  Some NRO-related decisions were already taken by CPM but there is a need for them to be reconfirmed. The Secretariat will consolidate all CPM decisions relating to the Information Exchange and NROs, taking into account inconsistencies/disambiguates.	Secretariat: NRO	01/12/2014	Immediate term (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10)	
	1.9 Write to Bureau and highlight need for a study of all obligations in IPPC as a number of obligations are not promoted or dealt with directly.	NROAG	30/08/2014	Immediate term (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10)	
	1.10 Finalize report as soon as possible	Secretariat: NRO	31/07/2014	Immediate term (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10)	
	1.11 Review work of NROAG and make recommendations on its future role, composition and functions	NROAG, Secretariat: NRO	01/06/2015	Medium-term (year 3-4)	
	1.12 NRO statistics provided was supposed to be further analyzed by participants after the meeting with a possibility of feedback on possible improvements	NROAG	31/09/2014	Immediate term (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10)	
	1.13 Analyze WTO notifications in more detail.	Secretariat: NRO	30/10/2014	Immediate term (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10)	



	1.14	NRO tables will be finalized by the Secretariat after the meeting and distributed to participants for comments within 3 weeks following the meeting.	Secretariat: NRO	31/07/2014	Immediate term (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10)	
	1.15	ISPMs – more detail or new requirements: task will be send to participants by email.	Secretariat: NRO, NROAG	30/11/2014	Immediate term (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10)	
<b>2 Standard Setting</b>	2.1	Request SC to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Request SC (TPG) to review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ consistency analysis on terms “Regulated pest list” and “pest list” in ISPM 8, 13, 17, 19 by TPG</li> <li>○ review use of measures and regulation</li> <li>○ provide clarity on terminology used in the convention to describe NROs</li> <li>○ write a justification</li> </ul> </li> <li>• ISPMs: 8, 13, 17, 19 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ write a justification</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	NROAG, Secretariat: SS	15/08/2014	Immediate term (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10)	
	2.2	Provide a more active and visible mechanism for providing immediate feedback on challenges regarding the implementation of ISPMs	NROAG, Secretariat: SS	15/08/2014	Immediate term (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10)	
<b>3 Tools</b>	3.1	Complete pest reporting through RPPO tool	Secretariat: NRO, EPPO	31/10/2014	Immediate term (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10)	
	3.2	Expand use of pest reporting through RPPO tool	Secretariat: NRO	31/12/2015	Short term (before CPM-11 2016)	
	3.3	Training: develop training tools	Secretariat: NRO,	31/12/2015	Short term (before	



		NROAG		CPM-11 2016)	
	3.4 Consider developing a bilateral non-compliance reporting mechanism in the IPP.	Secretariat: CD & NRO	30/06/2015	Immediate term (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10)	
<b>4 Capacity Development</b>	4.1 Transmit strong need for national surveillance, PRA and diagnostics capacity development in support of NRO programme, particularly regulated pest lists and pest reporting to CDC and Implementation programme meeting	Secretariat: NRO	31/08/2014	Immediate term (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10)	
	4.2 Develop work plan for CD for emergency action	Secretariat: CD	15/12/2015	Short term (before CPM-11 2016)	
	4.3 More focus will be put on CD (surveillance, diagnostics and PRAs).	Secretariat: CD	15/12/2015	Short term (before CPM-11 2016)	
	4.4 Within the framework of CD, the creation of the model of a national database that could be considered so it would be easier to transfer data from similar national database to the IPP, particularly if a country has got a possibility to create such a database.	Secretariat: CD and NRO	31/12/2017	Medium-term (year 3-4)	
<b>5 Resource Mobilization</b>	5.1 Prepare concept notes for project funding e.g. staffing support, training (virtual and face-to-face), new tools, new software, Apps, on-line training.	Secretariat: NRO	30/11/2014	Immediate term (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10)	
	5.2 Submit selected project proposals for funding	Secretariat: NRO	30/11 annually	Short term (before CPM-11 2016)	
<b>6 International Phytosanitary Portal (IPP –</b>	6.1 Check Official Contact Points (OCPs) on IPP and update where necessary	Secretariat: NRO	31/12/2014	Immediate term (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10)	



www.ippc.int)					
	6.2 Reminder to OCPs regarding for ALL NROs	Secretariat: NRO	31/12/2014	Immediate term (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10)	
	6.3 Develop an automatic reminder system on the IPP	Secretariat: NRO	31/12/2015	Short term (before CPM-11 2016)	
	6.4 Pest reporting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand use of reporting through RPPO tool</li> <li>• Change format of reporting and retrieving data (NROAG to test)</li> </ul>	Secretariat: NRO	31/12/2017	Medium-term (year 3-4)	
	6.5 Develop new NRO user requirements and re-design website	Secretariat: NRO & CD	31/12/2017	Medium-term (year 3-4)	
	6.6 Optimization/new design for the website	Secretariat: NRO, NROAG	31/12/2019	Long-term (Year 5 onwards):	
	6.7 On the IPP changes will be made regarding pest reporting (a new search tool by geography has been introduced). Currently, pest reporting is based on an electronic form to be filled the IPP by editors or OCPs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• development of IT tools to make it physically easier to report including data entry and extraction;</li> <li>• preparation of guidance.</li> </ul>	Secretariat: NRO	31/12/2015	Short term (before CPM-11 2016)	
	6.8 The IPP country summary page created by the Secretariat has different dates regarding updated data than 'countries' page (e.g. legislation publication date and update date/s). The Secretariat will set criteria or templates for each folder.	Secretariat: NRO	30/09/2014	Immediate term (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10)	



	6.9	The Secretariat will consider linking WTO notifications with the IPP country pages.	Secretariat: NRO & CD	28/02/2014	term (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10)	
<b>7 Implementation of NROs</b>	7.1	Revise NRO manual	Secretariat: NRO	31/12/2014	Immediate term (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10)	
	7.2	Training: develop training material	Secretariat: NRO & CD, NROAG	31/12/2015	Short term (before CPM-11 2016)	
	7.3	Take advantage of existing synergies with other projects for implementation	Secretariat: All	31/12/2015	Short term (before CPM-11 2016)	
	7.4	Check OCPs	Secretariat: NRO	31/12/2014	Immediate term (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10)	
	7.5	Develop guidance material for OCPs	Secretariat: NRO	31/12/2014	Immediate term (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10)	
	7.6	List of Regulated pests – monitoring and evaluation process	Secretariat: NRO & CD, NROAG	31/12/2021	Long-term (Year 5 onwards):	
	7.7	The Secretariat will prepare a list of its possible tasks in the field of data quality checking	Secretariat: NRO	30/09/2014	Immediate term (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10)	
	7.8	Produce new guidance material regarding an OCP and their role & obligations.	Secretariat: NRO	30/09/2014	Immediate term (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10)	



	7.9 A IPPC legal disclaimer will be developed to be put at the IPP.	Secretariat: NRO / FAO Legal Office	31/08/2014	Immediate term (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10)	
	7.10 To send letters or reminders to Contracting Parties (CPs) which have not done the reporting or have not provided updates	Secretariat: NRO	15/08/2014	Immediate term (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10)	
	7.11 Description of NPPO – remind of obligation and guidance material	Secretariat: NRO	31/12/2015	Short term (before CPM-11 2016)	
	7.12 The review of the IPP website to make it more user-friendly - changes will be made taking into account the conclusions of the meeting. NROAG to assist in advice and testing	Secretariat: NRO, NROAG	Phase I: 30/09/2014  Phase II: 31/12/2015	Immediate term (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10)  Short term (before CPM-11 2016)	
	7.13 Prepare a list of its possible tasks in the field of data quality checking by the Secretariat, with written guidance.	Secretariat: NRO	30/11/2014	Immediate term (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10)	
	7.14 Send a list of OCPs to RPPOs for their verification every 6 months and will also contact FAO national offices and regional / sub-regional technical officers in that regard.	Secretariat: NRO	31/12/2014	Short term (before CPM-11 2016)	
	7.15 More guidance is needed for all NROs.	Secretariat: NRO	30/06/2015	Short term (before CPM-11 2016)	
	7.16 Send emails every 6 or 12 months to CPs. The next planned version of the IPP will automatically send reminders to CPs that specific information was not updated for some time. In the new IPP version,	Secretariat: NRO	30/06/2015	Short term (before CPM-11 2016)	



	each reporting NRO will have a reminder with a different timeframe which will be sent to CPs - a reminder about OCPs details will be send more often.				
	7.17 Role of RPPOs - The Secretariat will explore possibilities to work with other RPPOs apart from EPPO, Contact RPPOs in relation to the question what type of reports can be provided from their members	Secretariat: NRO	31/08/2014	Immediate term (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10)	
	7.18 Guidance for data uploading will be prepared. The IPP website will be revised by the Secretariat IT team taking into account possible - quick (present NROs more clearly; add information on the actual date nomination of Official CP) and medium term fixes	Secretariat: NRO	31/12/2015	Short term (before CPM-11 2016)	
	7.19 On-line trainings will be prepared.	Secretariat: NRO	31/12/2015	Short term (before CPM-11 2016)	
	7.20 Emergency actions – address constraints to reporting emergency actions identified by the IRSS the study	Secretariat: NRO & CD	31/12/2017	Medium-term (year 3-4)	
	7.21 A document explaining the benefits of reporting and the consequences of not reporting	Secretariat: NRO	31/12/2014	Immediate term (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10)	
<b>8 Implementation, Review and Support System (IRSS)</b>	8.1 A study for IRSS to explore constraints to meet emergency action reporting	Secretariat: IRSS	31/12/2015	Short term (before CPM-11 2016)	



## Commission on Phytosanitary Measures

# National Reporting Obligations Advisory Group (NROAG) - 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting

01 - 03 July 2014

## REPORT

### 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

Mr Lucien Kouame Konan, member of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measure (CPM) Bureau, opened the meeting as an interim chair of the National Reporting Obligations Advisory Group (NROAG).

#### 1.1 Welcome

The Secretary of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) welcomed the participants. The Secretary recalled that during the Eighth Session of CPM, intensive discussions regarding national reporting obligations (NROs) of Contracting Parties (CPs) took place. The first meeting of the NROAG was meant to take place in 2013, therefore there is a time pressure to work efficiently to keep to the original CPM agreed NRO reporting timeline.

The Secretary noted that during the June Bureau meeting, it was decided to revert to Terms of Reference as they were originally agreed (ToR – see Appendix 3) for NROAG. NROAG should focus on potential short and long-term improvements in meeting NROs.

A participants list can be found in Appendix 1.

#### 1.2 Housekeeping

The Secretariat outlined the anticipated time schedule. Participants were informed that the representative of Africa was unable to attend due to unexpected circumstances at the last minute.

### 2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The Agenda was presented by the Secretariat and adopted by the participants (see Appendix 2).

#### 2.1 Election of Rapporteur

Mr Charles Zarzour (the expert representing the Near East) was chosen as the Rapporteur for the meeting.

### 3. REGIONAL REPORTS: SUCCESSES AND CONSTRAINTS

#### 3.1 Assessment of Reporting

The Secretary informed the meeting that the main issue remains that CPs have signed the IPPC but are not meeting their NROs as laid down in the text of the Convention. CPs give different reasons for not reporting (e.g. already reporting to World Trade Organization - WTO), therefore specific feedback from the regions are needed to understand the situation. The Secretariat had distributed a table to encourage feedback ('IPPC NROs: status update') to help collecting information and discussion.

#### 3.2 Africa



Due to the absence of the representative of Africa the Secretariat volunteered to present the situation for Africa. Information was primarily gathered during regional or sub-regional workshops held by the Secretariat in Africa. The situation is varied due to national capacity and dependable on knowledge of a person appointed as an Official Contact Point (OCP). It often happens that when that trained person changes reporting stops and no knowledge is passed to the next 'generation'. Some CPs still have difficulties with internet access, especially in areas of conflict, but overall the situation is much better than 10 years ago. The East and South African CPs contribute most to reporting. It can be said that the IPPC area in agriculture is underinvested in most CPs.

### **3.3 Asia**

Detailed data for Asia regarding NROs was presented for the period 2011-2014. Out of 27 CPs in Asia, 26 Official Contact Points (OCPs) are established (no data is available for Kazakhstan). It was reported that the e-mail addresses for Myanmar and Pakistan do not work. Pest reporting is undertaken by 7 CPs; phytosanitary requirements/restrictions/prohibitions is undertaken by 12; points of entry that restrict the entry of plant and plants products is undertaken by 11 CPs; and lists of regulated pests is undertaken by 8 CPs. Sometimes reports are put in wrong places (i.e. under inappropriate folders). The main problem is inconsistency, irregularity and quality of the data.

