**REVISED FOR SPG FOLLOWING BUREAU DISCUSSIONS**

**COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES:**

**BUREAU MEETING - TELECONFERENCE - JUNE 2022 MEETING**

**CPM Friends of the Chair – Draft Policy Statement**

*(Prepared by John Greifer and Sam Bishop)*

This Bureau policy statement is intended to ensure transparency, consistency, and general understanding on the operation of Friends of the Chair (FOC) meetings at sessions of the CPM.

1. Background

Friends of the Chair (FOC) meetings are informal, small groups convened at the discretion and pleasure of the Chair during sessions of the Commission of Phytosanitary Matters (CPM) to help work through a given issue that has reached an impasse in the larger plenary session. This is a commonly used strategy to facilitate and progress issues in a smaller group setting and reach consensus on difficult matters.

Generally, a small group of interested contracting parties meet outside of plenary. The results of their effort to find a consensus solution on a given issue are reported to the Chair and shared with the CPM for further consideration and potential decision making.

2. Chairperson Role

The Chair is responsible for facilitating CPM meetings and trying to move the parties through complex discussions to a consensus position, decision, or agreement on different topics on the agenda.

To better equip the Chair in their responsibilities to facilitate meetings and reach consensus decisions--especially in cases where time has expired for continued discussion on a given issue or the issue is stalled in the larger plenary meeting-- the Chair has the discretion to invite a smaller group of parties to meet on their own time to attempt to find a way forward on that issue.

Generally, the Chair will charge the FOC to seek an agreed way forward on the issue at hand and to report back to the Chair on areas of agreement and/or the key issues and concerns that remain unresolved and hinder an agreed solution. This information will then be reported to the CPM, providing a basis for a potential agreement or decision-making in plenary.

3. Participation

In forming the FOC, the Chair will primarily request the participation of those parties who have demonstrated (in the course of the plenary discussions) a strong interest in the issue at hand, those who may bring necessary expertise on the subject, and others who wish to offer practical solutions to progress the issue.

The Chair will rely on contracting parties to be the primary participants given their status as officially sanctioned representatives of their governments and their decision-making authority on CPM related matters.

Up to 2 representatives from the Regional Plant Protection Organizations (RPPOs) may be allowed to participate because of the integral role they play in implementing the IPPC at the regional level, their expertise, the resources they bring to various IPPC programs, and their routine interactions with National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs) in their region.

By exception, others—beyond NPPOs and RPPOs—will be considered by the Chair, in consultation with the Bureau, on a case-by-case basis, depending on the expertise and value they may bring to a given FOC meeting. Only accredited observers to the CPM are eligible for consideration. Their participation, if approved by the Chair, will be as silent observers to ensure contracting parties have the opportunity to exercise their decision-making authority on IPPC issues. It is anticipated that the majority of FOC meetings will not have such observers in attendance.

The Chair may request a member of the Bureau, the Secretariat staff, or Chairs of the Standards Committee or Implementation Committee—depending on the topic—to facilitate a FOC meeting and to provide a resulting report on outcomes which will subsequently be disseminated and orally reported to CPM in the subsequent plenary session.

The Secretariat will provide the administrative support for these meetings, consistent with their normal responsibilities (e.g., logistical, record keeping, and archival information).

The SPG is invited to:

1. *Endorse* this policy statement and recommend that it be presented to CPM 17 for approval.