



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations



Regional IPPC Workshop for Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia 2015

The Regional IPPC Workshop for Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia took place in Bykovo, Russia during the 7-11 September, 2015. The workshop was organized by the FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia (REU) with the support of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC). Representatives from 12 National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs) in the region participated in the workshop activities. The workshop was attended by observers from the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) (See list of participants, annex 1).

The objectives of the workshop were to learn how to analyze draft ISPMs and to formulate productive comments using the examples of draft ISPMs for member consultation in 2015, to build phytosanitary capacity and raise awareness on all activities related to the IPPC, and finally, to exchange experiences at the regional level (see workshop agenda, annex 2).

Meeting arrangements

The meeting was opened by Ms Yulia Shvabauskene, the Deputy Head of the Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance who greeted the participants and underlined the importance of experience and information exchange within the IPPC framework.

Mr. Craig Fedchock, Coordinator of the IPPC Secretariat, greeted the Workshop participants and read out the welcome letter from Mr. Jingyuan Xia, IPPC Secretary, underlying the importance of the Regional workshop as a forum for understanding the realities and challenges of contracting parties.

Mr. Aleksandr Sapozhnikov, Director of the All-Russian Plant Quarantine Center (FGBU VNIIKR), briefly informed on the logistics and informed that all the workshop materials including presentations and exercises were printed out in English and Russian in the form of a booklet and provided to the participants.

Mr. Avetik Nersisyan, Plant Production and Protection Officer, FAO REU, reminded that the Workshop Agenda, draft ISPMs – appendix to ISPM 20 and revisions to ISPM 15, as well as document on surveillance and pre-training NRO exercise had been distributed to the participants prior to the meeting, and then proceeded with the adoption of the Agenda, and election of chairperson and rapporteur. Mr Leanid Pliashko, Head of the Belarusian NPPO, was elected as the chairperson and Aksana Drenova, chief of FGBU VNIKR's International Department, Russia, was elected as the rapporteur.

The introductory presentation on the objectives of the Workshop was made by Ms Ketevan Lomsadze, the IPPC Secretariat representative. She outlined that participants, using the examples of the draft appendix to ISPM 20 on Guidelines for a phytosanitary import regulatory system and the draft annex to ISPM 15 on for inclusion of the phytosanitary treatment Sulphuryl fluoride fumigation and the revision of dielectric heating of wood packaging material would have opportunity to learn how to analyse draft ISPMs and to formulate productive comments.

She also gave an overview of the IPPC- related agenda items:

- Submission of formal objections: process and justification
- Updates on ISPM 15 symbol registration
- Phytosanitary Resources page and IPPC technical resources
- International Year of Plant Health
- WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement
- ePhyto updates
- IPPC Dispute avoidance and settlement system
- Exercise on national Reporting Obligations
- Pilot program on surveillance

She underpinned the importance of exchanging experiences and information at the regional level. With this regard the following topics of the Agenda were introduced:

- Experiences of countries in surveillance;
- Emerging pests in the region

She stressed the importance of participants' involvement in IPPC activities both through interaction with the IPPC Secretariat and within their own countries and presented information on useful IPPC and FAO contacts for the region.

Mr. Craig Fedchock informed participants on the latest IPPC activities.

Analysis and discussion Draft ISPMs :

The introduction to the use of Online Commenting System (OCS) system was given by Ms. Lomsadze and Ms. Drenova. The Russian speaking participants underlined the need to have the OCS in Russian as for them the language barrier was a serious hindrance.

Mr Avetik Nersisyan stressed that taking into account the fact that the language of communication within the framework of international activities was predominantly English countries should request FAO for OCS translation officially to strengthen countries communication capacities and that REU would consider the issue.

Ms Lomsadze reminded participants that comments from member consultation go to stewards and to the Standard Committee (SC). Therefore, when discussing translation of the OCS in Russian the issue of the comments being translated from Russian to English also should be considered in order to make them understandable for stewards and the SC.

The draft ISPMs were reviewed as follows:

- Draft ISPM: appendix to ISPM 20 on Arrangements for verification of compliance of consignments by the importing country in the exporting country (2005-003)
- Draft ISPM: revisions to ISPM 15 (Regulation of wood packaging material in international trade) Annex 1 and 2 for inclusion of the phytosanitary treatment Sulphuryl fluoride fumigation of wood packaging material (2006-010A) and the revision of the dielectric heating section in Annex 1 of ISPM 15 (2006-010B)

Presentations on the draft ISPMs were given by Ms. Lomsadze. She informed the participants about the background and the main discussions which took place during the development of the drafts.

Mr Martin Ward, EPPO's Director General, informed the participants on the discussions of the EPPO Panel on CPM Affairs that took place during the previous week. He especially stressed the importance for EPPO to hear the views of the Regional Workshop participants.