The summary page created by the Secretariat has different dates regarding updated data than 'countries' page (e.g. legislation publication date and update date/s). The proposed solution was that the Secretariat sets criteria or templates for each folder. The Secretariat should keep urging CPs to report (e.g. every 6 months). Additionally, it was proposed that a link to WTO notifications should be considered.

### **3.4 Europe**

Provided a brief summary (assumed that Secretariat would have provided an analysis of the data on the IPP). One of the main concerns is that the IPP is not that easy to use which means CPs can become discouraged from using it. There are various lines of reporting within Europe – e.g. to European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization (EPPO and the IPPC are working together to allow reporting to the IPP directly via EPPO) and also to the EU for EU CPs. Many CPs will only report the NROs that require reporting on request when a request is actually received, e.g. on pest status. As with most regions it is likely that time constraints/staff resources have a significant impact on reporting and on the priority it is given. There is a need to make it clear what needs to be reported via the IPP and what directly to the IPPC Secretary. It would be good to have a system which automatically emails OCPs to remind them if reports are missing or when information has not been updated for a specified period of time.

### **3.5 Latin America and Caribbean**

Detailed NRO data for Latin America (LA) and Caribbean (C) regarding NROs was presented. Phytosanitary requirements/restrictions/prohibitions are reported by 7 (LA CPs) and 10 (C CPs); OCPs by 10 and 31 CPs respectively; description of NPPO by 7 and 12 CPs respectively; and list of regulated pests 8 and 11 CPs respectively. CPs have information on the IPP ranging from *no information* to *very good information*, through *wrong*, *few* and *very little* information. Many reports appeared to be at least 5 years old. Some reports have wrong titles and/or are at the wrong places (folders). Most CPs have their own websites with valuable information present there. Some CPs never reported anything.

### **3.6 Near East**

Some CPs have insignificant agricultural production (especially Arab Gulf Countries) therefore the need to report is not seen as a priority. Most CPs report only information regarding OCPs contact details. The most active CPs of the region are Lebanon and Yemen. It happens very often that OCPs are high level people with



no time or expertise to report. The Workshop on Information Exchange which was held in Cairo in 2007 significantly stimulated reporting, but more workshops are needed because OCPs and IPP editors change quite often. Usually when there is a lack of encouragement and no reminders of issues, people do not report. No reports have been made on pest status. The lack of reporting is also connected to a continuing conflict situation in some countries during which administration does not function and the situation is unstable. There is also a certain lack in understanding on what to report, and lack of financial or human resources. Workshops organized by the Secretariat in a region would be a valuable contribution towards the reporting rate. Many CPs put valuable information but only on their own websites.

### **3.7 North America**

There are 3 CPs within the region. As CPs report to the North American Plant Protection Organization (NAPPO) it was suggested to make a link between NAPPO and the IPP. Generally, there is a lack of updating regarding pests lists and pests status. If a problem arises it is usually dealt with bilaterally between the National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPO) of the CPs involved. In cases where a new market access is requested only then the pest lists regarding that commodity will be established/categorized. The ambiguity between a quarantine pest and a regulated pest is also a problem.

### **3.8 SW Pacific**

Most small islands CPs are not familiar with the IPP but are more familiar with their Regional Plant Protection Organization (RPPO). Those CPs which are a part of the Asia and Pacific Plant Protection Commission (APPPC) report to that body which urges them to report. Slow internet connection has made it difficult to upload reports in the past.

### **3.9 Surveys Results**

The Secretariat presented a summary of [the report](#) on the Round Table Discussion on indicators of implementation of the IPPC (Appendix 4). A meeting of strategic and analytical experts took place in Windsor in 2013 and the main issues which emerged during discussions were:

- the Secretariat does not urge CPs firmly enough to comply with the IPPC, therefore reporting is not done;
- export certification is regarded as a high priority by CPs while pest reporting as low;
- there is a constant lack of human resources; a complicated administrative structure in some CPs can hamper reporting efforts (data is available but is not reported); data is sometimes of low quality and therefore unusable.

The Secretariat reported to the meeting on findings of the general survey which was done on the Convention and its standards conducted in the period October 2012 - February 2013 (see Appendix 4) and surveys carried about for the ISPMs no. 8, 13, 17 and 19 (see Appendix 4). The main findings from the surveys were that some information is considered more valuable than other by CPs and the reporting of pest status is not regarded as priority. Overall, there are many underlying challenges why CPs do not meet NROs and this is why there is no simple solution to this issue. In general CPs need more support in understanding NROs and encouragement to report.

### **3.10 Subsidiary bodies**

SBDS: The Chair of the Subsidiary Body on Dispute Settlement (SBDS) noted that according to the survey on the ISPM 13, basic knowledge as to whom and what to report in cases of non-compliance should be made clear in order to avoid disputes.



CDC: The representative for the IPPC Capacity Development Committee (CDC) noted that the main requirements of CPs should be defined. It should also be clear to everyone what should be done in case of a pest outbreak (i.e. adequate reporting and appropriate response).

### **3.11 Discussion**

Reasons why NROs are not met by CPs as well as main constraints and mechanism involved were discussed.

A major problem that country editors often encounter is obtaining clearance for IPPC reporting from their OCP and / or hierarchy to put data on the IPP (this includes data which is already available elsewhere).

OCPs are often very senior staff or officials. When they are not part of the NPPO they may have little or no direct connection to plant protection, therefore they are not aware of their reporting obligations and/or possible implications of not reporting. Designating an OCP and reporting their contact details, including their name, should be simple but in practice it is often not the case for many reasons (e.g. political issues). It also happens that after an initial designation, no updates are provided even when the OCP changes (e.g. six CPs from the Near East do not have functional OCPs after their initial designation). There is an increasing tendency to provide general email addresses for an OCP but this should not be the case – the email address should belong to an actual OCP.

Regional workshops and training organized by the Secretariat generally lead to a short-term improvement in reporting (i.e. reporting was / is provided either during a workshop or shortly thereafter), but this effect quickly wears off. Consequently, a stable ongoing national reporting situation has very seldom been achieved. The major challenge after workshops is a follow-up of the activity as there is seldom a political will or financial/human resources to do it. Nonetheless, the workshops are a major source of reports and information. Workshops were also found to be beneficial for country editors as using the IPP was for them a new activity, while at the same time workshops enabled people to learn from each other's experiences. Overall, developing countries got better in reporting due to the number of workshops essentially involving them.

NROAG felt that RPPOs should have a greater role in encouraging CPs to meet their NROs as they know their regions well. The Secretariat should continue to cooperate with RPPOs to raise awareness among CPs. It is already possible to have a special agreement for CPs to report via their RPPO. At present a prototype to convey pest reports collected by EPPO exists and there should be a connection created for reports collected by NAPPO.

The NROAG suggested the use of incentives and highlighting those CPs which comply with NROs in timely and effective manner. There is also a possibility that too much reporting is asked for at the same time and maybe it could be better to ask initially only for some reports or ask for the reports over a longer period of time. The introduction of automatic analyses of the reports on the IPP should be considered.

The idea of introducing penalties for not reporting was discussed, together with listing the non-complying CPs. In general there is not much support to introduce penalties due to the fact that a term 'penalty' is negative and does not encourage CPs to improve their reporting.

In 2001 the CPM encouraged (and this has been re-iterated several times since) CPs to use the IPP for NROs.



The IPP is intended to be a global gateway to phytosanitary information provided by CPs. Unfortunately, some CPs are under misconception that the IPP was developed for other CPs and not for them. However, for the IPP to be effective all CPs must participate equally and consistently.

As there is no simple solution that would work for all CPs, therefore a series of actions is needed. The programme connected to NROs began in 2001 with a small financial budget. The budget was then increased which enabled numerous regional workshops to be held. That was followed by the decrease in a budget and the loss of a post within the Secretariat which have impacted on the programme. Right now funding is available to recruit a full time member of staff to work on NROs. However, a long term financial support for this post is needed.

NROAG agreed that:

1. listing the benefits of reporting and the consequences of not reporting would be useful to make it more explicit for CPs why these NROs exist, as at present reporting is regarded as an aimless obligation by many CPs (see Appendices 9 and10);
2. in general the IPP should be made more user-friendly;
3. languages and translations are a challenge as not all CPs can provide reports in English or any other FAO official language. CPs should be encouraged, but cannot be required, to report, or at least summarize, in one of the FAO languages;
4. there was not much support within the NROAG to introduce penalties for not reporting due to the fact that the term 'penalty' is negative and does not encourage CPs to improve their reporting;
5. RPPOs should be encouraged to have a greater role in encouraging CPs to meet their NROs;
6. there is no simple solution that would work for all CPs at the same time and instead a series of actions is needed.

NROAG requested the Secretariat:

1. to develop guidance material on the role and obligations of an OCP;
2. to produce a document explaining the benefits of reporting and the consequences of not reporting (see Appendices 9 and10);
3. to consider how to make the IPP more user friendly.

#### **4. REPORT OF IPPC SECRETARIAT ON NRO-RELATED ACTIVITIES**

##### **4.1 Current Obligations & Procedures**

NROs and related issues have been under discussion since 1999. According to the IPPC Information Exchange Programme the ISPMs provide additional guidance on specific NROs determined by the Convention. During workshops issues were discovered with some reporting elements in the Standards.

Initially, a support group had been established to provide guidance on the elements of NROs, at first called Working Group on Information Exchange, later called: the IPP Support Group (IPP SG), but both were discontinued. At the moment, the IPP User Manual ([Guide to the International Phytosanitary Portal](#)) provides basic information on NROs and data entry.

The IPP SG recognized 3 types of mandatory NROs:

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- i. Basic obligations;
  - ii. Event driven obligations;
  - iii. Request driven obligations.

The flow of information is different in regard to some NROs as they are triggered by different factors but all of them remain obligatory. NROAG discussed all types of NROs. The results of the discussion can be found in Appendix 5.

NROs are not clearly divided into those a CP has to meet and those that an NPPO has to meet, in practice a very high proportion of NROs are delegated to NPPOs.

It is not mandatory to report through the IPP but it is the CPM's preferred method of meeting NROs. There is still a possibility of paper reporting for those without reliable internet access or those who choose not to use the IPP, but the Secretariat cannot post reports on behalf of CPs/NPPOs due to legal liability issues.

It was agreed that a revised legal disclaimer on the use of the IPP would be developed by the Secretariat through the FAO Legal Office to be put on the IPP.

FAO Legal Office advice is that the Secretariat cannot change or delete any data put on the IPP by CPs and it is the legal responsibility of a CP to execute its own reporting via OCPs or as per agreed CPM procedures for RPPOs. FAO Legal Office also recommended that the IPPC Secretariat should not check or correct specific national information provided by CPs, but limit itself to providing general support and advice, e.g. advice on the placement of information.

The Secretariat can send letters or reminders to CPs which have not met their NROs or have not provided updates for some time. Updates should be made by OCPs at regular intervals.

In most cases, reports are already available in a CP as they are usually needed for different purposes at national level, therefore in theory it is a question of making these reports available via the IPP which theoretically should not be time consuming.

Since 1999 27 workshops were organized for every region except for North America, however Mexico attended a workshop organized for Latin America. Overall, regional workshops were effective in terms of getting information on the IPP, while at the same time there has been no sustainability in reporting after these workshops (little lasting change in frequency of reporting was observed). In general it can be said that workshops had produced mixed results.

A discussion on a classification of NROs (bilateral, via IPP website, etc.) had already taken place in the IPP SG. It was decided that the use of the IPP should be encouraged as it helps transparency and avoids cases when CPs would transmit information (e.g. regarding restrictions/legislation) to some CPs of their choice which is in accordance with the Convention but is not practical. Even though the text of the Convention was drafted before the development of the IPP the implementation of NROs should take into account the use of electronic communication. As it should not be judged which NROs are more important than others, a decision which should be dealt with first by CPs can be taken by the Group. The establishment of different timeframes for CPs to follow regarding different NROs would be crucial due to a restricted capacity of many CPs (human/financial resources). At the same time, CPs should be held responsible for fulfilling their NROs.

The Secretariat agreed:



to develop a revised legal disclaimer through the FAO Legal Office and put it on the IPP.

#### **4.2 Statistics**

The Secretariat prepared [statistical data](#) on reporting on the IPP and use of the IPP which were discussed during the meeting (see Appendix 4). Due to time constraints during the meeting, information provided is expected to be further analyzed by participants after the meeting with feedback on possible improvements.

In legal terms, reporting specific IPPC-related information to the WTO-SPS is not considered as fulfilling NROs. According to the analyses of WTO-SPS notifications for the period 2008-2013, in total 1284 notifications were made to WTO/SPS and only 494 to the IPP (with only 22 notifications identified as the same data). However, the nature of WTO notifications is different (most notifications are draft legislation for consultation and not the implemented legal acts). The Secretariat was requested to further analyze WTO notifications.

It has been observed that recently there has been more interest in reporting information which is not related to NROs under 'other' information section of the IPP. This is often supplementary information which NPPOs think will be beneficial to other CPs.

