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Convention

REPORT

Focus Group on Communication

**Eleventh Virtual Meeting
25 August 2022**

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 secretariat for its work to support the Focus Group on Communication (FG-COM) and thanked group members for their work intersessionally on the draft communication strategy.
- [3] The chairperson introduced Osama EL-LISSY, the new Secretary of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC). The Secretary offered his thanks to the members of FG-COM for their work to support the mission of the IPPC. He said that the draft communication strategy was comprehensive, thoughtful and well organized, and he looked forward to the strategy being presented to the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) Bureau and Strategic Planning Group (SPG) at their meetings in October, with the ultimate aim of having the strategy adopted at the Seventeenth Session of the CPM (CPM-17) in 2023. The Secretary noted that the draft communication strategy went beyond communicating and would engage the IPPC community in many ways. The Secretary also said that the forthcoming International Plant Health Conference (IPHC), to be held in London, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from 21 to 23 September 2022, was an opportunity to promote the communication strategy and also to collect feedback thereon.
- [4] The chairperson thanked the Secretary for his encouragement, support and recognition of the importance of the work being done by FG-COM, and echoed his comments about the importance of engagement in the draft communication strategy.
- [5] The chairperson summarized the work of the group's previous meeting on 1 August 2022 where members agreed to submit a paper to the CPM Bureau and SPG on the draft communication strategy in order to seek feedback from those bodies. A notable question was whether there should be a consultation process on the draft communication strategy prior to its submission to CPM-17 (2023) for adoption. The group also agreed to specify the kind of feedback they would like to receive from the CPM Bureau and SPG in order to offer meaningful direction to FG-COM.

2. Meeting arrangements

2.1 Election of the rapporteur

- [6] FG-COM members elected Lucy CARSON-TAYLOR as rapporteur of the meeting.

2.2 Adoption of the agenda

- [7] FG-COM members adopted the agenda as presented in Appendix 1 to the present report.

3. Administrative matters

3.1 Document list

- [8] FG-COM members took note of the documents on the document list as presented in Appendix 2.

3.2 Participant list

- [9] The secretariat introduced the participant list (Appendix 3).
- [10] The secretariat noted that the group's recently selected representative from the North American Plant Protection Organization (NAPPO) had not yet participated in any meetings. The chairperson said they would reach out to NAPPO counterparts for further information.

3.3 Action list from previous meeting

- [11] The secretariat introduced the action list (Appendix 4).

Commented [DM(1): Please check participant list in Appendix 3 to confirm presence/absence of group members.

(1) Remove social media statistics table

[12] Action completed: The secretariat said that the table had been removed from the document, noting that the information therein would have quickly become dated.

(2) Revise the message map to include evidence and annex

[13] Action completed: The secretariat said that the message map had been revised, and welcomed feedback from group members thereon. One member said that including data on one key crop or group of crops would be beneficial to illustrate the impact of plant health on people's lives.

(3) Delete message table on SDGs and instead incorporate relevant SDGs in the key messages

[14] Action completed: The secretariat said that the message table on Strategic Development Goals (SDGs) had been removed and relevant SDGs incorporated into the key messages.

(4) Remove stakeholder diagram, add explanatory text on stakeholder mapping and annex the stakeholder matrix

[15] Action completed: The secretariat said that explanatory text had been added while the stakeholder matrix had been moved to the annex.

(5) Create or modify a table of objectives, audiences for each objective and the key messages for each audience per objective, and list the expected action for each audience

[16] Action completed: The secretariat said a table to clarify the objectives, audiences, key messages and expected actions had been created in the annex of the document.

(6) Subject-matter specialists to provide inputs on opportunities to engage with interested parties

[17] Action ongoing: The secretariat said that group members had contributed to this item intersessionally and invited further contributions thereon. The secretariat said that it would be important to take advantage of opportunities to increase the visibility of the work of FG-COM. One member said that the European Plant Protection Organization (EPPO) remained supportive and willing to provide feedback on the draft communication plan.

(7) Ask the new focus group participant from OCC for input on item No. 6. Media

[18] Action ongoing: The secretariat said that it was in communication with the new representative from the Office of Communications (OCC), and said that OCC would be involved in the development process. One member suggested that using a media agency may encourage further engagement with the OCC. The member said that there were a number of international days that the OCC could use to communicate with high-level stakeholders.

(8) Distribute the CPM update paper to FG-COM participants for their review and comment

[19] Action ongoing: The secretariat said it would send the CPM update paper once it had consolidated all the comments and input from group members. The secretariat said it would also send the SPG paper for review.

