

REPORT

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Italy
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1999

Eleventh Technical Consultation Among Regional Plant Protection Organizations



Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

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Report of the Eleventh Technical Consultation among Regional Plant Protection Organizations

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**Eleventh Technical Consultation among
Regional Plant Protection Organizations**

Opening of the Consultation

1. Mr Duwayri, Director of the FAO Plant Production and Protection Division, opened the Consultation. He stated that this Consultation is the final meeting of the millennium and that the regional plant protection organizations (RPPOs) could take this opportunity to reflect on past accomplishments. Mr Duwayri noted that one of the goals of the meeting would be to develop consistent guidelines for the recognition and role of RPPOs in light of the new responsibilities of the IPPC. He also noted that RPPOs should play an active role in capacity building for weaker members, in particular with regard to the new round of World Trade Organization negotiations taking place this year.

Election of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Rapporteur

2. Mr Alan Pemberton (EPPO) was elected Chairperson. Mr Ismail Ibrahim (APPPC) was elected Vice-chairperson. The Secretariat agreed to serve as rapporteur.

Adoption of the Agenda

3. The provisional agenda was discussed by the meeting and modifications to the order of the agenda were suggested by the Chair. These modifications were agreed upon and the agenda was adopted as amended (Appendix I).

Actions arising from the Tenth Technical Consultation

4. The Chair summarized points arising from the Tenth Technical Consultation. These points were the status of acceptance of the New Revised Text of the IPPC, the revision of the Plant Protection Agreement for Asia and the Pacific Region, emergency response and regional cooperation.

5. The Chair suggested that the meeting review the report of the Tenth Technical Consultation.

6. Mr Robert Griffin, Coordinator, IPPC Secretariat, reviewed the status of acceptance of the New Revised Text by members. He noted that eight contracting parties to the 1997 text had submitted their acceptance of the New Revised Text, while two new countries had adhered to the 1979 Text. Representatives of the RPPOs noted that the process of acceptance of the amendments is a lengthy and complicated process for most contracting parties, but that their members had taken steps to initiate the process within their governments. It was further suggested that the goal for entry into force of the New Revised Text should be the year 2001.

7. The meeting noted that the Plant Protection Agreement for Asia and the Pacific Region has been revised. The two sets of amendments were adopted by the 21st Session of the Asian and Pacific Plant Protection Commission. The first set will update the agreement and bring it into line with the Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS). The second set concerned South American leaf blight. The amendments will be submitted to the next session of the FAO Council in November 1999 for adoption. After adoption, the first set will be circulated by the Director-General of FAO to contracting parties. The second set will be circulated by the Director-General after the adoption by the Commission of a standard on South American leaf blight.

8. EPPO reported that its Convention had been amended. The main changes were the adjustment for the revision of the International Plant Protection Convention and extension of its potential geographical area to include all countries that had been part of the former Soviet Union and all countries bordering the Mediterranean.

9. The issue of emergency response and regional cooperation was also discussed. Mr Smith (EPPO) noted that this was an issue with the introduction of Western corn rootworm into the Danube basin. Mr Morales (COSAVE) noted that Brazil and other countries of the region had expressed concern for the presence of Carambola fruit fly in French Guyana and Surinam. Mr Barbosa commented on the eradication project and the Chair requested that the Consultation receive an update on progress next year. The Chair suggested that Mr Bill Roberts, who will be a visiting scientist in the IPPC, could address these issues as part of his work programme. This was regarded by the meeting to be a priority. Finally, the meeting expressed its concern on the status and replacement of methyl bromide as a quarantine treatment. Mr McDonell (NAPPO) noted that NAPPO will host a meeting in October of 2000 on alternatives to methyl bromide, and that other RPPOs were welcome to attend.

Discussion Papers

10. Mr Smith (EPPO) summarized the discussion paper prepared by EPPO on Guidelines for Recognition of RPPOs. In particular he noted that the New Revised Text mentions RPPOs in Article IX but does not describe how RPPOs are recognized. The meeting discussed several criteria for the recognition of RPPOs. The importance of sovereignty of governments, compliance with Article IX of the New Revised Text and coordinated and harmonized action of the national organizations were considered to be the primary considerations for the formation and recognition of RPPOs. The meeting recommended the adoption of the guidelines as presented in Appendix II subject to review by FAO Legal Counsel.

