TC-RPPO

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Paris, France

ENGAGEMENT OF REGIONAL PLANT PROTECTION ORGANIZATIONS  
IN THE IPPC STANDARD SETTING PROCESS

(Prepared by the IPPC Secretariat)

Introduction

The International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) promotes cooperation between contracting parties (CPs) to achieve the goals of the IPPC. A key role in the cooperation is played by regional plant protection organizations (RPPOs). The purpose of the paper is to identify areas where the engagement of RPPOs in the standard setting process could be strengthened and to suggest possible options to do so.

Roles of RPPOs

According to the CPM-12 (2017) decision on the roles and functions of regional plant protection organizations (RPPOs) in their relationship with the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM)[[1]](#footnote-1), areas of cooperation between RPPOs and the IPPC Secretariat in the standard setting process include the following:

* participation in the development of standards, such as identifying topics for standards and providing comments during the consultation periods;
* identification of regional standards that should be proposed as the basis for future ISPMs;
* action as collaborators and assistance in hosting standard setting meetings, as appropriate;
* preparation of draft explanatory documents on ISPMs according to paragraph 111 of the Report of the Sixth Session of the ICPM under the auspices of the IPPC Secretariat;
* provision of technical and administrative support to Standards Committee members;
* Participation of RPPO observers in the Standards Committee meetings.

RPPOs should cooperate between them and with the IPPC Secretariat on activities in the standard setting process, as set out in Art. IX of the IPPC and further detailed in the IPPC Procedure Manual for Standard Setting[[2]](#footnote-2). The following are of key importance for the engagement of RPPOs in the standard setting process:

1. RPPOs play an important role by **setting regional standards** for phytosanitary measures. These provide a platform for the regional cooperation between national plant protection organizations (NPPOs), for the regional harmonization of phytosanitary measures and serve as a basis for discussions on draft international standards. As they address the issues of regional relevance, it helps the IPPC Secretariat focus on global issues.
2. RPPOs should actively engage in various stages of the standard setting procedure for the drafting of standards such as submitting proposals for new topics for revisions to standards or new standards, providing comments to draft specifications and draft ISPMs, participating in Standards Committee (SC) meetings as observers. Their engagement helps to ensure that regional aspects are taken into consideration.

RPPOs should support the nomination of SC members and of expert working group members.

**Nominations of members for the Standards Committee (SC)**

According to the Rules of Procedure for the SC, the FAO regional chair[[3]](#footnote-3) is to submit nominations for SC members, which may at times provide for a lengthy and complex procedure. However, each FAO region may devise its own procedures (i.e. not through the FAO regional chair). In fact, some regions have set up a procedure where, once the nominations are agreed upon regionally, they are submitted by the head of the RPPO or by the CPM Bureau member from the region, copying the FAO regional chair, allowing for a fast, straightforward and well-coordinated process.

In the regions where there is not such a fast-track process, RPPOs may consider having a coordinating function in the nomination process for SC members.

SC meetings preparation

RPPOs should help coordinate the regional preparation for SC meetings. RPPOs may also submit discussion papers to SC meetings and are encouraged to communicate regularly with SC members from their region to ensure that the views presented are shared by countries across the region. Having RPPOs coordinating the positions of the countries in the region allows for more experts to provide input into the issues to be discussed during SC meetings; this may lead to the preparation of more solid regional positions to be presented by the SC members of the region.

In addition, each RPPO may request to send an observer to the SC meeting (SC-7 meetings do not allow observers).

Submitting topics for International standards for phytosanitary measures (ISPMs)[[4]](#footnote-4)

In response to the biennial call for topics, RPPOs may submit proposals for new topics or for the revision of existing ISPMs. RPPOs may submit proposals for phytosanitary treatments, providing all the supporting data needed, when calls for phytosanitary treatments are made[[5]](#footnote-5). When RPPOs do not wish to submit topics directly, they may facilitate or aid the submission made by CPs. RPPOs may also influence the topics being proposed by supporting specific topics, as, to indicate a global need for the proposed topic, submitters are encouraged to gain support from CPs and RPPOs in other regions. This could also help the situation where some regions do not submit any proposal for topics (as has been the case in the past), and which may result in standards that do not reflect the needs of all regions.

