



The roles and basic responsibilities of Regional Plant Protection Organizations

Introduction

- [1] Regional Plant Protection Organizations (RPPOs) have played an important role in shaping global plant health. From a historical perspective, they have contributed to the formulation of the new revised text of the IPPC in 1979, and the creation of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) and its predecessor the Interim Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (ICPM). To continue to play a strategic role in plant health in the twenty-first century, it is important that all RPPOs have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities while taking into account their diversity of structure and governance

History

- [2] The first RPPO was established in 1951 when the original International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) was drafted and opened for signature by countries. The IPPC entered into force in 1952. In 1962, the four existing RPPOs met at the first meeting of RPPOs convened by FAO. Gradually, more RPPOs were established resulting in seven RPPOs by 1989, when the 1st Technical Consultation among RPPOs (TC-RPPO) was convened. At this meeting, the RPPOs recommended the establishment of an IPPC Secretariat to manage the IPPC, which was finally created in 1992. They also recommended and agreed on the organization of annual meetings of the TC-RPPO, and we have now reached the 35th TC-RPPO meeting in 2023. It is important to recognize that prior to the existence of the 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 International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs). Since 2017, there are 10 RPPOs representing regions around the world.

The ten RPPOs

- 1951 - EPPPO** - European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization
- 1953 - OIRSA** - Organismo Internacional Regional de Sanidad Agropecuaria
- 1956 - IAPSC** - Inter-African Phytosanitary Council
- 1956 - APPPC** - Asia and Pacific Plant Protection Commission
- 1969 - CAN** - Comunidad Andina
- 1976 - NAPPO** – North American Plant Protection Organization
- 1989 - COSAVE** - Comité de Sanidad Vegetal del Cono Sur
- 1994 - PPPO** - Pacific Plant Protection Organization
- 2012 - NEPPO** - Near East Plant Protection Organization
- 2017 - CAHFSA** – Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency

1. RPPOs in IPPC

- [3] The RPPOs are mentioned in the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) (<https://www.ippc.int/en/core-activities/governance/convention-text/>) and their roles are described in general terms. As stated in Article IX of the IPPC, RPPOs shall function as coordinating bodies for plant health within their regions, shall participate in various activities to achieve the objectives of this Convention and, where appropriate, shall gather and disseminate plant health information. Contracting Parties undertake

to cooperate in establishing RPPOs in their areas. The RPPOs shall cooperate with the IPPC Secretariat in achieving the objectives of the IPPC, and, where appropriate cooperate with the IPPC Secretariat in developing international standards.

2. Roles and functions of the RPPOs in their relationship with the CPM

[4] The roles and functions of RPPOs in their relationship with the CPM were more explicitly described in a document drafted by the TC-RPPO in 2016 and approved by CPM-12 in 2017. These roles and functions refer to specific areas such as standard setting, implementation and capacity development, communication and coordination and partnerships.

[5] This document is attached as Annex (below) and is also available on the IPPC website (https://assets.ippc.int/static/media/files/publication/en/2020/02/Roles_and_function_of_RPPOs_2020-02-19.pdf).

3. Additional roles and close collaboration

[6] In addition to the roles and functions of RPPOs in their relationship with the CPM, RPPOs have other important roles, which include:

- Supporting potential new RPPOs and making recommendations to the CPM on recognition of new RPPOs.
- Providing advice to the CPM, IPPC Secretariat, Strategic Planning Group (SPG), and CPM subsidiary bodies on phytosanitary issues.
- Developing and delivering the yearly TC-RPPO action plan.

[7] Furthermore, good collaboration and communication among and between RPPOs is important, and may include:

- Exchanging information on pests on which RPPOs might collaborate;
- Exchanging information on activities in their regions (e.g. webinars, conferences);
- Participating in and contributing to activities in other regions;
- Co-organizing activities, e.g., for regions that have members in common;
- Exchanging positions on CPM agenda items prior to CPM;
- Supporting proposals from other regions, e.g., during the open call for topics for Standards or implementation materials;
- Supporting other RPPOs in implementing their roles.