11. Mr Smith (EPPO) introduced a discussion paper prepared by EPPO on procedures for cooperation between RPPOs and the IPPC Secretariat. The Chair suggested that the discussion also cover procedures for cooperation between RPPOs and the ICPM. The meeting discussed what the possible roles of RPPOs should be with regard to cooperation between members of an RPPO, with other RPPOs, the Secretariat and the Interim Commission. It was noted that since the Secretariat serves the Commission, cooperation between RPPOs and the Interim Commission and between RPPOs and the Secretariat would be the same. RPPOs could assist the Secretariat in the collection and dissemination of information, as well as the translation of standards. Furthermore, RPPOs could assist

member countries and the Secretariat in development of international standards by submitting regional standards to the Secretariat for further consideration and adaptation by the Commission. Mr Canale noted that another possible role of RPPOs would be to facilitate adequate regional representation of members in subsidiary bodies, but this was generally considered an ICPM matter. The meeting thus agreed that the provisional recommendations would be appended in the report (Appendix III) and that further consideration would be required at the next Technical Consultation.

12. Mr Smith presented a discussion paper on the reporting obligations of EPPO members (Appendix IV). Several aspects of pest reporting were discussed by the meeting though it was also noted that this topic would be covered in the Interim Commission meeting. The meeting agreed that next year's Technical Consultation would return to this discussion following the results of the discussion of this topic in the Interim Commission meeting. It was also agreed that the capacities of different RPPOs whose members are developing countries should be taken into account.

13. The Secretariat presented a discussion paper on provisional rules of procedure for RPPOs attending SPS Committee meetings. The meeting agreed that each RPPO participating as part of the IPPC delegation would limit itself to one. EPPO had withdrawn its request for observer status as a result of the arrangement subject to acceptance by the ICPM. Mr May (OIRSA) explained that OIRSA had not withdrawn its request for observer status with the SPS Committee since OIRSA covers both animal and plant health. Thus, representation within the IPPC delegation would not cover both aspects. The Chair requested that OIRSA report to the Consultation next year the result of their application for observer status with the SPS Committee. The meeting agreed to the amended provisional rules of procedure (Appendix V), subject to review by the FAO legal counsel and subsequent consideration by the ICPM.

Coordinated activities

14. The meeting determined there were five issues for discussion: priorities for standard setting, NAPPO regional standard for wood dunnage and packing material, phytosanitary certificates, official control and biosafety. With regard to priorities for standard setting, the meeting agreed that RPPOs could assist the Secretariat in preparing standards by submitting regional standards for review. It was also agreed that, in some cases, simplified standards might be appropriate to elaborate on particular concepts or issues. Mr Ikin mentioned that the Pacific Plant Protection Organization (PPPO) had produced a simplified standard on pest risk analysis (PRA) which was circulated at the meeting for the information of the participants.

15. Mr McDonell (NAPPO) advised the meeting that NAPPO had developed a regional standard on wood dunnage and packing material and that it had been submitted to the IPPC Secretariat for consideration by the Interim Commission as a candidate for an international standard.

16. Mr Griffin informed the meeting as to the status of the international standard on phytosanitary certificates. It was reviewed this past year and is in the process of being translated and sent for country consultation.

17. Mr McDonell (NAPPO) expressed concern over the interpretation and application of the term "official control". A draft definition had been prepared by the FAO Glossary group but the CEPM found that the revised definition did not adequately define the term. NAPPO feels that a definition is not adequate but that a background paper or possibly an ISPM are required. It was noted that the definition of official control would be mentioned at the Interim Commission meeting.

18. Mr Ikin (PPPO) discussed the issue of biosafety, including genetically modified organisms. He noted that other international organizations are in the process of developing guidelines on these issues, but do not appear to be taking phytosanitary or plant quarantine organizations into consideration. In addition, Mr Lloyd and Mr Canale noted, and the meeting agreed, that there is a sense of urgency in the RPPOs dealing with this issue. NAPPO advised that at its meeting of October 18-22, 1999 there will be presentations on the Convention on Biological Diversity and the biosafety protocol. The meeting discussed whether there was a position which the RPPOs could take on this issue, but were reminded that biosafety is an agenda item for the Commission meeting. The meeting then agreed that, pending the outcome of the Interim Commission meeting, the RPPOs would further discuss this issue at the next Technical Consultation. It was agreed that if the Commission did not form a working group on biosafety, the RPPOs would form a small working group to follow the activities of other organizations and to write a discussion paper for the next Consultation. Mr Canale (COSAVE) and Mr McDonell (NAPPO) both agreed to serve on this working group if necessary. Other RPPOs were also invited to participate.

