



TERMS OF REFERENCE AND RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE TECHNICAL CONSULTATION AMONG REGIONAL PLANT PROTECTION ORGANIZATIONS

Background

- [1] 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:
- [2] “The Secretary will convene regular Technical Consultations of representatives of regional plant protection organizations to:
- (a) *promote* the development and use of relevant international standards for phytosanitary measures (ISPMs); and
 - (b) *encourage* inter-regional cooperation in promoting harmonized phytosanitary measures for controlling pests and in preventing their spread and/or introduction.”
- [3] 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 ISPMs.
- [4] 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-RPPO¹ was finalized by the 8th TC-RPPO (1996)² and submitted to FAO. At their following meeting (9th TC-RPPO, 1997), the TC-RPPO was informed that the TOR (including Rules of Procedure) was accepted by FAO, and this was noted in the report of the meeting³.
- [5] The TC-RPPO played a vital role in the revision of the IPPC and promoted the creation of the ICPM. In 2005, ICPM-7⁴ 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)⁵,” and encouraged the IPPC Secretariat, the Strategic Planning Group (SPG) and all CPM subsidiary bodies to continue to collaborate with RPPOs.
- [6] 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.
- [7] The FAO Legal office was consulted on the process for revising the TOR and ROP and they advised that once the TC-RPPO agreed to the revised text it should be forwarded to FAO (via the IPPC Secretariat). FAO reviewed the text to ensure that the document was in line with FAO rules.

¹ Terms of Reference of TC-RPPO is available at: <http://www.ippc.int/en/publications/88719/>

² Report of the 8th TC-RPPO is available at: <https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/80884/>

³ Report of the 9th TC-RPPO is available at: <https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/80875/>

⁴ Report of ICPM-7 is available at: https://assets.ippc.int/static/media/files/publication/en/2016/11/ICPM_7_2005_Report_En_Rev.pdf

⁵ Roles and Functions of RPPOs in their relationship with the CPM is available at: <https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/88182/>

[8] The TOR and ROP were presented to the TC-RPPO who approved them on 8th of November 2021, noting that all previous versions would be superseded. It was recommended that the TC-RPPO approved TOR and ROP be presented to CPM for noting.

[9] CPM-17 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

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

- a) Discuss plant health issues of global interest;
- b) Facilitate collaboration and co-ordination among and between RPPOs.

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

[12] 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

[13] The TC-RPPO is comprised of a representative from each RPPO recognized under Article IX of the IPPC. Criteria for recognition of RPPOs were adopted by ICPM-04 (2002)⁶

3. Functions

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

1. Promote the implementation of the IPPC, ISPMs, and Recommendations of the 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 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 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.

[15] 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, agreed by consensus, and submitted to CPM for noting.

⁶ Report of ICPM-4 is available at: https://assets.ippc.int/static/media/files/publication/en/2016/11/Report_ICPM-4_2002_Mar_2002-05-13_2n45Cii.pdf

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

Rule 1. Membership

- [16] 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.
- [17] 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

- [18] The IPPC Secretary is responsible for convening annual TC-RPPO meetings including the provision of logistics support and report writing. (Article IX.4 of the IPPC).
- [19] The TC-RPPO annual meeting could be face-to-face or virtual and, in the case of virtual meetings, the TC-RPPO could consist of several sessions.
- [20] The date and venue for the next annual 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.
- [21] The TC-RPPO annual meetings may be hosted by an RPPO in their region or may be held at FAO Headquarters in Rome.
- [22] The duration of the TC-RPPO annual meeting shall be three to five days depending on the meeting agenda.
- [23] A short meeting of the TC-RPPO may be convened prior to or during the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) meeting to discuss urgent matters and/or review the draft agenda for the next TC-RPPO meeting.
- [24] Other informal meetings can be called by the TC-RPPO Chairperson. These meetings may include only TC-RPPO members or the TC-RPPO and the IPPC Secretariat. Conclusions reached at informal meetings will be recorded by the Chairperson and shared with all members.
- [25] A simple majority of the members of the TC-RPPO shall constitute a quorum.
- [26] Members are responsible for all costs associated with attending meetings of the TC-RPPO.

Rule 3. Observers

- [27] Any RPPO or the IPPC Secretary may invite observers provided a majority of the TC-RPPO members agree on suggested observers at least two weeks prior to the meeting concerned. Agreement on suggested observers is reached by sending their names for review and approval by the TC-RPPO at least one month prior to the meeting. 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. International or regional organization representatives active in phytosanitary work from the region hosting the TC-RPPO;
 5. Representatives from international research institutions from the region hosting the TC-RPPO.
- [28] Observers may contribute to the discussions but will not participate in decision-making.
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[29] Observers are responsible for all their costs associated with attending the meetings of the TC-RPPO.

[30] 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

[31] 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 meeting reports. The Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson would initiate their duties immediately. They serve in these capacities until the end of the next TC-RPPO annual meeting. The Vice-Chairperson will become the Chairperson in the following year.

[32] The Chairperson ensures observance of these Rules of Procedure including facilitating discussions, formulating conclusions, proposing time limits for speaker interventions, suspending, or adjourning the meeting, and any other duties that will foster productive dialogue during the meeting.

[33] The Vice-Chairperson will exercise the functions of the Chairperson in his/her absence or as requested by the Chair.

Rule 5. Rapporteur, Report Writing and Report to CPM

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

[35] The IPPC Secretariat is responsible for report writing for the TC-RPPO annual meeting with input from the rapporteur.

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

Rule 6. Decision-making

[37] Decisions will be taken by consensus whenever possible, otherwise by simple majority of the RPPOs present at the meeting. Situations where a decision is taken by simple majority or where a decision cannot be reached shall be described in the meeting report detailing all positions expressed.

Rule 7. Actions between face-to-face meeting

[38] If any decision is required between annual meetings, a request should be submitted in writing by the TC-RPPO or the IPPC Secretariat to the Chairperson who consults the Vice-Chairperson and engages the IPPC Secretariat, if needed. A paper outlining the issue will be circulated to TC-RPPO members allowing a minimum of two weeks for comments. More time may be allotted if the decision requires the RPPOs to consult their member countries. The outcomes of decisions taken in this manner will be included in the report of the next TC-RPPO annual meeting.

Rule 8. Agenda for TC-RPPO annual meetings

[39] A draft agenda should be jointly developed by Chairperson of the TC-RPPO and the IPPC Secretariat.

[40] 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 the CPM, no reports from the IPPC Secretariat will be necessary

Rule 9. Documents

[41] Documents to support agenda items for 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

[42] 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 this assignment and invite their comments.

[43] 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

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

[45] The annual action plan should include:

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

Rule 12. Language

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

Rule 13. Amendments

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