**Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the Technical Consultation among Regional Plant Protection Organizations**

Background

The Technical Consultation among Regional Plant Protection Organizations (TC-RPPO) is the forum for Regional Plant Protection Organizations (RPPOs) to discuss issues of common interest. Article IX.4 of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) states that:

“The Secretary will convene regular Technical Consultations of representatives of regional plant protection organizations to:

1. *promote* the development and use of relevant international standards for phytosanitary measures; and
2. *encourage* inter-regional cooperation in promoting harmonized phytosanitary measures for controlling pests and in preventing their spread and/or introduction.”

The TC-RPPO was first convened in 1989 and meetings have been held every year since. Prior to the existence of the Interim Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (ICPM), the TC-RPPO was the only international forum for discussion of phytosanitary matters. As such, the TC-RPPO was a key partner in the development of several of the early International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs).

From 1989 until 1997 the TC-RPPO operated without a formalized Terms of Reference. The first Terms of Reference (TOR) (including Rules of Procedure) for the TC-RPPO[[1]](#footnote-2) was finalized by the [8th TC-RPPO](https://assets.ippc.int/static/media/files/publications/en/1157015904421_TC8_rep3.pdf) (1996) and submitted to FAO. In their following meeting, [9th TC-RPPO](https://assets.ippc.int/static/media/files/publications/en/1157015904421_TC8_rep3.pdf) (1997), they were informed that the TOR (including Rules of Procedure) were accepted by FAO and this was noted in the report of the meeting.

The TC-RPPO played a vital role in the revision of the IPPC and promoted the creation of the ICPM. In 2005, ICPM-7 adopted *recommendations* on the role and functions of RPPOs. CPM-12 (2017) adopted a revised version of “Roles and Functions of RPPO in their relationship with the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM)[[2]](#footnote-3),” and encouraged the IPPC Secretariat, the Strategic Planning Group (SPG) and all CPM subsidiary bodies to continue to collaborate with RPPOs.

At the 29th TC-RPPO (2017), the RPPOs agreed that they should further specify and codify the way they operate. Consequently, at the 30th TC-RPPOs (2018), a revised Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure (TOR and ROP) for the TC-RPPO were drafted. The drafts were reexamined and improved during 2020-2021 and are presented in Attachments 1 and 2 of this paper.

The FAO legal office was consulted on the process for revising the TOR and ROP and they advised that once the TC-RPPO discussed and agreed to the revised text they should be forwarded to FAO (via the IPPC Secretariat). FAO would review and propose revisions, if needed, to ensure the TOR and ROP were in line with FAO rules. The TOR and ROP would then be presented back to the TC-RPPO for final approval, noting that all previous versions of TOR and ROP would be superseded. It is recommended that the TOR and ROP after approval by TC-RPPO be presented to the CPM-16 (2022) for noting.

CPM-16 is invited to:

* *Note* the Terms of Reference for the Technical Consultation among the Regional Plant Protection Organizations as presented in Attachment 1.
* *Note* the Rules of Procedure for the Technical Consultation among the Regional Plant Protection Organizations as presented in Attachment 2.

Attachment 1. Terms of Reference for the Technical Consultation among Regional Plant Protection Organizations

1. Scope

The Technical Consultation among Regional Plant Protection Organizations (TC-RPPO) is a forum for RPPOs to:

1. Discuss plant health issues of global interest
2. Facilitate collaboration and co-ordination among and between RPPOs

The TC-RPPO also provides a venue for dialogue and information sharing among RPPOs, the IPPC Secretariat and subsidiary bodies of the CPM.

Each RPPO has its own structure, remit, strategic plan and constitution and by-laws. Nothing in these Terms of Reference changes the rights and responsibilities of each RPPO and its member countries.

2. Composition

The TC-RPPO is comprised of a representative from each RPPO recognized under the Article IX of the IPPC.

3. Functions

The functions of the TC-RPPO include, but are not limited to:

1. Promote the implementation of the IPPC, International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs) and Recommendations of Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM);
2. Provide advice on phytosanitary issues to the CPM, IPPC Secretariat, SPG and CPM subsidiary bodies;
3. Engage with the CPM as described in the Roles and functions of RPPOs[[3]](#footnote-4) in their relationship with the CPM;
4. Nominate RPPO representatives to meetings or CPM subsidiary bodies as necessary;
5. Share information on their work programs, available expertise and phytosanitary experience to identify opportunities for horizontal collaboration and coordination;
6. Share information on emerging pests in their respective regions;
7. Support potential new RPPOs ;
8. Make recommendations to the CPM on recognition of new RPPOs;
9. Develop and deliver on the yearly TC-RPPO action plan;
10. Any other activity that the TC-RPPO may consider appropriate with a view to advance the objectives of the IPPC.

Amendments to these Terms of Reference may be proposed, in writing, by any RPPO. Proposed amendments will be discussed at the annual face-to-face TC-RPPO meeting, decided by unanimity and submitted to the CPM for noting.

Attachment 2. Rules of Procedure for the Technical Consultation among Regional Plant Protection Organizations

Rule 1. Membership

Each RPPO, recognized under Article IX of the IPPC, is considered a member of the TC-RPPO. Each RPPO should be represented at TC-RPPO meetings by the head of the organization (e.g., Director General, Executive Director, Executive Secretary, etc.) or their designated representative.

The RPPO representative may be accompanied by one or more advisers at their discretion. These advisers form part of their delegation and are there to provide support to the representative, as appropriate.