19. The Chair of the meeting inquired as to whether the outcome of the Technical Consultation should be reported to the Interim Commission. The meeting report from 9th Technical Consultation was distributed to the 1st Interim Commission as an information document, but it is not an official meeting document. The meeting agreed that the report The meeting agreed that the reports of the 10th and 11th Technical Consultations should be made available to the Interim Commission. The meeting further agreed that one of the countries would raise the issue of the Consultation reporting to the Interim Commission under "other business" in the agenda of the Interim Commission.

20. Action points were agreed to as per Appendix VI.

Date and Venue of the Twelfth Technical Consultation

21. The 12th Technical Consultation was agreed to be held in Rome immediately after the 3rd ICPM. If this resulted in a long period between meetings of the Technical Consultation, the Secretariat, in consultation with the RPPOs, will convene a meeting at an earlier date. The location and date will be determined in consultation with the RPPOs.

Closure

22. Mr van der Graaff noted that this would be the last Technical Consultation for Mr Ikin prior to his retirement at the end of the month. He thanked Mr Ikin for his long and valued contribution to the development of phytosanitary issues and wished him well in the future. In closing the Consultation, the chair thanked participants for their constructive contributions to a successful meeting.

IPPC SECRETARIAT

**ELEVENTH TECHNICAL CONSULTATION AMONG REGIONAL PLANT
PROTECTION ORGANIZATIONS**

Date: September 30 – October 01, 1999

Agenda

- 1. Opening**
- 2. Election of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairpersons and Rapporteur**
- 3. Adoption of the Agenda**
- 4. Actions arising from the Tenth Technical Consultation**
- 5. Coordinated Activities**
- 6. Discussion Papers**
- 7. Other Business**
- 8. Venue and Date of 12th TC**
- 9. Closure**

Guidelines proposed to the ICPM for the recognition of Regional Plant Protection Organizations

1. Agreement:
 - between governments;
 - to accomplish the objectives of Art. IX of the IPPC in their regions;
 - deposited with the IPPC Secretariat.

2. Functions:
 - coordinating body for NPPOs in the areas covered;
 - harmonization of phytosanitary measures;
 - participates in activities to achieve the objectives of the IPPC;
 - gather and disseminate information;
 - cooperates with the Secretariat.

3. A suitable period of transition is suggested to allow existing RPPOs to meet these criteria.

Provisional procedures for cooperation between RPPOs and the IPPC Secretariat

The New Revised Text of the IPPC provides that:

“RPPOs shall cooperate with the Secretary in achieving the objectives of the Convention and, where appropriate, cooperate with the Secretary and the Commission in developing international standards.”

and

“The Secretary shall cooperate with RPPOs in achieving the aims of the Convention.”

To these formal undertakings, one can add a more general cooperation in relation to the programmes of activity of the RPPOs and the Secretariat.

Cooperation with the Commission in relation to standard setting

The role of RPPOs in relation to the future standard-setting committee of the Interim Commission was one of the issues discussed by the ad hoc Working Group in Montevideo. The Working Group proposed that RPPOs :

- establish regional standards and deposit them with the Secretariat
- encourage cooperation between their member countries in the preparation of individual or joint positions on :
 - proposals for new ISPMs, deposit of regional standards as candidates for ISPMs, or review of ISPMs
 - comments on specifications of draft ISPMs
 - comments on draft ISPMs received for consultation
- cooperate with the Secretary in support of the work programme.

Regional standards constitute an important potential source of material for the establishment of ISPMs. The RPPOs should prepare appropriately annotated lists of their regional standards. In addition to depositing them with the Secretariat, they should review them jointly, and use them as a basis for proposals for new ISPMs.

In order for RPPOs to fulfil their role of encouraging cooperation between their members in the preparation of individual or joint positions on standards, their Secretariats need to receive the appropriate material from the IPPC Secretariat for consideration. Accordingly, the RPPOs look to the IPPC Secretariat to give them access to the specifications, and send them draft ISPMs in good time.