The Secretariat explained that statistical data appearing under country profiles is provided by the FAO database and updated automatically, apart from Phytosanitary and Trade-Related Data which could be inserted by OCPs. Summary crop data was added to the IPP following IRSS advice. As this data could be misleading for CPs, it should be moved to the background by linking it from the home page. In this context, the Secretariat can add more maps and data (e.g. maps on vegetation periods) which are available to FAO as a possible help for PRAs purposes.

Overall, in comparison to any other FAO websites the IPP website has up to 3 times more returning visitors. However, geographical location of users is uneven, e.g. there are very few visitors from Arabic countries.

#### **The NROAG requested:**

the Secretariat to further analyze WTO notifications.

#### **4.3 Training and Awareness**

There is a constant request for workshops to be organized due to changing editors and OCPs. However, it is difficult to measure a long term effectiveness of such workshops. Workshops that included RPPOs were organized with an idea that RPPOs will train their members. However, in general this arrangement worked only for about 5 years for selected RPPOs.

The Secretariat intends to develop different e-learning modules covering NROs and information exchange and NROAG agreed that providing further training for IPP editors would be beneficial. While physical workshops are good for learning from other participants, e-learning is cheaper and available to everyone with no added cost to users. Traditional workshops cannot be funded by FAO at the moment due to a lack of resources.

WTO notifications have an immediate impact on trade and not reporting often results in trade disruptions and complaints from importers. WTO organizes training workshops every year and internet-based training is also available, together with activities prepared for specific countries. The WTO only asks for some



information that is required by the IPPC and a potential conflict of interest might be created in this way. In practical terms, WTO reporting is seen as a high priority for countries, while the IPPC reporting is not. At the same time, quality of data provided to the WTO is often low and data is not consistent. The link to the WTO was initially included on the IPP but due to low quality of WTO data CPs (mostly from Asia) asked for that link to be removed. The Secretariat will consider reinstating the link but as the the quality of WTO data has not improved (it is being addressed in the WTO) there may be little value in doing so.

The NROAG supported:

the Secretariat's proposal to develop e-learning modules on NROs.

#### **4.4 Capacity Development (CD)**

A series of NRO-related workshops in the field cannot be financially supported by FAO within the CD framework (there would have to be a special project to finance that but at present no such project exists). However, isolated training actions can be funded together with e-learning tools. The pre-CPM 10 training session (on Sunday before CPM) will focus on NROs. One hundred and twenty participants attended the Sunday training session in 2014 and it is hoped that this will continue as a good opportunity to create awareness and build basic NRO capacity.

#### **4.5 IRSS**

IRSS is an EU funded project which runs in 3 year cycles. It was agreed that implementation should include aspects of NROs. Once a NRO work programme is established, some elements of it can be supported by IRSS.

#### **4.6 Standard Setting**

A number of International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs) include details regarding NROs. The Secretariat explained how Standards Committee (SC) works and how ISPMs are being developed. The flowchart of the standard setting process was provided to NROAG participants (Appendix 6). The SC approves draft ISPMs for country consultations and reviews comments on those drafts. If a mistake or inconsistency is discovered in an adopted ISPM, details are collected and addressed when a revision of that Standard is undertaken.

The NROAG discussed a number of standards during the 3 days and felt it necessary to provide feedback on the IPPC Standard Setting process – see Appendix 8. Unfortunately, there is no formal process to allow this to happen. NROAG felt that the Standard Setting process could benefit substantially from receiving feedback on implementation challenges experienced by CPs as this would allow improvement of existing or new ISPMs when they are revised or developed.

The NROAG requested:

the Secretariat to make the standard setting group in the Secretariat aware of the feedback on standards in Appendix 8.

#### **4.7 Discussion**

Taking into account the 10 year experience with NROs, the general NRO situation has improved, especially when compared to the information available before 2001. Currently only 3% of CPs have not officially designated an OCP. Problems with incorrect details of appointed OCPs are experienced and the database of OCPs is difficult to manage and keep up-to-date.



It was felt that more feedback is needed from field inspectors and administrators involved in implementation during a standard setting process. It was felt that ISPMs are not reviewed often enough to deal with issues as they arise.

The CD work plan includes NROs. It was felt that there is a need to improve interaction between NROAG with the CD programme in future. The IRSS project is currently being revised and efforts should be made to consider how it can support the NRO programme. Any proposals on this will have to go to the Bureau for approval. Integration with the IPPC Implementation programme should begin with a pilot project on surveillance as a significant component of this programme.

The NROAG recommended:

that there is a need to involve persons dealing directly with standards implementation in the field in commenting on operational aspects of standards and their feasibility. Feedback could be obtained through NPPOs or through a new mechanism to be developed for feedback from CPM subsidiary bodies.

## **5. REVIEW OF THE NRO LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

### **5.1 Legal Basis**

The activities carried out by the Secretariat including technical issues on the IPP are guided by advice given by the FAO Legal Office.

It has been discussed several times whether NROs could be prioritized. According to the opinion of the FAO Legal Office all NROs are of equal status. The Convention describes which NROs exist while the ISPMs are a guidance tool for interpretation of the Convention and are adopted by CPM.

No non-compliance mechanism is mentioned in the IPPC as CPs decided it would be beneficial to work on voluntary basis. Therefore, the promotion of compliance is a challenge under these circumstances; however, the IRSS was introduced to help CPs comply with obligations.

The NROAG requested:

the Secretariat to produce revised guidance material on the NROs.

### **5.2 Utilization of reports from or through other organizations, including RPPOs**

All NROs can be met via RPPOs if an IPP mechanism exists to do this (eg. a mechanism to report occurrence, outbreak or spread of pests is being tested at the moment) and a CP formally agrees to reporting through their RPPO. If a CP would like to use this option, a special form needs to be completed and signed by the OCP. [The form](#) can be downloaded from the IPP (Appendix 4).

[The 2011 Procedural Manual](#) details the role of RPPOs (Part 8.3) in the area of information exchange:

- operation of an effective International Phytosanitary Portal (IPP);
- assistance to CPs in meeting IPPC NROs in relation to information exchange;
- provision of information on regional IPPC-related activities (such as pest interceptions, pest status, pest reports, regional standards, regulations, etc.).



RPPOs cannot be held accountable for fulfilling NROs – it is still the CPs that are legally responsible for fulfilling their NROs.

NROAG recommended the Secretariat should contact RPPOs asking if and what type of reports they can, or would be willing, to provide on behalf of their members. A prototype system for the transfer of pest reports is currently being tested by EPPO and the Secretariat.

The Secretariat cannot accept any data coming from sources other than from OCPs or RPPOs on behalf of OCPs. In practice, data can originate from other sources but it needs to be officially communicated by OCPs.

The NROAG recommended:

that when the pest reporting mechanism is functional the Secretariat should contact RPPOs to determine whether pest reports and other reports can be made through them.

### **5.3 Role of IPPC contact points and IPP editors**

It was agreed for practical reasons (as OCPs have restricted time availability) that OCPs should officially appoint an editor or editors who physically upload the data. A special form needs to be filled in and signed by OCPs and conveyed to the Secretariat. [The form](#) can be downloaded from the IPP (Appendix 4). Some OCPs appointed multiple editors in the past.

### **5.4 Proposed Role of Secretariat**

It was decided that all data uploaded by the CPs should be kept on the IPP for at least 10 years (it was later reduced to 5 years for practical reasons) to be available in case of any civil court procedure. Country editors do not have the ability to delete any data they had uploaded. The Secretariat can delete data in case of certain obvious errors (e.g. the same document was uploaded twice by mistake).

The Secretariat will not change or validate the content of data provided by CPs. Some quality control can be done by the Secretariat while leaving the content intact, e.g. the lists of pests will not be checked/validated/commented on but advice will be given concerning its format. The Secretariat will prepare a list of its possible tasks in the field of data quality checking.

The IPP is regularly revised which in future will provide an opportunity to develop an automatic system of reminders with different timeframes for each NRO to be sent to CPs (a reminder about OCPs details will be sent more frequently than others).

The NROAG agreed:

that the Secretariat would prepare clear guidance on its role in quality checking of data.

## **6. REVIEW OF CONTRACTING PARTY SPECIFIC REPORTING OBLIGATIONS**

### **6.1 IPPC**

The NROAG reviewed [Appendix XV to ICPM 3 report](#) which stipulates all NROs (Appendix 5) which was the basis for the establishment of the IPPC Information Exchange Programme in 2001. Although significant progress was made during the meeting, the Secretariat was requested to finalize it after the meeting and distribute them to participants for comments within 3 weeks after the meeting.

Official Contact Point



NROAG agreed that an OCP should be a person from a country's NPPO. However, there are exceptions and CPs are free to nominate who they think is most appropriate. Most importantly, an OCP should be nominated by another person higher in a hierarchy/administration structure (i.e. someone more senior who is able to nominate an OCP on behalf of the government of a country). OCPs cannot nominate themselves. There can only be 1 OCP per country, even if some CPs would prefer more (e.g. for internal organizational reasons) – this is a clear stipulation of the Convention and has been re-emphasized by the CPM. NROAG discussed whether an outgoing OCP should nominate the incoming OCP. NROAG noted that such an arrangement could be open to abuse (it has happened before that suddenly there are 2 OCPs nominated via different routes).

The Secretariat will send a list of OCPs to RPPOs and request facilitation with their verification every 6 months and will also contact local FAO offices in that regards.

There are four types of IPPC contact point listed on the IPP:

- *Official contact points (OCPs)*: Officially nominated contact point for the IPPC as officially nominated by an IPPC CP;
- *Unofficial contact points (unOCPs)*: An contact point for the IPPC for which an official nomination is outstanding or has not taken place correctly;
- *Information point*: the “IPPC contact point” for a country that is not a CP to the IPPC; and
- *Local contact*: the “IPPC contact point” for a territory, i.e. territories that cannot become CPs as they are not fully recognized countries.

“Local contacts” are included so that they receive appropriate communications, but in most cases they need to contribute to the IPPC work programme through their CPs. The legal status of “territories” varies enormously and they cannot all be treated in the same manner.

#### Description of the NPPO

A description of the NPPO should preferably be in the form of an organogram; ideally with a description of its organizational arrangements (i.e. who is responsible for which area and what are the connections between different parts of the NPPO). Some participants felt that a template for this NRO should be provided, however that might cause more problems and be more difficult for CPs to fill in. Generally, it was felt that more guidance is needed for the “Description of the NPPO”.

#### The NROAG recommended:

that the Secretariat should produce guidance on the information to be included in “Description of the NPPO”.

#### Phytosanitary requirements, restrictions and prohibitions

Initial interpretation by the IPP SG and Expert Working Group (EWG) was that it meant to include all legislation, regulations, etc. However, some members of NROAG did not agree that it was meant to include all legislation as that interpretation was too broad. It was noted that the IPPC text states that ‘*Contracting party shall publish and transmit phytosanitary requirements, restrictions and prohibitions to any contracting party or parties that they believe may be directly affected by such measure*’.

It was agreed that due to constantly changing trading patterns and for transparency, these elements of national regulations should be made available to all countries.



### List of entry points

Overall, no problem with reporting points of entry by CPs was identified. In cases where there are no restrictions concerning through which entry points consignments can be introduced into a country, no report is needed.

### List of regulated pests

Not only more regulated pest lists should be published by CPs, but regular updates of these lists are essential. The Secretariat could send reminder e-mails every 6 or 12 months to OCPs. Some conclusions of this discussion included:

- NROAG and the Secretariat agreed the next planned version of the IPP will automatically send reminders to CPs that their lists have not been updated from some time. In the new IPP version, each NRO will have a reminder with a different timeframe that will be sent to CPs (a reminder about OCPs details will be sent more often).
- There is a great deal of terminology confusion. A number of CPs post national pest lists but this is not a NRO as they are not the *regulated* pests. Sometimes there is also confusion between a list of quarantine pests and regulated pests.
- A major challenge is that some CPs do not have pest lists or have pest lists which have not been updated for a long time. Many CPs do not have the capacity (and sometimes limited expertise) to undertake this work. Therefore, this subject needs serious attention, as many other IPPC processes are dependent upon the outcome of national surveillance and identification systems.

### Pest reporting

The Secretariat has released a new interface to access IPPC pest reports that includes navigation through a map to make a search for pest reports easier for users. In practice, CPs do not need to physically upload a complete pest report as such, but can provide basic information and link to their national websites where all the data is available – this allows the report to be found through the IPP while CPs have to maintain the full information in a single place, i.e. their own websites. However, for those CPs that do not store pest reports on their own websites (still the majority), it is still possible to upload as much information as they need to on the IPP.

