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Virtual Meeting

IPPC Secretariat

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1. Opening of the meeting

1.1 Welcome by the IPPC Secretariat

[1] Adriana MOREIRA, IPPC Standard Setting Officer and Deputy Lead of the Standard Setting Unit, opened the virtual meeting of the Technical Panel on Commodity Standards (TPCS) and welcomed all participants. She highlighted the main focus of the meeting, which was to provide input to the Standards Committee (SC) regarding the commodity-standard proposals submitted in response to the 2023 Call for Topics: Standard and Implementation.¹

2. Meeting arrangements

2.1 Selection of chairperson

[2] As agreed at their meeting in June 2023,² the TPCS selected Lihong ZHU (New Zealand) as chairperson.

2.2 Selection of the rapporteur

[3] The TPCS selected Douglas KERRUSH (Australia) as rapporteur.

2.3 Adoption of the agenda

[4] The TPCS adopted the agenda (Appendix 1).

3. Administrative matters

[5] The panel noted the absence of Alfayo OMBUYA (Kenya).

4. TPCS work programme

4.1 October 2023 meeting report

[6] The TPCS noted that the topic submission prepared by China for fresh banana, mentioned at their last meeting,³ had subsequently been submitted.

[7] The secretariat confirmed that they had forwarded to the Task Force on Topics (TFT) the suggestion by the TPCS that the online form for topic proposals be amended to allow additional files to be uploaded. The TPCS agreed that it would be useful to refer to this in the conference room paper for the SC arising from this meeting.

4.2 First assessment on commodity standards by Task Force on Topics

[8] The TPCS considered this agenda item, on the first assessment by the TFT, together with agenda item 4.3, on the TFT's final assessment (see agenda item 4.3).⁴

4.3 Final assessment on commodity standards by Task Force on Topics

[9] The TPCS noted that nine proposals for commodity standards had been submitted:

- Seeds of *Phaseolus vulgaris* (2023-008), submitted by the Kingdom of the Netherlands;
- International movement of *Vitus vinifera* fruit (2023-018), submitted by New Zealand;
- International movement of *Citrus* fruit (2023-019), submitted by New Zealand;

¹ Call for Topics: Standards and Implementation: <https://www.ippc.int/en/calls/call-for-topics-standards-and-implementation/>

² TPCS 2023-06, agenda item 2.1.

³ TPCS 2023-10, agenda item 4.1.

⁴ 02_TPCS-Tel_2023_Nov (first TFT assessment); 03_TPCS-Tel_2023_Nov (final TFT assessment).

- Commodities of lower pest risk (2023-021), submitted by Australia;
- International movement of fresh taro (*Colocasia esculenta*) corm for consumption (2023-023), submitted by the Pacific Plant Protection Organisation);
- International movement of *Malus domestica* fruit for consumption (2023-024), submitted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland;
- International movement of fresh orange (*Citrus sinensis*) fruit (2023-027), submitted by Comité de Sanidad Vegetal del Cono Sur (COSAVE);
- International movement of fresh banana (*Musa paradisiaca*) fruit (2023-028), submitted by COSAVE); and
- International movement of *Musa* spp. (banana) fruit (2023-036), submitted by China.

[10] The TFT's first assessment covered the first eight of these proposals, and their final assessment covered all nine.

[11] The TPCS noted that the TFT had recommended six of the proposals for inclusion in the work programme with a priority of 1: *P. vulgaris* seeds; *V. vinifera* fruit (table grapes); the *Citrus* fruit proposal submitted by New Zealand; *C. esculenta* (taro) corm; *M. domestica* (apple) fruit; and the *M. paradisiaca* (banana) fruit proposal submitted by COSAVE. With regard to the *Citrus* proposal, the TFT had also recommended that the TPCS examine the feasibility of the proposal, including investigating whether all or some *Citrus* commodities could be grouped. If the TPCS concluded that the *Citrus* proposal was not feasible, then the TFT had recommended that the standard on *C. sinensis* (orange) fruit be developed instead (priority 2). The TFT had not recommended the development of the proposed standard on commodities of lower pest risk, but had recommended that the SC discuss the way forward for this topic. The TFT had not considered the proposal from China for *Musa* spp., because it was a late submission and the TFT had felt that one submission on banana (2023-028) was enough.

