



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



International
Plant Protection
Convention

REPORT

IPPC Financial Committee Meeting

**Virtual meeting
15 December 2020**

IPPC Secretariat

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1. Opening of the Meeting

- [1] The FC Chair Mr. Greifer welcomed the FC participants noting his interest in continuing the tradition of engaging the whole of the Bureau in the FC meetings to promote full awareness among all Bureau colleagues on IPPC financial matters and realities.
- [2] Mr. Nersisyan, Officer in Charge for daily matters of the IPPC Secretariat, welcomed all participants and reiterated his commitment to sound financial management, budgetary transparency and efficacy, as well as accountability to the IPPC Contracting parties. He also noted that it is a good initiative that IPPC Secretariat teams present their work plans and priorities for 2021.
- [3] The Chair noted his interest in wanting the FC be forward looking and strategic in how it addresses funding and budget issues, including taking a practical look at the next year's priority activities and the resources needed to support that work.
- [4] The primary objectives of the meeting were to review the current 2020 budget situation, preview the funding outlook for 2021, and then begin a conversation about the resource implications of the new 10 year strategic framework. The key question driving this conversation is how to ensure that IPPC's limited resources are directed to supporting CPM's highest priority initiatives, particularly in relation to the topics on the development agenda.

2. Meeting Arrangements

2.1 Documents list

- [5] The Documents list is attached to this report as Appendix 2.

2.2 Participants list

- [6] The List of Participants is attached to this report as Appendix 3.

3. Objectives of the meeting

- [7] The FC Chair noted that primary objectives for the FC meeting were to:
 - a) reflect on the main outcomes from the SPG meeting related to 2021 work priorities, especially SPG views regarding implementation of the new Strategic Framework and the various development agenda items;
 - b) reach a common understanding on the IPPC' most vital activities in 2021 in four core areas including: standard setting; implementation and technical assistance; integration and strategic communications; and e-phyto. This was intended to provide a clearer view of the primary work to be done next year and an understanding of the resources needed to support that work; and,
 - c) gain clarity and agreement on the draft IPPC Secretariat Work & Budget for 2021 for CPM endorsement.

4. Adoption of the Agenda

- [11] The FC adopted the agenda (Appendix 1).

5. Brief update on 2020 budget issues

- [12] Regarding the Regular programme budget for 2020, Secretariat informed the FC that due to IPPC Secretariat's transition from AG department to NSP division, approximately USD 250,000 in the budget were still not transferred to the IPPC Secretariat. IPPC Secretariat expressed concern about the lack of clarity on the total budget of the IPPC Secretariat for 2020. Also, transition generated several new budget codes, which further complicates the work of the Secretariat. Secretariat is in contact with relevant FAO divisions, trying to resolve these issues.
- [13] The IPPC Secretariat indicated an estimated USD 140,000 savings from 2020 in Regular programme funds would be available to carry over for the Secretariat activities in 2021.
- [14] In addition, the latest analysis of funds indicated that current resources for 2021 (second year of the current FAO biennium budget) were sufficient to support the various CPM activities planned for 2021. The scope of planned activities was described in the presentations made by the Secretariat program leads.
- [15] The IPPC Secretariat also reported a record end of the year balance for the IPPC Multi-donor trust fund. However, he noted that 2021 TF contributions could decrease significantly and are not expected to stay level with past contributions. An assumption is that the economic costs of the pandemic and recovery efforts among contracting parties will reduce extra budgetary contributions to the IPPC Secretariat for the foreseeable future. The effects of this downturn in IPPC Multi-donor trust fund are not expected to be felt until 2022.
- [16] The Secretariat discussed the focused use of projects as defined by the donors. While such contributions have been very instrumental in advancing various CPM priority projects, concerns occasionally arise when projects have the effect of diverting Secretariat staff time and resources away from their other regular program responsibilities. The FC chair suggested that this should be notified and dealt with between the Secretariat and the Bureau to prevent and avoid distortions of Secretariat work and functions caused by certain projects driven by external donations.
- [17] The FC discussed and noted some important assumptions about next year which will affect the program and funding situation and outlook, including:
- CPM and Secretariat will continue to operate in remote virtual environment and there will be travel cost reductions. Significant cost reductions are associated with not having to fund travel for participants from developing countries. However, the source of this funding is EU project and these funds cannot be used for other purposes.
 - The virtual CPM meeting planned for March 2021 will not yield great savings to the IPPC Secretariat Regular programme allocation because interpretation, translation, IT related support, and other FAO conference services will largely be the same as an in-person event.
 - With respect the e-Phyto initiative, the Secretariat program lead for e-Phyto reported that current funding is sufficient to support e-Phyto activities and objectives for the next two years. It is expected that by 2022 the CPM will have reached some agreement on a sustainable funding and administrative scheme to support e-Phyto hub system for the future. Efforts will continue to be made over the next year to identify potential e-Phyto partners in industry and other international organizations which would also invest and support e-Phyto going forward.
 - In the context of 2021 funding for IPPC Secretariat employees' contracts, the Secretariat noted the short term contracts for certain high performing staff members was due to expire next year. The Chair suggested that this issue be taken up by the Bureau (recognizing that the savings that roll over into 2021 could be utilized to renew that contract and retain this high value staff member).

[18] The FC:

- *Noted* the update.

