



# **REPORT**

## **STRATEGIC PLANNING GROUP (SPG) MEETING**

**VIRTUAL MEETING  
8-9 OCTOBER 2020**

**IPPC SECRETARIAT**

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## 1. Opening of the Meeting

- [1] Mr Lucien KOUAME KONAN, Chairperson of the Strategic Planning Group (SPG), welcomed all participants to the SPG ninth session and gave the floor to Mr Jingyuan XIA, former IPPC Secretary and newly appointed Director of the Plant Production and Protection Division (NSP).
- [2] Mr Jingyuan XIA deliver his remarks, thanking the IPPC community for the outstanding work delivered during the past five years. He recalled the first SPG meeting he attended in 2015, during which the suggestion for annual themes to promote the IPPC work was first launched. Mr XIA listed the several successes that led to today stronger IPPC community and Secretariat, with over thirty staff members. The newly appointed NSP director encouraged all SPG participants to provide meaningful contributions during the current session as many IPPC successes started during such sessions. He mentioned the International year of Plant Health (IYPH) and its legacy, such as the International Day of Plant Health (IDPH) that was endorsed by the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) of FAO one week before the current SPG meeting.
- [3] Mr XIA concluded by underlining how the SPG is the think tank of the IPPC, constantly innovating for the future, and noted that the IPPC community is at a crucial crossroads with the challenge of implementing the IPPC Strategic Framework 2020 – 2030 and its development agenda during the next ten years. He underlined the importance of a clear and strong communication strategy, encouraging the SPG participants to continue organising events on plant health and the importance of IPPC work at the global level.

## 2. Meeting Arrangements

### 2.1. Adoption of the Agenda

- [4] The Chairperson introduced the agenda, asking for any editions or additions. The United States of America proposed two additional agenda items for discussion:
- update of the SPG terms of reference, to be added under Any Other Business; and
  - roundtable discussion on SPG agenda items and to summarise main strategic points from the meeting for consideration of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM).
- [5] Mr Javier TRUJILLO ARRIAGA (CPM Chairperson) proposed the following additions to be discussed under Any Other Business:
- the role of the IPPC community in the process of appointment of the new IPPC Secretary and IPPC Secretariat positioning in the new FAO structure; and
  - update on IPPC community actions against COVID-19.
- [6] The SPG Chairperson noted no objections regarding the proposed additions and included them in the provisional Agenda, which was adopted and is attached to this report as [Annex 1](#).

## 2.2. Election of the Rapporteur

- [7] Mr KOUAME KONAN (SPG Chairperson) asked for volunteers to be nominated as Rapporteur at the current SPG session. Mr Javier TRUJILLO ARRIAGA (CPM Chairperson) proposed to nominate Mr Marco TRAA (Netherlands). The SPG Chairperson noted the proposal and Mr TRAA's acceptance of the role, which was seconded by Ms Marica GATT (CPM Bureau member for Europe).
- [8] Mr Marco TRAA (Netherlands) was appointed Rapporteur at this meeting.

## 3. Administrative Matters

### 3.1. Document lists

- [9] The Document list was introduced and is attached to this report as [Annex 2](#).

### 3.2. Participants list

- [10] The Participant list was introduced and is attached to this report as [Annex 3](#).

## 4. Advancing work on IPPC Development Agendas 2020-2030

- [11] Mr Peter THOMSON (CPM Bureau member for South West Pacific) expressed appreciation for the opportunity to present topics for the discussion on the IPPC development agenda items and summarised the main issues for the SPG discussion. He specified that the IPPC Strategic Framework 2020 – 2030 was approved but not yet endorsed by CPM, further specifying that it covers a ten-year period. He noted the importance to address all development agenda items strategically and that substantial work had already been carried out on three of the eight points.
- [12] Mr THOMSON suggested a focused or staged implementation of the IPPC SF 2020 – 2030 as such an approach may allow to deliver better results. He invited the SPG to discuss whether the IPPC community and Secretariat may focus on the five development agenda items that the IPPC Secretariat has already commenced working on and delivered substantial work or implement all the development agenda items simultaneously.
- [13] Mr Ralf LOPIAN (Finland) welcomed the paper from Mr THOMSON, adding that CPM guidance is also welcome when it comes to the IPPC SF 2020 – 2030 implementation. He noted that the IPPC Secretariat and community are developing an implementation plan for each agenda item with relevant milestones to be reached during the ten-year implementation period. He concluded by recommending an approach that may include all development agenda items implemented at the same time with detailed plans indicating major milestones to achieve within a precise timeline and with adequate allocated resources. Mr LOPIAN suggested these plans be drafted as soon as the next CPM adopts the IPPC SF 2020 – 2030 and also the establishment of small focus groups for the drafting of such implementation plan.

- [14] Mr Osama EL-LISSY (United States of America) suggested to avoid simultaneous implementation due to resource constraints, deducing a strong need for priorities in the development agenda items to tackle. He also suggested that the SPG may provide a rank of priorities, suggesting assigning the highest priority to ePhyto, e-commerce and commodity standards. Mr EL-LISSY shared additional views on the current digital transformation of the economies also due to the current pandemic, inviting the SPG to reflect on the mid and long-term consequences of the ongoing transformations.
- [15] Mr Greg WOLFF (Canada) supported the approach proposed by the United States of America, stressing the importance of a clear implementation plan, which outlines expected strategies and resource usage in the near term as well as expected approaches over a ten-year span, including yearly implementation reviews.
- [16] Ms Olga LAVRANTJEVA (Chairperson of the Implementation and Capacity Development Committee) thanked Mr THOMSON for the paper, clarifying she agrees with setting priorities. Ms LAVRANTJEVA reminded the SPG that the Implementation and Capacity Development Committee (IC) has been providing inputs for the implementation priorities to the IPPC community on the SF 2020 – 2030, inviting the SPG to note the IC contributions.
- [17] The IPPC Secretariat supported the document presented, clarifying that a clear implementation plan is an extremely good tool to assess the available and missing resources as well as to define potential resource mobilisation strategies for all the development agenda items.
- [18] The SPG:
- (1) *Agreed* to establish a focus group to propose a structured continuation of the discussion on the potential need to prioritise the IPPC Strategic Framework 2020 – 2030 development agenda items during the next SPG meeting.
  - (2) *Underlined* the importance of developing an implementation plan for all IPPC Strategic Framework 2020 – 2030 development agenda items containing clear milestones, a feasible timeline, a monitor and evaluation framework and adequate allocations in terms of budget and staff, which may be used for resource mobilisation purposes.

#### **4.1. Commodity - and pathway - specific ISPMs**

- [19] Mr Avetik NERSISYAN (IPPC Secretariat Officer-in-Charge) introduced the paper on Commodity and pathway Standard, indicating it is a new direction for the IPPC Secretariat but also community. He underlined how this tool may prove crucial in future IPPC communication, advocacy, partnerships and collaboration. He explained that the process is under way to develop the standard and that the IPPC Standards Committee (SC) already selected stewards.

- [20] The SPG entertained a discussion on the topic and agreed that the Commodity Standards represents an extremely positive innovation for the IPPC community, recognising the excellent work delivered by the Focus Group. Several SPG participants suggested to start with one commodity and draw from experience in certain regions, where this type of standards already exist, such as – but not limited to – the standard on mango in the Asia and Pacific Plant Protection Commission (APPPC), on which a regional workshop will focus on. New Zealand further specified that participation may be broadened to the entire IPPC community as the workshop is likely to happen through virtual means.
- [21] An SPG participant raised some concerns on paragraph 28 of the document concerning the definition and involvement of partnerships and networks for the commodity standards as this ISPM will still follow the standard setting procedure, which already regulates the participation by various stakeholders. Several SPG members agreed that the involvement of other stakeholders may be beneficial while noting that their participation must abide the IPPC text.
- [22] Mr Peter THOMSON (CPM Bureau member for South West Pacific) provided a brief overview of the paper drafted by New Zealand<sup>1</sup> on this topic, highlighting the general support for the IPPC community to proceed with the development of such standards while drawing from similar experiences in different regions. He commented that commodity standards have the potential to significantly benefit developing countries and facilitate trade among all IPPC contracting parties as well as reduce the resources required to conduct PRA and identify suitable phytosanitary measures for bilateral agreement, amongst other things.
- [23] The SPG:
- (3) *Suggested* that the IPPC community adopt a cautious approach in developing the commodity standards and recommended to use existing and future experiences to move this process further, particularly from the regional initiatives or by selecting one commodity as a potential model for future reference.
  - (4) *Suggested* to focus the standard on commodities and not on pathways.