Practical considerations for managing the TPCS workload

[12] The TPCS started their considerations by discussing some of the practicalities of developing the proposed commodity standards.

[13] **Priorities.** The TPCS agreed that it would not be feasible to develop all the proposed priority 1 commodity standards simultaneously. They noted, therefore, that even if the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) were to add multiple priority 1 topics to the work programme, it may be helpful for the SC to receive advice from the TPCS on which of these standards should be developed first. The secretariat confirmed that the aim would be to start by drafting two standards, so that two standards could be submitted for consultation in 2025.

[14] **Length of face-to-face meeting.** The TPCS expressed concerns about the feasibility of drafting two commodity standards in one week. The secretariat commented that it could be difficult for the secretariat and TPCS members to justify having a two-week meeting, but work on one or both of the draft standards could start before the face-to-face meeting to make it easier to accomplish the drafting within a one-week meeting. The TPCS chairperson suggested that the possibility of extending the length of the physical meeting could perhaps be raised in the SC paper arising from this meeting.

[15] Later in the discussion, the TPCS returned to the question of how to draft two standards within a one-week meeting. They recognized that doing some preparatory work in virtual mode beforehand would help, but also noted that group discussions about pests and measures would be very difficult, if not impossible, in a virtual meeting. One TPCS member suggested that the TPCS could perhaps nominate individual TPCS members to prepare an initial draft to bring to the face-to-face meeting.

[16] **Selection of pests.** The TPCS noted that the time required to draft a commodity standard would depend, in part, on the depth of evaluation needed for the proposed pests: if the TPCS simply needed to confirm that each pest is regulated by at least one country, then that could be done within a one-week meeting; but if a more profound evaluation was needed, then this would not be possible within one week for two standards.

- [17] This prompted the TPCS to revisit their discussions at previous meetings about the criteria used to select pests for inclusion in commodity standards.
- [18] The Assistant TPCS Steward, Joanne WILSON (Australia), recalled the advice of the former TPCS steward, who had emphasized that it was not the role of the TPCS to conduct pest risk analysis. When developing the draft annex on mango (Annex *International movement of fresh Mangifera indica fruit* (2021-011) to ISPM 46 (*Commodity-based standards for phytosanitary measures*)), the TPCS had therefore included pests that were both regulated by at least one country and had at least one corresponding measure.
- [19] One TPCS member noted that ISPM 46 stipulated that “a criterion for inclusion of a pest is that it is regulated by at least one contracting party based on technical justification”; however, it did not say that all pests regulated by a contracting party had to be included.
- [20] The TPCS recalled the subsidiary criteria for inclusion of pests that they had drafted at their meeting in January 2023, which had not been accepted at the SC meeting in May 2023. However, they also recalled that, when developing the draft annex on mango, they had excluded some pests and had recorded the reasons for doing this. Some TPCS members therefore suggested that, rather than having subsidiary criteria for *inclusion* of a pest, subsidiary criteria for *exclusion* of pests could be elaborated instead.
- [21] The TPCS referred to the meeting report from the SC May 2023 meeting and noted that one SC member had suggested that the criteria used to select pests be considered by the SC in greater depth at a future meeting.⁵ Noting that some of the first-consultation comments submitted on the draft mango standard were querying the inclusion of some of the pests, one TPCS member therefore suggested that the discussion with the SC about selection criteria be reopened.
- [22] The Assistant Steward emphasized that, regardless of whether a particular pest is listed in the commodity standard or not, a country is still required to conduct a pest risk analysis before regulating a pest.
- [23] The TPCS recognized that it was the sovereign right of countries to decide which pests to regulate. However, the TPCS considered whether it would be feasible and acceptable for the TPCS to go back to the submitting country for further supporting information about a pest, if needed (e.g. if there was no consensus within the TPCS about whether a pest is associated with the commodity). The TPCS noted that the only time that this could feasibly be done would be after first consultation. Some TPCS members commented that the requirement in ISPM 46 for selected pests to be regulated *based on technical justification* provided grounds for seeking further supporting information where needed.
- [24] **Streamlining the development of commodity standards.** The TPCS recalled that one proposal being submitted to CPM-18 (2024) was to change the Standard Setting Procedure to allow draft specifications for commodity standards to be developed without going to consultation, given that they will all be largely the same except for the commodity. The secretariat noted that this would shorten the life cycle of commodity-standard development. The TPCS chairperson therefore encouraged TPCS members, when liaising with colleagues within their national plant protection organization (NPPO), to highlight the similarity between the draft specifications submitted during the 2023 call for topics and encourage their NPPO to support the proposed change.

