

## **Written Reports from International Organizations: International Grain Trade Coalition (IGTC)**

### **Report for CPM17**

This report to the 17th Session of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) provides a summary of the activities of the International Grain Trade Coalition (IGTC) as an External Cooperator of the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) Secretariat during 2022.

IGTC presents its congratulations and best wishes to the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and all Parties to the International Plant Protection Convention on the occasion of the 17th Session of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM-17). The International Grain Trade Coalition (IGTC) greatly appreciates the opportunity to contribute to your success.

In celebrating expanding our understanding of, and making progress toward our common goals, we have established May 12, the International Day of Plant Health (IDPH), as a key date on the IGTC calendar.

IGTC is especially pleased to continue in a leadership role with the IPPC ePhyto Industry Advisory Group (IAG) and provide foundational support for the IPPC ePhyto Solution. IGTC participants from around the world welcome the opportunity to continue to participate in very beneficial ePhyto workshops.

The first International Plant Health Conference (IPHC) in London on September 21-23, 2022, was a success. The very well-attended side event during the IPHC to address "Supporting food security through international grain and seed trade and investment" has led to an expanded interest in our work and that of the WTO's Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF), the International Grains Council (IGC), and the International Seed Federation (ISF) who joined us on the side event panel.

### **1. IGTC purpose as it relates to the IPPC mission**

As we continue to unite and inform for timely and effective results to serve the greater good by promoting and facilitating the performance of the supply chain for grains, oilseeds, pulses, and derived products, IGTC finds it works very consistent with the IPPC mission. Our aims include to:

- Support accomplishments toward world food security and economic well-being goals as defined by the United Nations.
- Inform and promote the common/shared interests of international actors that include farmers, producers, exporters, importers, governments, and consumers.
- Foster a safe, predictable, sustainable, affordable, nutritious, and secure food supply across the world.
- Share critical research and expertise on the global supply chain.
- Serve the diverse needs arising from the international provision of food, feed, transport, and processing for grains, oilseeds, pulses, and derived products.

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IGTC achieves its purpose via cooperation with international organizations like IPPC as well as in collecting and disseminating information via an extensive global network of participants at the global, regional, national, and local venues of thought leadership and decision-making for policy as well as commercial practice. We succeed with common positions on key issues impacting the global grain trade that are in line with IGTC's strategic goals, communicating those positions through external advocacy, education, and guidance to members - ultimately establishing more trade-enabling policies among governments and international organizations. For example, IGTC is focusing much of its related effort on supporting the work of the WTO SPS Committee.

## **2. IGTC Electronic Trading Documentation Working Group**

Modernization and innovation in trade documentation practices are a high priority for IGTC. In 2022, 123 grain trade professionals from around the world worked to: Provide informational guidance regarding requirements and advice related to the innovation of paperless document exchange and assist in the innovation of a transparent, secure, cost-efficient electronic system for all parties to benefit from productivity improvements while resulting in better management and more sustainable, reliable, predictable, and responsive logistics.

The Working Group is currently supporting the advancement of the digitalization of trade documentation with information collection and embraces the opportunity for direct involvement with the IPPC related to the IPPC ePhyto Solution. Work specifically related to the ePhyto Solution includes:

- Support for grain trade personnel around the world as they contribute to the successful implementation of the ePhyto Solution and the now more than 3 million certificates that have been exchanged to facilitate the safe trade of plant products for the benefit of global food security.
- Leadership and planning for the NPPO and RPPO ePhyto Workshops with industry, spanning all regions of the world since their inception in 2021.
- Service as the Co-Chair of the Industry Advisory Group (IAG) along with the International Seed Federation (ISF). Recruitment to have more plant product sectors included in this group has been a priority.
- Addressing the long-term sustainability of the ePhyto Solution via the IPPC's Focus Group on Sustainable Funding.