#### **4.2. Developing guidance on the use of third-party entities**

- [24] The IPPC Secretariat introduced the paper<sup>2</sup> summarizing the proposed and planned activities related to developing guidance on the use of third-party entities. He explained that the process is at the last stages to develop the standard on the topic, and the CPM Bureau suggested to move forward and submitting it for adoption, notwithstanding that some contracting parties raised some concern. The IPPC Secretariat

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<sup>1</sup> 10\_SPG\_2020\_Oct

<sup>2</sup> 14\_SPG\_2020\_Oct

informed the SPG about the organization of a webinar on this topic, extending an invitation to all participants. Webinar (all invited) and desk study and guides will be developed once the standard is adopted.

[25] The SPG welcomed the discussion and focused its attention on the usefulness of the scoping study in the IPPC Implementation Review and Support System (IRSS). Several SPG participants presented cases in which this authorisation system is already present while noting how beneficial it can be for certain countries with limited capacity or constraints.

[26] Other SPG participants discussed the opportunity of scope for the IRSS study and raised some concerns regarding the role of such third-party entities, which may cause such as conflict of interest, testing confidence and capability as well as reliability in terms of equipment and sustainability of the relationship with such parties.

[27] The SPG agreed that the IPPC Secretariat may continue developing the necessary guiding material as well as seeking guidance from IPPC governing and subsidiary bodies on this matter to provide the IPPC community with the best evidence and support for countries that may wish to implement such a system.

[28] IPPC Secretariat thanked all SPG participants for their insightful inputs and provided clarifications regarding some of the aforementioned issues, also adding that SPG guidance is being sought as well while other answers may be provided by the IRSS study results, which will be published very soon. IPPC Secretariat also shared the information on the webinar, extending an invitation to SPG participants with the kind request to share it broadly in their respective networks, which is taking place on the 20 October 2020 12.00-14.00 (GMT+2 Rome time) and will be discussing the concept of authorization of entities to perform phytosanitary actions. The IPPC Secretariat further added that the Committee of the Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Agreement scheduled a similar webinar on 9 November 2020<sup>3</sup>, discussing voluntary third-party accreditation.

[29] The SPG:

(5) *Acknowledged* the general support for the standard but also a strong request for additional information and discussion on this sensitive topic.

(6) *Welcomed* the initiative by the IPPC Secretariat to organise a webinar on third-party authorisation on the 20 October 2020 12.00-14.00 (CET).

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<sup>3</sup> More information at <https://www.ippc.int/en/work-area-pages/workshops-and-experts-meeting/ippc-webinar-enhancing-the-understanding-of-the-concept-on-authorization-of-entities-to-perform-phytosanitary-actions>

(7) *Thanked* the IPPC Secretariat for offering to share and present relevant information on this matter as it becomes available voluntarily.

(8) *Agreed* that partnership and network is not to be included in the development agenda.

### **4.3. Diagnostic laboratory networking**

[30] The IPPC Secretariat introduced the paper<sup>4</sup> summarising the proposed and planned activities related to developing guidance on the Diagnostic laboratory networking, explaining that the paper contained the ideas of the Technical Panel on Diagnostic Protocols (TPDP) and not to be regarded as a developed plan. She highlighted that the nature of the agenda item (developing an international network) requires some time to be established, despite recognising that this development agenda item may be considered a high priority but still requiring work as all the others. The IPPC Secretariat informed the SPG that the TPDP proposed a diagnostician workshop to be held but the current global sanitary crisis has not allowed it to take place just yet and she clarified that the presented budget come from the five-year investment plan, but there is no resource allocation at the moment, inviting the SPG to provide guidance on resource mobilisation.

[31] The SPG noted that the needs for laboratory capacities vary greatly at the global level and suggested a step-by-step approach in identifying the requirements at the regional level before implementing a global initiative. Several SPG participants highlighted the need to list the country's requirements as a first step to begin planning the implementation of a diagnostic network while compiling a list of existing laboratories and their respective expertise, making use of the capillary spread of information technology and communication tools also as a result of the current COVID-19 pandemic, noting that this tool may be of high interest of national plant protection organizations (NPPOs). The SPG also agreed to apply a ten-year-span approach for this development agenda item and further suggested to add this item in the SC-IC collaboration framework.

[32] The SPG:

(9) *Agreed* to adopt a step-by-step approach in the implementation of the diagnostic laboratory networking.

(10) *Welcomed* any initiative to share additional information that may support the better definition of the steps to follow in the implementation of the diagnostic laboratory networking.

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<sup>4</sup> 17\_SPG\_2020\_Oct

- (11) *Suggested* the IPPC Secretariat to compile a list of existing laboratories and their respective expertise as well as the country primary requirements.
- (12) *Recognised* the importance of this initiative, which may provide great support to NPPOs in terms of expertise, equipment and capacity development.

#### **4.4. Harmonization of electronic data exchange**

- [33] The IPPC Secretariat introduced the paper on harmonization of electronic data exchange, noting that this has already been accomplished through the ePhyto platform. He suggested two main issues for SPG discussion, namely a technical conversation regarding potential enhancements and additional versioning (different technologies and/or mobile adaptation, amongst others), concluding that the main point would be SPG recommendations on financial sustainability options.
- [34] Mr Peter THOMSON (CPM Bureau member for South West Pacific) discussed the three main points for SPG discussion of the paper drafted by New Zealand on ePhyto, which referred to further implementing the ePhyto solution, suggestions for sustainable funding and governance of ePhyto platform.
- [35] The SPG welcomed the ePhyto initiative, which marked a key innovation for the entire IPPC community, and commended the IPPC Secretariat for its implementation, particularly Mr Craig FEDCHOK (ePhyto director). Several SPG participants noted that a discussion on the ePhyto governance is necessary and asked the IPPC Secretariat to coordinate the dialogue amongst all stakeholders, highlighting that the IPPC regular programme budget should not fund the ePhyto platform, the IPPC Secretariat and ePhyto governance should remain separate and that more commitment by countries may be necessary to ensure its sustainable funding.
- [36] The SPG discussed the opportunity to establish a small focus group to analyse all said issues and that may also look into technical aspects related to both the ePhyto technological component as well as its stakeholders, such as the ePhyto Steering Group (ESG) and their potential involvement in both the focus group and as donors to establish a sustainable funding mechanism.
- [37] The IPPC Secretariat suggested that interested parties reach out to the ePhyto Director to set up an informal Zoom discussion on how best to proceed with the approach to governance and other issues raised in the SPG discussion.
- [38] The SPG:
- (13) *Commended* the work of the IPPC Secretariat for its implementation, particularly Mr Craig FEDCHOK (ePhyto director).

- (14) *Suggested* the establishment of a small focus group that includes also the ePhyto stakeholders to discuss the issue of expanding ePhyto applications both in terms of implementation and technical advancements, its governance and sustainable funding options.

#### **4.5. Management of e-commerce and postal and courier pathways**

- [39] The IPPC Secretariat presented the paper which provided a brief history of IPPC activities related to e-Commerce, an update of on-going activities in the e-Commerce programme, and discussed possible future activities and budget considerations.
- [40] The SPG stressed that e-Commerce has emerged as an important new pest pathway and is continuing to trend upwards during the pandemic, noting that distribution systems are changing to meet the demand of consumers and the challenge to screen and prevent the unauthorized entry of regulated goods, which could cause the spread of pests, continues to increase. He stressed the need to focus on e-Commerce and suggested the formation of a Task Force, modelled on the Sea Containers Task Force.
- [41] Several SPG participants agreed that e-Commerce is an important issue that has been brought to the forefront by the pandemic and by the recent brushing scam, amongst other recent events. The IPPC Secretariat noted the close linkages with e-Phyto, particularly the emphasis on speed while helping to ensure safe trade, and suggested closer engagement between these two topics.
- [42] The IPPC Secretariat reminded the SPG that the e-Commerce programme is under the oversight of the Implementation and Capacity Development Committee (IC). The IC Lead for e-Commerce noted that he was only recently appointed to work on e-Commerce and suggested that the establishment of a more formal group to support this work could be considered again when other activities have progressed further. The Secretariat encouraged interested participants to join the informal network of e-Commerce experts, in the meantime. The IC Chair suggested that the IC be asked to consider whether an IC-Team or an IC-Subgroup on e-Commerce would be most appropriate.
- [43] Several SPG participants and the Chair of the Financial Committee (FC) noted the importance of reviewing the budget. One member noted that this review should help ensure that there are no financial barriers that would prevent developing countries from participating. The IPPC Secretariat noted that all NPPO are invited to identify a representative to participate in the informal e-Commerce network and to submit nominations to participate in the working group that will be tasked with developing the e-Commerce Guide and that both of these groups are expected to be virtual.
- [44] The SPG:
- (15) *Noted* the ongoing and proposed activities related to the e-Commerce programme.