RPPOs may play an important role in:

* encouraging NPPOs from their region to submit proposals for topics;
* coordinating submissions for topics at the regional level and submitting proposals for topics;
* Coordinating the inter-regional support for topic submissions.

Drafting of standards

Once the SC has approved a draft specification for consultation, the IPPC Secretariat solicits comments through the Online Comment System (OCS). RPPOs are encouraged to provide comments during the consultation and they may coordinate at the regional level the submission of comments from NPPOs.

When the IPPC Secretariat launches calls for experts to take part in expert working groups (EWG) or in technical panels (TPs), RPPOs are encouraged to invite NPPOs from their regions to nominate experts to become members of the EWGs. RPPOs may also coordinate nominations of experts at the regional level and submit nominations to the IPPC Secretariat.

Even when a region is not represented in the EWG or TP, the RPPO and the CPs of the region are encouraged to submit discussion papers on the subject of the draft ISPM to the EWG or TP to provide a regional viewpoint and share experience.

RPPOs are encouraged to host meetings of the expert drafting groups (EWGs or TPs), especially if issues that the draft ISPM should deal with are relevant for the region or the CP (see document 11\_TC-RPPO\_2017\_Nov Opportunities for hosting IPPC Standard setting meetings).

Consultation and review

RPPOs are encouraged to provide comments on draft ISPMs during consultations. They may coordinate at the regional level the submission of comments from NPPOs; for instance, they can organise technical coordination meetings or workshops for the CPs of the region to discuss draft ISPMs under consultation.

Translations

Representatives from CPs and RPPOs may form a Language Review Group (LRG) and, following the CPM-agreed LRG process, may propose modifications to translations of adopted ISPMs. RPPOs are encouraged to take an active part in the LRG process.

RPPOs may support standard setting activities and the objectives of the Convention by providing translations of supporting documentation or outreach materials under co-publishing agreements (e.g. explanatory documents, brochures, factsheets). The translations may be into any language, including the official FAO languages.

A tentative list of resources that would benefit from translation in FAO languages is provided in Annex 1.

General support

In the past, RPPOs have supported the organization of CPM sessions and similar support could be provided to SC or expert drafting group meetings, by supplying human resources for some time to work with the IPPC Secretariat on tasks such as drafting meeting reports, in-session track changing, document handling, and so on. This would provide for an excellent opportunity for RPPO staff to increase their knowledge about the working procedures of the IPPC Secretariat and expose them to international high level or technical meetings.

IPPC regional workshops and TC-RPPO

IPPC regional workshops and Technical Consultation of RPPOs (TC-RPPOs) may also provide a good opportunity for RPPOs to discuss issues related to the nominations or to development of specifications and standards.

RPPOs are invited to:

1. *discuss* the points above;
2. *discuss* the possible benefits and challenges of regional processes coordinated by RPPOs;
3. *consider* ways to strengthen further the engagement of RPPOs in the IPPC Standard setting process for instance with regards to the nomination of SC members, the preparation of SC meetings, the submission of proposals for new topics, the drafting of standards, the consultation and review of draft standards, the translation of standard setting documents and outreach material, and to general support of the standard setting work programme.
4. *Identify* which RPPO will attend the 2018 SC meetings.

Annex 1: Tentative list of resources that would benefit from translation in FAO languages

Current Standard setting documents and outreach material that should be translated into all FAO languages for broader distribution are listed below. In addition to this list, the Standard setting unit may produce other brochures and factsheets in the future (also based on feedback from stakeholders).

The material provides insights into the Standard setting work and helps IPPC stakeholders engage better in the Standard setting process by explaining procedures or providing useful guidance. Part of the material advocates for standard setting in a plant health context and explains the benefits of international harmonization. By translating the documents into other languages, the material will be able to be distributed more broadly and used more extensively.