Criteria and availability of information

- [25] **Criteria.** One TPCS member suggested that, in addition to the criteria used by the TFT to assess the proposals, other criteria could be the potential contribution of the commodity standard to the facilitation of trade; the availability of information; and the number of countries that may benefit from the standard.
- [26] Later in the meeting, the TPCS noted that confidence in the CPM adopting the commodity standard could be another criterion. Recognizing that there was still a need to build confidence in commodity

⁵ SC 2023-05, agenda item 6.4.

standards, it might be better to start with commodity standards that are simpler to develop, where possible, and would be supported by the wider trading community.

[27] **Availability of information.** The TPCS noted that they would only be able to fully evaluate the feasibility of developing the proposed commodity standards after a call for information materials on the respective standards. The secretariat confirmed that, once CPM-18 (2024) had decided which topics to add to the work programme, a call for information could be made in May 2024. After CPM-18 (2024), therefore, the TPCS could perhaps consider the order in which the priority 1 topics should be developed. The TPCS chairperson suggested that the call for information be restricted to two draft commodity standards (or a maximum of three), because countries could not reasonably be expected to submit information materials on more than this at one time.

Preferred topics

[28] The TPCS was in general agreement with the TFT's recommendations. Mindful of their earlier discussion about not being able to develop all priority 1 topics at the same time, TPCS members offered suggestions on which standards should be developed first.

[29] **One temperate plus one tropical.** One TPCS member suggested that one temperate topic (e.g. apple or table grape) and one tropical topic (e.g. taro) be developed first, as the former would probably be more time consuming and the latter less so, hence making the simultaneous development of two standards more feasible. This concept was supported by another TPCS member, who commented that any combination of one temperate and one tropical commodity was likely to be of interest to more contracting parties than two commodities from just one of these.

[30] **Apple (2023-024).** Some TPCS members suggested that this should be one of the first standards to be developed. The TPCS noted that, as the proposal already included contributions from multiple countries, there may not be much more information to collect and this would make it easier to develop the standard. They also noted that apple is also one of the most regulated of the commodities proposed, so there should be sufficient information available.

[31] **Phaseolus vulgaris seeds (2023-008).** One TPCS member expressed surprise that the TFT had recommended a priority of 1 for this commodity, as the relative economic value globally was likely to be low. However, another TPCS member suggested that this standard be one of the first to be developed.

[32] **Table grapes (2023-018).** Some TPCS members suggested that this should be one of the first standards to be developed, as table grapes are one of the most regulated of the commodities proposed and are traded internationally in large volumes, so there sufficient information should be available. Some TPCS members commented that a standard on table grapes was likely to be simpler to develop than one on apple.