VNIKR's veteran expert on fumigation Mr. Yakov Mordkovich provided a presentation on use of sulphuryl fluoride as a fumigant, details of hazards the fumigant posed to human health and the environment. He reviewed various approaches to the fumigant in different countries and stressed out the need to follow stringent safety procedures and take into account the fact that sulphuryl fluoride didn't affect metal, paper, skin, clothes and plastic materials but destroyed rubber materials (gas masks, gloves, and boots). Moreover, he suggested that the treatment schedules (CT and temperature) proposed in the revisions were considerably overstated and need to be reviewed. Mr Martin Ward, underlined the significance of valuable comments made

by the fumigation experts as the EPPO Panel on CPM Affairs hadn't had any fumigation experts attending the previous week's meeting to be able to make any expert judgments. He also said that the steward would be very interested in obtaining the data provided.

The participants proceeded discussing the long-lasting search for an alternative to methyl bromide, however, the prospect of getting an even more hazardous and costly treatment didn't seem to be very appealing especially taking into account the tendency in some countries that had previously registered and used the fumigant to abandon it .

Belarus, Uzbekistan and Tadzhikistan shared their experience of operating and supervising fumigation services.

The Russian fumigation expert also contributed to the discussion on dielectric heating by sharing information about special tables for determining the temperature of core wood based on the air , humidity and temperature and the type of wood. His point was to develop such kind of tables for dielectric heating and use them in cases when special sensors are not available or when NPPOs need to audit treatment operators.

The detailed discussion resulted in a number of substantive and some editorial comments to the drafts. The comments on the draft ISPMs were inserted into the OCS. The participants had the opportunity to see and follow the whole process of using the OCS. It was decided to share the comments with the Official Contact Points of the participant countries. Participants were reminded that the IPPC secretariat is expecting to receive at least one comment on each draft through the OCS stating that a country agrees with the draft as it is in the event there is no intention to submit any other comment(s).

IPPC-related topics:

Submission of formal objections

Mr. Craig Fedchock made a presentation on formal objections and encouraged the participants to take an active part in the standard setting process. Moreover, he underscored the need for every country to carefully consider what effect draft ISPMs might have on them in future.

With regard to the standard setting process, the EEC wondered whether the EU as an IPPC contracting party had ever made any proposals for ISPM topics. Some discussion went on that matter as Ms Kristine Kjago, Director of the Latvian NPPO, shared the experience of Latvia as an EU member and participating in various discussions related to CPM Affairs within the framework of EC groups and panels. EPPO informed that the CPM Affairs Panel was actively involved in discussing the abovementioned issues.

Phytosanitary resources page and the IPPC technical resources

Ms. Lomsadze informed the participants about the phytosanitary resources page, its objective, content, latest updates and search options.

Mr Meruzhan Tarzyan, a participant from Armenia, expressed his wish to have more phytosanitary resources translated into Russian. Ms Ketevan Lomsadze noted that in 2012 countries had been invited to share their resources and this process hadn't been terminated. She urged the participants to share their phytosanitary resources.

The exercise on the phytosanitary resource page was eagerly done by the participants. They expressed gratitude and high appreciation of the IPPC Secretariat's efforts to make as many materials available in FAO official languages as possible.

While reporting on his task on transit, Mr Leanid Pliashko shared his experience and especially stressed the difficulty of defining what transit was when it was related to the Eurasian Economic Union. Additionally, he underlined that theoretical examples given in the manual are not exhaustive. The Secretariat representative informed the participants that they are welcome to contribute to the improvement of any phytosanitary resource by providing their feedback through a fast and easy survey, a link to which can be found in each resource.

Mr Talekh Shamiev, Azerbaijan, reporting on the task, noted that the available resources were of great use and interest.

Ms. Maryam Mironova underlined importance of the upcoming manual on Establishment and Operation of NPPOs as a great aid for the NPPOs.

Participants from Russia expressed their interest in the market access manual and especially to the section on PRA.

International Year of Plant Health

Mr Craig Fedchock, IPPC, made a presentation on the International Year of Plant Health. He underlined the need for volunteers and noted Finland taking the initiative to push the matter to the foreign ministry level and get other countries to support this effort. He invited the Workshop participants to get in touch with their Finnish colleagues or IPPC Secretariat. He noted that the importance of plant health is greatly underestimated. This is high time for the international phytosanitary community to raise the global awareness.

Mr Jean Perchet, EPPO, thanked Mr. Fedchock for the interesting presentation and agreed that plant health issues are widely neglected. The message to the public should be emotional and touch every single person and official. He also informed the participants that according to Mr. Lopian's statement, donations in time for IYPH would be taken as donations in money. He also encouraged the Workshop participants to contribute to IYPH.