Rule 2. Meetings

2. TC-RPPO meetings could be face-to-face or virtual and, in the case of virtual meetings, the TC-RPPO could consist of several sessions.

3. The date and venue for the next meeting should be agreed to by the TC-RPPO at the conclusion of their annual meeting or, if needed, RPPOs may agree to this using virtual means.

4. The TC-RPPO annual meetings may be hosted by an RPPO in their region or may be held at FAO Headquarters in Rome.

5. The duration of the TC-RPPO annual meeting shall be three to five days depending on the agenda.

6. A short meeting of the TC-RPPO may be convened prior or during a session of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) to discuss urgent matters and/or review the draft agenda for the next TC-RPPO.

7. A simple majority of the members of the TC-RPPO shall constitute a quorum.

8. Members are responsible for all costs associated with attending meetings of the TC-RPPO.

Rule 3. Observers

or the IPPC Secretariat may invite observers provided the TC-RPPO members agree prior to the TC-RPPO. Observers may include, among others:

1. FAO regional officers from the region hosting the TC-RPPO;
2. CPM Bureau member(s), usually the Chairperson or regional representative from the region hosting the TC-RPPO;
3. CPM subsidiary body representatives from the region hosting the TC-RPPO;
4. RPPO Executive Committee representatives from the region hosting the TC-RPPO
5. International or regional organization representatives active in phytosanitary work from the region hosting the TC-RPPO;
6. Representatives from international research institutions from the region hosting the TC-RPPO.

Observers may contribute to the discussions but will not participate in decision-making.

Observers are responsible for all their costs associated with attending the TC-RPPO.

The members may decide that a part of the meeting will be closed and therefore limited to TC-RPPO members only.

Rule 4. Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson

At the end of each TC-RPPO annual meeting, members should elect a Chairperson and a Vice-Chairperson following an agreed rotation as recorded in the reports of the TC-RPPO meetings and would take on their duties immediately. They will serve in this capacity until the end of the next TC-RPPO annual meeting. The Vice-Chairperson will become the Chairperson in the following year.

The Chairperson ensures observance of these Rules of Procedure The Vice-Chairperson will exercise the functions of the Chairperson in his/her absence.

Rule 5. Rapporteur, Report Writing and Report to CPM

A rapporteur should be elected from the members at the beginning of a TC-RPPO meetings to assist in the production of an accurate meeting report and ensure that decisions are correctly recorded.

The IPPC Secretariat is responsible for report writing reporting for the TC-RPPO annual meeting or any other convened meeting with input from the rapporteur.

Reports of the TC-RPPO meetings should be prepared and presented to the CPM by the TC-RPPO Chairperson. The report should include, inter alia, any points which the TC-RPPO has asked to be drawn to the attention of CPM.

Rule 6. Decision-making

The members make decisions by consensus. Situations where consensus cannot be reached shall be described in the meeting report detailing all positions expressed.

Rule 7. Actions between face-to-face meetings

If any decision is required from members Between face-to-face meetings a request should be submitted in writing to the Chairperson who consults the Vice-Chairperson and engages the IPPC Secretariat. A paper outlining the issue will be circulated to TC-RPPO members allowing a minimum of two weeks for comments. More time may be required if the decision requires consultation of the RPPO with its member countries. Decisions taken will be included in the report of the next TC-RPPO face-to-face meeting.

Rule 8. Agenda for TC-RPPO meetings

A draft agenda should be developed by the IPPC Secretariat, in consultation with the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson. in ..

The draft agenda should be circulated to all TC-RPPO members at least ten weeks ahead of the annual meeting requesting suggestions, additions or deletions. It should include a standing agenda point for members and the IPPC Secretariat to provide updates on their activities. If the TC-RPPO face-to-face meeting is held in Rome following CPM, no reports from the IPPC Secretariat will be necessary

Rule 9. Documents

Documents to support agenda items for the TC-RPPO meetings will be prepared by members or by the IPPC Secretariat and coordinated by the IPPC Secretariat. The documents should be posted at least two weeks prior to the TC-RPPO meetings to allow members sufficient time to prepare for discussions.

Rule 10. TC-RPPO representatives to other Committees and meetings

The TC-RPPO will designate its representative in an outside committee, meeting or consultation. The representative shall circulate to other members of the TC-RPPO the agenda and key documents related to the assignment and invite their comments.

The TC-RPPO representative shall make clear that they are representing TC-RPPO positions and clearly state when they are expressing the views of his/her RPPO. The TC-RPPO representative shall circulate a short meeting report to other TC-RPPO members after the meeting.

Rule 11. TC-RPPO annual action plan

The TC-RPPO develops an annual TC-RPPO action plan. Any member may propose inclusion of themes or activities.

The annual action plan should include:

* Core activities
* Schedule of activities
* Responsible person for each activity
* Follow up actions.

Rule 12. Language

The business of the TC-RPPO shall be conducted in English.

Rule 13. Amendments

Amendments to these Rules of Procedure may be proposed, in writing, by any RPPO and the IPPC Secretariat. Proposed amendments will be discussed and approved at the TC-RPPO annual meeting TC-RPPO meeting and submitted to the CPM for noting.

1. Terms of Reference of TC-RPPO is available at: <http://www.ippc.int/en/publications/88719/> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Roles and Functions of RPPOs in their relationship with the CPM is available at: <https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/88182/> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)