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للأمم المتحدة

# COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

## Fourteenth Session

Rome, 1-5 April 2019

### Report from the CPM Chairperson

### Agenda item 6

### Prepared by the CPM Chairperson

1. Participating in the last 12 meetings of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) has given me a clear appreciation of the paramount importance of what CPM delivers to agriculture, the economy and the environment; and how its results have contributed to nine UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The relevance of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) also cannot be questioned. In times of trade globalization, the adoption of international standards that 183 contracting parties have agreed on after sound discussion, is the only possible mechanism for balancing international trade and appropriate levels of protection. The standard setting process takes place thanks to the commitment of NPPOs that allocate time and share invaluable expertise. The IPPC has created a legal framework as well as a practical mechanism to create global standards that makes trade possible, while safeguarding the phytosanitary security of importing countries. It is easy for the National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs) to understand this, but may be more challenging for general audiences to understand. Fortunately, thanks to various events that will take place during the International Year of Plant Health (IYPH) in 2020, it will become clearer to a wide range of international trade actors.

2. The IYPH is a unique opportunity for bringing the key messages of the IPPC to every type of audience. Every effort that CPM employs in the forthcoming months is a unique opportunity to call the world's attention to our endeavors and deliverables. Many actors have earned credit for the work that resulted in the IYPH proclamation made by the United Nations General Assembly last December 2018. However, the highest merit mainly goes to two recipients: the Government of Finland and our former CPM chairperson Mr Ralf Lopian. We should also acknowledge the excellent support provided by the IPPC IYPH Steering Committee and the IPPC Secretariat in making this event happen. I invite the CPM members to enthusiastically thank them for their successful work.

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3. Since 2018, the IPPC's efforts have made it possible for any contracting party to make use of electronic phytosanitary certification. Many benefits will come from this. One of them is the possibility to increase security measures against suspicious actors. This technology allows for transparency and certainty when communicating legal requirements established by importing countries. This enhances phytosanitary control and increases participation in international trade. Launching this practical product is a milestone that comes after years of conceptual and methodological discussion. Many participants have given many hours of their great talent and capacity. Someone who deserves individual recognition is Mr Shane Sela, whose contribution was also made possible through the strategic and generous support of the Canadian NPPO.

4. The need for commodity and pathway standards has generally been accepted by representatives from all FAO regions. Examples of commodity and pathway standards already exist in ISPMs. Once conceptual standards as proposed by the CPM Focus Group on commodity and pathway standards have been developed and implemented, this approach for ISPMs is expected to strike a balance between the binding obligations of trade facilitation and phytosanitary protection. There is the clear recognition that NPPOs will not lose sovereignty in determining the appropriate level of protection. The decision to be made by CPM-14 on whether to embrace or postpone the development of concept standards for commodities and pathways will greatly affect the work and relevance of CPM in the future.

5. The CPM has the unique responsibility of addressing phytosanitary risks that individual Contracting Parties (CPs) cannot tackle successfully on their own. Two of these risks are associated with organisms that can travel freely on the ever increasing number of sea containers travelling in routes that are more diverse and complex each year. Another risk is the huge number of parcels that travel from country to country through electronic trade. Some items inside these boxes travelling internationally pose phytosanitary risks. These two risks are on the current agenda of the bodies attached to CPM.

6. The newly established Implementation and Capacity Development Committee (IC) captures the many years of experience of the Capacity Development Committee (CDC). The IC is a body designed to match the deliverables of the Standards Committee (SC). It has the big advantage of having Mr Brent Larson fresh from a remarkable success story coordinating the SC. The IC is a complex body with diverse tasks. Thankfully, it has a highly experienced and energetic chairperson and vice-chairperson. I make a plea for generosity in channeling any sort of support from NPPOs to the various groups involved in implementation.

7. The structure of the Secretariat has reached a solid stage and has had very satisfactory outcomes. The leading role of young experts in technical, administrative and communications areas has allowed the Secretariat to become a fundamental actor and meet its deliverables. For instance, transparency in budget operations is a much-appreciated achievement. The IPPC Secretariat's Work Plan and Budget for 2020 provides IPPC CPs with an accurate and informative financial report. The management of the IPPC Secretariat's financial resources is sound and transparent, which in-turn increased the overall trust IPPC CPs have in the IPPC Secretariat. The improvement in the quality and outreach of IPPC communications is visible. The Online Commenting System (OCS) was used by a record of 91 IPPC contracting parties and partners in 2018.

8. My last comment is this: in 2019 let us focus on the contributions that each NPPO can offer to ensure IYPH celebrations lead to great visibility and support from all the audiences that we touch with our outcomes.