An Armenian participant expressed his astonishment, stating that it was high time for an International Year of Plant Health. He proposed equating plant health to human health. Advocacy materials are needed to promote the vital importance of plant health without which there would be no animal health and human health. He enthusiastically expressed his gratitude to the IPPC for announcing the IYPH.

Belarus noted that it was difficult for NPPOs to push the awareness to the national and international level, for this reason it was very important that the IYPH would be announced.

ISPM 15 Registration:

Ms. Lomsadze reminded the participants about the objective and procedures of the symbol registration. She updated the participants about the status of the ISPM 15 symbol registration in the world.

An Armenian representative had a question about the registration of a producer/treatment provider. Specifically, he was interested in knowing whether a producer/treatment provider should be assigned the registration number by the NPPO or if there is an international register for producer/treatment registration. The Secretariat representatives explained that the responsibilities of registration and authorization of the providers rests within the NPPOs.

WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement

The agenda item was presented by Mr. Craig Fedchock. He urged the participants to be more involved and pay attention to the activities related to the agreement as there are some areas of overlap between the ATF and the SPS Agreement.

ePhyto update

The presentation informing about the newest developments in the ePhyto field was made by Mr. Craig Fedchock. He underlined importance and benefits of electronic phytosanitary certification and high-lighted that it is not obligatory for countries.

The Workshop participants expressed great interest in the electronic phytosanitary certification.

IPPC Dispute avoidance and settlement system

Mr. Craig Fedchock made a presentation on the dispute avoidance system. Answering a question from a Russian participant to give an example on the misuse of phytosanitary measures, Mr Craig Fedchock replied that it would take the whole day. As an example he noted that a country may find a pest and using an unofficial information source misidentifies the pest and thus takes measures against another country. He gave examples of WTO SPS dispute cases on phytosanitary issues as providing a legal basis for what is the proper interpretation of SPS rules. He also noted that the IPPC Secretariat is currently working on a dispute between the EU and South Africa regarding citrus black spot. While some countries consider it to be a quarantine pest, several others do not.

Exercise on National Reporting Obligations:

Before proceeding to the exercises on NROs Ms Ketevan Lomsadze explained what the NROs were and importance of reporting within the IPPC framework. Then the answers to the pre-training exercise were discussed.

The Participants were given mock reports and invited to determine types of reports and how they might be improved. During the discussions participants provided their suggestions on the improvement of mock reports and discussed ways of reporting.

At the end of the exercise Ms Ketevan Lomsadze noted that based on the advice of the National Reporting Obligations Advisory Group (NROAG) and the decision taken at CPM-9 (2014), every year would be dedicated to a different national reporting obligation. Last year was the year of the official contact point, this year is the year of "Organization of the NPPO". The "Year" will focus on different aspects of the functioning of National Plant Protection Organization, mainly its descriptive aspects. She urged the participants to update their relevant information on the IPP.

Experience of countries in Surveillance

All participating countries made presentations on surveillance. They discussed each other's experiences, shared good practices and challenges.

The uniformity of surveillance activities performed by the countries was reflected in the fact that they all based their survey activities on ISPM 6 under IPPC and resorted to scientific resources. For example, in Latvia surveys are conducted generally for all agricultural pests which allows timely detection of new pest of quarantine potential.

Discussion also touched upon the way countries made up their lists of pests using PRA results.

Describing the surveillance system, the countries presented the structure of their NPPOs and the surveillance responsibilities within them.

All participants also mentioned the legislative framework established in their countries for phytosanitary surveillance. Notwithstanding the national diversity, NPPOs either exercise the sole authority of establishing and lifting quarantine in areas where outbreaks are found or share it with the ministries of agriculture.

Russia shared its experience of conducting the so-called pheromone monitoring of the country, i.e. using pheromone traps baited with pheromones, for 33 quarantine and non-quarantine pests of Russia.

The participants from Belarus, Macedonia, Armenia, Montenegro reported on their national phytosanitary systems, surveillance being part of them.

The history of applying monitoring programs is different in different countries. For example, Macedonia started conducting phytosanitary surveys in 2013 and developed relevant programs for major agricultural crops (e.g. potatoes).

All participants stressed the importance of building capacity, training personnel and upgrading equipment for surveillance purposes.

To conclude, Ms Ketevan Lomsadze of the IPPC explained why presentations on surveillance had been requested by the IPPC Secretariat prior to the Workshop. IPPC developed more than 30 ISPMs over the past 20 years, but there's a huge gap between standard development and their implementation. The CPM-10 decided to start with a pilot on surveillance because surveillance is a tool of great importance, and the information obtained during surveys is the basis for PRAs, pest categorizations and export-import regulations.

Pilot program and Surveillance

Ms Ketevan Lomsadze, IPPC, proceeded with the presentation on the surveillance pilot. She invited the participants to ask questions on the surveillance pilot both during and after the Workshop. She also asked the countries whether they wanted to participate in such a pilot and in what way.