The RPPOs have already cooperated with the Secretariat for several years in hosting Working Group meetings and in identifying suitable experts to serve as members of these groups. This can readily continue. RPPOs may also, individually or in cooperation with each other, organize their own working groups (with involvement of the IPPC Secretariat as appropriate) to develop standards. The extension of the set of standards from the present general concept standards to a much wider range of pest or

commodity-specific standards is a task where the RPPOs are particularly well placed to provide technical support, in view of their experience of developing such standards at regional level.

Other objectives of the Convention

RPPOs receive a variety of information from their members (see separate document on Reporting Obligations). This information overlaps with the information which members have to report to each other and to the IPPC Secretariat. RPPOs have the possibility to collect and distribute this information, more widely and transparently than is provided for in the IPPC or SPS Agreement. This applies particularly to information on occurrence, outbreak and spread of pests, and on phytosanitary requirements. These are tasks that the RPPOs can undertake at their own initiative, but there would also be benefits in cooperating with the IPPC Secretariat on this.

Electronic services

Earlier attempts to share information between the IPPC Secretariat and the RPPOs were only partly successful, because of communication problems and delays. The Internet now provides a greatly improved means of communicating information from locations all over the world. One of the most important areas for cooperation in future will be between the “Webmasters” of the organizations, to ensure that a person seeking phytosanitary information and entering any of the Web Sites concerned can easily find all the others and obtain homogeneous and well organized information.

Use of different languages

Most of the RPPOs use English, Spanish or French, and have considerable practical experience of translating technical phytosanitary documents between these languages. Although many of the documents originating from the Interim Commission will initially be in English, the French and Spanish versions will be actively used in the countries concerned in preference to the English original. It is accordingly very important that they should be technically equivalent. The RPPOs have assisted in ensuring this, and have the possibility to continue.

Conclusion

In general, the first priority is to agree on areas for cooperation, where real practical possibilities exist. Once agreement has been reached on this, more detailed procedures can be worked out for implementation.

Reporting obligations of EPPO members

Proposed EPPO Council recommendation

1. Each EPPO Member Government should report to the Organization, as required by the New Revised Text of the IPPC:

- any points of entry which are specified as the only ones through which consignments of particular plants or plant products may be imported;
- any lists of regulated pests which it may establish (using scientific names);
- any emergency actions on the detection of pests posing a potential threat to its territories.

2. Each EPPO Member Government should additionally report to the Organization the following information identified in the IPPC, without being specified as reportable to RPPOs:

- newly adopted phytosanitary requirements, restrictions and prohibitions;
- a description of its official NPPO and of any changes in it;
- any significant instances of non-compliance with phytosanitary certification (using the "Notification of interception" forms already recommended by Council in 1992).

3. Each EPPO Member Government should report to the Organization information on:

- occurrence, outbreak or spread of pests that may be of immediate or potential danger.

The EPPO Convention provides that "*Member Governments shall furnish to the Organization so far as is practicable such information as the Organization may reasonably require in order to carry out its functions*". The EPPO Working Party on Phytosanitary Regulations considers that all the information under points 1-3 above falls in this category. It suggests that an *ad hoc* EPPO Working Group should be established to decide how and to what extent information on point 43 can reasonably and practicably be communicated.

Rules of Procedure for RPPOs Attending WTO-SPS Committee Meetings as Members of the IPPC Delegation

The World Trade Organization (WTO) Committee for the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (the SPS Committee) makes provision for certain organizations to attend meetings of the Committee as permanent observers. Primary among these observers are the international standard setting organizations identified in the SPS Agreement: the IPPC for plant health; OIE for animal health; and Codex Alimentarius for human health and food safety. An IPPC Secretariat staff member routinely attends SPS Committee Meetings with funding provided by FAO though the regular programme budget for the Secretariat.

As an observer, the IPPC delegate's primary role in the meeting is to follow the issues and activities being discussed by WTO Members and to respond to any inquiries directed specifically to the IPPC by the SPS Secretariat or Committee Members. In addition, there are two standing agenda items for which the SPS Committee has requested reports from the observer organizations; "technical assistance and cooperation", and "matters of interest arising from the work of observer organizations".

