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**INTER-AFRICAN PHYTOSANITARY COUNCIL CONSEIL PHYTOSANITAIRE INTERAFRICAIN**

**Twenty first Technical Consultation among Regional Plant Protection Organization**

**Entebbe-Uganda,**

**30November-4December, 2009**

**REPORT OF THE INTER-AFRICAN PHYTOSANITARY COUNCIL OF AFRICAN UNION (AU-IAPSC) FOR THE TWENTY FIRST TECHNICAL CONSULTATION AMONG REGIONAL PLANT PROTECTION ORGANIZATIONS**

**30 NOVEMBER-4 DECEMBER, 2009**

1. **REVIEW OF RPPO ACTIVITIES**

**I.1. Introduction**

The Inter-African Phytosanitary Council (IAPSC), besides implementing its 2009 budget programme within the framework of strengthening the Regional Pillars of Cooperation, Development and Regional Integration, that included four projects: Strengthening continental-wide Cassava protection initiatives against major diseases, Meetings and training workshop for reclassification and improving integrated pests’ management,Control phenomenon of the trans-boundary pest in Africa: Grain Eating Birds (Quelea-sp) Phase II and updating spatial and temporal analysis of pests and plant diseases in Africa; the office has started executing the PANSPSO with AU-IBAR and Regional Economic Communities. IAPSC also took part in many meetings scheduled by the African Union Commission, IPPC Secretariat, different National Plant Protection Organizations of the continent, and some regional organizations and Regional Economic Communities. This aimed at preventing the introduction and spread of plant and plant products pests in Africa, while strengthening the phytosanitary situation of African countries and boosting inter-intra African trade and reducing poverty among the rural masses.

**I.2. IAPSC`s 2009 Budget programme,**

 Concerning the project on the Strengthening continental – wide Cassava protection initiatives against major Diseases; Phase one; the study team set up by IAPSC successfully conducted from July - to August,2009 a survey in eight African countries (Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Cote d`Ivoire, Liberia, Mozambique, Nigeria and Uganda for data collection and reviewed numerous assessments of the specific African countries in the area of cassava germplasm and planting material exchange, linkages networks, crop diseases affecting yield and productivity, since more than 300 million people feed on cassava and it is the second staple food in the Sub Sahara Africa. This study tour enables the team to also assess the Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation of these countries. The phytosanitary situation of these countries still generally very weak. If nothing is done this may jeopardize the inter-intra African trade and compromise the poverty reductions which still the main goals of agricultural programme of many African countries and governments of the continent. In order to create awareness of different governments of countries producing cassava and build capacity in cassava diseases and pests diagnosis, IAPSC organized a workshop on cassava production and protection in Bujumbura-Burundi in November16-17,2009,where participants came from National plant protection Organizations of countries surveyed with Experts from IITA, FAO, IAPSC and National Research Organizations and Universities to address these problems and help those present to be more armed and know the identification of cassava diseases and control methods as well as understand the principle behind cassava germplasm movement and planting material production and distribution to the poor cassava growers.

Necessary arrangements have been made with the Egyptian government and the training workshop on reclassification and improving integrated pests’ management with focus on fruit flies for central and north African countries will take place in Cairo in December 14-15, 2009 so as to enhance the capacity of some National Plant protection Organization Officers on this pest which is one of the main problem for fruits export.

 Work is on –going with the Control phenomenon of the trans-boundary pest in Africa: Grain Eating Birds (Quelea- sp) invasions in Africa. This aimed at describing the situation as it occurs in the continent and coordinating controls methods used by affecting countries.

The workshop is also scheduled in Sudan to enhance the capacity of African countries in the control of Grain Eating Birds so as to increase cereal production in the region affected.

 Updated spatial and temporal analysis of pests and plant diseases in Africa is an on-going process which requires strength and energy and enough funds to tackle the issues. The contribution of all African National plant protection organization is more than needed. Many countries are still having difficulties to establish their pests list, IAPSC has just started reviewing this list and it is going to take time to come up with an appropriate list of quarantine pests.