[33] **Multi-species Citrus (2023-019) and orange fruit (2023-027).** The TPCS noted that, although the TFT's report appeared to consider that New Zealand's *Citrus* fruit proposal was for all citrus commodities, in fact it was for several species and these had similar pest profiles and measures. One TPCS member suggested that the standard on orange be one of the first standards to be developed, but another member agreed with the priority 2 level recommended by the TFT.

[34] **Taro (2023-019).** The TPCS expressed a concern that a commodity standard for taro would not be of value to many countries, but acknowledged that they did not know how many countries exported taro. They noted that the regional plant protection organization for the Caribbean had published a regional standard on taro.

[35] **Banana (*Musa paradisiaca* (2023-028) and *Musa spp.* (2023-036)).** The TPCS noted that banana would be an alternative to taro if selecting a tropical commodity to develop, and it was likely that sufficient information would be available. Some TPCS members expressed support for starting with a standard on banana. The TPCS recognized that, although the TFT had not considered the submission

from China (2023-036), the information contained in the submission could also be considered if developing the banana standard proposed by COSAVE (2023-028).

[36] **Next steps.** The TPCS did not reach a consensus on which standards should be developed first, but noted that their observations may still be of use to the SC in making their recommendations about which topics to include and with what priority. The TPCS agreed that they would continue their considerations about the preferred order in which standards should be developed at a future meeting, noting that the TPCS was the body best placed to advise on this.

[37] The TPCS noted that the TFT had used the economic value of the commodity as one of their evaluation criteria, and agreed that they would include economic value in their considerations.

[38] The TPCS:

- (1) *invited* the SC to consider the observations made by the TPCS at this meeting; and
- (2) *agreed* to consider the topic proposals in more detail at a future meeting, with a view to providing further advice to the SC about which commodity standards to develop first once the CPM has decided which to include on the work programme.

5. Any other business

5.1 Brief overview of consultation comments on mango annex

[39] The steward for the draft annex *International movement of fresh Mangifera indica fruit* (2021-011) to ISPM 46, Joanne WILSON (New Zealand), gave a brief update on the outcome of the first consultation.

[40] She explained that over 600 comments had been received. Many countries had suggested changes to the set wording of the Scope section. Additional text had been proposed to clarify what NPPOs need to do to use the standard, and there had been some proposals for changes to pests and measures, including some new treatments and two systems approaches. The comments had included requests to remove the methyl bromide treatments and two irradiation treatments.

[41] The TPCS:

- (3) *noted* the update on the first consultation comments on the mango annex.

6. Next TPCS meeting

[42] The next meeting will be held in virtual mode on 6 December 2023 at 10.00 CET (Rome time). The main agenda item will be the consultation comments on the draft mango annex.

7. Close of the meeting

[43] The chairperson thanked the participants and closed the meeting.

Appendix 1: Agenda

Agenda Item		Document No.	Presenter
1.	Opening of the Meeting		
1.1	Welcome by the IPPC Secretariat	--	IPPC Secretariat (MOREIRA)
2.	Meeting Arrangements		
2.1	Selection of Chairperson	--	MOREIRA
2.2	Selection of the Rapporteur	--	Chairperson
2.3	Adoption of the Agenda	01_TPCS_Tel_2023_Nov	Chairperson
3.	Administrative Matters		
3.1	TPCS membership list	TPCS membership list	MONTEROSA
3.2	Connections to Zoom and virtual meetings	Short guidelines for participants	
4.	TPCS work programme		
4.1	October 2023 meeting report	TPCS Oct meeting	IPPC Secretariat / Chairperson
4.2	The TFT first assessment on the commodity standards	02_TPCS-Tel_2023_Nov	MOREIRA / WILSON
4.3	TFT final assessment on commodity standards	03_TPCS-Tel_2023_Nov	MOREIRA / WILSON
5.	Any other business	--	Chairperson
5.1	Brief overview of country comments on Mango annex	Country comments on Mango	ZHU / ALL
6.	Next TPCS meeting		IPPC Secretariat / Chairperson
7.	Closing of the meeting	--	IPPC Secretariat / Chairperson