Minutes of the first meeting of the Working Group to develop IPPC e-Commerce Guide for plants, plant products and other regulated articles (2017-039) (VM-01)

*23 February 2021 at 16:00 – 19:00 p.m. (Central European Time, GMT +1)*

1. Opening of the Meeting

Mr Brent LARSON, the IPPC Secretariat, Implementation and Facilitation Unit Lead opened the meeting and welcomed the participants. He introduced himself and the other members of the IPPC Secretariat and explained the role of the Secretariat and Implementation and Capacity Development Committee in the development of guides and training materials. He provided some background on the work of the Secretariat in relation to e-Commerce. Finally, he explained the role of the working group and emphasized the value of each expert’s contributions to the development of the guide.

2. Meeting arrangements

There was no objection for the Secretariat to record the meeting.

Ms Barbara PETERSON, the IPPC Secretariat, Implementation and Facilitation Unit (IFU) Lead for the e-Commerce guide, explained the role of the Chairperson and the rapporteur.

Mr Thorwald GEUZE, Implementation and Capacity Development Committee (IC) Lead for the e-Commerce Guide offered to be the Chairperson and Ms Sanniel WILSON GRAHAM volunteered as rapporteur for the meeting. There were no objections.

The Chair introduced himself and led an activity to introduce all the meeting participants, using virtual breakout rooms.

The agenda for the meeting was adopted and is presented in Appendix 1.

3. Administrative matters

Mr Nicolas AUÑON and Mr Maurico RIBEIRO had internet connectivity issues and were unable to participate fully in the meeting.

The list of participants is presented in Appendix 2.

4. e-Commerce programme and process for the development of guides

Mr Thorwald GEUZE, the IC Lead for e-Commerce, made a presentation which provided information on the IPPC e-Commerce programme, the role of the IC, and the general process for the development of guides. He highlighted that e-Commerce is a priority developmental agenda under the IPPC Strategic Framework (2020-2030). The activities of the IPPC Secretariat's work plan on e-Commerce, including strengthening collaboration, establishing an informal network of experts, collecting existing information, and developing an IPPC guide on e-Commerce, were presented to the participants.

A Working Group (WG) member asked whether Secretariat is aware of any other international organizations that have produced guides related to e-Commerce. The Secretariat confirmed that the Universal Postal Union has published a guide on e-Commerce aimed at national postal unions and maintains lists of prohibited and restricted materials.

A WG member confirmed that the World Customs Organization has developed an e-Commerce package which includes the WCO Framework of Standards (FoS) on Cross-Border E-Commerce and a set of additional instruments and tools to support the implementation of the FoS. The package, which was finalized in December 2020, includes more than 10 different tools, such as definitions, technical specifications, flowcharts, and a compendium of case studies, which are intended to assist WCO members to implement the standards. This includes use of advanced electronic data, which is provided to Customs by the vendors or the e-Commerce marketplace to allow risks to be assessed pre-border, and thereby avoid hindering trade while ensuring safety and compliance. The link to the WCO e-Commerce package was shared in the chat: <http://www.wcoomd.org/en/topics/facilitation/instrument-and-tools/frameworks-of-standards/ecommerce.aspx>.

The Secretariat stressed the importance of identifying other relevant materials that already exist, so they may be shared with the WG members.

5. Overview of the e-Commerce Guide Outline

The Secretariat introduced the e- Commerce Guide Outline and provided an overview of the document. The Outline identifies relevant Convention Articles, ISPMs, and CPM recommendations and includes the scope, background and purpose of the guide, as well as key references and supporting materials. The main body of the document lists the tasks that have been assigned to the WG.

The Secretariat asked members of the WG if they had suggestions on where to start and how to approach the development of the guide.

One WG member shared that he intends to develop a case study that can be included in the guide.

One WG member suggested that is important to define e-Commerce in the context of the work to develop this guide, since so many trade transactions these days have an electronic component. He also raised questions about how NPPOs determine their acceptable level of phytosanitary security and how they evaluate their success, with respect to e-Commerce trade.