A pest report should contain important information that allows CPs to adjust as necessary their phytosanitary import requirements and actions to take into account any changes in pest risk. It was felt by some participants that the ISPM No. 8 should be revised to give more detailed information. An alternative would be to develop more guidance on pest reporting as a part of a separate manual or guidelines, although it is possible that the existence of both could be confusing. Problems were noted in understanding of the meaning of *'a pest of immediate or potential danger'* and a degree of potential risk. Therefore, a pest which might be important for other CPs might not be reported, as it would not be considered significant enough to report by a CP where it appeared. Therefore, it was noted that reporting of any pest, even if that would seem excessive, may in fact be desirable in the IPPC framework.

### Notifications of non-compliance

This NRO should be implemented bilaterally, however some CPs have requested the option to be able to communicate this information more widely via the IPP. The Secretariat will consider this request based on priorities and resources. It was also noted that some CPs never respond to numerous non-compliance notifications sent to them and never provide feedback on the investigations as required in the ISPM No. 13. Additionally, there is an issue of the interpretation of *'significant'* [*importing contracting party shall inform of*



*significant instances of non-compliance*] in regards to non-compliance. It was also felt that some elements of the ISPM No. 13 (see Appendix 8) are not compatible with the IPPC and hence is in need of revision.

#### Pest status

CPs often confuse pest reports (connected with occurrence, outbreak and spread) with report on pest status (connected also with surveillance); CPs asked for these 2 to be reported together. Usually, pest status reports are on request by CPs wanting to perform PRAs.

#### Emergency action

Emergency action should be reported by CPs. However, the ISPM 13 includes *emergency actions* and *phytosanitary measures* and many CPs do not understand the difference. Ideally, a timeline should be established for such reporting as 'immediately' [*the action shall be immediately reported*] could be interpreted differently. NROAG also noted that by combining non-compliance and emergency action can and has lead to some confusion in some CPs. It was felt by some that CPs would be best served by splitting the ISPM No. 13 into two ISPMs that dealt with these two topics separately.

#### Technical and biological information necessary for pest risk analyses

This is a bilateral reporting issue, i.e. information should be provided on request. The IPP SG and CPs at Information Exchange workshops agreed that such requests should be made available to carry out or revise a PRA. However, CPs have also agreed that CPs are encouraged to post completed PRAs and technical information on the IPP to facilitate transparency and allow CPs to access this information without delay.

### **6.2 ISPMs**

There is a need to analyze the ISPMs which were not discussed during the meeting with a view to highlight items related to NROs. At the moment there are 16 ISPMs awaiting analysis. Due to time restrictions during the meeting, this task will be undertaken by the NROAG by email.

#### **6.2.1 Ways to improve pest reporting**

The Secretariat noted that changes on the IPP will be made regarding pest reporting (a new search tool by geography was introduced recently but still needs further refinement and development).

Currently, data entry is based on a form and uploaded on the IPP by OCPs or editors.

The NROAG discussed possible ways to improve pest reporting and it was decided that the following elements would be helpful:

- Making it easier to report and extra data:
  - development of IT tools to make it physically easier to report including data entry and extraction;
  - preparation of more detailed guidance;
- Making available a fast track reporting process through RPPOs, provided the appropriate legal authorization has been granted;
- Building capacity for surveillance and diagnostics;
- Some aspects of pest reporting require long-term planning (e.g. capacity to undertake surveillance) in CPs with little to no capacity to do so;
- Increase awareness of NROs, listing benefits of reporting and consequences of not reporting (see Appendices 9 and 10);
- Prepare "case studies" or 'success stories' regional if possible (examples of CPs with good quality and timely reporting);
- Organize pre-CPM and side-events training.

#### **6.2.2 Ways to improve reporting of regulated pest lists**



The Group discussed possible ways to improve reporting of regulated pest lists. It was decided that the following elements would be helpful:

- Building capacity for PRAs, surveillance and diagnostics at global, regional and national level;
- Long-term planning;
- Awareness of NROs, listing benefits and consequences (see Appendices 9 and 10);
- Prepare case studies of ‘success stories’ regional if possible;
- Continue pre-CPM training and side-events trainings;
- Revision of the ISPM No. 19 (ambiguous terminology in the standard needs significant improvement, clarity on lists of pests is needed);
- Making it easier to report:
  - development of IT tools to make it physically easier to report including data entry and extraction (e.g. extraction of pests by commodity);
  - preparation of additional guidance;
- Regular reminders from the Secretariat will be sent to CPs to update the data.

### 6.2.3 Other reporting

This area was built to allow CPs to report additional information useful to trading partners and other CPs but it does *not* constitute obligatory reporting.

### 6.3 Language

According to the Convention (Article XIX) *only* the following reports need to be provided in *at least one of* the official languages of FAO (i.e. Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian or Spanish):

- NPPO description;
- phytosanitary requirement, restriction and prohibitions (summary);
- points of entry;
- lists of regulated pests;
- pest status;
- pest reporting (a short summary and bibliographical data *only!*).

It is not necessary to provide reports in English alone; however English is usually most practical. The IPP SG agreed that it would be better to have reports in any national language rather than not have any reports available at all. Regulated pest lists where Latin names are usually used are less problematic in translation. At the same time, reporting only in a language known to very few people would be of a limited usefulness. Some participants felt there should be incentives available to CPs to undertake translations, e.g. some trading partners may offer to translate the NRO text into a FAO language.

### 6.4 Benefits of IPPC Reporting

The NROAG believes the advantages of IPPC CPs meeting their NROs, include:

- *Facilitation of trade and market access;*
- *Facilitates the protection of cultivated and wild plants by preventing the introduction and spread of pests;*
- *Assists in determination of the phytosanitary requirements of an importing country and improving a safe trade;*
- *Assists in meeting the phytosanitary requirements of an importing country and improving a safe trade;*
- *Decrease in number of cases of interceptions and rejections of non-compliant consignments;*

- *IPPC Official Contact Points (OCPs) network is beneficial as coordinates of a contact person are widely known so it is clear who to contact in order to ask for phytosanitary requirements or in case of intercepted consignments at the border;*
- *Non-compliance system as described in the ISPM No. 13 helps to resolve issues between CPs;*
- *Establishment of an effective information exchange system makes it easier to meet conditions laid down by an import country;*
- *Increased protection of the world's biodiversity and food security;*
- *Protection of native plants under increased number of people's travels and globalization;*
- *High importance of and increased reliability, timeliness and adequate quality of data provided together with regular data updates;*
- *Building of a reliable database over time;*
- *Good communication facilitates cooperation and coordination;*
- *Positively contributes to avoidance of phytosanitary disputes;*
- *Help in meeting CPs' NROs while fulfilling CPs' NROs laid down in the IPPC;*
- *Making available data of good quality builds trust in bilateral relationships between CPs over time;*
- *The agreed rules to share information are based on trust, good will and common understanding;*
- *It improves transparency;*
- *Indicates an establishment and functioning NRO programme / NPPO.*

Meeting NROs via the IPP should be a primary objective for all CPs and CPs should be encouraged to establish an effective National Information Exchange system, i.e. a national process in place that systematically collects and verifies these data, allowing the OCPs to meet their NROs.

The NROAG believes the consequences of IPPC CPs not meeting their NROs, include:

- *unnecessary phytosanitary restrictions being introduced;*
- *it undermines market access – existing and potential. This will be visible as a lack of, or slower, trade;*
- *creates potentially more phytosanitary disputes resulting in long negotiations process, delays and increased costs;*
- *isolates CPs which are not able to participate and benefit from an effective IPPC official contact point (OCP);*
- *increases phytosanitary and trade risks and costs;*
- *affects the entire international phytosanitary system;*
- *affects all CPs i.e. developing as well as developed countries;*
- *lack of reporting can be seen as a failure or possibly as an evidence of not entirely functioning NPPO which needs visible improvement;*
- *the loss of, or reduced, trust towards non-reporting CPs; and*
- *not meeting NROs result in CPs not fulfilling CPs' NROs laid down in the IPPC and being seen as possibly trying to hide phytosanitary issues from trading partners or neighbours.*

## **7. COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA**

The review of the IPP website to make it more user-friendly has already been planned by the Secretariat. Changes will be made taking into account the conclusions of the meeting.

### **7.1 Data format**



Currently there are restrictions as to the format of files that can be uploaded onto the IPP (PDF, Word). With pdf documents it is impossible to create links between data which could be done by the Secretariat or automated. Based on requests received, and the need to add value to the IPP data, the Secretariat suggests changing these formats to a database format which will allow significant added value to the data supplied through the creation of summaries and or links, particularly for regulated pests lists and pest reports. This would allow data to be presented in more interesting ways and be more useful for users. The NROAG agreed that any change to the IPP should be user friendly and not make the system more complicated. At the moment uploading of PDFs is very easy and if that option is blocked, it could make the uploading of data more difficult. If that change to the IPP is going to be introduced, a possibility to upload reports as PDFs should be kept and any changes should be introduced gradually.

CPs often want to put on the IPP other information supporting their decisions and other IPPC-related information, e.g. changes in phytosanitary certificates, information on pest free areas, surveillance data, and information on the ISPM 15 mark. These data are *not* NROs but reporting of such information could improve the availability of data to facilitate the implementation of the IPPC and improve transparency. NRAOG discussed ways to deal with these voluntary reports. It was felt that CPs should have a possibility to exchange this information via the IPP (right now there is a box to tick ‘inform trading partners’ while uploading the data), however it should be clearly separated from NROs. Guidance regarding this topic should be revised. It was felt that reports should not be tagged official and unofficial as any information provided by an Official CP is considered to be official.

Within the CD framework, a model national database could be developed which could be used by CPs and would make the transfer of data to the IPP easier.

*Standardization of pest and host Latin Names:* Presently the verification of Latin names and spelling is done for pest reports through the utilization of the EPPO Plant Protection Thesaurus (EPPT), i.e. when any Latin name is being typed by an IPP user, the system gives an option of EPPT names to choose from. Currently the use of EPPT for this specific purpose is free and provides preferred scientific names, synonyms, common names, EPPO codes, and taxonomic relationships of organisms important in agriculture and crop protection.

The Secretariat noted:

- i. the primary purpose of utilizing the EPPT is to improve quality control, i.e. to avoid spelling mistakes, incorrect names, very unusual names being utilized, improve accuracy and consistency;
- ii. allow synonym and common name usage – substantially increases the flexibility of the system for data entry, and particularly for data extraction;
- iii. after significant research, the Secretariat was not able to find another pest taxonomic system that at present offers an accurate and reasonably extensive verified pest taxonomic data (i.e. more complete and accurate) database to be used by the IPP. The Australian and CABI database were checked but they were found unsatisfactory for different reasons.
- iv. EPPO informed the Secretariat that in the case of any pest name being missing from the EPPT database, it would update the database as soon as practically possible. The Secretariat has also undertaken to provide EPPO with pest names that are known not to be in EPPO region based on lists supplied to the Secretariat.
- v. the use of a standardized and verified taxonomic system provides far greater flexibility for data extraction and analysis, e.g. generate summaries for bacterial diseases or fruit flies;

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- vi. there is absolutely no intention of requiring NPPOs to adopt the EPPT coding system – this is purely a Secretariat quality control and data management tool that will have benefits to all CPs. NPPOs can continue to use their own national taxonomic data systems. Neither is this an EPPO initiative but an independent initiative from the Secretariat which has involved discussions with a number of CPs. In addition, the Secretariat has announced several times during a number of CPM information exchange reports and training workshops that it had started this database conversion for quality control purposes – it was not suddenly introduced by the Secretariat without thorough consideration;
  - vii. utilizing a scientifically reliable database that is maintained by a reputable organizations already within the IPPC framework and zero cost is highly desirable until such time as additional resources become available within the Secretariat to investigate the use of alternative taxonomic data systems; and
  - viii. the e-Phyto feasibility study has also identified the EPPT as a highly desirable management tool as there is no other practical and verifiable system that can replace it. However, due to the anticipated volumes involved, EPPO will need to charge to add all the new names. Negotiations between the Secretariat and EPPO are ongoing but it is anticipated that this will not affect the NRO system on the IPP.

## **7.2 Quality Assessment**

The quality assessments envisaged to be implemented by the Secretariat will be giving advice to OCPs on shortcomings of data provided (in a technical sense such as data location or presence of spelling mistakes; see sections 5.4, 7.1 and 8.3). The Secretariat will also develop and manage a reminder system for NPPOs. Written guidance will be prepared by the Secretariat on this topic.

## **7.3 Analysis and Output, including adding value**

The NROAG concluded:

- i. the current pest report presentation is the prototype for a new way of data extraction. This system will be refined and developed further and then rolled out for other topics of NROs;
- ii. better search tools are needed to extract data in different configurations than those currently available on the IPP;
- iii. the site should be optimized for mobile devices;
- iv. *apps* should be developed for users when applicable, e.g. how the use the website, targeted awareness raising, delivery of specific related information such as capacity development and training;
- v. the Secretariat should maximize linkages between data in the IPP and support information for the implementation of the IPPC to add value to CPs meeting their NROs; and
- vi. a greater variety of statistics or tools be made available for data provide by CPs.

