



COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES
SEVENTEENTH SESSION
REPORT FROM THE STRATEGIC PLANNING GROUP (SPG)
AGENDA ITEM 8

(Prepared by the SPG Chairperson)

- [1] The International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) Strategic Planning Group (SPG) held its first in-person meeting since the world went into a Covid lockdown in early 2020. The meeting took place at FAO headquarters in Rome, Italy, the week of October 24-28, 2022. The SPG is responsible for providing strategic analysis, planning, and advice to the IPPC Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM). A total of 18 countries and 2 regional plant protection organizations participated in the SPG session. The meeting was chaired by Bureau vice Chair John Greifer (United States, North America Representative).
- [2] The most significant issues discussed by the SPG were:
- (1) Long term funding for the global ePhyto solution;
 - (2) approving an overarching implementation plan for the IPPC 10 year Strategic Framework, including the eight development agenda initiatives;
 - (3) next steps on developing a global approach to sea container cleanliness;
 - (4) reaching consensus on the scope of IPPC involvement in the One Health program at FAO;
 - (5) the IPPC Secretary's vision and proposal to develop a standardized global phytosanitary program that can first be implemented in Africa; and
 - (6) advising on various IPPC projects and procedural issues.

Sustainable ePhyto Funding

- [3] The SPG examined the options for establishing a permanent and sustainable funding mechanism to support the international ePhyto system into the future. The SPG members debated: the scope and type of costs required to maintain the ePhyto system, options for how to apportion costs and charge among different members, and options for collecting payments. There was a rich assessment and exchange of views on the merits of each option. These options will be presented to the CPM for decision making. The SPG agreed that CPM members also be urged to continue making voluntary contributions in the interim until a long-term funding mechanism is put in place.

Implementation of the IPPC 10 year Strategic Framework

- [4] The Chair of the Focus Group on Implementation of the Strategic Framework Peter Thomson (New Zealand) led the SPG through a comprehensive review of the draft implementation plan. There was in-depth discussion on different aspects of the plan including cost estimates for implementing the development agenda items, how best to sequence the initiatives over time, monitoring and evaluation options, Secretariat resource limits including possible creation of a dedicated program officer, strategies for obtaining donor support, and many suggestions and ideas on the specific initiatives themselves. The SPG thanked Peter Thomson and the Focus Group for all their hard work on developing this complex implementation plan.

Sea Containers

- [5] The Chair of the Sea Container Task Force (Greg Wolff, Canada) briefed the SPG on the outcomes of the recent international workshop on sea containers held in London in September 2022. The aim of the

workshop was to identify and develop consensus on key elements of a possible framework for mitigating the risk of pest spread via sea containers. The SCTF Chair noted convergence of views on a framework consisting of regulatory and non-regulatory actions and measures that can be taken by NPPOs and industry actors in the supply chain, which would distribute responsibility for properly inspecting and cleaning containers and cumulatively result in a substantial reduction in pest contamination and risk. There was also agreement on the need to update the existing CPM Recommendation on sea containers as an interim step while a global framework is more fully developed. The SPG supported the proposal for a follow-up international workshop in mid-2023 to continue the work to develop this so-called systematic approach. Canada agreed to help fund this workshop and Australia has volunteered to host the event in Australia. The SPG thanks both Canada and Australia for their financial and in-kind support of this important IPPC work.

One Health

- [6] Over the past several years, the IPPC members have been exploring the linkage of plant health to the One Health concept and the strategic merits of being a more active part of this inter-disciplinary dialogue.
- [7] The SPG members agreed on a number of key points on this question including:
- (1) that IPPC activities already contribute directly to food security, consumer, and environmental health, and this needs to be effectively communicated to and integrated in the FAO One Health communications;
 - (2) the issue of anti-microbial resistance (AMR) in the phytosanitary context requires more research, data, and analysis to better and more fully understand the actual risk issues before any actions should be considered;
 - (3) in view of the uncertain importance of AMR in the plant health sector, the SPG agreed that this component of the One Health dialogue should not obscure the significant contributions that IPPC makes to global health;
 - (4) the Secretariat should continue to attend and monitor one health discussions at the FAO to share IPPC information on its relevant programs and activities; and,
 - (5) there was no support to propose the development of a One Health specific program at this time, or until there more clarify and agreement on the objectives and merits of doing so.
- [8] The SPG recommended that the secretariat prepare a short paper for CPM-17 (2023), drawing upon the papers and discussion from this SPG meeting to highlight the important contribution that plant health can make in achieving the One Health agenda. They also wanted to identify areas that require further analysis and scoping such as the role of antimicrobial resistance in the context of plant production and health.

New Global Phytosanitary Program Concept

- [9] The IPPC Secretary presented a vision and initiative which proposes the development of a global phytosanitary program based on a pest prevention, early detection, and rapid response and recovery framework. Central to this model is proactive surveillance of specific priority pests and diseases. The initial program would be developed and implemented in Africa and then serve as a model that could be applied in other regions. There was interest and support in the SPG for the Secretary to pursue the development of this conceptual program, noting the need to secure donor funding as well as clear commitments from other potential partner organizations. The Secretary intends to continue refining these concepts and consulting with members going forward.
- [10] In closing, from a Chairperson's perspective, I felt the meeting was extremely productive and beneficial in terms of critically examining priority work underway at the IPPC and offering fresh diverse ideas and perspectives to enhance the value of this work to the IPPC community. Together, being in the same space and time zone, we were able to have a much richer and active exchange of viewpoints and ideas.

It was, we all hope, a turning point in bringing all of us back together again after a long passage of time of being apart. There was joy in this.

[11] The CPM is invited to:

(1) *Note* this report