[20] Reporting on the action item (5) *Share information on IPPC participation in One Health initiatives within FAO* from the group's 1 August 2022 meeting, the secretariat said that a monthly newsletter on One Health would be prepared from October 2022 and would include the conclusions of the IPHC. The technical working group on One Health also agreed to cross-publish other items of interest from other IPPC newsletters. The secretariat said that there would likely be a One Health/One FAO side event at the Twenty-seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP27). Items on plant health and climate change, early warning systems and capacity building had already been proposed for inclusion, and group members were invited to submit further ideas.

[21] One member said that FAO and the Consortium of International Agricultural Research Centers (CGIAR) were finalizing an agreement to have a joint food pavilion at UNFCCC COP27. Opportunities existed for collaboration with the Office of Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environment (OCB). One member said that since Egypt would host the Conference, it would be important for the secretariat to engage with the FAO Regional Office for the Near East and North Africa on plant health topics. The member said that the chairman of the Near East Plant Protection Organization (NEPPO) would attend the IPHC; that represented an opportunity for further discussions on how to prepare for engagement at COP27. It would be important to communicate and collaborate to avoid overlap of issues among NEPPO, the FAO Regional Office, the IPPC Secretariat and FG-COM at COP27.

[22] One member noted that the IPPC would have a desk at the IPHC Conference in London, which would be an opportunity to promote and start conversations on IPPC global communications through the draft communication strategy.

[23] The CPM Focus Group on Communication:

- (1) *Asked* the secretariat to distribute the CPM update paper and the SPG paper to FG-COM participants;
- (2) *Asked* the secretariat to include data on key crop(s) to show the impact of plant health on people's lives;
- (3) *Asked* the secretariat to follow up on opportunities to collaborate with other FAO divisions at UNFCCC COP27.

4. IPPC Communications Strategy revisions

4.1 Updated objectives

[24] The secretariat presented the revised IPPC Communication Strategy, noting that the objectives — inform, advocate, mobilize and engage — had been further developed. Members expressed their support for the updated objectives.

[25] One member said that engagement with national and regional plant protection organizations (NPPOs, RPPOs) was important as those had significant potential to act on plant health initiatives, but noted that capacities across NPPOs and RPPOs were varied and a considered approach to structured collaboration would thus be needed.

[26] The chairperson said that it would be important to demonstrate that the strategy was not merely for the secretariat, but for all members of the IPPC community working together to achieve common aims.

4.2 Validation of stakeholder mapping

[27] The secretariat said that stakeholder mapping had been updated to create a sense of narrative among the elements, and invited feedback thereon from FG-COM members. One member said that it would be important to reflect the value of the IPPC to the stakeholder group; that would provide clarity on how and what to communicate with the group. One member said that it would be important for the strategy to note that categories would change from place to place and would evolve over time.

[28] One member said that the farmer stakeholder group might be better placed together with civil society and the general public, as messaging across those groups would be similar. Another member agreed, noting that the IPPC had less direct contact with farmers, and that engagement with that group usually happened through other organizations. A number of members noted that farmers had a greater exposure to plant health risks and had different knowledge levels from civil society and the general public, and thus required different messaging. Consequently, splitting farmers out into a separate category could be beneficial. A number of participants agreed.

- [29] The chairperson said that developing specific messaging for civil society and the general public about what to do/what not to do could have tangible impact when compared to generic messaging about the value of plant health.
- [30] The chairperson said that, while top-tier media was not typically interested in plant health stories, the IPHC represented a possible annual opportunity to engage. One member noted that there were industry-specific media outlets that could have more direct impact with specific industry stakeholders.
- [31] The chairperson said that the industry stakeholder group included both stakeholders directly involved with, impacted by and influential in the work of the IPPC – such as seed industry associations and maritime shipping organizations – and stakeholders that were less directly involved. It would be beneficial to split out those groups in order to address them directly.
- [32] One member said it would be important to include the World Trade Organization (WTO) in the list of relevant international organizations.
- [33] One member said it would be important to reflect the role of academia as expert voices in plant health issues.
- [34] The CPM Focus Group on Communication:
- (4) *Asked* the secretariat to differentiate in the strategy between industry stakeholders that were highly involved in and impacted by the work of the IPPC from industry stakeholders that were more peripheral to IPPC work.

4.3 Key messages per audience/stakeholder and expected actions, vis-à-vis objectives

- [35] The secretariat said that key messages had been updated to reflect outcomes from the International Year of Plant Health (IYPH).
- [36] One participant said that it would be important for each key message to include supporting evidence. That could be data quantifying the impact of disease on key crops or case studies demonstrating impact. Data or examples would allow the audience to better understand the meaning of the key message. The chairperson said that examples showing the positive impact of phytosanitary measures and international standards would also be beneficial in supporting key messages. Possible examples included safe planting materials for *Phytophthora infestans* and *Fusarium* Tropical Race 4 (TR4), ISPM 15 (*Regulation of wood packaging material in international trade*), and prevention of fruit fly infestation using standards.
- [37] One member said that it would be important to frame the key messages in terms of the benefits they provide rather than the obligations they create.

