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Convention

# **REPORT**

## **Focus Group on Communication**

**Virtual Meeting  
28 September 2021**

**IPPC Secretariat**

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## 1. Opening of the Meeting

- [1] The IPPC Secretariat (Secretariat) opened the meeting and welcomed all participants.
- [2] The Chairperson thanked the Focus Group on Communication (FG-COM) participants for their contributions to the draft objectives document.

## 2. Administrative matters

### 2.1 Document list

- [3] FG-COM participants took note of the documents on the document list as presented in Appendix 1 to the present report.
- [4] One participant asked if the FAO communication strategy could be shared with FG-COM. The Secretariat said that the communication strategy was an internal document that was currently under development, but the Secretariat would ensure that focus group proposals were aligned with the strategy.
- [5] One participant said it would be useful to understand the organization of communication within other IPPC divisions. It would also be beneficial to involve communication focal points from other divisions in the work of the group and to get their feedback. The Secretariat said that the Implementation and Capacity Development Committee (IC) focal point for communication had been invited to the present meeting, but was unable to attend; the IC focal point would participate in the forthcoming FG-COM meeting.
- [6] A number of participants said that the previous IPPC communication strategy could inform the work of FG-COM, and that any key performance indicators (KPIs) in particular would be helpful to understand how success had been measured. The Secretariat said that the previous IPPC communication strategy had not included any KPIs, but the group could consider using the International Year of Plant Health (IYPH) communication report to inform the development of KPIs. The Chairperson said that it would be important for FG-COM to include KPIs in the new communication strategy; issues to consider would include objectives, deliverables and how those could be achieved, target audiences, and how success could be measured.
- [7] *It was agreed that the Secretariat would provide a summary explaining the organization of communication within IPPC divisions.*
- [8] *It was agreed that the Secretariat would provide a summary of the FAO communication strategy.*

### 2.2 Participant list

- [9] The Secretariat introduced the participant list (Appendix 2).
- [10] The Secretariat invited the participants to notify the Secretariat if any changes were needed to the information on the participant list.
- [11] The Chairperson, in noting the absence of a number of FG-COM members, said that the small size of the focus group meant that it was important to have input, technical expertise and regional representation from all members.
- [12] The Secretariat said that the selection process was ongoing to find a new representative from North America to join FG-COM. The Secretariat also said that a new IPPC focal point for communication would join FG-COM from its forthcoming meeting onwards.

## 3. Adoption of the Agenda and election of the rapporteur

- [13] FG-COM participants elected Ms Katy LEE as Rapporteur of the meeting.
- [14] FG-COM participants adopted the agenda as presented in Appendix 3.

### 3.1 Discussion on the objectives of the strategy

- [15] In discussing objectives, the Co-Chairperson said that it was important to step back and to consider what was the comparative advantage of the IPPC. As the communication strategy would be implemented through partners, such as national and regional plant protection organizations, it would be important to distinguish what made the IPPC distinctive.
- [16] The Co-Chairperson said it was important for FG-COM to consider obstacles that might impede the success of the group. Past issues the IPPC had encountered with its communication strategy could help to inform the work of the group. The Secretariat said that one particular challenge was that there was no structured communication mechanism between the IPPC and its contracting parties, which made it difficult to communicate on activities at global, regional and national levels. Such a mechanism would also support the implementation of other objectives. A suggested recommendation for the group to put forward could be to prioritize communication as one of the core activities of the IPPC.
- [17] The Chairperson said that identifying target audiences and developing key messaging was a core deliverable for FG-COM. A number of participants said that developing key messaging for ministers was particularly important both because ministers were decision makers empowered to make resources available and impact work, and because ministers could be political appointees who were not necessarily familiar with plant health considerations. Noting that there were many target audiences, the Chairperson suggested ranking audiences into a hierarchy for consideration and to develop a timeline for targeting different audiences.
- [18] The Secretariat said that the Strategic Planning Group (SPG) would discuss the IPPC partnership strategy at its forthcoming meeting. The strategy would consider the ideal approach to engage with stakeholders, and may complement and support the work of FG-COM. The Chair welcomed the consideration of the IPPC partnership strategy, and said it was important for FG-COM to avoid duplicating work that had already been done.
- [19] A number of participants said that necessary alignment with FAO corporate communications created some challenges for the IPPC. Having a recognizable global brand would be beneficial for the IPPC, but IPPC branding must be implemented within FAO guidelines. The Secretariat said that FAO would be open to discussions regarding flexible or new approaches if FG-COM had recommendations thereon with strong justifications. A mechanism to coordinate with FAO corporate communication would be beneficial.
- [20] On governance, the Secretariat said that each team within the IPPC had a communication focal point, but often that person was a technical expert, not a communication expert. It would be beneficial to have a mechanism to oversee and provide advice to technical committees on how communication could help them achieve their objectives and deliverables.
- [21] Critical to the success of the communication strategy would be the allocation of resources. For communication to be effective and to reach more people, the necessary resources and capacities needed to be allocated. One particular area for FG-COM consideration was increased and better communication with donors and the private sector. Developing donor-specific, targeted messaging would be helpful to attract more resources.
- [22] The Chairperson said that even in developed countries with substantive funding for plant health, there were not always dedicated communication specialists working on the topic; communication on plant health was often subsumed into the many responsibilities of a ministry, or that communication on plant health could be split across ministries. One participant said that developing countries were even less likely to have dedicated communication specialists, and noted that, even at a regional level, there were no dedicated communication specialists working on plant health in their region. A number of participants said that the lack of dedicated communication specialists underscored the need for easily accessible and shareable resources on plant health that could be used effectively by non-experts. One such example was the IYPH monthly newsletter, which had been a useful resource to share objectives, best practices, processes and inspiration around plant health topics.