The Secretariat will investigate possibilities of short and long-term solutions.

## **7.4 Access and communication**

All opportunities to create awareness of NROs, improve access to the NRO data and increase NRO reporting should be utilized. However, it was felt that a communications / access plan could be developed over the next 6 months once more detail becomes available of the revised NRO programme. There would be a general long-term plan that would be supported by annual communication plans.



## **8. NROAG ADVICE (SHORT- AND LONG-TERM)**

### **8.1 Role of OCPs and Editors**

NROAG agreed to continue work regarding NROs with country editors appointed by OCPs.

### **8.2 Role of Other Organizations**

Due to the explicit provisions of the New Revised Text of the IPPC (1997), CPs can only report directly or through their RPPOs (providing the necessary legal permissions are given). Reporting via any other organizations / agencies cannot be accepted as fulfilling the IPPC NROs. Even if CPs chose to report via RPPOs, it is still the CPs that are responsible for the data and its official validation. The Secretariat will explore possibilities to work with RPPOs, in addition to EPPO, once the EPPO/IPPC data sharing system is fully functional. The Technical Consultation amongst RPPOs (TC for RPPOs) will be consulted to see how best they can support CPs meeting their NROs.

### **8.3 Format and procedures, including quality assurance**

A stronger and more active role for the Secretariat is envisaged. A system of reminders will be established (reminders to be sent at least once a year). Records of CPs responses (e.g. that data is still valid and no changes are to be made) will be kept by the Secretariat. Guidance for data uploading should be expanded according to the advice provided above. The IPP website will be redesigned by the Secretariat IT team taking into account possible quick solutions with minimal effort (e.g. clearer identification/presentation of NROs; re-arrangement of the CP's page layout; addition of information on the actual date of the OCP's designation) and medium term fixes.

### **8.4 Training and capacity development**

An on-line NRO training programme will be developed as it is felt that they are the most effective and cost efficient learning tools. Training material should be available in all FAO languages. As there will always be a need for physical workshops, face to face training will be provided at every practical opportunity (e. g. around CPM every year, and at other opportunities such as regional IPPC workshops). However, no separate series of NRO workshops are envisaged until additional resources become available.

The Secretariat will also investigate making available templates for reporting to CPs that can be sent to the Secretariat for uploading i.e. if an internet connection is not available.

More focus should be placed on CD, particularly surveillance, diagnostics and PRAs to support the NRO programme.

### **8.5 Awareness, including pest reporting and regulated pest listing**

More communication material on NROs will be prepared, including posters, etc., targeting NPPOs. Annual awareness raising campaigns will be launched regarding a chosen NRO (e.g. the NROAG decided that the year 2014/2015 will be the year of OCPs). Various opportunities for communication should be utilized such as:

- IPPC regional workshops;
- through RPPOs, TC for RPPOs, RPPO annual meetings;
- WTO-SPS workshops;
- Specific workshops, e.g. surveillance workshop;
- Regional Economic Communities (RECs) could be asked for assistance (on a case by case basis as matters could be politically sensitive);

- FAO meetings, including regional conferences;
- FAO regional and sub-regional representatives which have knowledge/access to a local administration/government (on a case by case basis);
- letters to governments prepared and given to participants of different events to take home to their governments;
- NROs elements to be present in reports from the meetings.

At the same time, NROAG members will convey the message from the meeting to their regions.

Data on how many CPs updated/put reports will be presented on the website. Information on successful CPs will be conveyed during CPM together with the results of previous campaign/s.

### 8.6 Stepwise programme and timelines

The NROAG discussed priorities and goals taking into account different timeframes: immediate- (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10), short- (up to CPM-11), medium- (year 3 - 4) and long-term tasks (from year 5 upwards). This essentially meant the work programme would last for 5 – 10 years. Some actions will be continuous.

NROAG established the following generalized priorities as regards NROs (see Appendix 7):

- |   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| • OCPs  | Short-term;              |
| • Pest reporting  | Short-term, medium-term; |
| • Awareness   | Short- to medium-term;   |
| • Emergency action  | Short- to medium-term;   |
| • Description of NPPO                                       | Medium-term;             |
| • Points of entry with restrictions                         | Medium-term;             |
| • Phytosanitary requirements, restrictions and prohibitions | Medium-term;             |
| • List of regulated pests                                   | Long-term.               |

NROAG established the following goals with different timeframes for activities:

#### **Immediate term (between 4 July 2014 and CPM-10):**

1. OCPs
2. develop /revise NRO work programme
  - revise for NROAG consideration
  - submit for SPG /Bureau for advice
  - country consultation
  - submit to CPM
3. request revision of the ISPM 19 – call for topics & SC; include in standard framework review (representative of NROAG chair to attend)
  - write a justification
  - request SC (TPG) to review use of measures and regulation
  - consistency analysis on terms “Regulated pest list” and “pest list” by TPG (to be included in a TPG agenda – need to send justification to Standard Setting Team).
4. request SC (TPG) to provide clarity on terminology used in the Convention to describe NROs
5. complete pest reporting through RPPO tool
6. revise NRO manual
7. reminder for ALL NROs.

- 
8. transmit strong need for surveillance, PRA and diagnostics capacity development in support of NRO programme, particularly regulated pest lists and pest reporting to CDC and Implementation programme meeting.
  9. write to Bureau and highlight need for a study of all obligations in IPPC as a number are not promoted or dealt with directly.
  10. prepare concept notes for project funding e.g. staffing support, training (virtual and face-to-face), new tools, new software, Apps, on-line training.
  11. develop paper/s for CPM on reporting procedures, hosting on IPP and in particular pest reporting. Consolidate all CPM decisions relating to IE and NROs, in particular inconsistencies.
  12. agree on terminology to use in classifying the various NROs.

#### **Short-term (before CPM-11 2016):**

13. description of NPPO – reminder of the NRO
14. pest reporting
  - develop procedures for CPM consideration Art. VIII 1a
  - expand use of reporting through RPPO tool
  - change format of reporting and retrieving data (NROAG to test before broader testing & release)
15. emergency actions: request a study for IRSS to explore constraints to meet emergency action reporting
16. develop an automated IPP reminder system
17. training: develop training tools and materials
18. take advantage of existing synergies with other projects for implementation
19. submit selected project proposals for funding
20. develop work plan for CD for emergency action
21. develop user requirements for the NRO website

#### **Medium-term (year 2017-2018):**

22. review work of NROAG and make recommendations on its future role, composition and functions
23. pest reporting
  - expand use of reporting through RPPO tool
  - change format of reporting and retrieving data (NROAG to test before broader testing & release)
24. improve reporting of regulated pest lists
25. emergency actions: address constraints to reporting emergency actions identified by the IRSS study
26. re-development of the NRO website
27. optimize the NRO reminder system
28. finalize NRO training: training tools and materials

#### **Long-term (2019 onwards):**

29. reporting by all CPs of regulated pest lists – monitoring and evaluation process
30. optimization of new NRO website
31. develop new tools for NROs
32. adjustment of the NRO work programme after mid-term review

### **9. OTHER BUSINESS**

#### **9.1 NROAG work programme to CPM-10**

The timeframe for the work was established:

- 
- 15 August 2014 – first draft;
  - 30 August 2014 – comments from NROAG;
  - 15 September 2014 – paper for Bureau / SPG;
  - 15 October 2014 – 3rd draft for NROAG for comments;
  - 30 October 2014 – deadline for comments from NROAG;
  - 15 December 2014 – deadline for CPM papers.

The work programme will be prepared by the Secretariat.

Some decisions were already taken by CPM but there is a need for them to be reconfirmed. The Secretariat will consolidate all CPM decisions relating to the Information Exchange and NRO programmes, taking into account inconsistencies/ambiguities.

### **9.2 Election of NROAG Chair 2014/15**

Mrs. Lottie Ericson (a representative of North America) was elected as a NROAG chairperson, provided other members would be able to share the expected travel/workload with her.

Arrangement with other NROAG participants to help the chair to cover different meetings was established. Within a framework of that arrangement Mr. Charles Zarzour will represent NROAG at the Open Ended Working Group on Strengthening Implementation of the IPPC and ISPMs to be held in Rome from 4 to 7 August 2014. The IPPC Standards Framework meeting (last week in August in Costa Rica) will be attended by Mr. Ezequiel Ferro (provided permission is received from Argentina).

### **10. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING**

The report from the meeting will be send to participants for comment as soon as possible and the meeting was closed on 03/07/2014 at 15:14.

## PARTICIPANTS LIST

A check (✓) in column 1 indicates confirmed attendance at the meeting.

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✓	CDC Chair	<p>Mr. Corne VAN ALPHEN</p> <p>Coordinating Policy Officer Phytosanitary Affairs</p> <p>Plant Supply Chain and Food Quality Department</p> <p>Ministry of Economic Affairs</p> <p>P.O. Box 20401</p> <p>2500 EK - The Hague</p> <p>The Netherlands</p> <p>Telephone: (+31) 703785552</p> <p><u>Substituted by:</u></p> <p>Marc Gilkey</p> <p>U.S. Mission to the European Union</p> <p>Brussels, Belgium</p> <p>Phone: (32-2) 811-5182</p>	<p><a href="mailto:c.a.m.vanalphen@mineleni.nl">c.a.m.vanalphen@mineleni.nl</a></p> <p><a href="mailto:Marc.C.Gilkey@APHIS.USDA.gov">Marc.C.Gilkey@APHIS.USDA.gov</a></p>

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## Commission on Phytosanitary Measures

National Reporting Advisory Group (NROAG) - 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting

01-03 July 2014

FAO, Rome, Italy

*(Pakistan Room – A127)***AGENDA**

Agenda item	Document No.	Time	Facilitator
<b>Tuesday, 01 July 2014</b>			
<b>1. Opening of the meeting</b>		09:00 – 09:15	Chair
1.1 Welcome			Yokoi
1.2 Housekeeping	NROAG 2014-07/02 NROAG 2014-07/05		Nowell
<b>2. Adoption of the agenda</b>	NROAG 2014-07/01	09:15 – 09:20	Chair
2.1 Election of Rapporteur			
<b>3. Regional Reports: successes and constraints</b>		09:20 – 12:30	
3.1 Assessment of Reporting			Yokoi
3.2 Africa	(10 minutes)		Minko
3.3 Asia	(10 minutes)		Pradyabumru ng
3.4 Europe	(10 minutes)		Bishop
3.5 Latin America and Caribbean	(10 minutes)		Ferro
3.6 Near East	(10 minutes)		Zarzour
3.7 North America	(10 minutes)		Erikson
3.8 SW Pacific	(10 minutes)		Kami
3.9 Surveys Results	30 minutes		Sosa
3.8 Discussion			Nowell
<b>4. Report of IPPC Secretariat on NRO-related activities</b>		14:00 – 17:00	
3.1 Current Obligations & Procedures	NROAG 2014-07/03 & 04 NROAG 2014-07/06 – 11 NROAG 2014-07/13 - 18		Nowell

Agenda item	Document No.	Time	Facilitator
4.2 Statistics (NRO, IPP, WTO)	NROAG 2014-07/12		Nowell / Buzon
4.3 Training and Awareness			Nowell
4.4 Capacity Development			Peralta
4.5 IRSS			Sosa
4.6 Standard Setting			Larson
<b>Wednesday, 02 July 2014</b>			
<b>4. Review of the NRO legal framework</b>		09:00 – 10:00	
Legal Basis			Nowell
4.2 Utilization of reports form or through other organizations, including RPPOs			Nowell
4.3 Role of IPPC contact points and IPP editors			Buzon
4.4 Proposed Role of Secretariat			Nowell
<b>5. Review of Contracting Party specific reporting obligations</b>		10:00 – 12:30 14:00 – 15:00	
5.1 IPPC			Nowell
5.2 ISPMs			Larson
5.2.1 Ways to improve pest reporting			Nowell
5.2.2 Ways to improve pest listing			Peralta
5.2.3 Other reporting			Nowell
5.3 Language			Nowell
5.4 Benefits of IPPC Reporting			Nowell
<b>6. Collection and Analysis of Data</b>		15:00 – 17:00	
6.1 Data format			Nowell
6.2 Quality Assessment			Nowell
6.3 Analysis and Output, including adding value			Nowell
6.4 Access and communication			Nowell
<b>Thursday, 03 July 2014</b>			
<b>7. NROAG Advice (short- and long-term)</b>		9:00 – 12:30 14:00 – 15:00	Chair
8.1 Role of OCPs and Editors			
8.2 Role of Other Organizations			
8.3 Format and procedures, including quality assurance			
8.4 Training and capacity development			



Agenda item	Document No.	Time	Facilitator
8.5 Awareness, including pest reporting and regulated pest listing			
8.6 Stepwise programme and timelines			
<b>9. Other business</b>		15:00 – 16:00	Chair
9.1 NROAG work programme to CPM-10			
9.2 Election of NROAG Chair 2014/15			
<b>10. Closure of the meeting</b>			Chair

## ToRs and RoPs for IPPC NRO Advisory Group.

### Background

The Eighth Session of CPM (2013)<sup>1</sup> agreed to the establishment of an IPPC national reporting obligations (NRO) advisory group (NROAG) to provide assistance to the IPPC Secretariat with the review the IPPC NRO programme and development of a revised stepwise work plan aimed at improving members' capacity to meet their NROs under the IPPC.