(16) *Thanked* Canada for providing the necessary support to continue the work on e-Commerce

(17) *Recommended* that the Implementation and Capacity Development Committee consider the best approach to address the issues related to e-Commerce.

(18) *Requested* the IPPC Secretariat to review the e-Commerce programme budget in light of COVID-19 and the funding received, and recommended whether additional co-funding arrangements are needed.

#### **4.6. Strengthening pest outbreak alert and response systems**

[45] The IPPC Secretariat presented the paper providing a brief overview of IPPC activities related to emergencies situation, emerging pests and pest outbreak alert and response systems as well as an update of on-going activities of the dedicated programme.

[46] The SPG welcomed the approach taken by the IPPC Secretariat of learning lessons from systems in place, of building connections with FAO activities and with what regions and countries have set, considering the approach very encouraging and considered very appropriate to analyse existing tools and systems. The SPG advocated for the development of an accurate system whereby the IPPC Secretariat would find its place, emphasising the importance of the Focus Group providing guidance on this topic.

[47] The IPPC Secretariat clarified that the Terms of Reference (ToRs) of the CPM Focus Group for “Strengthening Pest Outbreak Alert and Response Systems” had been reviewed by the CPM Bureau and that a call was opened on the IPP until the 15th of November. The SPG noted that strengthening the overall phytosanitary capacities at the country level is necessary prior to act at the national or regional level, welcoming the future setting of the CPM Focus Group and considered which pests should be dealt with at the global level in the frame of this programme, and on how to divide functions in between FAO and the IPPC Secretariat, such as the case of *Spodoptera frugiperda* (Fall Armyworm).

[48] The SPG concluded that this programme encompasses two aspects: alert systems, recalling that existing systems exist within the Convention and on the IPP which require continued improvement, and response systems, which are complex and require synergies with other entities, expressing favourably on considering how to leverage other resources over long term and to identify the most efficient way to tackle this new work.

[49] The SPG:

(19) *Noted* the update and ongoing activities on the Development Agenda “Strengthening Pest Outbreak Alert and Response Systems”.

(20) *Congratulated* the IPPC Secretariat for the work delivered so far.

(21) *Urged* the IPPC Secretariat to finalise the establishment of the CPM Focus Group for “Strengthening Pest Outbreak Alert and Response Systems”

(22) *Asked* the IPPC Secretariat to liaise with relevant stakeholders to foster synergy on this matter.

#### **4.7. Assessment and management of climate change impacts on plant health**

[50] The IPPC Secretariat introduced the paper on climate change impacts on plant health, providing a background on the urgency of accelerating climate action in the United Nation System, specifying that climate change has a significant impact on plant health, especially through the possible expansion of pest distribution, incidence and intensity, and changes in pest epidemiology and life cycle, recalling the goal defined in the IPPC Strategic Framework 2020-2030 being that by 2030, the impacts of climate change on plant health and the safe trade of plants and plant products are evaluated on a regular basis, especially in relation to pest risk analysis and management issues, and that phytosanitary matters are adequately reflected in the international climate change debate and considered by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

[51] The IPPC Secretariat invited the SPG to discuss and possibly agree on the major goal in 2021 is to increase the international understanding of the phytosanitary issues associated with climate change, follow up the Helsinki Conference with a webinar organized by the IPPC Secretariat, targeted at the CPM members, to further inform and enhance countries’ understanding of the issue and establish a CPM focus group on climate change and phytosanitary issues.

[52] Several SPG participants welcomed the paper and suggested that the focus group may continue building the mutual understanding about pest patters and spread in relation to climate change through practical responses on this topic by NPPOs, noting that the current framework to move the discussion forward through the next CPM and the first International Plant Health Conference (IPHC) in Helsinki is appropriate. The SPG noted that the focus group may be open-ended to allow broader participation on such an important topic.

[53] The SPG:

(23) *Thanked* the IPPC Secretariat for the work delivered so far and encouraged further definition of the following steps to take.

(24) *Asked* the CPM to establish a focus group to further advance the work on climate change impact on plant health.

(25) *Asked* the IPPC Secretariat to make the necessary arrangements to hold a webinar following the outcomes at the IPHC in Helsinki.

(26) *Endorsed* the current concept note for presentation at CPM-15.

#### **4.8. Global phytosanitary research coordination**

[54] The IPPC Secretariat introduced the topic, highlighting that science has a crucial role in providing technical solutions, but also in bringing national and international actors closer together to work on forecasting, early warning, enhanced preparedness and implementing preventive measures and outbreak response to phytosanitary issue. The IPPC Secretariat further discussed IPPC's key activities is to develop and promote the implementation of internationally agreed, science-based standards in the regulation of plants and plant products as they move internationally and the main constraints towards its achievement.

[55] Mr Nico HORN (EPPO) thanked the IPPC Secretariat and discussed the benefits of the EUPHRESKO initiative, which shares experiences acquired through implementations, concluding that EPPO supports this IPPC SF 2020 – 2030 development agenda item on global phytosanitary coordination. He offered to share more insights on the EUPHRESKO initiative upon request and suggested to begin looking into existing networks to probe potential further integration at the global level.

[56] The SPG welcomed the proposal and highlighted the need to keep building on existing systems to avoid duplications and to minimise the risk of establishing a network without any uptake or participation by the IPPC community, considering this an occasion for younger researchers to start looking into plant health as a potential area of research.

[57] Several SPG participants raised several concerns regarding the specifications of such a global network in terms of infrastructure and resource allocation as well as noting the need to understand the root causes for lack of research on phytosanitary topics before taking any steps towards implementation.

[58] IPPC Secretariat agreed with the proposed approach to have an initial analysis and discuss with relevant organizations but also noted that the IPPC Secretariat is already collaborating with some research organizations and that a coordinator for research and academia is already present in the IPPC Secretariat, further recalling the in-kind contribution by USA to support efforts on this topic, amongst others.

[59] The SPG welcomed the clarifications by the IPPC Secretariat and discussed the potential establishment of a Phytosanitary Research Group while considering that the domain of phytosanitary research remains extremely broad, suggesting some selection mechanism that takes into consideration national priorities should be established too.

[60] The SPG:

- (27) *Welcomed* the initiative on Global phytosanitary research coordination
- (28) *Thanked* the IPPC Secretariat for drafting the initial concept.
- (29) *Suggested* to analyse the situation further by building on the existing experiences.
- (30) *Clarified* that the phytosanitary research coordination should remain neutral and facilitate the research in accordance to national priorities.

## 5. Integration and Support

### 5.1. IPPC Communication Strategy

- [61] Mr Greg WOLFF (Canada) introduced the topic, noting that every organization requires a communication strategy. He clarified that the proposal is to create a focus group defining the ToRs of a Communication and Advocacy Group (CAG), highlighting the deliverables of the communication strategy, which should include the impact of COVID-19. Mr WOLFF specified that the CAG should be composed by IPPC staff and FAO Communication personnel, and experts from IPPC CP communication divisions, underlining the importance of continuity in the communication strategy.
- [62] The SPG welcomed and supported the initiative, suggesting to build on existing experiences, such as the Communication plan for the International Year of Plant Health (IYPH), noting that this strategy may already take into consideration the initiative of establishing an International Day of Plant Health (IDPH).
- [63] USA thanked the paper, which is fully supported. The Communication strategy must align with the IPPC SF, available communication tools and the establishment of the communication group. Should be done by next CPM. The team should be then assembled. Using inputs from the IYPH experience. lessons from IYPH in addition to future planning for IDPH could be included in this future TORs when and if a communication advisory group is formed.
- [64] The SPG:
- (31) *Endorsed* the development of an IPPC Communication strategy for the period 2021 – 2025 and *further endorsed* the proposal to discuss the establishment an IPPC Communication Advisory Group (CAG) at CPM-15.
- (32) *Requested* the IPPC Secretariat to draft the initial Terms of Reference (ToRs) of the focus group to be establish at CPM-15 that will define tasks, scope and responsibilities for the IPPC Communication Advisory Group (CAG).