4.4 Channels

- [38] One participant said that plant health was a broad subject and stakeholder interests were usually issue- or region-specific. It would therefore be important to make it easy for stakeholders to find and access the information relevant to them. A number of participants agreed. A more streamlined way of distributing information according to user preferences would lead to better engagement. The chairperson said that grouping information into thematic areas may better serve different stakeholder groups.
- [39] The secretariat said that the International Phytosanitary Portal (IPP) was currently being redesigned, but it would be important to go beyond cosmetic changes and rethink its architecture and how it responds to user needs. Participants expressed their support for the redesign process; one participant highlighted the need for a toolbox of digital assets that could be easily accessed by stakeholders that may otherwise not have capacity to develop assets themselves.
- [40] One member noted that giving space in IPPC social media channels to partners, such as academics, think tanks and international organizations, would provide a diversity of voices while creating content without requiring additional input of resources from the IPPC Secretariat.

- [41] One member noted that IPPC social media channels often shared and liked information, but did not often comment. Participating in the conversation by commenting on the plant health perspective would have a positive impact on engagement.
- [42] On the question of who would drive the implementation of the communication strategy after its adoption, members noted that the group's terms of reference provided possible extension of the group's mandate. If the group's mandate is extended to cover implementation, it may be necessary to revisit the terms of reference, as a different skillset among group members would be needed. One member noted that reporting on outcomes created a need for ongoing strategic thinking on the communication strategy following its implementation.
- [43] On the question of whether the communication strategy would be announced at the IPHC, those members involved in the Conference's preparation said that an official speech, perhaps by IPPC Secretary, Osama EL-LISSY could include reference to the strategy. Other speeches would also include awareness-raising and advocacy on plant health issues. It would also be beneficial if IPPC social media accounts could mention plans for the communication strategy.
- [44] The CPM Focus Group on Communication:
- (5) *Asked* the secretariat to report back on the process to redesign the IPP;
 - (6) *Asked* the secretariat to report back on communication needs from the Focus Group on Strategic Framework 2020–2030 Development Agenda Items (FG-SFADI) and the Focus Group on Climate Change and Phytosanitary Issues (FG-CCPI);
 - (7) *Asked* the secretariat to incorporate pertinent information from the latest partnership strategy into the milestones;
 - (8) *Asked* the secretariat to clarify the role of FG-COM in implementing the communication strategy;
 - (9) *Asked* the secretariat to seek approval from the CPM Bureau about changing the title of the communication strategy from "2022" to "2023" to reflect the strategy's deferred delivery.

5. Consultation process with NPPOs and RPPOs

- [45] The chairperson said that it would be important for FG-COM to decide on the consultation process for the communication strategy, its timeframe, who would be consulted and by what channels.
- [46] One member noted that both SPG and CPM-17 participants would have internal consultation processes when considering the communication strategy. Additional, external consultation mechanisms were not easily envisaged and may not be needed.
- [47] One member said that scenario-planning the consultation process may identify the most appropriate course of action. One member said that the timeframe for consultations would be the most critical issue.
- [48] The chairperson said that the SPG and the CPM Bureau would be the first groups from which to seek feedback on the draft strategy. Thereafter, the IPPC Online Comment System (OCS) could be used to solicit feedback from NPPOs and RPPOs. As international organizations did not have access to the OCS, it would be necessary to reach out to them directly for their feedback. Industry stakeholders could be consulted via internal review processes for CPM-17. The chairperson recommended putting the consultation plan to SPG and CPM Bureau for their feedback.
- [49] As regards the timeline of events, the secretariat said that consultation with SPG and CPM Bureau would happen in October 2022, consultation with wider stakeholders could take place in November–December 2022, with incorporation of feedback into the draft strategy in January 2023, documents would need to be submitted for translation and distribution in February 2023 and CPM-17 would likely take place in March 2023.

[50] On the question of selecting the NPPOs to consult, participants agreed that the best course of action was to contact RPPOs that could then collect responses from their NPPO members.

[51] One participant said that it would be important to use the OCS to ask specific questions in order to collect useful, broad-based feedback. FG-COM would need to develop the questionnaire to collect the feedback it needed. A number of members noted that the use of survey tools should be explored to facilitate the compilation of responses. The vice chair suggested that the secretariat could seek support from FAO statistics or other division to develop the appropriate survey tool that will also allow for efficient analysis of responses.

6. Any other business

[52] No other business was raised.

7. Date and arrangement of the next meeting

[53] FG-COM members agreed to hold the forthcoming virtual meeting on 12 October 2022 at 09:00 to 12:00 CET.

