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Alimentación y la Agricultura

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COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

Tenth Session

Rome, 16-20 March 2015

Summary of the Strategic Planning Group report

Agenda item 7.2

Prepared by Peter Thomson, Chair of the SPG meeting

I. Highlights from the Strategic Planning Group October 2014 meeting

1. The Strategic Planning Group (SPG) met 7-10 October 2014. It was a very successful meeting both in terms of the level of participation and quality of discussion on strategic topics.
2. The Secretariat should be commended for their work to increase the level of participation in the SPG by developing countries. The 22 participants were from 9 developing countries and 9 developed countries from across all regions. This provided a broad source of perspectives on topics under discussion. Participants were required to submit a short 'think-piece' prior to the meeting. This led to well informed and thoughtful discussion on the key agenda item for the meeting.
3. The key agenda item was titled "The IPPC in 20 years". Almost 2 days were spent on this item attempting to create a vision for what the IPPC should be like in 20 years time. Changes that could occur over the next 20 years were explored with respect to global trade, plant health, technology and other areas. Possible adaptations to the work, focus and capability of the IPPC were discussed. The following seven themes were developed for further exploration to ensure IPPC can respond to the challenges and opportunities coming in the next 20 years:
 - 1) Technology, Innovation and Data
 - 2) Resource Mobilisation
 - 3) Advocacy and Awareness through Strong Communication
 - 4) Implementation, Participation and Collaboration
 - 5) The IPPC as a Centre of Excellence and Innovation
 - 6) The IPPC Contribution to Food Security, Environmental Protection, and Economic Prosperity
 - 7) Simplifying the Regulatory Environment for the Complexities of Future Global Trade

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4. These themes will provide the basis for future SPG discussions with Resource Mobilization (2) and Advocacy and Awareness through Strong Communication (3) being flagged for further discussion at the next SPG meeting in 2015. ‘Future-casting’ for opportunities and threats will become a regular agenda item of SPG meetings. Exploring these themes and associated strategic opportunities and threats will help to inform the next iteration of the IPPC Strategic Framework.
5. Other important agenda items discussed at SPG included:
- **Resource mobilisation** – Options for improving the financial sustainability of the IPPC were discussed. These included voluntary assessed contributions, mandatory contributions, use of donor agreements for multi-year donations, and others. It was recognised that financial support will follow recognition of the value being generated by the IPPC at a global and national level and that an economic analysis of this would be useful. The Secretariat provided an update on the process and necessary support needed to establish an International Year of Plant Health.
 - **Framework for Standards** – SPG was asked to comment on the Framework for Standards work. Some very useful work has been done to identify possible gaps where new standards or guidance are needed. It could also be used to support implementation work. SPG suggested that additional input from other IPPC bodies would improve the current draft outputs.
 - **Ephyto** – SPG received an update on ephyto work including information that the ePhyto Steering group and the Secretariat are developing a proposal to build an ephyto hub. This proposal will go to CPM 10 (2015) for a decision to proceed or not. Advantages and disadvantages of a hub were discussed and it was generally felt that a hub would address IPPC needs. An issue still to be resolved is how to recover the costs for hub development and its on-going operation.
 - **Implementation** – The outputs of the Open Ended Working Group on Implementation were discussed. SPG emphasised the need for establishing strong synergies between standard setting and implementation. Resourcing the additional work on implementation was seen as a significant challenge and either new resources would be needed or difficult reprioritisation decisions would be needed. The Secretariat is developing the implementation work plan for the Surveillance topic.
6. Other important topics included: diversion from intended use, traceability, pest diagnostics, communications, concepts of an ISPM, the Capacity Development Committee review, and the National Reporting Obligations Programme.
7. The SPG continues to be an extremely valuable forum for strategic thinking and planning within the IPPC. The SPG is not a decision-making body but does provide valuable feedback and guidance to assist the Bureau and Secretariat to explore strategic issues, and develop suitable proposals for consideration at CPM meetings.