International Day of Plant Health

Prepared by the IPPC Secretariat

With the support of its national plant protection organization (NPPO), the government of Zambia tabled the proposal for an International Day of Plant Health (IDPH) to be observed by the international community on 12 May each year. The proposal was endorsed unanimously by the FAO Committee on Agriculture (COAG) and the FAO Council in 2020. The FAO Conference discussed and approved the proposal unanimously in its 2021 session[[1]](#footnote-2), mandating the FAO Director-General, Mr QU Dongyu, to inform Mr Antonio GUTERRES, Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN), about the proposal to establish the International Day of Plant Health.

The UN Secretary-General received Mr QU Dongyu’s request on 14 July 2021 proposing the discussion on the IDPH establishment to the Second Committee of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) at its seventy-sixth session. The Bureau of the UNGA Second Committee is still assessing the possibility to convene a session on the requests to assess the proposals for international occurrences, such as the IDPH. The Bureau of the UNGA Second Committee may also decide not to add such an agenda item; should that be the case, an alternative mechanism to table the resolution should be discussed.

The Strategic Planning Group (SPG) may discuss, assess and propose activities and initiatives that IPPC contracting parties (CPs), the IPPC Secretariat and the international community may undertake to celebrate the first IDPH, which would occur on the seventieth anniversary of the Convention. The International Steering Committee of the International Year of Plant Health (IYPH) suggested that the former IYPH Technical Advisory Board be transformed into the IDPH ISC and be composed of IPPC CPs, FAO Permanent Representatives and stakeholders on a regional basis. Both the IYPH ISC and CPM Bureau noted that the IDPH may become an occasion to continue promoting the IYPH legacies and to sustain the IYPH momentum on plant health dialogues globally. The SPG may consider providing its strategic guidance on the types of activities or initiatives that may fit the first IDPH as well as elaborate on the potential key messages and possible targeted audiences.

The SPG may also note that the IYPH ISC agreed to explore the possibility of linking plant health and art, considering the important role plants play in creating original content. Amongst the IYPH activities, the SPG may also take inspiration by the photo contest and art and drawing competition, which resulted in hundreds of photos and original drawings submissions to the IPPC Secretariat. Some IPPC CPs promoted the IYPH by exposing flags of IYPH logo on their government buildings or by colouring in green some monuments and landscapes to raise awareness on plant health.

The SPG is invited to:

1. *Discuss* alternative approaches to table the request for the establishment of the International Day of Plant Health at the seventy-six session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.
2. *Assess* the activities or initiatives that IPPC contracting parties and the international community may undertake to celebrate the first International Day of Plant Health, once established, paying particular attention to the key messages, the targeted audiences and the scope of the activities or initiatives.
1. Paragraph 49, page 11, [Report of the forty-second session of the FAO Conference](http://www.fao.org/3/ng169en/ng169en.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)