One WG member suggested that e-Commerce does not present an increased commodity risk. The pest risks have not changed and the commodity is the same. The difference is that more goods are moving individually rather than in bulk. Commercial consignments are also ordered on line, but they are shipped in a container and follow a different distribution pattern from small parcels. This change in distribution patterns means that goods may circumvent the points where regulatory agencies would traditionally engage with the supply chain to manage the risk. The biggest challenges are related to differences between the traditional distribution patterns for goods and the new distribution patterns resulting from e-Commerce.

One WG member highlighted that e-Commerce has resulted in many new players, some of whom may not be aware of applicable phytosanitary import requirements.

A member of the WG pointed out that when an NPPO carries out a pest risk analysis it focuses on a particular commodity from a particular country of origin. One of the challenges with e-Commerce is that the goods may be shipped from multiple countries. She also pointed out that customs brokers and freight forwarders may become more involved in clearance of e-Commerce consignments than traditional consignments.

A WCO representative explained the importance of good cooperation between Customs authorities and the entire supply chain including both traditional stakeholders, such as express carriers, freight forwarders, customs brokers and new stakeholders, such as vendors, market places, and fulfillment centers.

The SC representative suggested that the guide should focus on helping NPPOs identify e-Commerce supply chains and managing the associated risks. He pointed out that there is very little that NPPOs can do to affect e-Commerce activities occurring in another country and he highlighted that the guide should focus on providing NPPOs with guidance on how to manage the part of the e-Commerce supply chain that is located within their country – particularly the part that is exporting goods. He also highlighted that NPPOs need guidance to help identify e-Commerce supply chains and key e-Commerce stakeholders within their country, and how to reach out and engage with them.

One of the WG members agreed that NPPOs do not have control or jurisdiction over activities taking place in another country, although it is sometimes possible to contact the exporting NPPO or vendor. He also emphasized the importance of educating the public about the risks associated with importing regulated articles in order to raise bio-security awareness and reduce unintentional non-compliance.

Two members of the WG, who are also members of the Sea Containers Task Force, noted similarities between e-Commerce and sea containers; in both cases the phytosanitary challenges are related to the risk associated with the supply chain.

The Secretariat proposed to invite WCO to give a presentation on their e-Commerce package and contact Universal Postal Union and Global Express if they have a representative who could attend one of the WG meetings and give a presentation. The Secretariat also asked the WG members to give more thought to the structure of the Guide and to consider what the Table of Contents for the Guide might look like.

The WG agreed to the importance of discussing definitions related to e-Commerce and e-Commerce supply chains at an early stage of the work to develop this guide.

1. Accessing the restricted work area and technical resources on the International Phytosanitary Portal (IPP)

The Secretariat shared a video demonstrating how to access the restricted work area and how to find technical resources related to e-Commerce on the International Phytosanitary Portal (IPP).

8. Any other business

The WG agreed that the next WG meeting (VM-02) will be on 24 March 2021 at 21:00 - 24:00 (UTC time) and it will be held virtually using Zoom.

9. Closing

The Chair and the Secretariat thanked all the experts for their participation and the meeting was closed.

Annex I: Agenda

**First meeting of the Working Group to develop the IPPC e-Commerce Guide for plants, plant products and other regulated articles (2017-039) (VM-01)**

*23 February 2021 at 16:00 – 19:00 p.m. (Central European Time, GMT +1)*

**Zoom meeting url:** <https://fao.zoom.us/j/91609975358>

P**asscode:** 136785 **Meeting ID:** 916 0997 5358

**To join by telephone:** dial a number based on your current location and enter the meeting ID followed by the passcode (<https://fao.zoom.us/u/acr8r0bkYA>)

