

Official Contact Points: advantages and possible consequences

Advantages of keeping the OCP's contact details up to date

- ◆ The important communications from the Secretariat regarding country consultations, workshops, invitations to meetings, calls for experts, etc. are received instantly by email.
- ◆ It facilitates cooperation and coordination between countries as they can officially contact one another to communicate phytosanitary information.
- ◆ It is clear who should be addressed in each country in case of enquiries on import phytosanitary requirements and in emergency cases when consignments are blocked at the border.
- ◆ It facilitates trade and market access building trust in bilateral relationships between countries.
- ◆ An efficient and functional OCP can be an indication of a successful and efficiently functioning Contracting Party to the Convention.
- ◆ It contributes to the protection of cultivated and wild plants by preventing the introduction and spread of pests increasing the protection of the world's biodiversity and food security.
- ◆ It improves transparency, timeliness and quality of information provided.

Possible consequences of not keeping the OCP's contact details up to date

- ◆ Important communications from the Secretariat are not received.
- ◆ It can isolate countries and prevent them from fully participating in and benefitting from interaction with the international plant protection community.
- ◆ It will indirectly affect trade, food security and the protection of cultivated plants and the environment.
- ◆ It can lead to a loss of or reduction of trust between trading countries.
- ◆ It could lead to unwarranted protective measures as the OCP cannot be contacted resulting in lengthy trade negotiations and limited market access.
- ◆ Not meeting any reporting obligations may be perceived by some countries as a possible attempt to hide phytosanitary issues from trading partners or neighbours.

A substantial amount of background information on meeting NROs is available on the IPPC website at: <https://www.ippc.int/en/core-activities/information-exchange/nro/>.

Where technical assistance and/or capacity development is needed to meet their national reporting obligations, contracting parties should contact ippc@fao.org.



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