### Objectives

The NROAG will work with the IPPC Secretariat with the objectives of:

- developing a revised NRO work programme for presentation to CPM-10 (2015), including a suggested prioritized and stepwise approach, and
- specifically working with the Secretariat and contracting parties to ensure increased reporting of pests and lists of regulated pests.

### Tasks

1. NROAG will work with the Secretariat to the review of the existing IPPC NRO programme, including:
  - a. the identification of barriers and issues which have been the cause of limited reporting in the past, particularly the limitations inherent in developing comprehensive regulated pest lists;
  - b. the review of background documents and papers submitted by contracting parties (CPs) (e.g. IRSS surveys and conclusions) to ensure consideration of CPs' views, experiences and evolving needs as they relate to pest reporting and developing regulated pest lists;
  - c. providing a report on status of NRO programme to CPM-9.
  
2. NROAG with the Secretariat to revise the IPPC NRO programme to facilitate CPs to meet their NROs by:
  - a) revising the legal basis for the mechanisms of reporting, including through Regional Plant Protection Organizations (RPPOs), and possible role of the IPPC Secretariat in ensuring the accuracy of data on the IPP – location, format and quality of data;
  - b) revising appendix XV of ICPM-5 (2003) report on NRO provisions in the convention and include all ISPMs adopted since 2002 – this review should identify gaps and possible improvements for existing ISPMs and the IPPC;
  - c) analysing the value of fulfilling obligations and purpose of the convention, including, whether it is appropriate to prioritize the provision of reporting data as determined by the IPPC;
  - d) identifying the underlying competencies and functions required of an NPPO in order for it to effectively fulfil its reporting obligation under the Convention;
  - e) determining how data is provided and relevant timeframes;

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<sup>1</sup> Relevant CPM papers include: CPM 2013/INF/16 and CPM 2013/CRP/11



- f) determining value added services the IPPC Secretariat could provide in addition to those already being developed for reporting, including being more proactive;
  - g) reviewing existing and establishing new mechanisms so that contracting parties can readily provide the same or similar information to other international organizations, such as the WTO and RPPOs and with them to ensure consistency of reporting and reduce duplication;
  - h) advising the most appropriate way for CPs to consistently meet their national reporting obligations;
  - i) advise the most appropriate way of strengthening the role of RPPOs in ensuring contracting parties meet their national reporting obligations; and
  - j) advise the most appropriate way of communicating the reported information to stakeholders, other than NPPOs and RPPOs.
  - k) analyze the current justification of each obligation and see whether it is still appropriate given the phytosanitary changes of the past 10 years e.g. regulated pest listing, legislation and regulations i.e. determine the value of the obligations and purpose of the convention.
  - l) determine the feasibility of a bigger role for RPPOs in facilitating countries meeting their NROs and ensure this is also discussed at the Technical Consultation amongst RPPOs.
3. After the review of the current NRO work programme, NROAG will work with the Secretariat and contracting parties to ensure increased reporting of pests and lists of regulated pests.
  4. NROAG will provide advice on a NRO outreach work plan, as a component of the NRO programme, with a view to improving meeting the IPPC NRO by CPs.
  5. NROAG will work with the Secretariat in the development of the NRO report and draft work plan, including priorities and stepwise actions with timeframes, for SPG review in 2014 and subsequent consideration at CPM-10 consideration in 2015. The report will specifically address:
    - a. the benefits of meeting NROs;
    - b. the challenges which have been limiting factors in the implementation of the IPPC NRO provisions and identify areas that possibly need revision if and when the IPPC is next reviewed;
    - c. CP needs for improving pest and regulated pest lists reporting; and
    - d. Possible solutions, with alternatives, to assisting countries meet their NROs, with specific reference to pest and regulated pest listing.
  6. CPM include list of non-active members
  7. Secretariat to follow up on WTO notifications if not reported through IPP.
  8. Consider nature of sanctions or further action required.

## **Membership**

NROAG participants shall be from contracting parties and should have extensive working knowledge of the IPPC, its objectives, its reporting obligations, and ISPMs.

The NROAG will consist of:

- One expert from each of the seven FAO regions (Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, Near East, North America, and Southwest Pacific).
- Members from other bodies: One (1) Bureau member, CDC Chair, SBDS Chair, and SC Chair.



- Experts will be coopted as necessary for specific tasks.

The IPPC Secretariat will consider funding assistance for participants from developing countries with extra-budgetary resources.

The NROAG will work virtually and a physical NROAG meeting is subject to the IPPC Secretariat receiving extra-budgetary funds.

The role of the NRO Advisory Group will be re-considered once the revised NRO programme is finalized.

## Referenced links for further background information

Topic	Link
Statistical data on NROs	<a href="https://www.ippc.int/countries/nro">https://www.ippc.int/countries/nro</a>
Statistical data on use of the IPP	<a href="https://www.ippc.int/publications/statistical-data-use-ipp">https://www.ippc.int/publications/statistical-data-use-ipp</a>
Appendix XV to ICPM 3 report stipulates all NROs	<a href="https://www.ippc.int/publications/annex-xv-report-third-session-icpm-1">https://www.ippc.int/publications/annex-xv-report-third-session-icpm-1</a>
The form for CPs to report through RPPOs via the IPP	<a href="https://www.ippc.int/publications/national-pest-reporting-through-regional-plant-protection-organizations">https://www.ippc.int/publications/national-pest-reporting-through-regional-plant-protection-organizations</a>
IPPC indicators meeting	<a href="https://www.ippc.int/largefiles/2013/IPPC_Indicators_Meeting_Report.pdf">https://www.ippc.int/largefiles/2013/IPPC_Indicators_Meeting_Report.pdf</a>
The general survey	<a href="https://www.ippc.int/largefiles/2014/IRSS-IPPC-General-Survey-review-2014.pdf">https://www.ippc.int/largefiles/2014/IRSS-IPPC-General-Survey-review-2014.pdf</a>
Surveys carried for the ISPM no. 8	<a href="https://www.ippc.int/largefiles/2013/ISPM8-IRSS_report.pdf">https://www.ippc.int/largefiles/2013/ISPM8-IRSS_report.pdf</a>
Surveys carried for the ISPM no. 13	<a href="http://irss.ippc.int/sites/irss.ippc.int/files/IRSS-ISPM13-Final-Report-Final-Clearance.pdf">http://irss.ippc.int/sites/irss.ippc.int/files/IRSS-ISPM13-Final-Report-Final-Clearance.pdf</a>
Surveys carried for the ISPM no. 17 and no. 19	<a href="https://www.ippc.int/largefiles/2014/Survey-Analysis-NPPOs-17-19.pdf">https://www.ippc.int/largefiles/2014/Survey-Analysis-NPPOs-17-19.pdf</a>
Reporting (pest reporting) through RPPOs – form	<a href="https://www.ippc.int/publications/national-pest-reporting-through-regional-plant-protection-organizations">https://www.ippc.int/publications/national-pest-reporting-through-regional-plant-protection-organizations</a>
Role of IPPC Official Contact Points including a notification form	<a href="https://www.ippc.int/publications/ippc-official-contact-point-notification-form">https://www.ippc.int/publications/ippc-official-contact-point-notification-form</a>
IPP editor – nomination form	<a href="https://www.ippc.int/publications/ipp-editor-nomination-request-nppos">https://www.ippc.int/publications/ipp-editor-nomination-request-nppos</a>
User and Editor Guide to the International Phytosanitary Portal	<a href="https://www.ippc.int/publications/user-and-editor-guide-international-phytosanitary-portal">https://www.ippc.int/publications/user-and-editor-guide-international-phytosanitary-portal</a>

### The IPPC National Reporting Obligations provisions

All obligations mentioned in the table constitute national reporting obligations to all Contracting Parties of the IPPC Convention.

The CPM agreed that the preferred mechanism to execute national reporting obligations is the use of the International Phytosanitary Portal (the IPP).

**Art. IV** (General provisions relating to the organizational arrangements for national plant protection), **VII** (Requirements in relation to import), **VIII** (International Cooperation), **XII** (Secretariat) and **XIX** (Languages) of the IPPC are the basis for this table. There are 3 types of reporting: basic, event-driven and on request, while there are 2 methods of reporting: public or bilateral.

Article	Type	Method	Responsible	Obligation	Receiving: in accordance with the IPPC text	Receiving: interpretation & advice	Priority	At least one of FAO Languages (Art. XIX)	Why	Constraints and solutions
VIII.2	Basic	Public	Contracting Party	Designate an <b>Official Contact Point (OCP)</b> for the exchange of information	Not specified	Secretary	Highest – short-term	1. Requests for information from contact points as well as replies to such requests, but not including any attached documents (Article XIX.3(e)).  2. Any document made available by contracting parties for meetings of the Commission. (Article XIX.3(f)).	1. OCPs are central to whole NRO programme and the broader IPPC programme.  2. Important to facilitate role of exchanging information in implementation of the IPPC as a whole e.g. standard setting.	1. Takes a lot of time to manage changes to contact point.  2. Need to rely on many sources to ensure maintenance of the OCP system.  3. Need to create increased awareness and priority that NPPOs & CPs give to this task.
Advice	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional guidance to be developed by the Secretariat and agreed/approved by NROAG.</li> <li>It is essential that a single person's name is provided for each OCP.</li> <li>It is preferable for the OCP to be in the NPPO as the NPPO is responsible for the implementation of the most IPPC actions.</li> <li>Nomination must be done by an officer/person more senior than the OCP. Self-nominations should not be accepted.</li> <li>It is suggested that editors are nominated by OCPs to assist in delivery of the NROs.</li> </ol>									



Article	Type	Method	Responsible	Obligation	Receiving: in accordance with the IPPC text	Receiving: interpretation & advice	Priority	At least one of FAO Languages (Art. XIX)	Why	Constraints and solutions
6.										
7.										
8.										
9.										
10.										
Actions to be taken										
1.										
2.										
3.										
4.										
5.										
<b>IV.4</b> <b>XII.4(d)</b>	Basic	Public	NPPO	Submit a <b>description of NPPO</b> and changes	Secretary	Secretary	Medium – medium-term	Art. XIX.3(a) says that <i>information provided according to Article IV paragraph 4</i> shall be in at least one of the official languages of FAO.	1. Confirmation that NPPO exists 2. Provides basis for other Contracting parties (CPs) to understand the NPPO 3. Ensures a degree of transparency and indication of how organizations of the NPPO are organized.	Remind CPs of this NRO but concentrate on others first.
Advice	Should be easy to complete but not seen as the highest priority.									
Actions to be taken	Send reminder to Contracting Parties (CPs) to meet all their NROs.									
<b>VII.2(b)</b> <b>XII.4(d)</b>	Basic	Public	Contracting party	Publish and transmit <b>phytosanitary requirements, restrictions and prohibitions</b>	Any contracting party or parties that they believe may be	Secretary	High – medium-term	Art XIX 2(b) says that <i>cover notes giving bibliographical</i>	To facilitate the efficient trans-boundary movement of plant, plant	This was initially understood by the IPP Support Group to mean “all



Article	Type	Method	Responsible	Obligation	Receiving: in accordance with the IPPC text	Receiving: interpretation & advice	Priority	At least one of FAO Languages (Art. XIX)	Why	Constraints and solutions
					<p>directly affected by such measures.</p> <p>At the same time, Art. XII 4(d) says that the Secretary shall disseminate information received from contracting parties on phytosanitary requirements, restrictions and prohibitions referred to in Article VII paragraph 2(b).</p>			<p><i>data on documents transmitted according to Article VII paragraph 2(b) shall be in at least one of the official languages of FAO.</i></p> <p>Art XIX 2(c) says that <i>information provided according to Article VII paragraph 2(b) shall be in at least one of the official languages of FAO.</i></p>	products and other regulated articles. To result in minimum impediment of international movement of plants, plant products and other regulated articles.	<p>legislation and regulations".</p> <p>Ambiguous provisions in the IPPC in Article VII 2(b) and Article XII 4(d).</p>
Advice	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Encourage Contracting Parties to make phytosanitary requirements more widely available than in the past through inclusion in the IPP (available to all countries whether affected or not).</li> <li>2. Other users would use their own Websites (or their RPPOs) making their phytosanitary requirements, restrictions and prohibitions available but linked to the IPP.</li> </ol>									
Actions to be taken	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Request CPM to agree that phytosanitary requirements, restrictions and prohibitions mentioned in Article VII 2 (b) are to be reported via the IPP.</li> <li>2. Revision of ISPM 19.</li> </ol>									
<b>VII.2(d)</b> <b>XII.4(b)</b>	Basic	Public	Contracting party	Designation and publication of specified <b>points of entry</b> for plants or plant products	Secretary, RPPOs of which the contracting party is a	Secretary	Medium – short-term	Art XIX 2(c) says that <i>information provided according to Article VII</i>	To facilitate trans-boundary movement of plant and plant products. To result in minimum	Not clearly understood by all



