

NROs UPDATE

National Reporting Obligations UPDATE

Protecting the world's plant resources from pests



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IPPC Official Contact Points

The Official Contact Points (OCPs) are crucial in communication between contracting parties and the Secretariat, as well as amongst each other. The contact details (e-mail addresses) of OCPs are used to transmit important messages from the Secretariat (information on country consultations, workshops, invitations to meetings, calls for experts, etc.), and for countries to communicate amongst themselves.

More important than the general communications, the OCPs are responsible for reporting specific obligatory national information as described in the Convention, such as:

- a description of the official national plant protection organization (NPPO);
- phytosanitary requirements, restrictions and prohibitions;
- specific points of entry;
- lists of regulated pests;
- occurrence, outbreak and spread of pests;
- emergency actions.

All communications from the OCP are also automatically deemed official and on behalf of the country.

Do you know?

The basis for existence of Official Contact Points is [Article VIII.2 of the International Plant Protection Convention \(IPPC\)](#) which requires contracting parties to the Convention to designate a contact point. This is done by formal nomination of the individual which is communicated to the Secretary to the IPPC. The information on OCP is then placed on the [International Phytosanitary Portal](#).



The Year of the IPPC Contact Points

2014 / 2015

In July 2014, during the first meeting of the National Reporting Obligations Advisory Group (NROAG), it was agreed that every year would be dedicated to a different national reporting obligation. As OCPs are so central to the functioning and wellbeing of the IPPC, it was unanimously agreed that 2014/15 would focus on OCP awareness raising and increasing the activity of OCPs in general. In other words, the period up to CPM-10 in 2015 becomes the NRO “Year of the IPPC Official Contact Point”.

You will be hearing more from the IPPC Secretariat over the next few months and we will systematically be posting additional OCP-related information on the IPP.

Further OCP-related topics that will be covered before the end of the operational year (the period up to CPM-10 in 2015) will include:

- ✓ The role of contact points and IPP editors.
- ✓ Practical advice on the implementation of an NRO programme.
- ✓ Advantages of meeting IPPC NROs.
- ✓ Consequences of not meeting NROs.
- ✓ Monitoring of the NRO programme, i.e. statistics.
- ✓ Updates on the development of the revised NRO programme.
- ✓ NRO-related activities undertaken by the Secretariat as per the NRO work programme.
- ✓ An updated IPP user’s manual.
- ✓ On-line training on NROs and for IPP editors (longer term goal).
- ✓ Update on changes to the IPP to make meeting NROs easier and finding the data more quickly.

Do you know?

An IPPC Official Contact Point is a standard type of contact. There are also other types of Contact Points:

- *IPPIC Unofficial Contact Point*: for contracting parties which are yet to officially nominate a contact point;
- *IPPIC Information Point*: for non-contracting parties;
- *IPPIC Local Contact*: for dependant territories of contracting parties.

Check your national information on the IPP



Please consult the International Phytosanitary Portal (IPP): go to your [country home page](#) and check the following:

- ✓ Name and title of your country's designated Official Contact Point (OCP).
- ✓ Contact details for your country's designated OCP.
- ✓ Names and contact details of your country's IPP editors.

Is the information correct? If not, you can:

- ✓ edit the OCP contact details yourself (if you are an OCP or a country's IPP editor);
- ✓ see [page 5](#) for information about the changing of the OCP name
- ✓ Get your OCP to complete an [editor form](#) and send it to the Secretariat, if names and contact details of your country's IPP editors are not correct.
- ✓ For any other problems, please inform the Secretariat (ippc@fao.org).




Why and how to use the IPP?

The Third Session of ICPM (2001) agreed that the *preferred* method of meeting IPPC NROs is via the [International Phytosanitary Portal](#).

