**IPPC LIAISON/COOPERATION/PARTNERSHIP POLICY**

During the June 2012 Bureau meeting, a paper on a proposed IPPC Industry Advisory Committee was introduced by the Secretariat. The Bureau discussed how members would be selected and there was a suggestion that industry representatives could be requested to provide papers highlighting their concerns, emerging issues and challenges. It was also suggested that research and teaching organizations could be another group of stakeholders to work with when exploring different ways to cooperate with the private sector.

The Bureau:

1. *asked* the Secretariat to identify industry groups that could be approached to participate in an event, possible symposium during CPM, where industry would be able to meet with the CPM members to explore potential issues, merging challenges and look for possible synergies to help all parties achieve common solutions
2. *proposed* that a strategy should be developed prior to taking any concrete actions, in order to help develop lasting relations with industry.

When considering the broad range of organizations that could possibly be associated with the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) Secretariat, great care must be given to ensure that there is no appearance of undue influence on the activities of the IPPC, and that all activities are carried out in a transparent manner. For the purposes of this document, the following definitions from the Oxford English language dictionary will be useful: **liaison** - communication and contact between groups or units, and **liaison officer** - a person who liaises between groups or units. These definitions apply to the IPPC as personnel of the Secretariat staff frequently act as liaison between the IPPC and other organizations, be they national, international, public or private, and, staff of the IPPC engage in the act of liaison by establishing and maintaining mutual understanding.

In the majority of situations in which the IPPC liaises, the activity is focused on maintaining or enhancing mutual understanding, rather than on any specific cooperative activity. The IPPC rarely engages in cooperative activities, and only after receiving the approval of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures. In the current fiscal environment, the IPPC Secretariat recommends that more liaison activities take place, as well as more cooperation, and that these activities occur across a broader spectrum with a wider range of contacts, to include non-traditional contacts and donors such as the private sector.

The Secretariat recommends that the IPPC pursue a strategy of engaging in more partnerships that are consistent with the four strategic objectives defined in the new IPPC Strategic Framework. Aligning this strategy with the new IPPC strategic objectives will broaden the number of potential partners as many aspects of the new strategic framework have not been as clearly defined before. Partnerships engage stakeholders in collective action based on shared objectives. The goal is to achieve more together than would be possible alone, and to improve the effectiveness of the results generated. The Secretariat considers the development of partnerships to be an important way of providing effective support to contracting parties in the future, and seeks support in identifying potential partnerships in traditional and non-traditional areas.

It is important to remember that partnerships can range from informal, flexible arrangements to highly defined relationships based on the full sharing of risks, resources and responsibilities. The characteristics and complexity of these partnerships depends on the organizations involved, as well as the objectives, duration and scope of the collaboration in question. Sometimes, partnerships are accompanied by new financing and/or legal arrangements. The types of organizations with which the IPPC may interact should not be limited to any specific form. Full consideration should be given by the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures and the IPPC Secretariat, if the circumstances are appropriate, to developing new partnerships with national, regional, international and global organizations, public and private.

The Secretariat requests comments from the SPG on a possible long term strategy for the pursuit of appropriate partnerships within the parameters identified above, and suggestions for the development of a CPM approved policy which would provide a legal framework and clear guidance on developing partnerships.