8. Close of the meeting

[54] The Chairperson thanked the participants for their contributions and the secretariat closed the meeting.

Appendix 1: Agenda

**COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES
FOCUS GROUP ON COMMUNICATION
VIRTUAL MEETING**

25 August 2022

	Agenda Item	Document No.	Presenter
1.	Opening of the meeting	–	Lihong ZHU <i>Chairperson</i>
2.	Meeting arrangements		
2.1	Election of the rapporteur	–	Lihong ZHU
2.2	Adoption of the agenda	01_FGCOMM_Agenda 20220108	
3.	Administrative matters		Mutya FRIO <i>IPPC Secretariat</i>
3.1	Document list	02_FGCOMM_Doclist 20220108	Mutya FRIO <i>IPPC Secretariat</i>
3.2	Participant list	03_FGCOMM_Particip antsList_2022018	
3.3	Action list from previous meeting	04_FGCOMM_Actionl List_20220108	
4.	IPPC Communications Strategy revisions		
4.1	Updated objectives	05_FGCOMM_2022_2 0220108	Lihong ZHU
4.2	Validation of stakeholder mapping	05_FGCOMM_2022_2 0220108	Lihong ZHU
4.3	Key messages per audience/stakeholder and expected actions, vis-à-vis objectives	05_FGCOMM_2022_2 0220108	James STAPLETON <i>Vice Chairperson</i>
4.4	Channels	05_FGCOMM_2022_2 0222508	James STAPLETON
5.	Consultation process with NPPOs and RPPOs		Lihong ZHU
6.	Any other business	–	Mutya FRIO
7.	Date and arrangement of the next meeting		Mutya FRIO
8.	Closing of the meeting		Lihong ZHU

Appendix 2: Document list

DOCUMENT NO.	AGENDA ITEM	DOCUMENT TITLE
01_FGCOMM_2022_	2.2	Agenda
02_FGCOMM_Doclist_20220108	3.1	Document List
03_FGCOMM_2022_20220108	3.2	Participant list
04_FGCOMM_2022_20220108	3.3	Action list from previous meeting
05_FGCOMM_2022_20220108	4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4	Draft IPPC Communications Strategy
MS Teams links:		
Meeting documents		

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	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)	James STAPLETON Head of Communications & Public Awareness, Consortium of International Agricultural Research Centers- (CGIAR) Lima, Peru	J.Stapleton@cgiar.org	Y
Egypt	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	Denise Martinez-Breto Information and Communication Officer, Office for Corporate Communications, Food and Agriculture Organization	Denise.Martinez@fao.org	N
International Grain Trade Coalition (IGTC)	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	N
Malawi	Hector MALAIDZA Communications Officer, Technology Dissemination-Agriculture Research Officer, Department of Agriculture Research Services	hectormalaidza@yahoo.co.uk	N

North America	Ify CHAFY Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)		N
Near East and North Africa	Mekki CHOUIBANI Executive Director Near East Plant Protection Organization (NEPPO)	hq.neppo@gmail.com, m.chouibani@neppo.org	N
New Zealand	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	Lucy CARSON-TAYLOR Plant Health Engagement Manager, UK APHA/ Defra	Lucy.Carson-Taylor@apha.gov.uk	Y
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IPPC Secretariat	John GILMORE	John.Gilmore@fao.org	N
IPPC Secretariat	Daniel McKINNON	danielmckinnon@yahoo.com	Y
IPPC Secretariat	Natsumi YAMADA	Natsumi.Yamada@fao.org	Y

Appendix 4: Action list

No.	Action	Lead	Lead within Secretariat/CPM Bureau/ Persons involved	Deadline
1	Remove social media statistics table	IPPC Secretariat	Mutya FRIO	12/08/2022
2	Revise the message map to include evidence and annex	IPPC Secretariat	Mutya FRIO	12/08/2022
3	Delete message table on SDGs and instead incorporate relevant SDGs in the key messages	IPPC Secretariat	Mutya FRIO	12/08/2022
4	Remove stakeholder diagram, add explanatory text on stakeholder mapping and annex the stakeholder matrix	IPPC Secretariat	Mutya FRIO	12/08/2022
5	Create or modify a table of objectives, audiences for each objective and the key messages for each audience per objective, and list the expected action for each audience.	IPPC Secretariat	Mutya FRIO	12/08/2022
6	Subject-matter specialists to provide inputs on opportunities to engage with interested parties	CPM FG	All members Lihong ZHU	01/09/2022
7	Ask the new focus group participant from OCC for input on item 6. Media	IPPC Secretariat	Mutya FRIO	12/08/2022
8	Distribute the CPM update paper to FG-COM participants for their review and comment	IPPC Secretariat	Mutya FRIO	17/08/2022