## **3. IGTC Phytosanitary Policy Team**

The IGTC Phytosanitary Policy Team is one of five operating under the IGTC. The Policy Team monitors, analyzes, and influences phytosanitary measures impacting the international trade of grain, oilseeds, and other agri-bulks. Principle activities included developing and sharing expertise on phytosanitary standard settings and the principles of facilitating safe trade, harmonizing official measures, expediting market access negotiations, and enhancing phytosanitary security.

The Policy Team monitored discussions at the April 2022 annual Commission for Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) meeting No.16 in 2022. Of particular relevance to the international trade of grain were:

- Focus Group on Safe Provision of Food and Other Humanitarian Aid – the impact of the management systems used in the trade of grain on minimizing the international movement of pests.
- Sea Container Task Force – empty container inspection before loading is critical to assist in the reduction of the movement of pests by the large number of containers moving in the international trade.
- Commodity-specific standards for phytosanitary measures (2019-008) as an overarching standard to guide the development of more specific commodity-based standards.
- The removal of "2008-007 International Movement of Grain" as this specification and draft ISPM will require revision given the recent work on Commodity Standards (i.e., 2019-008) as the topic is too broad in scope.
- The IPPC work plan of the emerging pest Fall Armyworm, given the impact of this insect on several Grains and rapid spread in many Grain producing countries.
- The IPPC Strategic Framework 2020-2030 and various Focus Groups and work being undertaken that impact the international movement of Grain.

In addition to the above activities that are directly related to the CPM, the Policy Team developed the first IGTC policy statement on Phytosanitary Measures which impact trade. The main concepts under this policy include:

- Encouraging all parties to more effectively manage contaminating pests to enhance food security and protect the world's biodiversity.
- Management of pests in exporting countries to minimize the movement of quarantine pests in the international trade of grain.
- Aligned and robust international phytosanitary standards should be based on sound science and risk assessments to facilitate trade and improve food security, minimizing the risk of the movement of quarantine pests during grain trade.
- Support for the promotion of WTO Members' use of existing international standards, guidelines, and recommendations where they exist to reduce the occurrence of phytosanitary-related matters becoming barriers to trade without increasing the risk of the movement of pests during grain trade.
- The use of SPS processes in developing all phytosanitary measures that apply to imports and exports of grain.

To assist implementation of the policy statement, the Policy Team revised an Advocacy Strategy outlining a range of actions to be done during the 2022/23 year. Of note these included:

- Regular review of the IPPC website for events and meetings of relevance where IGTC members may attend and have input. This includes the 2023 CPM17 meeting.
- Review of IPPC documents and provision of feedback directly to IPPC or via IGTC member governments on issues that may affect the international trade of grain.
- Meetings with various WTO members on the developments in the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS).
- Advocacy with WTO Member States on agenda items at the 12th WTO Ministerial Conference.
- Monitoring progress in the implementation of the SPS Declaration adopted at the 12th WTO Ministerial Conference. Consider possible developments in light of the upcoming 13th WTO Ministerial Conference in late February 2024.
- Attendance and activities at a side event of the International Day of Plant Health.

As noted above, the IPPC website is regularly reviewed for planned and forthcoming meetings of relevance. Based on the existing calendar of events, the Policy Team will be actively involved, either via physical attendance, online, or review of meeting documents and advocacy with relevant international and national governments and organizations, in the following events:

- WTO SPS Committee and Thematic sessions (schedule of meetings is available [here](https://docs.wto.org/dol2fe/Pages/SS/directdoc.aspx?filename=q:/G/SPS/GEN2036R1.pdf&Open=True): <https://docs.wto.org/dol2fe/Pages/SS/directdoc.aspx?filename=q:/G/SPS/GEN2036R1.pdf&Open=True>)
- CPM17
- International Day of Plant Health

#### **4. IPPC Communications Strategy for 2023-2030**

IGTC has welcomed the opportunity to feed into the work of the CPM Focus Group on Communications (FG-COM) to develop the IPPC Communications Strategy for 2023-2030. Meetings among the 12 members since September 2021 have provided a valuable space for discussion about the implementation of the Convention, and the audiences and partners that can be mobilized and engaged at local, national, regional, and international levels.