BROCHURES AND FACTSHEETS

Standard setting unit at a glance (updated yearly): <https://www.ippc.int/static/media/files/publication/en/2017/10/Factsheet_2016-SSU_At_A_Glance_2017-03-14.pdf> *(Currently available only in English.)*

Brochure on Introduction to the Standard setting process: <https://www.ippc.int/static/media/files/publication/en/2017/07/brochure_introtoippc-ssp.pdf> *(Currently available only in English.)*

Factsheet on Introduction to the Standard setting process: <https://www.ippc.int/static/media/files/publication/en/2016/12/FactSheets_IntrotoIPPC-SSP_W.pdf> *(Currently available only in English.)*

Brochure on Introduction to phytosanitary terminology: <https://www.ippc.int/static/media/uploads/web_ippc_ispm5_e_170216.pdf> *(Currently available in English and Spanish – the latter yet to be published.)*

Factsheet on ePhyto: <https://www.ippc.int/static/media/files/publication/2017/07/10/factsheet_ePhyto.pdf> *(Currently available only in English.)*

Factsheet on the ISPM on the International movement of grain: <https://www.ippc.int/static/media/files/publication/2017/07/10/factsheet_IMG.pdf> *(Currently available only in English.)*

EXPLANATORY DOCUMENTS

Explanatory document for ISPM 15 *(Regulation of wood packaging material in international trade)* (Currently available in English, French and Spanish – the latter yet to be published.)

Explanatory document for ISPM 17 (Pest reporting). (Currently available only in English.)

Explanatory document for ISPM 18 *(Guidelines for the use of irradiation as a phytosanitary measure)*. This explanatory document will need to be revised in the future to be aligned with the future revision of the ISPM, currently on the List of topics for IPPC standards. *(Currently available only in English.)*

Explanatory document for ISPM 20 *(Guidelines for a phytosanitary import regulatory system).* This explanatory document should be revised to be aligned with the revised version of ISPM from 2016). *(Currently available only in English.)*

Explanatory document for ISPM 31 *(Methodologies for sampling of consignments). (Currently available only in English.)*

OTHERS, INCLUDING PROCEDURAL DOCUMENTS OR TRAINING MATERIAL

Standards Committee Terms of reference and Rules of procedure (updated by the IPPC Secretariat following CPM-11): <https://www.ippc.int/static/media/files/publication/2017/07/31/TORs_and_ROPs_Standards_Committee_2017-07-31.pdf> *(Currently available in English with all changes but CPM-11 adopted version available in all languages in CPM report.)*

Standards Committee - Good practices for participation in meetings: <https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/82802/> *(Currently available only in English.)*

OCS, Frequently asked questions: <https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/82623/> *(Currently available only in English.)*

OCS user manual: <https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/82350/> *(Currently available in English, French and Spanish.)*

New OCS short guide: <https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/84379/> *(Currently available only in English.)*

NEWS ITEMS

How a “simple” IPPC search tool may help the phytosanitary treatments worldwide: <https://www.ippc.int/en/news/how-a-simple-ippc-search-tool-may-help-the-phytosanitary-treatments-worldwide/> (posted in English in October, 2017)

## Trading healthy seeds to ensure a healthy future: <https://www.ippc.int/en/news/trading-healthy-seeds-to-ensure-a-healthy-future/> (posted in English in March, 2017)

## Focus on the oriental fruit fly’s impact on international trade: <https://www.ippc.int/en/news/focus-on-the-oriental-fruit-flys-impact-on-international-trade/> (posted in English in January, 2017)

1. CPM-12 Report (Appendix 09): <https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/84387/> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Link to the 2016/2017 Procedure Manual for Standard Setting: <https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/82931/> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Link to the list of Chairpersons of FAO regions (FAO intranet link): <http://intranet.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/csc/CSCP/Chairs_and_ViceChairs_22_Sept_2017_.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Based on section 2. of the Procedure Manual: IPPC Standard Setting Procedure [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The call for phytosanitary treatments is currently open: <https://www.ippc.int/en/core-activities/standards-setting/calls-treatments/> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)