Ms Zorka Prljevič, Head of the NPPO of Montenegro, reported that her country had no administrative and operational capacity to perform any extra works, however, she expressed readiness to share their technical resources.

Mr Meruzhan Tarzyan, Armenia, noted that it was a very topical issue. However, he needed to discuss this matter with their colleagues and supervisors.

Ms Ketevan Lomsadze, IPPC, noted that the detailed working plan for the surveillance pilot would be elaborated and further discussed.

This session was facilitated by Mr. Avetik Nersisyan. He underlined the importance of the participants' active involvement in the discussion on emerging pests and understanding of the existing challenges.

Mr Nersisyan also made a presentation on FAO and its structure, mandate, goals and activities and then proceeded with presentations from the countries on emerging pests and the relevant discussions.

EPPO also made a valuable contribution. Mr Andrei Orlinski, EPPO, presented information on the EPPO Alert list – the list of emerging pests in the EPPO region or pests of potential quarantine importance. Special attention was drawn to recent additions since June 2014: [*Lycorma delicatula*](#) (Hemiptera: Fulgoridae), [*Massicus raddei*](#) (Coleoptera: Cerambycidae), [*Pseudacysta perseae*](#) (Hemiptera: Tingidae), [*Singhiella simplex*](#) (Hemiptera: Aleyrodidae), [*Thrips setosus*](#) (Thysanoptera: Thripidae), [*Meloidogyne mali*](#) (Nematoda: Meloidogynidae), [*Raffaelea lauricola*](#) (laurel wilt) and its insect vector ([*Xyleborus glabratus*](#)), [*Sirococcus tsugae*](#), [Grapevine red blotch-associated virus](#), [*Amaranthus palmeri*](#) (Amaranthaceae), [*Galenia pubescens*](#) (Aizoaceae), [*Impatiens edgeworthii*](#) (Balsaminaceae)

Mr Orlinski urged the participants to pay attention to the Alert list. Unfortunately, there's an example of the boxwood weevil that had been on the Alert list but countries paid no attention and now it's become major problem in Russia, Armenia and some other countries.

He noted that if a country wants to include a pest from the EPPO A1 or A2 list into its national list there's no need for the country to perform a PRA as it has already been performed by EPPO for the whole region.

Mr. Fedchock added that for IPPC that would be very difficult to maintain a list like EPPO's. From the technical point of view that would be perhaps possible for a top 10-pest list for a region. For this reason IPPC encourages RPPOs to maintain such lists.

Jean Perchet, EPPO, informed that in the previous week during the EPPO CPM meeting they discussed creating the priority list together with EPPO, however, before starting to develop any list of this kind, what the priority is should be defined first.

Mr Avetik Nersisyan, once again underlined the importance of exchanging information on emerging pests and encouraged the countries to get in touch and share information. He underlined the opportunities provided by FAO to countries for sharing their views through such workshops. He also informed counties about the new projects in the region and invited them to the Regional cooperation through development of new projects.

The IPPC Secretariat representatives noted that the IPPC Secretariat is ready to discuss the topics of interests of countries and take into account their views when elaborating the agenda of the future workshops. The participants were encouraged to start thinking and to share their views with the Secretariat.

Other business

Armenia proposed to include a new term into the Glossary – фитосанитария – система мероприятий, направленная на производство здоровых растений, растительных продуктов и регулируемых объектов в здоровой среде; phytosanitary – complex of measures targeted on production of healthy plants, plant products and regulated articles in the healthy environment.

Ms. Lomsadze noted that the proposal should be made under IPPC procedures and provided details of the procedure.

Evaluation of the workshop

Participants undertook the online evaluation survey of the workshop. Mr. Avetik Nersisyan encouraged the participants to make comments for improvement of the workshop.

Closing

During the closing of the Workshop Mr Sapozhnikov, VNIKR's director, expressed his hope that the Workshop participants had had a fruitful and active discussion and were satisfied with the results of work.

VNIKR had prepared certificates of participation, Mr Avetik Nersisyan, FAO, and Craig Fedchock, IPPC, VNIKR's director Aleksander Ya. Sapozhnikov signed them and presented them to the participants.

Mr Sapozhnikov expressed his wish to see the participants coming back to VNIKR and hoped that FAO and IPPC would continue having regional workshops in VNIKR, Russia.

Mr Avetik Nersisyan, FAO, thanked the participants and the hosts and closed the meeting.

Conclusions

- The participants underlined the importance of the Regional workshop as a forum for information and experience exchange;
- Agreed to collaborate in the regional projects within the FAO framework
- The participants expressed their interest in the Pilot programme on Surveillance, however underlined needs to consult their NPPOs
- Requests were made for the translation of the OCS and different technical resources into Russian.