Your country should follow this advice from CPM and to facilitate this, as an OCP, you can nominate an IPP editor to upload the data on your behalf. To initiate this, [fill in the form](#), sign it (as the OCP) and send it to the IPPC Secretariat for registration in the system. Editors can also edit an OCP's e-mail address, postal address and phone number when they change – what they cannot change is a name or title of their OCP. At the same time, the OCPs themselves can still edit their national data, including contact details, on the IPP.

The Secretariat prepared an IPP manual to help with accessing, reporting and data editing. It is currently available in English, French and Arabic [at the IPP](#) and other FAO language versions will follow soon.



As the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures decided on OCPs in the past

The extract from the CPM report:

The Role of Official Contact Points

CPM-1 (2006) / Report

APPENDIX XVIII

The IPPC contact points are used for all information exchanged under the IPPC between contracting parties, between the Secretariat and contracting parties and, in some cases, between contracting parties and Regional Plant Protection Organizations (RPPOs).

The IPPC contact point should:

- have the necessary authority to communicate on phytosanitary issues on behalf of the contracting party, i.e. as the contracting party's single IPPC enquiry point;
- ensure the information exchange obligations under the IPPC are implemented in a timely manner;
- provide coordination for all official phytosanitary communication between contracting parties related to the effective functioning of the IPPC;
- redirect phytosanitary information received from other contracting parties and from the IPPC Secretariat to appropriate official(s);
- redirect requests for phytosanitary information from contracting parties and the IPPC Secretariat to the appropriate official(s);
- keep track of the status of appropriate responses to information requests that have been made to the contact point; and

The role of the IPPC contact point is central to the effective functioning of the IPPC, and it is important that the IPPC contact point has adequate resources and sufficient authority to ensure that requests for information are dealt with appropriately and in a timely manner.

Article VIII.2 requires contracting parties to designate a contact point, and therefore it is the contracting party which is responsible for making, and informing the Secretariat of, the nomination. There can be only one contact point per contracting party. The contracting party, by making the nomination, agrees that the nominee has the necessary authority to fulfil the functions of the contact point as determined within the framework of the IPPC. Individual persons cannot appoint themselves as contact points.

A frequently asked question:

How to nominate a new Official Contact Point?

In practical terms, the IPPC [Official Contact Point notification form](#) needs to be completed and signed, and then emailed or faxed to the IPPC Secretariat.

The following rules should be respected in a nomination process:

1. There can be only one contact point per contracting party.
2. A contact point should be an actual person (with first name/s and family name) and not an anonymous entity or specific office.
3. The contracting party, by making the nomination, agrees that the nominee has the necessary authority to fulfill the functions of the contact point as determined within the framework of the IPPC.
4. Consequently, the notification of the new contact point must be signed by a relevant person more senior than the new IPPC contact point. Individual persons cannot appoint themselves as contact points.
5. An outgoing Official Contact Point should not nominate the new (incoming) Official Contact Point. This should be done by a relevant person more senior than the new Official Contact Point.
6. The information needs to be reported in a timely manner so that there is no gap in communication through the Official Contact Point.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Secretariat at ippc@fao.org



Trade in fruit and vegetables: manage phytosanitary risks!

Fruit and vegetable production is increasing around the world and the produce is often shipped overnight to major markets – a fast and reliable pathway for new pests if risk management is not undertaken and adequate measures are not in place.

Think before your travel – understand the consequences of your actions.

How often do we travel and buy wooden curios, flowers or agricultural products to take home to our friends and family? THINK before you do this – you could be taking pests back to your country that could cause a very significant negative economic or environmental impact.

Prevention is better than cure

Be responsible for your actions!



The acronym finder:

- CPM Commission on Phytosanitary Measures
- FAO Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
- IPP International Phytosanitary Portal (www.ippc.int)
- IPPC International Plant Protection Convention
- NPPO National plant protection organization
- NROs National Reporting Obligations
- NROAG National Reporting Obligations Advisory Group
- OCP Official Contact Point of a Contracting Party to the Convention
- RPPO Regional plant protection organization



Contact the IPPC:

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