Article	Type	Method	Responsible	Obligation	Receiving: in accordance with the IPPC text	Receiving: interpretation & advice	Priority	At least one of FAO Languages (Art. XIX)	Why	Constraints and solutions
					member, all contracting parties which the contracting party believes to be directly affected, other contracting parties upon request.			<i>paragraph 2(d) shall be in at least one of the official languages of FAO.</i>	impediment of international movement of plants, plant products and other regulated articles.	
Advice	Recommend to the CPM that this point may be covered by Art. VII.2(b) so this information could be reported as part of the information reported under VII.2(b)									
Actions to be taken	Provide additional guidance, particularly regarding possible inclusion under Art. VII 2(b) reporting.									
<b>VII.2(i)</b> <b>XII.4(c)</b>	Basic	Public	Contracting party	Establish and update <b>lists of regulated pests</b>	Secretary, RPPOs of which they are members, other contracting parties on request.	Secretary	High – long-term	Art XIX 2(c) says that <i>information provided according to Article VII paragraph 2(i) shall be in at least one of the official languages of FAO.</i>	To allow trading partners to understand which pest are regulated by importing country and for which they will need to meet established national measures.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A lot of confusion with "list of pests" which is being confused by many countries with "list of regulated pests".</li> <li>2. Surveillance system needs strengthening.</li> <li>3. Extensive Capacity Development, including pest identification, surveillance and pest risk assessment,</li> </ol>



Article	Type	Method	Responsible	Obligation	Receiving: in accordance with the IPPC text	Receiving: interpretation & advice	Priority	At least one of FAO Languages (Art. XIX)	Why	Constraints and solutions
										needed in a number of CPs before they can meet this NRO.
Advice	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Make long-term goal and link with Capacity Development programme.</li> <li>2. Increase awareness and clarify the difference between a “pest list” and “regulated pest list”.</li> </ol>									
Actions to be taken	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Make long-term goal and link with Capacity Development programme.</li> <li>2. Increase awareness and clarify the difference between a “pest list” and “regulated pest list” and a “pest” and a “quarantine pest”.</li> <li>3. Revision of ISPM 19.</li> <li>4. Encouraged CPs to meet this NRO if possible and ensure that updates are reported.</li> </ol>									
<b>IV.2(b) &amp; VIII.1(a)</b>	Event driven	Public	NPPO  Contracting party	Reporting of the <b>occurrence, outbreak or spread of pests</b>  Cooperation: Exchange of information on plant pests, particularly the reporting of the occurrence, outbreak or spread of pests that may be of immediate or potential danger.	Develop a procedure for CPM to adopt.	Secretary	High – short-term	Art XIX 2(d) says that <i>notes giving bibliographical data and a short summary of relevant documents on information provided according to Article VIII paragraph 1(a)</i> shall be in at least one of the official languages of FAO.	Basis for cooperation, identify phytosanitary risks, establish pest risk and stated in the preamble of IPPC is the avoidance of introduction and spread of pests of plants.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A large number of CPs do not to have the capacity to undertake pest reporting.</li> <li>2. List advantages of pest reporting and consequences of not reporting pests.</li> <li>3. Political commitment to pest reporting – need to increase awareness.</li> <li>4. Surveillance system needs strengthening. Capacity development for surveillance, pest identification for some CPs.</li> </ol>



Article	Type	Method	Responsible	Obligation	Receiving: in accordance with the IPPC text	Receiving: interpretation & advice	Priority	At least one of FAO Languages (Art. XIX)	Why	Constraints and solutions
Advice	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ISPM No. 17 already developed.</li> <li>Need further guidance built on ISPM No. 17 explanatory document.</li> <li>Consider ISPM 17 for revision.</li> </ol>									
Actions to be taken	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CPM to agree that pest reports can be made through existing RPPOs.</li> <li>Add value to pest reports by providing tools and features (e.g. maps) through the IPP.</li> <li>Improve data extraction.</li> <li>Facilitate the development of national pest reporting systems.</li> <li>Revision of ISPM 8 and development of accompanying explanatory note.</li> <li>Need further guidance built on ISPM No. 17 explanatory document and consider ISPM 17 for revision.</li> </ol>									
<b>IV.4</b>	On request	Bilateral	NPPO	<b>Organizational arrangements</b> for plant protection	Other contracting parties upon request.	Other contracting parties upon request.	Low	Art XIX.3(a) says that information provided according to Article IV paragraph 4 shall be in at least one of the official languages of FAO.	To understand the operation of the NPPO.	Not all CPs have developed such information, or kept existing text up-to-date.
Advice	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This requirement does not relate to the general structure of an NPPO (mentioned in the first sentence of Art IV.4), but to organizational arrangements described in Article IV.2 &amp; 3.</li> <li>Text description of functions and responsibility. Provide guidance on content needed.</li> </ol>									
Actions to be taken	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bilateral communication only but encourage public posting on the IPP.</li> <li>Provide guidance on content needed.</li> </ol>									
<b>VII.2(c)</b>	On request	Bilateral	Contracting party	Make available to any contracting party the <b>rationale</b> for phytosanitary requirements, restrictions and prohibitions	On request, to any contracting party.	On request, to any contracting party.	Low	[Suggested one of FAO languages to facilitate transparency and communication]	To ensure CPs can trade with minimal negative impact on trade and research. To ensure that unjustified measures are not in place. To result in minimum impediment of	Lack of PRAs on old regulated pests, on pathways and commodities. Lack of technical capacity within NPPO.



Article	Type	Method	Responsible	Obligation	Receiving: in accordance with the IPPC text	Receiving: interpretation & advice	Priority	At least one of FAO Languages (Art. XIX)	Why	Constraints and solutions
									international movement of plants, plant products and other regulated articles.	
Advice	'Rationale' is understood to refer to compliance with the requirements stated in Article VI.1(a) and (b)									
Actions to be taken	Bilateral communication only but encourage public posting on the IPP.									
<b>VII.2 (f)</b>	Event driven	Bilateral	Importing contracting party	Communicate significant instances of <b>non-compliance</b> with phytosanitary certification	Exporting or re-exporting contracting party.	Exporting or re-exporting contracting party.	Low	[Suggested one of FAO languages to facilitate transparency and communication]	To notify the exporting country of significant problems, eg. interceptions of quarantine nature.	Need to build a mechanism to allow CPs to exchange this information on a bilateral basis restricted to parties concerned only.  Most CPs already have bilateral mechanisms in place to report noncompliance
Advice	Advice provided by ISPM No. 13 on non-compliance.									
Actions to be taken	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bilateral communication only. Delete this from the public IPP.</li> <li>2. Need to build a mechanism to allow CPs to exchange this information on a bilateral basis restricted to parties concerned only.</li> </ol>									
<b>VII.2 (f)</b>	Event	Bilateral	Exporting contracting	Report the result of its <b>investigation</b> regarding	Importing country on	Importing country on	Low	[Suggested one of FAO languages to	To allow exporting country to improve	Lack of response to



Article	Type	Method	Responsible	Obligation	Receiving: in accordance with the IPPC text	Receiving: interpretation & advice	Priority	At least one of FAO Languages (Art. XIX)	Why	Constraints and solutions
	driven		party	significant instances of <b>non-compliance</b> with phytosanitary certification	request.	request.		facilitate transparency and communication]	their phytosanitary procedures.	non-compliance
Advice	Advice provided by ISPM No. 13 on non-compliance.									
Actions to be taken	Bilateral communication only but encourage public posting on the IPP.									
<b>VII.2(j)</b>	On request	Bilateral	Contracting party, to best of ability	Maintain adequate information on <b>pest status</b> and make such information available	Make pest status information available on request by CPs.	Contracting Parties on request.	Low	Art XIX 2(c) says that <i>information provided according to Article VII paragraph 2(j) shall be in at least one of the official languages of FAO.</i>	To enable categorization of pests, and for use in the development of appropriate phytosanitary measures	Surveillance system needs strengthening.
Advice	<p>Recommends the term 'pest status' is understood to be the same meaning as 'pest status' in ISPM No. 8. 'Categorization' is understood to refer to the differentiation of regulated and non-regulated pests. ISPM No. 6 provides guidance on what is meant by 'adequate' information.</p> <p>Although it is a bilateral reporting, it was suggested that Contracting parties should be given an option to undertake Pest Reporting through the IPP.</p>									
Actions to be taken	Bilateral communication only but encourage public posting on the IPP.									
<b>VII.6</b>	Event driven	Public	Contracting party	Immediately report <b>emergency action</b>	Contracting parties concerned, Secretary,	Secretary	High – short-term	[Suggested one of FAO languages to facilitate transparency and	Report new phytosanitary challenges that may affect the national	1. Not everyone understands the concept of emergency

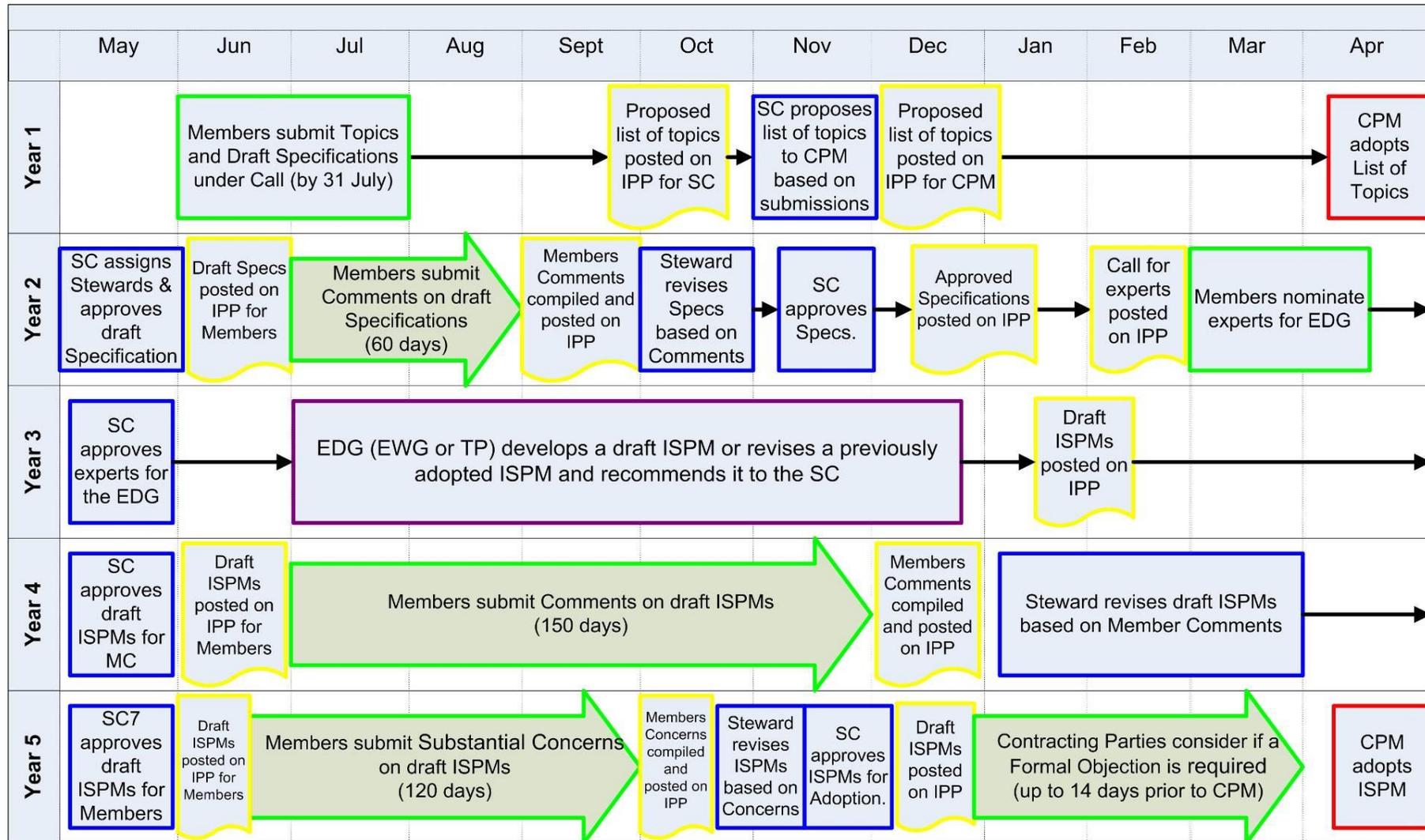


Article	Type	Method	Responsible	Obligation	Receiving: in accordance with the IPPC text	Receiving: interpretation & advice	Priority	At least one of FAO Languages (Art. XIX)	Why	Constraints and solutions
					RPPOs of which the contracting party is a member.			communication]	phytosanitary status and those of partners / neighbours.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>action.</li> <li>2. Some confusion caused by being combined with non-compliance, hence the need to revise ISPM 13.</li> <li>3. Some confusion caused by the fact that sometimes 'an emergency measure' and sometimes 'an emergency action' is mentioned in the IPPC text and ISPM.</li> </ul>
Advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Clarification is already provided in ISPM No. 13.</li> <li>2. Additional clarification may be provided through the TPG or SBDS</li> <li>3. Need to address both emergency measures and emergency actions in reporting.</li> </ul>									
Actions to be taken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Awareness raising.</li> <li>2. It is suggested that ISPM No. 13 is split into two separate/new ISPMs dealing with non-compliance and emergency actions respectively.</li> </ul>									
<b>VIII.1(c)</b>	On request	Bilateral	Contracting party, to the extent practicable	Cooperate in providing the <b>technical and biological information</b> necessary for pest risk analysis	Other contracting parties.	Other contracting parties.	Low	[Suggested one of FAO languages to facilitate transparency and communication]	To support the PRA process	Timeliness in meeting obligations not always satisfied.