Other organizations, including some RPPOs, have formally requested observer status in the SPS Committee. The question of RPPOs as observers in the SPS Committee was raised at the 10th Technical Consultation in 1998. At that time, several RPPOs expressed the desire to have more information about SPS Committee meetings. It was agreed that the IPPC Secretariat would make and distribute summary reports to RPPOs after each meeting. This practice was implemented beginning with the 13th Meeting of the SPS Committee in November 1998 and has continued to present, recognizing that all official documents and other official communications relevant to the SPS are supplied directly to member governments by the WTO.

The SPS Committee has continued to consider requests for observer status by several different organizations over an extended period while also developing criteria and procedures for the granting of observer status. In the case of RPPOs, the Committee has suggested that these organizations be provided the opportunity to attend as part of the IPPC delegation.

The IPPC Secretariat indicated to the SPS Secretariat its willingness to implement this proposal as a means to help the Committee resolve some of the outstanding issues regarding observers. This resulted in a request by the Committee to have the IPPC invite EPPO and OIRSA to attend the 15th Meeting of the SPS Committee in July 1999 as part of the IPPC delegation. Invitations were extended as requested, resulting in a positive response from EPPO.

Provisional Rules of Procedure were proposed by the IPPC Secretariat, modified in consultation with EPPO, and agreed prior to the meeting, as follows:

Provisional Rules of Procedure:

1. The representative of the IPPC Secretariat is the spokesperson for the delegation. A representative from an RPPO may be designated by the IPPC Secretariat to make a statement to the meeting.
2. The IPPC Secretariat will inform RPPOs of the Committee meeting dates and provisional agenda as soon as possible after receiving this information from the WTO. RPPOs will inform the IPPC Secretariat of their intention to join the IPPC delegation at least two weeks in advance of the Committee meeting.
3. RPPOs are limited to one delegate per organization. Funding for attendance is the responsibility of the RPPO.
4. RPPOs can provide information for the IPPC Secretariat to consider in advance of the Committee meeting and may suggest points to contribute to the meeting.
5. Following the meeting, the IPPC Secretariat will prepare a summary report of the meeting for distribution to RPPOs who were not present for the meeting.

List of Action Points - 11th Technical Consultation of RPPOs
Actions arising from the Tenth Technical Consultation

1. RPPOs to urge adherence/acceptance of revised IPPC by their members.
2. APPPC and FAO
 - complete revision of the Agreement and encourage acceptance;
 - complete PRA and develop RSPM for South American leaf blight of rubber.
3. RPPOs to offer contribution to NAPPO methyl bromide (MeBr) meeting (October 2000) and attend if possible. NAPPO will distribute report and conclusions to RPPOs for their members.
 - RPPOs to urge members to seek alternatives to MeBr, especially non-chemical and systems approaches.
4. Emergency response-Invite Bill Roberts as FAO visiting scientist to develop a discussion paper on emergency response protocols.
5. IPM and pest management-Invite Bill Roberts to develop discussion paper on IPM and pest management, if time is available.
6. Emergency actions in Central and South America and Caribbean-urge RPPOs and Contracting Parties to support/maintain eradication efforts on the Carambola fruit fly.
7. Note NAPPO workshop (February 2000) on pink hibiscus mealy bug and request report circulation back to RPPO Technical Consultation.
8. Emergency action- *Diabrotica virgifera* in EPPO region: invite EPPO to report back to RPPO Technical Consultation.

Discussion Papers

9. RPPOs to deposit Regional Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (RSPMs) with the IPPC Secretariat.
10. RPPOs to identify RSPMs as candidates for consideration as ISPMs with the IPPC Secretariat.
11. Recognition of RPPOs (Appendix II)
 - Secretariat to request FAO Legal Council review;
 - request members of RPPOs to draw attention of ICPM to report;
 - next Technical Consultation to consider draft annex.
12. Cooperation by RPPOs and IPPC Secretariat (Appendix III)
 - RPPOs to consider/submit comments to the Secretariat for amendments to the paper;
 - next Technical Consultation to consider further action needed.

Coordinated Activities

13. Note discussion on reporting obligations including the differing capacities of RPPOs and reconsider at the next Technical Consultation in the light of the ICPM discussion.
14. Note urgency of the discussion on biodiversity and genetically modified organisms and in light of the outcome of the discussion of the 2nd ICPM request the IPPC Secretariat in cooperation with COSAVE, NAPPO and others to prepare by correspondence or working group a discussion paper for the next Technical Consultation

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