Getting In Touch About Strengthening Pest Outbreak and Response Systems (POARS)

Agenda item 4.5

Outline: Pest Outbreak Alert and Response Systems (POARS)

- Background

- Focus Group on POARS outputs
  - POARS Study
  - Recommendations

- Updates on progress made so far

- SG POARS Terms of Reference

Pest Outbreak Alert and Response Systems (POARS) Development Agenda (DAI)

"(…) a global pest alert system with mechanisms to evaluate and communicate emerging pest risks will be developed, providing regular information to NPPOs on changes in pest status around the world. NPPOs will use this to quickly adapt their phytosanitary systems to reduce the risk of introduction and spread. In the case of outbreaks, strengthened pest outbreak response systems and tools will help countries take much more timely action, especially against new incursions. NPPOs, RPPOs and the FAO will collaborate to develop and roll out a comprehensive but easy to use toolbox to help countries respond quickly and effectively. Some RPPOs may play an active role in assisting NPPOs to coordinate outbreak responses across their regions."

- The **IPPC Strategic Framework 2020-2030** includes eight development agenda items (DAIs), one of which is the Strengthening Pest Outbreak Alert and Response Systems (POARS).

- Focus Group on POARS (FG POARS) was established to provide recommendations on effective POARS.

- CPM 16 agreed to establish a POARS Steering Group to work on establishing a POARS capability (2024).

Background

CPM -14 requested that the Bureau draft an action plan for an IPPC pest emergency system

2019

2020

CPM Bureau established a CPM Focus Group on POARS (FG POARS) to recommend effective POARS

FG POARS evaluated the existing systems and agreed on recommendations

2021

Completed 12 tasks defined in its ToRs and presented considerations to the SPG

2022

FG POARS presented the recommendations to CPM-16 (2022) and were published on the IPP

CPM-16 agreed to establish a POARS Steering Group (SG POARS)

CPM-17 agreed on the overarching implementation plan for the IPPC Strategic Framework 2020-2030 DAI

2023

2024

POARS SG initiated activities

FG POARS outputs

POARS internal study

Internal study on POARS existing systems and recommendations for optimal functioning (conducted in 2021)

Recommendations

Recommendations for an Effective Pest Outbreak Alert and Response System (formulated in 2021 and presented to the CPM-16 (2022))

https://assets.ippc.int/static/media/files/mediakitdocument/en/2022/03/POARS_All_Recommendations.pdf

POARS Internal study

FG POARS studied the existing national, regional and global systems to determine their overall components, strengths and weaknesses.

- The World Organization for Animal Health (WOHA) system EIOS.
- The Epidemic Intelligence from Open Sources (EIOS) for Animal Health.
- The FAO Emergency Prevention System (EMPRES); the FAO Emergency. Management Center for Animal Health.
- The European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization (EPPO) system.
- The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) system;
- The European Union Notification System for Plant Health Outbreaks (EUROPHYT).
- Organismo Internacional Regional de Sanidad Agropecuaria (OIRSA) system.
- The North America Plant Protection Organization (NAPPO) system; the Pacific Community (SPC) system.
- The Centre for Agriculture and Biosciences International (CABI). system; Cropwatch Africa.
- The Australian system.
- The USA National Plant Diagnostic Network.
- Pest Lens.
- The French epidemiological platform.
- The Argentinian Network of Experts (SINAVIMO).

Let's take a look at the 2021 FG POARS recommendations for effective POARS implementation!

Recommendations	Brief descriptions
1.Components	• Overarching components (policy, legal, financial, data management and comms) • Pre-detection • Post-detection.
2.Practicalities, legal frameworks and NROs	• Distribution information • Challenges and solutions for NROs.
3.Roles at global, regional and national levels	• Governance (POARS and CPM, new subsidiary body, function subsidiary body • Operationalization (IPPC Sect., FAO-IPPC, Roles NPPOs and RPPOs.
4.Criteria for a pest to be considered under the POARS framework	• Definition of emerging pest. • Criteria.
5. Early identification of outbreaks and communication of alerts to NPPOs.	• Components early detection and comms. • Detection and diagnostics • Comms and alerts.
6. Systems and tools useful to NPPOs and RPPOs	• Current tools • Establishing a toolbox • IPPC processes • POARS SC subgroups.
7. Processes to engage experts and resources	• National expertise • Organization, logistics, expertise (international, database of experts, specific commandos, remote diagnostic expertise).
8. Generic tools comprising POARS	• Components (horizon scan, risk analysis, phytosanitary regulation, inspection, prevention and preparedness, surveillance, diagnostics, risk communication, notification).