- [23] One participant said that not all private sector organizations have dedicated in-house communication experts, the same as for public sector bodies. It was suggested to carry out a review of the communication capacity of the global plant health community.
- [24] One participant said that FG-COM had not, as yet, considered the role of the communication strategy in facilitating safe trade. It was important to have adequate communication so that stakeholders were aware of standards and that they understood why standards were put in place to protect plant health.
- [25] A short but impactful message could help to raise awareness of the IPPC. Key messaging developed for the IYPH could be helpful in that regard.
- [26] Recognizing the importance of the Strategic Framework 2020–2030, FG-COM should work with the Focus Group on Strategic Framework 2020–2030 Development Agenda Items (FG-SFDAI) to support the communication activities to deliver the Strategic Framework. Working with the Focus Group on Climate Change and Phytosanitary Issues (FG-CCPI) would also be beneficial to help that group deliver on its communication objectives as well.
- [27] Work in standard setting made the IPPC unique. A number of participants noted that the IPPC was involved in other areas as well, including trade facilitation, capacity-building, dispute settlement and information exchange; FG-COM should also be mindful of those areas as it developed its action plan. To that end, the Co-Chairperson suggested developing both high-level objectives, to support the global role of the IPPC, and process objectives, that set out actions to achieve the high-level objectives, such as the communication mechanism, ensuring quality materials, raising resources and supporting partnership activities. Each objective would have its own work package, setting out who would be involved, timing, resources and how the objective supported the delivery of the IPPC mandate.
- [28] *It was agreed that the Secretariat would share the IPPC partnership strategy with FGCOM for consideration once the document had been finalized.*
- [29] *It was agreed that plant health and trade facilitation would be added as an objective of the communication strategy.*
- [30] *It was agreed that FG-COM would produce a document for the group's consideration at its forthcoming meeting on the necessary process objectives for the draft communication strategy. The Group tasked Ms Gabrielle VIVIAN-SMITH and Ms Lihong ZHU with considering technical process objectives, and Ms Lucy CARSON-TAYLOR and Mr James STAPLETON with considering communication process objectives.*

### 3.2 Reporting to the SPG

- [31] The Chairperson said that the draft paper to present to SPG was due on 30 September 2021, in two days' time. The Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) Bureau representative explained that SPG was aware FG-COM had only met three times and, as such, a short document with a simple update on the work of the group would be sufficient. Participants suggested that the draft paper should set out key facts about the group, such as its membership and number of meetings to date, and include the road map that had been prepared at the preceding FG-COM meeting.
- [32] *It was agreed that the Secretariat would prepare the draft paper for the Chairperson and CoChairperson to present to SPG.*

### 3.3 Discussion on the narrative framework and strategy elements

- [33] The agenda item was not discussed.

## 4. Any other business

- [34] The Secretariat said that, in discussions on the terms of reference (TOR) for the International Steering Committee (ISC) for the International Day of Plant Health (IDPH), the CPM Bureau had suggested that

the TOR be shared with FG-COM for comment. The Bureau also suggested that the Chairperson of FG-COM could be a member of the ISC IDPH.

[35] *It was agreed that FG-COM would discuss the TOR for ISC IDPH at a forthcoming meeting.*

## **5. Date and arrangement of the Next Meeting**

[36] The Chairperson said that the group continue to work intersessionally to continue the momentum. The group was expected to deliver its strategy to CPM-16 in April 2022; the strategy would have to be submitted by end January to meet translation timelines.

[37] The CPM Bureau representative suggested that the group schedule its forthcoming meeting after SPG. That would allow SPG feedback to be incorporated into the work of the group.

[38] FG-COM participants agreed to hold the forthcoming virtual meeting on 27 October 2021 at 11:00 to 14:00 CET.