4. Differences between RPPOs

[8] RPPOs may have unique deliverables and different organizational arrangements. RPPOs may engage in other activities and deliverables, e.g., OIRSA has rapid intervention teams for phytosanitary emergencies and EPPO works on Plant Protection Products as well as on Phytosanitary Measures. The organizational structure of RPPOs is not prescribed and may be different for different regions. For example, an RPPO may be part of the FAO regional office (APPPC), have responsibilities in plant health and animal health in the same organization (OIRSA), be part of a larger economic and political organization (IAPSC), be independent organization (EPPO, NAPPO) or work in close collaboration with industry (NAPPO). Even though RPPOs may differ they have common basic roles and responsibilities as described herein.

5. TC-RPPO “rules”

[9] From 1989 until 1997 the TC-RPPO operated without a formalized Terms of Reference (ToR). The first ToR (including Rules of Procedure) was written in 1996 and applied from 1997 onwards. A revised and

much improved ToR including Rules of Procedure (RoP) was approved by the TC-RPPO in 2021 (<https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/91820/>) and noted by CPM-17 in 2023. This document describes the scope of work of the TC-RPPO, its composition and its functions, in line with those described above. The RoP describe the membership, observers, meetings, the roles of Chairperson and Rapporteur and the decision-making process within the TC-RPPO.

- [10] Each RPPO is considered a member of the TC-RPPO and should be represented at TC-RPPO meetings. The role of the Chairperson is the responsibility of one of the RPPOs for one year, rotating as recorded in meeting reports. TC-RPPO meetings are convened by the IPPC Secretary and can be hosted by an RPPO or held at FAO Headquarters in Rome. A simple majority of the members of the TC-RPPO shall be present to take decisions (the quorum). Decisions will be taken by consensus whenever possible, otherwise by simple majority. More detailed information is available in the ToR and RoP on the IPPC website (<https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/91820/>).



Annex: Roles and Functions of Regional Plant Protection Organizations (RPPOs) in their relationship with the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM)¹

Areas of cooperation between RPPOs and the IPPC Secretariat in accordance with article IX.3 of the IPPC include the following:

Standard setting process

- participation in the development of standards, such as identifying topics for standards and providing comments during the consultation periods;
- identification of regional standards that should be proposed as the basis for future ISPMs;
- action as collaborators and assistance in hosting standard setting meetings, as appropriate;
- preparation of draft explanatory documents on ISPMs according to paragraph 111 of the Report of the Sixth Session of the ICPM under the auspices of the IPPC Secretariat; - provision of technical and administrative support to Standards Committee members; - participation of RPPO observers in the Standards Committee meetings.

Implementation Facilitation and Capacity Development [or their new name/form]

- [joint] organization of IPPC regional workshops in their respective region
- facilitation of implementation of the IPPC and its ISPMs and identification of implementation challenges
- reporting on IPPC and ISPM implementation successes and challenges to the Technical Consultation among RPPOs
- contribution to avoidance and resolution of disputes
- cooperation with the IPPC Secretariat in the delivery of capacity development activities - participation of RPPO representative[s] in the CDC [or their new name/form];
- contribution to the global implementation of ePhyto.

Communications

- collaboration among RPPOs and with the IPPC Secretariat in the dissemination and exchange of information through, for example: annual reports, workshops, questionnaires, surveys, draft calendars and work plans, publications, websites, and technical resources.

Coordination and partnership amongst RPPOs and with the IPPC Secretariat

- attendance and active participation in the TC and CPM;
- may assist in the nominations for CPM, subsidiary and other bodies;
- ensuring RPPO representation in the IPPC Strategic Planning Group (SPG);
- nominating RPPO representatives as required to CPM bodies and groups;
- participation in global initiatives, such as IYPH and ePhyto;
- support to member countries in meeting IPPC obligations in appropriate areas such as pest reporting;
- assistance in the translation of IPPC documents;

¹ Adopted by the CPM-12 (2017), Appendix 09 to report: https://www.ippc.int/static/media/files/publication/en/2017/05/CPM-12_Report-2017-05-30_withISPMs.pdf

- in-kind cooperation with RPPOs or potential RPPOs requesting support;
- provision of information on regional related activities (on standards, regulations, etc.);
- cooperation with other regions in the organization and active participation in IPPC regional workshops and other capacity development activities;
- provision of technical resources to the IPPC resources page, or appropriate links.