(33) *Invited* the SPG to make use, disseminate and share relevant experiences in supporting, promoting and drafting effective strategies for communication.

## 5.2. IPPC Partnership Strategy

[65] The IPPC Secretariat recalled that the convention text recognises the important role of partnerships and the IPPC SF 2020 – 2030 emphasises the importance to establish relevant partnerships. The IPPC Secretariat specified that the paper was reviewed by partnership division, and proposed the topic for SPG discussion and possibly endorsement to the next CPM meeting in 2021.

[66] The SPG raised several concerns regarding this initiative, mainly related to the definition of IPPC partners, their role, benefits and duties that such undertaking implies, amongst other considerations. The SPG noted the existing partnerships and collaboration, commending the IPPC Secretariat for the initial mapping of partnering and liaising entities, but also underlining the need for a more substantive approach that requires a more in-depth discussion by the IPPC community, in constant dialogue with the IPPC Secretariat, prior to reach the CPM.

[67] The SPG concluded that the discussion triggered by the IPPC Secretariat is a positive starting point and suggested to revise the paper adopting a more substantive approach, including potential levels of partnerships, mutual benefits and duties of engaging with the IPPC community to establish a partnership, the legal implications and the possibility of different levels of engagements, paying special attention to the potential political implications.

[68] The SPG:

(34) *Thanked* the IPPC Secretariat for the initial analysis of the IPPC partners and liaising organizations.

(35) *Suggested* to review the work on IPPC partnerships by the next SPG session, taking into consideration a more substantive approach, particularly on potential levels of partnerships, mutual benefits and duties of engaging with the IPPC community to establish a partnership, the legal implications and the possibility of different levels of engagements, paying special attention to the potential political implications.

## 6. International Year of Plant Health

[69] The IPPC Secretariat delivered an update on the IYPH activities throughout 2020, highlighting the high level of events, interactions and initiatives despite the pandemic. Several SPG participants shared their respective activities and initiatives related to the International Year of Plant Health, underlining the positive and encouraging feedback for such an important initiative, and welcomed the possibility to continue promoting plant health during the first semester of 2021.

[70] The SPG

(36) *Noted* the several positive experiences in organising IYPH events globally and *encouraged* SPG participants to continue promoting plant health during the first semester of 2021.

(37) *Commended* the IPPC Secretariat for delivering a successful International Year of Plant Health.

## 7. Any Other Business

### 7.1. Review of the SPG role

[71] Mr Osama EL-LISSY (United States of America) delivered a brief introduction to this newly included item on the SPG agenda, stating that the SPG plays a crucial role in facing the issues of the plant health community. He brought to the attention of the SPG that the IPPC SF 2020 – 2030 originated in the SPG. He summarised the proposal of reviewing the role of the SPG, which should be providing contributions and guidance to the IPPC community, without spending time on procedural matters.

[72] He suggested that future SPG agenda items should be submitted by CP, with a brief summary specifying the strategic relevance to the IPPC community, which would then be reviewed by the CPM Bureau. Mr EL-LISSY proposed the establishment of a focus group composed of seven members, one per FAO region, to evaluate the primary SPG functions, identify new and emerging policy issues that could impact the IPPC community.

[73] The SPG welcomed the discussion but also noted that the recent SPG sessions have been entertaining a good number of strategically focused items, still expressing its availability to improve the quality of the discussions further.

[74] Several SPG participants suggested that it would be beneficial to review the SPG ToRs with the purpose of improving them. The SPG agreed to establish a group of volunteers composed by USA, Canada, New Zealand, IC Chairperson to draft a reviewed version of the SPG ToRs.

[75] The SPG:

(38) *Proposed* a revision of the ToRs of the Strategic Planning Group by the CPM with the purpose of improving them, if necessary.

(39) *Suggested* the establishment of a focus group by the CPM Bureau for the revision of the SPG ToRs, highlighting the fact that the SPG discussions should continue remaining driven by its contracting parties.

(40) *Agreed* to establish a small group of volunteers to present a paper to discuss a potential revision of the SPG ToRs by the coming extraordinary session during the November meeting.

## **7.2. Update on IPPC community activities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic**

[76] Mr Javier TRUJILLO ARRIAGA (CPM Chairperson) updated the SPG regarding the action the CPM Bureau took in response to the pandemic, mentioning that the FAO Legal Service was consulted but also the CPM Bureau asked for CPs' trust in taking the lead in absence of the CPM. He further specified that he had received only one reaction by a contracting party on this matter and that the IPPC community reacted positively to the CPM Bureau holding monthly sessions to provide continuity together with the IPPC Secretariat.

[77] The SPG:

(41) *Noted* the update by the CPM Chairperson.

## **7.3. IPPC Secretariat positioning within FAO**

[78] Mr Javier TRUJILLO ARRIAGA (CPM Chairperson) summarised the current situation regarding the IPPC Secretariat positioning within the FAO structure. He clarified that the IPPC Secretariat may be placed in a reporting line linked to a Deputy Director-General of FAO and similar to the position that the CODEX Alimentarius Secretariat occupies now. Mr TRUJILLO ARRIAGA clarified that this discussion should take place at the coming session of the FAO Council.

[79] Several SPG participants noted that the current temporary positioning of the IPPC Secretariat does not reflect the best interests of the IPPC community and noted the possibility to join either the normative stream or become part of the One Health centre, which includes CODEX Alimentarius Secretariat and the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources as well.

[80] The SPG agreed that IPPC Secretary should be a D-1 position and that the CPM Chairperson may explore the opportunity and feasibility to entertain a face-to-face meeting with the Ms Beth BECHDOL, Deputy Director-General, to discuss the content of the letter Mr Javier TRUJILLO ARRIAGA sent on 18 September 2020 in person.

[81] The SPG recommended that the visibility of the IPPC within FAO should be improved and financially sustained.

[82] The SPG:

(42) *Endorsed* the CPM Bureau's position that IPPC Secretariat should have a visible position within FAO and placed in the normative stream or the one health stream, preferably the latter.

- (43) *Agreed* with the CPM Bureau's position that the IPPC Secretary should be a D-1 position, reporting to a Deputy Director-General of FAO directly and that the CPM Bureau should be included in the selection process.
- (44) *Asked* Mr Javier TRUJILLO ARRIAGA (CPM Chairperson) to arrange a meeting with the Ms Beth BECHDOL, FAO Deputy Director-General, to discuss the IPPC Secretariat positioning within the FAO structure as well as the CPM Bureau involvement in appointing the IPPC Secretary.
- (45) *Recommended* to IPPC contracting parties to liaise with their counterparts in Rome to include the discussion on the IPPC Secretariat positioning in the next Council's agenda, under Any Other Business.

### **8. Next Meeting**

[83] The next meeting will be on 10 November 2020, from 10:00 to 16:00 (CET).

### **9. Close of the Meeting**

[84] The Chair thanked all participants for their active participation and closed the meeting.

