



19 October 2021

Dear Sir/Madam,

As you are aware, the Fifteenth Session of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM-15) was held on 16 and 18 March, and on 1 April 2021 virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the measures for its containment. The CPM Bureau discussed the planning and scheduling of the Sixteenth Session of the Commission (CPM-16) assessing the current epidemiological situation, and recommended that it be held virtually again, given the persistence of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The CPM Bureau consulted the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) Secretariat and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) with a view to replicate the virtual setting proposed in 2021, and identified 5, 7 and 21 April 2022 as tentative dates to hold CPM-16 to address priority issues within its mandate.

In this context, and in the absence of any specific provision in the CPM Rules of Procedure, FAO is suggesting to replicate last year's procedure drawing upon FAO GRO XXV (13). IPPC Contracting Parties are invited to endorse:

- i. that CPM-16 be held virtually (it is noted that meeting documents will be made available on the IPPC website at www.ippc.int);
- ii. the exceptional suspension of any provisions within the CPM Rules of Procedure that presuppose in-person sessions of the Commission;
- iii. the authorization to the CPM Bureau to assess whether credentials of Contracting Parties are in conformity with the requirements of the Organization and report to the CPM accordingly.

You are kindly requested to confirm your endorsement of the proposed way forward by logging in to the International Phytosanitary Portal (IPP) at this link: <https://www.ippc.int/en/poll/64/> to register your response not later than 30 November 2021.

Please contact the IPPC Secretariat (ippc@fao.org), should you encounter any difficulties in expressing your preference or accessing the IPP. Should the proposal be endorsed by a two-thirds majority of the IPPC Contracting Parties, CPM-16 will proceed with the organization of the virtual session and you will be informed accordingly no later than 15 January 2022. On that occasion, you will receive a formal invitation to CPM-16.

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To: Contracting Parties of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC)

The Session would be conducted in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Spanish and Russian, and all related documents would be available in the six official languages of the Organization.

I wish to underline that the above-mentioned proposal is due to the exceptional circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Please rest assured that every effort will be made to adhere as closely as possible to the Rules of Procedure of the CPM, including existing practices.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Elizabeth Bechdol". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "E" and a long, sweeping tail.

Elizabeth A. Bechdol
Deputy Director-General