 Given IAPSC mandate, mission and stakeholders concerns, about achieving greater effectiveness from budget programme allocations to project submitted, effort is still needed to the release and availability of funds in time when projects are approved. The percentage of the implementation of the above projects may reach 71% by the end of the year. However, there are still many challenges which IAPSC could achieve with the assistance of all and the experience and cooperation of sister organizations and donors institutions through partnership

1.3 **Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) and standards for Phytosanitary Measures.**

 Two training of Trainers Workshops on improving the efficiency of participation of African Nations in the activities of WTO-SPS committee and International Standards-setting Organizations were held in Nairobi-Kenya and Bamako-Mali, respectively on 13-16 July, 2009 and 20-23 July, 2009 for English and French speaking groups. These as part of the implementation of participation of African Nations in Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards –setting Organizations project (PAN-SPSO). Trainers were taught in International trade and the SPS Agreement, The SPS committee, Information sources on SPS and International Standards Setting Organization (ISSOs)-three sisters (IPPC, Codex Alimentarius Commission and OIE). A workshop for reviewing of draft ISPMs by African countries took place in Nairobi-Kenya thanks to the PANSPSO project. Member present at this meeting brought their valuable comments, amendments and contribution on the draft standards submitted.

 In order to strengthen East African countries in phytosanitary information exchange a 5th East African Phytosanitary Information Committee workshop was held in Kigali-Rwanda on March 2-6, 2009. It aimed at developing official country specific and regional pest reporting methods and Internet-accessible databases that support Sanitary and Phytosanitary requirements for the region. The EAPIC databases are use to complement trade initiatives in the region and help to prioritize specific needs for pest survey, detection, inspection, and diagnosis. EAPIC groups countries like Kenya, Burundi, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Rwanda and their activities are funded by the USDA in collaboration with USAID/EA and FAO which is also funding the improvement of the Pest Information Management System (PIMS) in response to requests by users.

 Close to 37 participants from various West African countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Gambia, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, and Togo) and institutions like IAPSC, IPM-CRSP, IITA, AVRDC and USA attended the Regional Diagnostics as part of the International Plant Diseases Network (IPDN) in Bamako-Mali in February 16-20, 2009. The system requirements for west Africa need for plant disease diagnostics being to recognise symptoms, diagnose indigenous pathogens and recommend control options, test and certify food quality, share local and regional knowledge. The purpose of the workshop was to create a critical mass of stakeholders dedicated to IPDN and to conduct the West Africa Regional Diagnostics Workshop as part of the IPDN global theme; while stimulating support to produce an effective and sustainable diagnostic network in regional linked to world experts.

In the same line of action KEPHIS has been identified as a Phytosanitary Centre of Excellence (COPE) for east African countries and progressively, its activities are been implemented. However IAPSC recognizes that other Regional Economic Communities (RECs) are still to put in place these Centres of Phytosanitary Excellences in their regions.

 Other major activities of IAPSC included its participation to the workshop on Agricultural Trade and export Development in Africa in order to Understand the implication of recent trends and developments in agricultural trade flows, recent global market developments and how they can contribute to economic growth and poverty reduction; and also effectively assist countries to participate in international (bilateral, regional or multilateral) agricultural trade negotiations; and design and formulate efficient unilateral domestic trade policies in the face of the challenges and opportunities presented by the developments in the international food and agricultural markets. Other centre of interest was the monitoring of the setting up of PANSPSO project in ECOWAS and in other RECs, the participation to the technical committee meeting in Addis Ababa –Ethiopia, the 4th CPM meeting in Rome –Italy and other meetings which gear towards strengthening phytosanitary capacity in Africa and also improving phytosanitary regulation in the continent.

**Conclusion**

 There had been no developments in African phytosanitary standards despites effort made by the office through the implementation of PANSPSO project in the field. Regional Economic Communities are still as well as contracting parties of IPPC from Africa to concretely strengthen their capacity in WTO-SPS Agreement for better participation to CPM meeting and /or reviewing draft standards not to talk of setting standards. The situation of the phytosanitary capacity (PRA, Pests and diseases diagnostics and surveillance of African countries) is still for their majority weak. This observation calls for the attention of not only IAPSC but also the strong cooperation among all Regional Plant Protection organizations of IPPC. IAPSC will continue creating awareness among all contracting parties of IPPC from the continent and coordinating all activities undertaking by different National Plant protection Organizations (NPPOs).