**Appendix 01 - Provisional Agenda**

AGENDA ITEM		DOCUMENT NO.	PRESENTER / IPPC Secretariat support
1.	Opening of the Meeting		Jingyuan XIA (IPPC Secretary OIC) / Lucien KOUAME (CPM Vice-Chairperson)
2.	Meeting Arrangements		Lucien KOUAME
2.1	Adoption of the Agenda	01_SPG_2020_Oct	
2.2	Election of the Rapporteur	--	
3.	Administrative Matters		Arop DENG
3.1	Documents lists	02_SPG_2020_Oct	
3.2	Participants list	03_SPG_2020_Oct	
4.	Advancing work on IPPC Development Agendas 2020-2030	09_SPG_2020_Oct	Peter THOMSON
4.1	Commodity- and pathway- specific ISPMs	16_SPG_2020_Oct 10_SPG_2020_Oct	Avetik NERSISYAN / Adriana MOREIRA Peter THOMSON
4.2	Developing guidance on the use of third-party entities	14_SPG_2020_Oct	Artur SHAMILOV
4.3	Diagnostic laboratory networking	17_SPG_2020_Oct	Adriana MOREIRA
4.4	<a href="#">Harmonization of electronic data exchange</a>	11_SPG_2020_Oct 15_SPG_2020_Oct	Craig FEDCHOCK
4.5	Management of e-commerce and postal and courier pathways	12_SPG_2020_Oct	Barbara PETERSON
4.6	Strengthening pest outbreak alert and response systems	13_SPG_2020_Oct	Sarah BRUNEL
4.7	Assessment and management of climate change impacts on plant health	05_SPG_2020_Oct	Mirko MONTUORI
4.8	Global phytosanitary research coordination	06_SPG_2020_Oct	Arop DENG
5.	Integration and Support		
5.1	IPPC Communication Strategy	08_SPG_2020_Oct	Greg WOLFF / Mirko MONTUORI
5.2	IPPC Partnership Strategy	07_SPG_2020_Oct	Arop DENG / Mirko MONTUORI
6.	International Year of Plant Health	04_SPG_2020_Oct	Ralf LOPIAN / Mirko MONTUORI
7.	Any Other Business	18_SPG_2020_Oct	Lucien KOUAME
8.	Next Meeting		Lucien KOUAME
9.	Close of the Meeting		Lucien KOUAME

**Appendix 02 - Documents List**

<b>DOCUMENT NO.</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM</b>	<b>DOCUMENT TITLE (PREPARED BY)</b>	<b>DATE POSTED / DISTRIBUTED</b>
01_SPG_2020_Oct	02.1	Agenda	2020-10-01
02_SPG_2020_Oct	03.1	Documents List	2020-10-01
03_SPG_2020_Oct	03.2	Participants List	2020-09-29
04_SPG_2020_Oct	06	Update on the IYPH	2020-09-24
05_SPG_2020_Oct	04.7	Draft WP Climate change and plant health	2020-09-24
06_SPG_2020_Oct	04.8	Global Phytosanitary Research Coordination	2020-09-24
07_SPG_2020_Oct	05.2	IPPC Partnership Strategy	2020-09-24
08_SPG_2020_Oct	05.1	IPPC Communications Strategy	2020-09-25
09_SPG_2020_Oct	04	Prioritisation of IPPC development agenda 2020-2030 – <i>New Zealand</i>	2020-09-25
10_SPG_2020_Oct	04.1	Commodity- and pathway- specific ISPMs – <i>New Zealand</i>	2020-09-25
11_SPG_2020_Oct	04.4	Harmonization of electronic data exchange – <i>New Zealand</i>	2020-09-25
12_SPG_2020_Oct	04.5	Management of e-Commerce	2020-09-26
13_SPG_2020_Oct	04.6	Strengthening Pest Outbreak Alert and Response Systems	2020-09-26
14_SPG_2020_Oct	04.2	Developing guidance on the use of third-party entities	2020-09-29
15_SPG_2020_Oct	04.4	Harmonization of electronic data exchange - ePhyto Context	2020-09-29
16_SPG_2020_Oct	04.1	Commodity Standards	2020-09-29
17_SPG_2020_Oct	04.3	Diagnostic laboratory networking	2020-09-29
18_SPG_2020_Oct	07	Any other business - Positioning of the IPPC within FAO structure	2020-1-10
<b>IPP LINKS:</b>			
<a href="#">SPG October 2019 Report</a>			

## Appendix 03 - Participants List

### SPG Participants

	Region / Role	Name, mailing, address, telephone	Email address
✓	SPG Chairperson CPM Bureau Africa	<b>Mr Konan KOUAME</b> Inspecteur Direction de la Protection des Végétaux, du Contrôle et de la Qualité Ministère de l'Agriculture B.P. V7 Abidjan, Phone: (+225) 20 218442 Mobile: (+225) 07 903754 <b>COTE D'IVOIRE</b>	<a href="mailto:l_kouame@yahoo.fr">l_kouame@yahoo.fr</a>
✓	CPM Bureau Latin America and Caribbean <i>CPM Chairperson</i>	<b>Mr Francisco Javier TRUJILLO ARRIAGA</b> Director General de Sanidad Vegetal Servicio Nacional de Sanidad, Inocuidad y Calidad Agroalimentaria Sagarpa, Boulevard Adolfo Ruiz Cortines, N 5010, Piso4 Ciudad de Mexico Phone: (+52) 55 59051000 <b>MEXICO</b>	<a href="mailto:trujillo@senasica.gob.mx">trujillo@senasica.gob.mx</a>
✓	CPM Bureau Southwest Pacific	<b>Mr Peter THOMSON</b> Ministry for Primary Industries Pastoral House 25 The Terrace PO Box 2526 Wellington 6140 Tel: 64-4-894 0353 <b>NEW ZEALAND</b>	<a href="mailto:peter.thomson@mpi.govt.nz">peter.thomson@mpi.govt.nz</a>
✓	CPM Bureau Asia	<b>Mr Fuxiang WANG</b> Deputy Director General, National Agriculture Technical Extension and Service centre (NATESC) Ministry of Agriculture Room 630, Building No. Mai Zi Dian Street Chao Yang District, Beijing 100125 Ph.: 86-10-59194548 <b>CHINA</b>	<a href="mailto:wangfuxiang@agri.gov.cn">wangfuxiang@agri.gov.cn</a>
✓	CPM Bureau Europe	<b>Ms Marica GATT</b> Director General (VPRD) Veterinary and Phytosanitary Regulation Division Office of the Director General / Abettori Street, Alberttown, Marsa HRS 1123, Malta Tel: 356 22925222 <b>MALTA</b>	<a href="mailto:marica.gatt@gov.mt">marica.gatt@gov.mt</a>
✓	CPM Bureau North America	<b>Mr John GREIFER</b> Assistant Deputy Administration Plant Protection and Quarantine APHIS, USDA1400 Independence Av. SW Washington, DC 20250 <b>UNITED STATES OF AMERICA</b>	<a href="mailto:john.k.greifer@usda.gov">john.k.greifer@usda.gov</a>
	CPM Bureau Near East and North Africa	<b>Mr Gamil Anwar Mohammed RAMADHAN</b>	<a href="mailto:abuameerm21@gmail.com">abuameerm21@gmail.com</a>

	Region / Role	Name, mailing, address, telephone	Email address
		General Director of Plant Protection Department of Yemen, Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, Aden Ph.: 00967 770712209 <b>YEMEN</b>	
✓	SPG IC Chairperson	<b>Ms Olga LAVRENTJEVA</b> Adviser on Phytosanitary Matters Plant Health Department Ministry of Rural Affairs Tel: +3726256535 <b>ESTONIA</b>	<a href="mailto:olga.lavrentjeva@agri.ee">olga.lavrentjeva@agri.ee</a>
✓	SPG SC Chairperson	<b>Mr Ezequiel FERRO</b> Ingeniero Ageónomo / Secretario de Coordinación Argentina National Plant Protection Organization: National Service of Agrifood Health and Quality (SENASA) Av. Paseo Colon 315, 4º Piso, Oficina 5 Codigo Postal: C1063ACD Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires Phone: (+54) 1141215091 <b>ARGENTINA</b>	<a href="mailto:eferro@senasa.gov.ar">eferro@senasa.gov.ar</a> ; <a href="mailto:dnpv@senasa.gov.ar">dnpv@senasa.gov.ar</a> ;
✓	SPG RPPO	<b>Mr Nico M. HORN</b> Director-General European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization (EPPO/OEPP) 21 boulevard Richard Lenoir 75011 PARIS Tel: + 33 (0) 1 45 20 77 94 <b>EPPO</b>	<a href="mailto:nico.horn@epo.int">nico.horn@epo.int</a>
✓	SPG RPPO	<b>Ms Stephanie BLOEM</b> Executive Director – Directora Ejecutiva North American Plant Protection Organization Organizacion Norteamericana de Proteccion a las Plantas 1730 Varsity Drive, Suite 145 Raleigh, NC 27606 (919) 617-4040 office <b>NAPPO</b>	<a href="mailto:Stephanie.bloem@nappo.org">Stephanie.bloem@nappo.org</a>
✓	SPG RPPO	<b>Mr Visoni TIMOTE</b> Executive Secretary Pacific Plant Protection Organisation (PPPO) Pacific Community (SPC) Pacific Community, Land Resources Division, Private Mail Bag ,Suva, Fiji Phone: (+679) 337 9220 <b>PPPO</b>	<a href="mailto:visonit@spc.int">visonit@spc.int</a>
✓	SPG RPPO	<b>Ms Ana Tunabuna BULI</b> Pacific Plant Protection Organisation (PPPO) <b>PPPO</b>	<a href="mailto:AnaT@spc.int">AnaT@spc.int</a>
✓	SPG RPPO	<b>Ms Juliet GOLDSMITH</b> Plant Health Specialist Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA) Phone: (+597) 7252922 <b>CAHFSA</b>	<a href="mailto:juliet.goldsmith@cahfsa.org">juliet.goldsmith@cahfsa.org</a>