6. Key outcomes from SPG meeting

[19] The Secretariat noted that the SPG 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 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). The SPG highlighted that the implementation stages for different development agenda items may vary considerably from one another.

[20] One FC member reiterated the importance of strategically sequencing these new development agenda initiatives to ensure they can be adequately supported by IPPC's limited financial resources and Secretariat staffing.

[21] It was noted that funding for the various items on the development agenda was expected to come from extra-budgetary sources, to avoid diverting resources from IPPC core established functions. The FC Chair recalled that the original purpose and intent of including the development agenda in the Strategic Framework was to highlight specific high impact initiatives which could attract interest and funding from relevant donor organizations.

[22] Furthermore, it was recalled that the SPG is recommending that a Focus Group be established in 2021 to develop an implementation plan for the new Strategic Framework and providing recommendations for staging the new initiatives to avoid overwhelming the IPPC Secretariat and exceeding CPM's resources. The report of this Focus Group will be important to future FC budget planning discussions.

[23] The FC:

- *Noted* the update.

7. Top work priorities for 2021 and corresponding budgets

[24] The Secretariat staff leads for SSU, IFU, IST and e-Phyto provided a helpful overview of the core activities in their respective areas planned for 2021. This provided a coherent picture of the various tasks and deliverables underway at the Secretariat. These activities are extensive, some are inter-connected, and important for advancing CPM's agreed work program.

[25] There was neither substantive discussion nor judgments made by the FC about the rank order or priority of these activities, even though the FC and Secretariat remain keenly aware of the ongoing need to think about priorities.

[26] These presentations did not delve into new potential work associated with initiatives identified in the Development Agendas. It was noted that some of these initiatives which are entirely new are still pending further elaboration and decisions by CPM.

[27] The FC:

- *Noted* the update.
- *Agreed* to put forward the IPPC Secretariat Work Plan and Budget for 2021 for CPM Bureau's consideration through e-decision process. CPM Bureau is supposed to review the document and approve it for presentation at CPM-15.

8. Any other business

[28] There was limited discussion about resource mobilization other than to remind FC members that the FC, Bureau, and SPG had generally agreed that the development of a new or updated resource mobilization strategy be put on hold until new incoming Secretary comes into position. It had been agreed that the resource mobilization will require executive level leadership in order to develop the necessary relationships with potential donor organizations, foundations, and other entities with deep pockets.

9. Next meeting

[29] The Chair suggested that the FC have its next meeting shortly before the March CPM. This will allow to have a short check-in meeting about any lingering issues that may merit some discussion. The Secretariat will make those arrangements. Also, the Secretariat suggested that the FC consider, at a future meeting, the possibility of a new norm where money left over from completed TF and earmarked projects is absorbed by the general IPPC Secretariat funds to support broader CPM needs.

10. Closing of the meeting

[30] The Chair thanked members of the Secretariat on behalf of the FC for their active, important work they do throughout the year and specifically for their presentations which provided the necessary context for discussing program goals, resources, and future budget priorities.

Appendix 01 - Agenda

AGENDA ITEM		DOCUMENT NO.	PRESENTER
1.	Opening of the Meeting	--	GREIFER/NERSISYAN
2.	Meeting Arrangements	--	BENOVIC
2.1	Documents list	02_FC_2020_Dec_Tel	
2.2	Participants list	03_FC_2020_Dec_Tel	
3.	Objectives of the meeting	--	GREIFER
4.	Adoption of the Agenda	01_FC_2020_Dec_Tel	GREIFER/FC
5.	Brief update on 2020 budget issues	Oral/PPT	BENOVIC
6.	Key outcomes from SPG meeting	05_Bureau_2020_Dec_Tel	NERSISYAN
7.	Top work priorities for 2021 and corresponding budgets	08_Bureau_2020_Dec_Tel	GREIFER/BENOVIC
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard setting • Implementation facilitation • Integration and support • ePhyto 	04_FC_2020_Dec_Tel 05_FC_2020_Dec_Tel 06_FC_2020_Dec_Tel 07_FC_2020_Dec_Tel	MOREIRA LARSON DENG FEDCHOCK
8.	Any other business	--	GREIFER
9.	Next Meeting	--	GREIFER
10.	Closing of the Meeting	--	GREIFER

Appendix 02 - Documents List

DOCUMENT NO.	AGENDA NO.	DOCUMENT TITLE	POSTED
01_IPPC-FC_2020_Dec		Agenda	
02_IPPC-FC_2020_Dec	2.1	Documents list	
03_IPPC_FC_2020_Dec	2.2	Participants List	
04_IPPC-FC_2020_Dec	7	SSU 2021 tentative work plan	
05_IPPC-FC_2020_Dec	7	2021 IFU work plan	
06_IPPC-FC_2020_2020	7	2021 IST work plan	
07_IPPC-FC_2020_Dec	7	2021 IPPC ePhyto Solution priorities	

Appendix 03 - Participants List

Attending	Participant role / Region	Name, mailing address, telephone	Email address
✓	Africa <u>Vice-Chairperson</u>	Mr Lucien KOUAME KONAN Inspecteur Direction de la Protection des Végétaux, du Contrôle et de la Qualité Ministère de l'Agriculture B.P. V7 Abidjan, Ph.: (+225) 07 903754 COTE D'IVOIRE	l_kouame@yahoo.fr
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Attending	Participant role / Region	Name, mailing address, telephone	Email address
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