Article	Type	Method	Responsible	Obligation	Receiving: in accordance with the IPPC text	Receiving: interpretation & advice	Priority	At least one of FAO Languages (Art. XIX)	Why	Constraints and solutions
Advice	This deals with bilateral cooperation and no action is required by the CPM. However, the proposed IPP may give access to any information which Contracting Parties choose to provide.									
Actions to be taken	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bilateral communication only.</li> <li>2. Leave up to bilateral – it is about providing information on request and not reporting.</li> <li>3. Could be place on the IPP to facilitate similar communications with other contracting parties.</li> <li>4. Bilateral communication only but encourage public posting on the IPP.</li> </ol>									

Flowchart for the whole standard setting process



## Priority for NROs

The NROAG set the following priorities as regards NROs:

National Reporting Obligations	Priority		
	Short-term	Medium-term	Long-term
Awareness	✓	✓	✓
Emergency action	✓	✓	
Description of NPPO		✓	
List of regulated pests			✓
OCPs	✓		
Pest reporting	✓	✓	
Phytosanitary requirements, restrictions and prohibitions		✓	
Points of entry with restrictions		✓	

## NROAG Feedback and Requests for Standard Setting

During the NROAG meeting from 1-3 July 2014, there were a number of comments that identified specific ISPM quality and appropriate feedback issues.

To summarize:

### **Feedback for Quality Improvement of Existing ISPMs**

There needs to be greater opportunity to allow feedback from CPM Subsidiary Bodies (as a result of their oversight, monitoring and evaluation activities) into the standard setting process during the implementation of ISPMs than currently available. There needs to be a ISPM feedback process that can be accessed at any time that will feed into improving the quality of the ISPM/s, the need for a possible revision, and identifying implementation challenges that can be avoided in future ISPMs e.g. practicality and confusion. At least CPM Subsidiary Bodies need to be able to provide feedback that specifically relates to their official activities – requesting this feedback through countries simply does not work as often this feedback is back based on consensus / practical experience and not specific national opinion. Guidance material can address some of these issues in some cases but this will be complementary work undertaken through the capacity development activities of the IPPC as a whole.

### **NROAG Identified Quality Issues of Existing ISPMs**

1. **ISPM 13:** NROAG felt the terminology used is not consistent with the New Revised Text of the IPPC, which only deals with emergency action (and reporting thereof). What about the reporting of emergency measures, if there is meant to be guidance by the IPPC? What does "significant" non-compliance mean? It was generally noted that this ISPM was outdated and needs revision.

There is some confusion that emergency action and measures in ISPM 13 only relates to non-compliance, and not general emergency actions and measures in the field resulting from outbreaks or new incursions.

Some suggested that ISPM 13 be divided into two ISPMs that dealt with non-compliance and emergency measures / actions separately – this would provide improved clarity and understanding as there is currently some practical confusion generated by this ISPM.

2. **ISPM 19:** the major issue is consistency of terms and concepts: the use of terminology to describe lists of "quarantine vs regulated pests", use of "pest list vs regulated pest lists" is causing considerable confusion. Participants felt that ISPM 19 is in "urgent" need of revision given the above

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which made it inconsistent with the convention. NROAG members felt that this ISPM also needs to deal with "categories" of regulated pests. Reporting surveillance and/or outbreaks needs some clarification or reference?

Specific comments from the NROAG Chairperson after the NROAG discussions:

“This is a very important but also a complex requirement as there are capacity development issues and trade facilitation implications. Work may need to proceed along two separate tracks before countries can develop regulated pest lists that achieve their intended uses:

- Track 1: Some contracting parties need to improve capacity for pest identification, surveillance, and risk assessment before they can develop regulated pest lists.
- Track 2: Clarification about purpose of regulated pest lists and the criteria for including pests on a regulated pest list.

Track 2: There is widespread confusion about the relationship between “regulated pest” and “quarantine pest” among contracting parties which extends to the use of regulated pest lists.

For example, many countries include pests on their regulated pest list that are present in their country and not under official control and thus do not meet the criteria for quarantine pest.

It is problematic when these countries attempt to impose measures for a pest that is on a regulated pest list but does not meet the criteria for quarantine pest.

Phytosanitary measures are imposed to prevent the entry and establishment of pests. If a pest has already entered and established, then there is no justification for imposing phytosanitary measures whether it is on the regulated pest list or not.

Some work needs to be done to clarify the purpose and uses of a regulated pest list for contracting parties.

As a first step there needs to be clarification on: between

- about the difference regulated and quarantine pests
- criteria for including pests on regulated pest lists
- appropriate and inappropriate uses of a regulated pest list
- guidance on updating regulated pest lists (with suggested timeframes)

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- suggested format for regulated pest lists (lists that contain codes or lists of regulations or that refer user to secondary sources without listing the pest outright may not be helpful.)
  - perhaps some consideration or guidelines for developing regional regulated pest lists

Guidance in ISPM 19 may be confusing to some parties because the terms regulated pest and quarantine pest seem to be used inconsistently or interchangeably.

Consider revision of ISPM 19 urgently.”

3. **ISPM 17**: what exactly needs to be reported e.g. outbreaks. Immediate and potential danger needs expansion - how is this determined consistently and to whom is it reported and how? Needs to be more explicit about timeframes and reporting pests where all data is not completely verified i.e. preliminary reports - value, urgency and need.

More is needed on sources of information, verification and timeliness of pest reports. Additional guidance is needed on what to report and when!

Some countries have consistently noted confusion between pest reporting and reporting surveillance results and/or outbreaks? There is also confusion about reporting / need to report pest status separate from pest reports? Some countries do not see the need to undertake these actions separately.

A number of countries have queried whether the IPPC needs only one ISPM for reporting and status (combine ISPMs 8 & 17)?

4. **TPG**: The NROAG suggested the SC consider requesting TPG to consider terminology issues related to the above.

The SC is invited to:

1. *Consider* establishing a formal process to collect feedback from CPM subsidiary bodies on ISPM implementation challenges NPPOs face as part of an IPPC-wide effort to ensure appropriate and timely feedback into the various IPPC core activities.
2. *Consider* the requests for revision of ISPM 13, 17 and 19 as well as how to address issues associated with terminology used in ISPM 13, 17 and 19.
3. *Recommend* the revision of ISPM 13, 17 and 19 to the CPM for inclusion in the “List of topics for IPPC standards”.

## Consequences of not meeting Contracting Parties' IPPC National Reporting Obligations (NROs)

A fundamental aim of the Convention is that contracting parties cooperate with each other to prevent the dissemination of pests and to achieve other strategic objectives. The Convention identifies many specific NROs (including some that are bilateral in nature) that help parties achieve the objectives of the Convention. The reason for having NROs is to ensure a minimum amount of official phytosanitary information is available that can be used as the basis for ensuring safe trade, safeguarding food security and protecting the environment from plant pests. To be most useful this phytosanitary information should be accurate, up-to-date, clearly presented, consistent with IPPC guidance and in a format that is easily accessible and understandable by other members. When IPPC contracting parties do not meet their NROs, some of the following consequences may occur:

- The lack of an IPPC contact point isolates contracting parties and prevents them from fully participating in and benefitting from interaction with the international plant protection community – this will indirectly affect trade, food security and the protection of the environment.
- When countries do not satisfy reporting obligations related to pests or measures, or provide information that is inaccurate, unclear or incomplete, it may be difficult, and even impossible, to come to agreement, or possible agreements may be delayed, on the measures required for safe trade or protecting food security and the environment.
- Lack of information on pest status or regulated pests could lead to unwarranted protective measures.
- Unwarranted protective measures, or lack of technical justification for protective measures, resulting from poor or lack of phytosanitary information, could lead to lengthy trade negotiations, limited market access and/or potential disputes.
- Inaccurate or unclear information about pest status or regulated pests could also result in ineffective measures. Ineffective measures could result in dissemination of pests with negative consequences for agricultural and environmental resources.
- Some countries perceive official reporting as an indication of successful and efficiently functioning NPPO. If lack of reporting is observed it can lead to a loss of or reduction of trust in non-reporting countries;
- Not meeting their NROs is perceived by some countries as a possible attempt to hide phytosanitary issues from trading partners or neighbours by the non-reporting countries.

The IPPC invites contracting parties to consider if/how they are meeting their NROs in order to avoid negative consequences described above and other negative consequences that may occur from non-reporting.

A substantial amount of background information on meeting NROs is available on the IPPC website at: <https://www.ippc.int/countries/>

Where technical assistance and/or capacity development is needed to meet their national reporting obligations, contracting parties should contact David Nowell (dave.nowell@fao.org).

4 November 2014

## The Benefits of IPPC Reporting

A fundamental aim of the Convention is that contracting parties cooperate with each other to prevent the dissemination of pests and to achieve other strategic objectives. The Convention identifies many specific NROs (including some that are bilateral in nature) that help parties achieve the objectives of the Convention. The reason for having NROs is to ensure a minimum amount of official phytosanitary information is available that can be used as the basis for ensuring safe trade, safeguarding food security and protecting the environment from plant pests. To be most useful this phytosanitary information should be accurate, up-to-date, clearly presented, consistent with IPPC guidance and in a format that is easily accessible and understandable by other members.

The IPPC National Reporting Obligations Advisory Group (NROAG) believes the advantages of IPPC contracting parties meeting their NROs, include:

- A functional *IPPC Official Contact Points (OCPs)* network is central to all information exchange under the IPPC;
- An OCP that acts as the single official IPPC point of contact for all countries;
- The establishment of an *effective information exchange system* which should make it easier to meet phytosanitary conditions of the importing country in a more sustainable manner;
- The official and verified information that becomes available will:
  - ✓ facilitate *trade* and increase *market access*;
  - ✓ facilitate the *protection of cultivated and wild plants* by preventing the introduction and spread of pests;
  - ✓ enable importing countries to more accurately *determine phytosanitary requirements*;
  - ✓ allow countries to ensure increased *protection of the world's biodiversity, environment and ensure food security*;
  - ✓ result in increased accuracy, reliability, timeliness and improved quality of data, together with regular data updates;
  - ✓ build a reliable and official phytosanitary database over time;
- The official phytosanitary information that becomes available during the national import and export certification processes (e.g. surveillance results such as pest reports and pest status):
  - ✓ should contribute to a decrease in the number of *interceptions and rejections* of (non-compliant) consignments;
  - ✓ facilitates the *resolution of instances of non-compliance* between countries through an agreed non-compliance feedback system (as described in the ISPM No. 13);
  - should positively contribute to the *avoidance of phytosanitary disputes*; will establish *transparent* communication which will facilitate *cooperation* and *coordination* between IPPC contracting parties;
- It should *build trust* in bilateral relationships between IPPC contracting parties over time;
- It provides an indication of an *establishment and functioning NRO programme / NPPO* – some countries believe that this is a good indicator of NPPO functionality.

The IPPC invites contracting parties to consider if/how they are meeting their NROs in order to take advantage from benefits described.

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A substantial amount of background information on meeting NROs is available on the IPPC website at: <https://www.ippc.int/countries/>

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4 November 2014