	Region / Role	Name, mailing, address, telephone	Email address
✓	SPG RPPO	<b>Mr Jean Gerard MEZUI M'ELLA</b> Director Inter-African Phytosanitary Council of the African Union Phone: (+237) 694899340 <b>IAPSC</b>	<a href="mailto:jeangerardmzuimella@gmail.com">jeangerardmzuimella@gmail.com</a>
✓	SPG RPPO	<b>Mr Luiza Mbura MUNYUA</b> Inter-African Phytosanitary Council of the African Union Phone: (+237) 694899340 <b>IAPSC</b>	<a href="mailto:MunyuaL@africa-union.org">MunyuaL@africa-union.org</a>
✓	SPG	<b>Mr Diego QUIROGA</b> Director Nacional de Protección Vegetal – Servicio Nacional de Sanidad y Calidad Agroalimentaria, SENASA Av. Paseo Colon 315 4º B, Código Postal 1063, Ciudad Autonoma de Buenos Aires, Tel:(+5411) 4121-5176 / 5495 <b>ARGENTINA</b>	<a href="mailto:dquiroga@senasa.gov.ar">dquiroga@senasa.gov.ar</a>  <a href="mailto:dnpv@senasa.gov.ar">dnpv@senasa.gov.ar</a>
✓	SPG	<b>Ms Robyn CLELAND</b> Australia's IPPC Contact Point A/g Australian Chief Plant Protection Officer, Department of Agriculture Phone: +61 2 62724671 <b>AUSTRALIA</b>	<a href="mailto:Robyn.Cleland@agriculture.gov.au">Robyn.Cleland@agriculture.gov.au</a>
✓	SPG	<b>Ms Sophie PETERSON</b> Assistant Director Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment GPO Box 858, Canberra ACT 2615, Australia Tel: +61 2 6272 3769 <b>AUSTRALIA</b>	<a href="mailto:sophie.peterson@awe.gov.au">sophie.peterson@awe.gov.au</a>
✓	SPG	<b>Mr Peter NEIMANIS</b> Plant Export Operations Department of Agriculture 18 Marcus Clarke St, Canberra City ACT 2601 Postal: GPO Box 858 Canberra City ACT 2601 Australia Tel: +61 2 6272 4082 <b>AUSTRALIA</b>	<a href="mailto:Peter.neimanis@agriculture.gov.au">Peter.neimanis@agriculture.gov.au</a>
✓	SPG	<b>Mr Michael JAMES</b> Senior Agricultural Officer Plant Pathology Section Plant Protection Unit Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security Graeme Hall Christ Church BB15003 Tel: 1246-5355252 <b>BARBADOS</b>	<a href="mailto:MJames@agriculture.gov.bb">MJames@agriculture.gov.bb</a>
✓	SPG	<b>Mr Gregory WOLFF</b> Director, Strategic Plant Health Programs & Partnerships Division Canadian Food Inspection Agency 59 Camelot Drive OTTAWA, ON. K1A 0Y9 Tel:(+1) 613 773 7060 Mobile:(+1) 613 325 2941 <b>CANADA</b>	<a href="mailto:greg.wolff@canada.ca">greg.wolff@canada.ca</a>

	Region / Role	Name, mailing, address, telephone	Email address
✓	SPG	<b>Mr Dominique PELLETIER</b> Horticulture Program Specialist Canadian Food Inspection Agency Regulatory Cooperation Division T1-4 1400 Merivale Rd. Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0Y9 Tel: (613) 773-6492 <b>CANADA</b>	<a href="mailto:dominique.pelletier2@canada.ca">dominique.pelletier2@canada.ca</a>
✓	SPG	<b>Mr Steve COTE</b> National manager, International Phytosanitary Standards Plant Import /Export Division International Affairs Branch Canadian Food Inspection Agency <b>CANADA</b>	<a href="mailto:steve.cote@canada.ca">steve.cote@canada.ca</a>
✓	SPG	<b>Mr Rajesh RAMARATHNAM</b> Senior Specialist – International Phytosanitary Standards, International Affairs Branch Canadian Food Inspection Agency Tel: 613-773-7122 <b>CANADA</b>	<a href="mailto:rajesh.ramarathnam@canada.ca">rajesh.ramarathnam@canada.ca</a>
✓	SPG	<b>Ms Fuyou DENG</b> Canadian Food Inspection Agency <b>CANADA</b>	<a href="mailto:fuyou.deng@canada.ca">fuyou.deng@canada.ca</a>
✓	SPG	<b>Mr Jean - Benoit MBORHOUL</b> Expert National en Protection des Végétaux Point de Contact CIPV Ministère de l'Agriculture et du Développement Rural Bangui Tél.: + 236 72 54 52 98 <b>CENTRAFICAN REPUBLIC</b>	<a href="mailto:jbmborohoul@yahoo.fr">jbmborohoul@yahoo.fr</a>
	SPG	<b>Mr Damas MAMBA</b> Directeur de la Protection des Végétaux Point de Contact Officiel de la CIPV Tel: (+243) 812959330 <b>DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO</b>	<a href="mailto:damasmamba@yahoo.fr">damasmamba@yahoo.fr</a>
✓	SPG	<b>Mr Roman VAGNER</b> Policy Administrator The European Commission, Directorate- General for Health and Food Safety (SANTE) Unit G.1 - Plant Health 101, rue Froisart, Bruxelles, Belgium Tel: +32 2 29 59664 <b>EUROPEAN UNION</b>	<a href="mailto:roman.vagner@ec.europa.eu">roman.vagner@ec.europa.eu</a>
	SPG	<b>Ms Marlyter SILBANUZ P.</b> Deputy Assistant Secretary Agriculture Unit, Department of Resources and Development FSM National Government, P.O. Box PS 12, Palikir, Pohnpei FM 96941, Tel: 691 320 5133 <b>FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA</b>	<a href="mailto:msilbanuz@fsmrd.fm">msilbanuz@fsmrd.fm</a>
✓	SPG	<b>Mr Ralf LOPIAN</b> Senior Advisor, International Affairs Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Finland Food Department/Animal and Plant Health Unit, Mariankatu 23, Helsinki Tel: +358 40 5965698	<a href="mailto:ralf.lopian@mmm.fi">ralf.lopian@mmm.fi</a>

