



COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

Fifteenth Session

Virtual Meeting, 16, 18 March and 1 April 2021

**Report from Strategic Planning Group - Summary 2020 Strategic Planning
Group Report**

Agenda item 8.3

Prepared by the IPPC Secretariat and the SPG

1. The Strategic Planning Group (SPG) meeting was held 8 and 9 October 2020. An extra meeting took place on 10 November. These two sessions were held virtually due to the current COVID-19 pandemic.
2. The meeting was attended by 49 participants, including CPM Bureau Members, Chairpersons of the IC and SC, IYPH ISC and RPPOs.
3. Several key points are brought to CPM's attention and some specific recommendations from SPG are included in CPM agenda and addressed through CPM papers.
4. The SPG analysed the general structure of the IPPC Strategic Framework 2020 – 2030 (SFW), and discussed the way of advancing work on the development agendas. On the structure of the SFW, the SPG identified three core functions of the IPPC Secretariat:
 - 1) Standard Setting;
 - 2) Implementation and Capacity Development; and
 - 3) Governance, Communication and Partnerships.
5. The SPG stated that such core activities should continue to operate and improve in alignment with the IPPC mission and Strategic Framework objectives. They expressed consensus on allocating resources from the regular programme in support of such core activities, with the development agenda items to be funded by extra-budgetary resources and in any case prioritising the good functioning of the IPPC Secretariat's core functions first. The SPG also stressed that all development agenda items are equally relevant, but the IPPC Secretariat should draft a timeline for their progressive implementation and realisation for consideration by a relevant CPM focus group, which will meet in 2021 to consider

implementation of all this work in a holistic and strategic manner. With regard to the way of advancing work on the Strategic Framework 2020 – 2030 development agendas, the SPG highlighted that the Framework is a living document which may be adapted according to contingent circumstances as they arise. They recognised that the implementation stages for different development agenda items may vary considerably from one another and listed the progress, advances and outcomes of the work already delivered or currently being implemented for a number of items, such as the commodity standards, strengthening Pest Outbreak Alert and Response Systems, harmonisation of electronic data exchange through the IPPC ePhyto solution, e-commerce, the study on impact of climate change on plant health and the use of third-party entities to perform phytosanitary actions. The SPG underlined the importance of developing a clear implementation plan for all the development agenda items with clear milestones, a feasible timeline, a monitoring and evaluation framework and adequate allocations in terms of budget and staff, which may be used for resource mobilisation purposes and for information and revision by the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM). To this end, the SPG recommended the CPM Bureau to develop the Terms of Reference for a Focus Group on Prioritisation of Development Agenda Items to be established by CPM

6. On Commodity and pathway specific standards, the SPG agreed that the Commodity Standards represents an extremely positive innovation for the IPPC community and an important tool in future IPPC communication, advocacy, partnerships and collaboration. SPG noted that the process is under way to develop the standard as the IPPC Standards Committee (SC) has already selected stewards. The SPG 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, and to focus the standard on commodities and not on pathways.

7. The SPG discussed the diagnostic laboratory network and global phytosanitary research coordination initiatives, welcoming the initial conceptual work that the IPPC Secretariat has carried out so far, suggesting keeping analysing it further, especially in terms of resource mobilisation and consensus by the IPPC community. The SPG recognized the importance of this initiative, which may provide great support to NPPOs in terms of expertise, equipment and capacity development and agreed to adopt a step-by-step approach in the implementation of the diagnostic laboratory networking. They also 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 and suggested the IPPC Secretariat to compile a list of existing laboratories and their respective expertise as well as the country primary requirements.

8. The SPG was presented with the harmonization of electronic data exchange initiative. They welcomed the ePhyto initiative which marked a key innovation for the entire IPPC community, and commended the IPPC Secretariat for its implementation. SPG discussed two issues (technical conversation regarding potential enhancements and additional versioning and 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.

9. The SPG discussed a strengthening pest outbreak alert and response systems initiative after 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. The SPG welcomed the approach of learning lessons from systems in place, and of building connections with FAO activities and with what regions and countries as this programme encompasses two complex aspects (alert systems and response system) which require synergies with other entities. They also expressed favourably on considering how to leverage other resources over long term and to identify the most efficient way to tackle this new work. The SPG urged the IPPC Secretariat to finalise the establishment of the CPM Focus Group for “Strengthening Pest Outbreak Alert and Response Systems” and asked the IPPC Secretariat to liaise with relevant stakeholders to foster synergy on this matter.

10. On climate change, the SPG discussed the assessment and management of climate change impacts on plant health. They agreed 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 that the goal defined in the IPPC Strategic Framework 2020-2030 is 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. The SPG asked the CPM to establish a focus group to further advance the work on climate change impact on plant health and endorsed the current concept note for presentation at CPM-15.

11. The SPG discussed the role of communication in present times, especially considering the challenges that the IPPC community is facing with the COVID-19 pandemic. The SPG recommended the CPM to endorse a new IPPC communication strategy and proposed the establishment of an IPPC Communication and Advocacy Group whose Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure would be submitted to CPM-15.

12. The SPG also decided to review its Terms of Reference to be submitted to CPM-15 for adoption, highlighting that the SPG sessions should remain focussed on discussing broad and strategic issues rather than administrative or procedural matters, and SPG discussions should continue remaining driven by the IPPC contracting parties. This will give the opportunity to improve the SPG efficiency further.

13. The SPG also reiterated the importance of developing a clear 2021 IPPC Secretariat Work Plan and Budget to guide the work and priorities of the Secretariat.

14. With regard to resource mobilization, the SPG agreed on the need to update the strategy by requesting Bureau to establish a small drafting group.

15. The other items discussed during the two sessions include: Global phytosanitary research coordination, IPPC Partnership Strategy, Resource mobilization, Review of 2021 Work Plan and Priorities of the IPPC Secretariat, International Year of Plant Health, IPPC community activities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and IPPC Secretariat positioning within FAO.

16. The CPM is invited to:

- 1) *Note* the summary of the SPG 2020 meeting.