Let's review the progress made so far..

Discussions at CPM-16 (April 2022) on the governance of POARS

1. Divergence of opinions regarding the creation of a subsidiary body
2. Budgetary concerns and potential overlap with existing initiatives
3. Suggestions to consider the model used for dealing with specific pests like fall armyworm and Fusarium banana wilt TR4
4. Agreements: to establish SG POARS focus on establishing a POARS capability

The role of RPPOs in POARS (October - 2022)

1. The FG POARS provided an inclusive list of actions that RPPOs may take
2. During the 2022 SPG meeting, the TC-RPPO presented a paper stating that "the role of the RPPOs and other regional organizations and institutions should be to guide, support, coordinate and link the NPPOs with POARS[11]"
3. The SPG recommended that the TC-RPPOs submit their comments to the SG POARS for consideration once the comments are finalized

Bureau and SPG discussions on emerging pest definition (October 2023)

1. **Initiation:** The SC requested the TPG to add the term "emerging pest" to ISPM 5, following advice from the FG POARS.

2. **TPG discussion and draft proposal:** The proposed term was discussed during the 2022 TPG meeting, and a draft definition of "emerging pest" was presented to the SC for approval.

3. **SC evaluation:** In May 2023, the SC discussed the proposed definition but concluded it was unsuitable for consultation. The SC recommended that the SG POARS continue developing criteria for determining what constitutes an "emerging pest," with input from the TPG.

4. **Bureau's recommendation:** In June 2023, the Bureau acknowledged concerns and difficulties with defining "emerging pest" and invited the SG POARS to develop a working definition for emerging pests specifically for POARS purposes. Additionally, it recommended that the SC remove the subject "emerging pest" (2018-003) from the work program of the TPG.

5. **SPG emphasis:** SPG recognized the importance of determining what constitutes an "emerging pest" and **emphasized the need for criteria rather than a strict definition.**

What are the SG POARS functions?

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List of functions in SG POARS ToRs	Color code	Category
1. Clearly define the relative **roles of the POARS Steering Group** in relation to IC to ensure synergy rather than overlap.	🟩	Governance
2. Analyze the **pros and cons** of setting a **POARS Steering Committee** and the return on investment, among its other functions.	🟩	Governance
3. Ensure coherent development and implementation of the **POARS framework** designed for the early detection and rapid response of pests of economic and environmental significance	🟨	POARS technical development
4. Establish a proactive approach to the **POARS framework.**	🟨	POARS technical development
5. Make recommendations for the necessary **POARS resources (staff and financial).**	🟦	Financial
6. Provide detailed recommendations on existing and **new pest alert and response systems.**	🟨	POARS technical development
7. Provide detailed recommendations to promote and articulate the **establishment of a network** of international organizations and experts actively involved in Pest Alert and Emergency Response.	🟦	Collaboration and resource mobilization strategies
8. Provide detailed recommendations to promote and articulate a **network for information exchange** and **resource mobilization** in the event of an imminent threat, incursion, or outbreak to facilitate advocacy initiatives with potential donors.	🟦	Collaboration and resource mobilization strategies
9. Set up **ad hoc working groups** calling upon subject matter experts to address specific tasks, including establishing emerging pest criteria and a clear procedure to assess and rank emerging pests, as recommended by the Focus Group.	🟩	Governance

POARS already agreed an action plan and will report progress done at the Strategic Planning Group (SPG) and the CPM Bureau in October 2024 and CPM-19 in 2025

Thank you

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