	Region / Role	Name, mailing, address, telephone	Email address
		<b>FINLAND</b>	
	SPG	<b>Ms Christine HERMENING</b> Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) Germany Division 714 - Plant Health and Phytosanitary Affairs in Export Rochusstrasse 1 53123 Bonn Phone: 0049 228-99 529-4484 <b>GERMANY</b>	<a href="mailto:Christine.Hermening@bmel.bund.de">Christine.Hermening@bmel.bund.de</a>
✓	SPG	<b>Mr Prudence ATTIPOE</b> Plant Protection and Regulatory Services Directorate Tel: +233209793292 <b>GHANA</b>	<a href="mailto:tonattipoe@yahoo.co.uk">tonattipoe@yahoo.co.uk</a> <a href="mailto:shataphsakal@yahoo.co.uk">shataphsakal@yahoo.co.uk</a>
✓	SPG	<b>Mr David OPATOWSKI</b> Head, Plant Biosecurity Plant Protection and Inspection Services P.O.Box 78, Bet Dagan 50250, Israel Tel: 972-(0)3-9681518 <b>ISRAEL</b>	<a href="mailto:davido@moag.gov.il">davido@moag.gov.il</a>
✓	SPG	<b>Ms Mariangela CIAMPITTI</b> Responsabile Servizio Fitosanitario – Servizi per la difesa delle colture ERSAF, Milan Tel + 39 02 67404 691 <b>ITALY</b>	<a href="mailto:Mariangela.Ciampitti@ersaf.lombardia.it">Mariangela.Ciampitti@ersaf.lombardia.it</a>
✓	SPG	<b>Mr Hirofumi UCHIDA</b> Director, International Affairs Office Plant Protection Division, Food Safety and Consumer Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) 1-2-1, Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-8950 Tel:+81 03 3502 8111 (ext. 4561) <b>JAPAN</b>	<a href="mailto:ippc_contact@maff.go.jp">ippc_contact@maff.go.jp</a>
✓	SPG	<b>Ms Natsumi YAMADA</b> Section Chief Plant Protection Division, Food Safety and Consumer Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) 1-2-1, Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-8950, Tel:+81 33502 5978 <b>JAPAN</b>	<a href="mailto:natsumi_yamada740@maff.go.jp">natsumi_yamada740@maff.go.jp</a>
✓	SPG	<b>Mr Teppei SHIGEMI</b> Deputy Director Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Japan Food Safety and Consumer Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries MAFF, 1-2-1 Kasumigaseki Chiyoda-ku Tokyo, 100-8950, Tel: +81-3-3502-5978 <b>JAPAN</b>	<a href="mailto:Teppey_shigemi780@maff.go.jp">Teppey_shigemi780@maff.go.jp</a>

	Region / Role	Name, mailing, address, telephone	Email address
✓	SPG	<b>Ms Faith NDUNGE</b> Head biosafety and phytosanitary services Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Services P.O.Box 49592-00100, Nairobi Tel: +254722697674 <b>KENYA</b>	<a href="mailto:findunge@kephis.org">findunge@kephis.org</a>
	SPG	<b>Ms Josephine SCHEMBRI</b> Principal Scientific Officer Plant Protection Directorate Phone: (+356) 22926555 <b>MALTA</b>	<a href="mailto:josephine.b.schembri@gov.mt">josephine.b.schembri@gov.mt</a>
✓	SPG	<b>Mr Thorwald GEUZE</b> Senior Officer Plant Health Ministry of Economic Affairs Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority, National Plant Protection Organization P.O. Box 9102, 6700 HC Wageningen, Tel: +31(0)651290267 <b>NETHERLANDS</b>	<a href="mailto:t.geuze@nvwa.nl">t.geuze@nvwa.nl</a>
✓	SPG	<b>Mr Marco TRAA</b> Senior Staff Officer Phytosanitary Affairs Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality <b>NETHERLANDS</b>	<a href="mailto:m.j.w.traa@mininv.nl">m.j.w.traa@mininv.nl</a>
✓	SPG	<b>Ms Lihong ZHU</b> Portfolio Manager IPPC International Policy, Policy and Trade, Ministry for Primary Industries Charles Fergusson Building, 34-38 Bowen Street , PO Box 2526, Wellington 6140, Tel:+64 4894 0261 <b>NEW ZEALAND</b>	<a href="mailto:ippc@mpi.govt.nz">ippc@mpi.govt.nz</a> <a href="mailto:lihong.zhu@mpi.govt.nz">lihong.zhu@mpi.govt.nz</a>
	SPG	<b>Ms Rosalynn ANDERSON-LEDERER</b> <b>NEW ZEALAND</b>	<a href="mailto:Rosalynn.Anderson-Lederer@mpi.govt.nz">Rosalynn.Anderson-Lederer@mpi.govt.nz</a>
✓	SPG	<b>Mr Jung Bin KIM</b> Director of Export Management Division / Department of Plant Quarantine Animal and Plant Quarantine Agency 177 Hyeoksin 8-ro, Gimcheon-si, Gyeongsangbuk-do, Republic of Korea 39660 Republic of Korea Tel: +82 54 912 0627 <b>REPUBLIC OF KOREA</b>	<a href="mailto:npqs@korea.kr">npqs@korea.kr</a>
✓	SPG	<b>Ms Kyu-Ock YIM</b> Senior Researcher Export Management Division Department of Plant Quarantine Animal and Plant Quarantine Agency (APQA) Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (MAFRA) 177, Hyeoksin 8-ro, Gimcheon-si, Gyeongsangbuk-do Tel: (+82) 54 9120627 <b>REPUBLIC OF KOREA</b>	<a href="mailto:koyim@korea.kr">koyim@korea.kr</a>
	SPG	<b>Mr Matus GRANEC</b> Senior Counsellor Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic, Dobrovicova 12, 812 66 Bratislava, Tel: +421 2 5926357 <b>SLOVAKIA</b>	<a href="mailto:matus.granec@land.gov.sk">matus.granec@land.gov.sk</a>

	Region / Role	Name, mailing, address, telephone	Email address
	SPG	<b>Mr Abdi MOHAMED HUSSEIN</b> Director of Plant Protection Department Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation Maka Almukarama Street, KM4, Next Building to CID HQ, Mogadishu Tel: +252614012223 <b>SOMALIA</b>	<a href="mailto:plant.protection@moa.gov.so">plant.protection@moa.gov.so</a> <a href="mailto:bashaq12@gmail.com">bashaq12@gmail.com</a>
✓		<b>Mr Mariano LOPEZ ROMANO</b> Ingeniero Agronomo/private sector <b>SPAIN</b>	<a href="mailto:mariano.agronomo@gmail.com">mariano.agronomo@gmail.com</a>
	SPG	<b>Mr Viliami KAMI</b> Head of Quality Management Division Tonga Phone: (+676) 24922/24257 <b>TONGA</b>	<a href="mailto:viliamik@spc.int">viliamik@spc.int</a>
✓	SPG	<b>Mr Samuel BISHOP</b> International Plant Health Policy Lead Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs DEFRA, 11G35, National Agri-Food Innovation Campus, Sand Hutton, York, YO41 1LZ, Tel: + 44 2080262506 <b>UNITED KINGDOM</b>	<a href="mailto:sam.bishop@defra.gov.uk">sam.bishop@defra.gov.uk</a>
✓	SPG	<b>Mr Osama EL-LISSY</b> Deputy Administrator, Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ), Head NPPO Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service United States Department of Agriculture 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, J.H. Whitter Bldg. 313.e Washington, D.C. 20250 <b>UNITED STATES OF AMERICA</b>	<a href="mailto:Osama.a.el-lissy@usda.gov">Osama.a.el-lissy@usda.gov</a>
✓	SPG	<b>Ms Stephanie DUBON</b> International Plant Health Standards Coordinator International Phytosanitary Standards Plant Protection and Quarantine Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service United States Department of Agriculture 4700 River Road   5C 03.33, Unit 130   Riverdale, MD 20737 Desk: +1 301 851 2180 <b>UNITED STATES OF AMERICA</b>	<a href="mailto:stephanie.m.dubon@usda.gov">stephanie.m.dubon@usda.gov</a>
	SPG	<b>Mr Christian B. DELLIS</b> United States Department of Agriculture, Animal, Plant Health Inspection Service, Plant Protection and Quarantine 4700 River Road, Unit 131 Riverdale, MD 20737 Tel: (+301) 8512154 <b>UNITED STATES OF AMERICA</b>	<a href="mailto:Christian.b.dellis@aphis.usda.gov">Christian.b.dellis@aphis.usda.gov</a>
✓	SPG	<b>Ms Beatriz MELCHO</b> <b>URUGUAY</b>	

