CPM FOCUS GROUP ON COMMUNICATIONS - UPDATE

1. Introduction

The Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) Focus Group on Communications was formally established by the CPM Bureau in July 2021, following a recommendation of the Strategic Planning Group in October 2020 and the subsequent endorsement by CPM-15 in April 2021. The Focus Group is currently composed of ten members with relevant skills and experience in communications and knowledge of the IPPC and its activities, and will remain effective until CPM-17 (2023), subject to possible subsequent Bureau decisions on extending its mandate. Some of the key functions of the CPM Focus Group on Communications include and are not limited to:

* Develop the IPPC Communications Strategy (2022-2030) to be presented to CPM-16 (2022) for adoption, as well as monitor and support its implementation.
* Propose and develop plans for campaigns to raise global awareness of plant health and the work of IPPC.
* Propose and elaborate procedures to plan IPPC communication activities and their implementation for future international days of plant health.
* Develop strategies to engage relevant stakeholders: IPPC contracting parties, Regional Plant Protection Organizations, the IPPC Secretariat and representatives of relevant FAO divisions, decision-makers, other international organizations and major donors.
* Identify, solicit and help to mobilize resources for the implementation of the IPPC Communication Strategy.

2. Progress update

Focus Group participants recommended the election of a Chairperson and a Co-Chairperson, one subject-matter expert and one person with a strong background in communication respectively. The group elected Ms Lihong ZHU (New Zealand) as Chairperson and Mr James STAPLETON (CGIAR) as Co-Chairperson of the Group. Membership from the North American region is still vacant following the transfer of the appointed representative from Canada.

The IPPC Secretariat coordinated the preparation of three focus group meetings on 3, 15 and 28 September 2021. In an orientation meeting on 3 September, the focus group members introduced themselves, reviewed the Terms of Reference and the background documentation, including the IPPC Strategic Framework 2020-2030, the IPPC communications strategy 2013-2018, the IYPH communication strategy and action plan, and the communication reports to CPM from 2016 to 2021. The group requested a background summary from the Secretariat on the IYPH digital reports and updates on the development agenda items already underway. During the second meeting, the focus group elected a Chairperson and a Co-chairperson, initiated discussion to advance its work plan and agree on strategic directions based on a draft road map provided by the Secretariat.

Discussions around the communication objectives were initiated during the third meeting on 28 September. The IPPC strategic objectives as well as recommendations from the previous communication strategy and the IPPC Strategic Framework 2020-2030 were considered. It was agreed that the eight-year communication strategy will enhance IPPC’s visibility, engagement and impact.

The Focus Group on Communications will meet again on 27 October to advance its work programme, discuss key target audiences and strategy’s elements to be included in the new communication strategy that will be presented at CPM-16 for adoption.

3. Objectives under discussion

The primary objectives currently under discussion of the communication strategy include and are not limited to:

* Raise global awareness of the importance and the impacts of plant health in our lives, and its contribution to the achievement of the SDGs, particularly SDG 1 (no poverty); SDG 2 (zero hunger); SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth); SDG 12 (responsible consumption and production); SDG 13 (climate action); SDG 15 (life on land); and SDG 17 (partnerships for the goals);
* Raise awareness of the IPPC as the sole international standard setting organization for plant health and facilitating safe trade;
* Raising awareness of the capacity development opportunities organized by IPPC and for success stories on their effectiveness, as well as promoting IPPC as a leading source and disseminator of information and knowledge on plant protection;
* Enhance the effectiveness of global, regional and national plant health communication initiatives with the IPPC Secretariat, FAO (including regional offices) through the establishment of a coordination mechanism;
* Support the implementation of the IPPC Strategic Framework 2020-2030 and its development agenda items;
* Highlight the vital role played by national and regional plant protection organizations in guaranteeing the safeguard of plant resources, and help improve the implementation of international standards for phytosanitary measures to facilitate safe trade;
* Enhance the consistency and quality of communications activities and overarching messaging with the IPPC community and mobilize stakeholders through coordinated annual plans;
* Support IPPC Secretariat, NPPOs and RPPOs’ resource mobilization programmes to reach its target audiences through clear and compelling communications illustrating the economic, social, and environmental benefits of investments in plant protection.

The SPG is invited to:

1. *note* the report;
2. *provide* guidance on strategic direction.