**PROVISIONAL Agenda**

*(revised 2021-02-15)*

| **AGENDA ITEM** | **Duration****(minutes)** | **DOCUMENT NO.** | **PRESENTER** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1** | **Opening of the Meeting**  | 10 | -- | Brent LARSONIPPC Secretariat |
| **2** | **Meeting Arrangements** | 60 | -- |  |
| 2.1 | Introduction of Chairperson |  | -- | IPPC Secretariat |
| 2.2 | Introduction of participants |  | -- | Chairperson |
| 2.3 | Selection of the rapporteur |  | -- | IPPC Secretariat |
| 2.4 | Adoption of the Agenda |  | VM01\_01 | Chairperson  |
| **3** | **Administrative matters** | 5 |  |  |
| 3.1 | Participants list |  | VM01\_02 | IPPC Secretariat  |
| 3.2 | Working documents |  | IPP restricted work area | IPPC Secretariat |
| **4** | **IPPC e-Commerce programme and process for the development of guides** | 30 | Presentation 1 | Thorwald GEUZE IC Lead  |
| **5** | **Overview of the e-Commerce Guide Outline**  | 40 | VM01\_03 | IPPC Secretariat / IC Lead |
| **6** | **Accessing the restricted work area and technical resources on the**  **International Phytosanitary Portal (IPP)** | 15 | [www.ippc.org](http://www.ippc.org)  | IPPC Secretariat |
| **7** | **Any Other Business** | 10 | -- | Chairperson |
| **8** | **Close of the Meeting** | 5 | -- | Chairperson / IPPC Secretariat |

Annex II: Participants list

**1st Meeting of the Working Group to develop an e-Commerce Guide for plants, plant products and other regulated articles (2017-039)**

**Participants List**

*(revised 2021-02-15)*

| **Role** | **Name, position, organization, country** | **Email address** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| WG Member | **Mr AUÑON, Nicolas**Technical SupervisorSENASA**Argentina** | naunon@senasa.gov.ar  |
| WG Member | **Mr BURNE, Alan**Manager Plant Import Risk Assessment Biosecurity New Zealand Ministry for primary Industries **New Zealand**  | allan.burne3@mpi.govt.nz  |
| WG Member | **Mr GALLANT, Bruno**Senior Legislation Officer integrationCanadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)**Canada**  | bruno.gallant@canada.ca  |
| WG Member | **Mr MARKER, Cory**Smuggling Interdiction Trade Compliance (SITC) Analyst USDA-APHIS Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ)**United States**  | cory.a.marker@usda.gov  |
| WG Member | **Mr McKEON, Samuel** Assistant Director, Biosecurity EducationDepartment of Agriculture, Water and Environment**Australia** | sam.mckeon@awe.gov.au  |
| WG Member | **Mr PAN, Xubin**Pest Risk Analysis Expert Chinese Academy of Inspection and Quarantine **China** | xubin.hu.pan@gmail.com  |
| WG Member | **Ms PASANEN, Miia**Senior Officer Finnish Food Authority**Finland**  | miia.pasanen@ruokavirasto.fi  |
| WG Member | **Ms PIERRE, Adele**Senior Plant Protection Officer National Plant Protection Organization, NAREI**Guyana** | apierre@narei.gov.gy  |
| WG Member | **Mr RIBEIRO, Mauricio**Postal Analyst Level IX Correios do Brasil (Postal Service)**Brazil** | mauriciocorrea@correios.com.br  |
| WG Member | **Mr SELA, Shane** Senior Trade Facilitation SpecialistWorld Bank Group**Canada / United States of America** | ssela@worldbank.org  |
| WG Member | **Ms WILSON GRAHAM, Sanniel**Chief Plant Quarantine OfficerMinistry of Agriculture & Fisheries **Jamaica**  | sanniel.wilsongraham@moa.gov.jm  |
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| Observer | **Ms KAGAWA, Satoko**Technical OfficerWorld Customs Organization**BELGIUM** | satoko.kagawa@wcoomd.org  |
| Implementation and Capacity Development Committee Lead | **Mr GEUZE, Thorwald** Senior Plant Health Officer - Food and consumer Product Safety Authority (NVWA) **NETHERLANDS** | t.geuze@nvwa.nl  |
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| IPPC Secretariat | **Ms GOGNADZE, Elene**Office AssistantIPPC Secretariat, FAO Viale Delle Terme di Caracalla00153 Roma**Italy** | elene.gognadze@fao.org  |