	Region / Role	Name, mailing, address, telephone	Email address
	SPG	<b>Mr Leonardo OLIVERA</b> Director General DIRECCION GENERAL DE SERVICIOS AGRICOLAS AVDA Millan 4703, Montevideo Tel: 598 2309 8410 interno 103 <b>URUGUAY</b>	<a href="mailto:ataidgsa@mgap.gub.uy">ataidgsa@mgap.gub.uy</a> <a href="mailto:dgssaa.direccion@mgap.gub.uy">dgssaa.direccion@mgap.gub.uy</a>
✓	SPG	<b>Mr Ibrohim ERGASHEV</b> Head State Plant Quarantine Inspection under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan 17th, 1st Bling Alley, Bobur Str., 100100, Tashkent, Tel:(+998)71-2556239 <b>UZBEKISTAN</b>	<a href="mailto:glavkaruz@mail.ru">glavkaruz@mail.ru</a> <a href="mailto:ird@karantin.uz">ird@karantin.uz</a>
	SPG	<b>Mr Hoang TRUNG</b> Director General Plant Protection Department (PPD) Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, 149, Ho Dac Di, Dong Da, Hanoi, Tel:(+84) 4 3 851 3688 <b>VIET NAM</b>	<a href="mailto:hoangtrungppd@fpt.vn">hoangtrungppd@fpt.vn</a> <a href="mailto:hoangtrung.bvtv@mard.gov.vn">hoangtrung.bvtv@mard.gov.vn</a>
✓	SPG	<b>Ms Mable MUDENDA</b> <b>ZAMBIA</b>	<a href="mailto:banji.mudenda@gmail.com">banji.mudenda@gmail.com</a>
✓	SPG	<b>Mr Martin KABEMBA</b> <b>ZAMBIA</b>	<a href="mailto:martinkabemba@yahoo.com">martinkabemba@yahoo.com</a>
✓	SPG	<b>Mr Pritchard MAKUWA</b> <b>ZAMBIA</b>	

### IPPC Secretariat

	Region / Role	Name, mailing, address, telephone, nationality	Email address
✓	FAO / IPPC Secretariat	<b>Mr Jingyuan XIA</b>	<a href="mailto:Jingyuan.Xia@fao.org">Jingyuan.Xia@fao.org</a>
✓	IPPC Secretariat	<b>Mr Avetik NERSISYAN</b>	<a href="mailto:Avetik.Nersisyan@fao.org">Avetik.Nersisyan@fao.org</a>
✓	IPPC Secretariat	<b>Mr Arop DENG</b>	<a href="mailto:Arop.Deng@fao.org">Arop.Deng@fao.org</a>
✓	IPPC Secretariat	<b>Mr Brent LARSON</b>	<a href="mailto:Brent.Larson@fao.org">Brent.Larson@fao.org</a>
✓	IPPC Secretariat	<b>Mr Marko BENOVIC</b>	<a href="mailto:Marko.Benovic@fao.org">Marko.Benovic@fao.org</a>
✓	IPPC Secretariat	<b>Mr Mirko MONTUORI</b>	<a href="mailto:Mirko.Montuori@fao.org">Mirko.Montuori@fao.org</a>
✓	IPPC Secretariat	<b>Mr Craig FEDCHOCK</b>	<a href="mailto:Craig.Fedchock@fao.org">Craig.Fedchock@fao.org</a>
✓	IPPC Secretariat	<b>Mr Riccardo MAZZUCHELLI</b>	<a href="mailto:Riccardo.Mazzucchelli@fao.org">Riccardo.Mazzucchelli@fao.org</a>
✓	IPPC Secretariat	<b>Ms Adriana MOREIRA</b>	<a href="mailto:Adriana.Moreira@fao.org">Adriana.Moreira@fao.org</a>
✓	IPPC Secretariat	<b>Mr Artur SHAMILOV</b>	<a href="mailto:Artur.Shamilov@fao.org">Artur.Shamilov@fao.org</a>
✓	IPPC Secretariat	<b>Ms Ketevan LOMSADZE</b>	<a href="mailto:Ketevan.Lomsadze@fao.org">Ketevan.Lomsadze@fao.org</a>
✓	IPPC Secretariat	<b>Ms Masumi YAMAMOTO</b>	<a href="mailto:Masumi.Yamamoto@fao.org">Masumi.Yamamoto@fao.org</a>
✓	IPPC Secretariat	<b>Ms Sarah BRUNEL</b>	<a href="mailto:Sarah.Brunel@fao.org">Sarah.Brunel@fao.org</a>
✓	IPPC Secretariat	<b>Ms Barbara PETERSON</b>	<a href="mailto:Barbara.Peterson@fao.org">Barbara.Peterson@fao.org</a>
✓	IPPC Secretariat	<b>Ms Viivi KUVAJA</b>	<a href="mailto:Viivi.Kuvaja@fao.org">Viivi.Kuvaja@fao.org</a>
✓	IPPC Secretariat	<b>Aoife CASSIN</b>	<a href="mailto:Aoife.Cassin@fao.org">Aoife.Cassin@fao.org</a>
✓	IPPC Secretariat	<b>Janka KISS</b>	<a href="mailto:Janka.Kiss@fao.org">Janka.Kiss@fao.org</a>
✓	IPPC Secretariat	<b>Qingpo YANG</b>	<a href="mailto:Qingpo.Yang@fao.org">Qingpo.Yang@fao.org</a>
✓	IPPC Secretariat	<b>Mr Edgar MUSHEGYAN</b>	<a href="mailto:Edgar.Mushegyan@fao.org">Edgar.Mushegyan@fao.org</a>
✓	IPPC Secretariat	<b>Ms Sara GIULIANI</b>	<a href="mailto:Sara.Giuliani@fao.org">Sara.Giuliani@fao.org</a>
✓	IPPC Secretariat	<b>Paola SENTINELLI</b>	<a href="mailto:Paola.Sentinelli@fao.org">Paola.Sentinelli@fao.org</a>
✓	IPPC Secretariat	<b>Ms Natalie NICORA</b>	<a href="mailto:Natalie.Nicora@fao.org">Natalie.Nicora@fao.org</a>
✓	IPPC Secretariat	<b>Mr Dennis ALLEX</b>	<a href="mailto:Denis.Alex@fao.org">Denis.Alex@fao.org</a>
✓	IPPC Secretariat	<b>Ms Tanja LAHTI</b>	<a href="mailto:Tanja.Lahti@fao.org">Tanja.Lahti@fao.org</a>

**Appendix 04 – Action List**

N.	Action	Lead	Lead within Secretariat/CPM Bureau/ Persons involved	Deadline
1	Send the draft standard on commodities to the next CPM meeting for adoption	IPPC Secretariat	Avetik NERSISYAN	15/02/2021
2	Establish a small working group that includes also the ePhyto stakeholders to discuss the issue of expanding ePhyto applications both in terms of implementation and technical advancements, its governance and sustainable funding options	IPPC Secretariat	Craig FEDCHOK	29/01/2021
3	Hold a discussion on the best approach to address the issues related to e-Commerce and review the e-Commerce programme budget in light of COVID-19 and the funding received, and recommended whether additional co-funding arrangements are needed	IPPC Secretariat	IC Chairperson Brent LARSON	20/11/2020
4	Finalise the establishment of the CPM Focus Group for “Strengthening Pest Outbreak Alert and Response Systems”	IPPC Secretariat	Brent LARSON Sarah BRUNEL	29/11/2020
5	Liaise with relevant stakeholders to foster synergy on strengthening pest outbreak alert and response systems	IPPC Secretariat	Brent LARSON Arop DENG	15/12/2020
6	Establish a focus group to further advance the work on climate change impact on plant health	CPM	CPM Chairperson	30/03/2021
7	Hold a webinar following the outcomes at the IPHC in Helsinki	IPPC Secretariat	Arop DENG Mirko MONTUORI	01/07/2021
8	Analyse the existing research coordination mechanisms to draft a proposal for global integration.	IPPC Secretariat	Arop DENG Mirko MONTUORI	16/02/2021
9	Develop an IPPC Communication strategy for the period 2021 – 2025	IPPC Secretariat	Arop DENG Mirko MONTUORI	16/02/2021
10	Draft the ToRs of a Working Group to be establish at CPM-15 that will define tasks, scope and responsibilities for the IPPC Communication Advisory Group	IPPC Secretariat	Arop DENG Mirko MONTUORI	16/02/2021
11	Review the work on IPPC partnerships, taking into consideration a more substantive approach, particularly on potential levels of partnerships, mutual benefits and duties of engaging with the IPPC community to establish a partnership, the legal implications and the possibility of different levels of engagements, paying special attention to the potential political implications	IPPC Secretariat	Arop DENG Mirko MONTUORI	24/09/2021
12	establish a small group of volunteers to present a paper to discuss a potential revision of the SPG ToRs by the coming extraordinary session during the November meeting	SPG	SPG Chairperson	09/11/2020
13	Liaise with counterparts in Rome to include the discussion on the IPPC Secretariat positioning in the next Council’s agenda, under Any Other Business	IPPC CPs	CPM Chairperson	29/11/2020