[39] The Chairperson encouraged participants to send topics to the Secretariat for inclusion on the agenda of the forthcoming meeting.

## **6. Close of the meeting**

[40] The Chairperson thanked the participants for their contributions and the Secretariat closed the meeting.

**Appendix 1: Agenda****2021 VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE  
FOCUS GROUP ON COMMUNICATION****28 SEPTEMBER 2021**

<b>Agenda Item</b>		<b>Document No.</b>	<b>Presenter</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Opening of the Meeting</b>	--	Chairperson
<b>2.</b>	<b>Administrative Matters</b>		Chairperson
2.1	Document list	01_CPMFG_2021_28 Sep	
2.2	Participant list	02_CPMFG_2021_28 Sep	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Adoption of the Agenda and election of the rapporteur</b>		Chairperson
3.1	Discussion on the objectives of the strategy	03_CPMFG_2021_28 Sep	
3.1.	Reporting to the SPG		
3.2.	Discussion on the narrative framework and strategy elements		
<b>4.</b>	<b>Any other business</b>	--	Chairperson
<b>5.</b>	<b>Date and arrangement of the Next Meeting</b>		Chairperson
<b>6.</b>	<b>Close of the Meeting</b>		Chairperson



**Appendix 2: Document list**

DOCUMENT NO.	AGENDA ITEM	DOCUMENT TITLE
01_CPMFG_2021_28Sep	2.1	Document List
02_CPMFG_2021_28Sep	2.2	Participant List
	2	Agenda
03_CPMFG_2021_28 Sep	3.1	Discussion on the Objectives of the Strategy
MS Teams links:		
<a href="#">Background documents</a> <a href="#">Meeting documents</a>		

### Appendix 3: Participant list

A check (✓) in column 1 indicates confirmed attendance at the meeting.

Representation	Name, role, organization	Email address	Presence (Yes/No)
Australia	Ms Gabrielle Vivian SMITH Chief Plant Protection Officer, Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, Canberra, Australia	Gabrielle.Vivian-Smith@agriculture.gov.au	Y
Consortium of International Agricultural Research (CGIAR)	Mr James STAPLETON Head of Communications & Public Awareness, Consortium of International Agricultural Research Centers- (CGIAR) Lima, Peru	J.Stapleton@cgiar.org	Y
Egypt	Mr Islam Farahat ABOELELA Supervisor of Pest Risk Analysis, FAO International Consultant Central Administration of Plant Quarantine, Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation	Islam.gene@gmail.com	Y
FAO	Ms Natasha LITTLE Communication Specialist, Office for Corporate Communications, Food and Agriculture Organization	Natasha.Little@fao.org	Y
International Grain Trade Coalition (IGTC)	Ms Katy LEE Director, Agricultural Dialogues International Limited Cheshire, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Secretariat International Grain Trade Coalition (IGTC) Geneva, Switzerland	katy@agriculturedialogues.org	Y
Malawi	Mr Hector MALAIDZA Communications Officer, Technology Dissemination- Agriculture Research Officer, Department of Agriculture Research Services	hectormalaidza@yahoo.co.uk	N
North America	TBD		

Near East and North Africa	Mr Mekki CHOUIBANI Executive Director, Near East Plant Protection Organization (NEPPO)	hq.neppo@gmail.com, m.chouibani@neppo.org	Y
New Zealand	Ms Lihong ZHU Portfolio Manager for IPPC, New Zealand Ministry for Primary Industries	Lihong.Zhu@mpi.govt.nz	Y
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms Lucy CARSON-TAYLOR Plant Health Engagement Manager, UK APHA/ Defra	Lucy.Carson-Taylor@apha.gov.uk	Y
Zambia	Mr Martin SIAZEMO Senior Plant Health Inspector and Head of Communications, Ministry of Agriculture Plant Quarantine and Phytosanitary Service	martinkabemba@yahoo.com	N
CPM Bureau Asia	Mr Fuxiang WANG Deputy Director General, National Agriculture Technical Extension and Service centre (NATESC) Ministry of Agriculture Room 630, Building No. Mai Zi Dian Street Chao Yang District, Beijing 100125 China  Ph.: (+86) 10 59194548 Fax.: (+86) 10 59194517 Mob.: (+86) 1013701330221	wangfuxiang@agri.gov.cn	Y
IPPC Secretariat	Mr Avetik NERSISYAN IPPC Secretary Officer in charge, FAO's Secretariat of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC)	Avetik.Nersisyan@fao.org	N
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IPPC Secretariat	Mr John GILMORE  Associate professional officer, FAO's Secretariat of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC)	John.Gilmore@fao.org	N
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IPPC Secretariat	Daniel MC KINNON  Copy-editor and proof-reader, FAO's Secretariat of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC)	danielmckinnon@yahoo.com	Y