



COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES
NINETEENTH 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) meeting took place at the Società Geografica Italiana and FAO headquarters in Rome, Italy, the week of October 28-30, 2024. The SPG is responsible for providing strategic analysis, planning, and advice to the IPPC Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM). A total of 17 contracting parties and two Regional Plant Protection Organizations participated in the SPG session. The meeting was chaired by SPG Chair Samuel Bishop (United Kingdom, European Representative).
- [2] Unlike recent meetings of the SPG, the first two days were outside of FAO and were a mix of plenary sessions and breakout sessions.
- [3] The most significant issues discussed by the SPG were:
- An environmental scan of the IPPC to identify strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and challenges
 - One Health, Antimicrobial resistance and plant health
 - Review of the format of ISPMs
 - Progress on the Strategic Framework DAIs
 - POARS
 - Africa Phytosanitary Programme (APP) update
 - Preparations for CPM-19 (2025)

An environmental scan of the IPPC to identify strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and challenges

- [4] The Chair of the CPM provided a detailed strategic review of strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities in the IPPC internal and external operating environment. Following this the SPG broke into five groups to discuss. Key themes identified included the CPM and secretariat improving their visibility within FAO, increasing engagement with the other ‘two sisters’, enhancing the IPPC’s monitoring and evaluation frameworks and positioning the IPPC as a reliable source of truth, countering misinformation.

One Health, Antimicrobial resistance and plant health

- [5] The SPG agreed that this is an important area for plant health, noted the key alignment of the IPPC’s mission to the One Health framework and supported (in principle) a proposal for development of a CPM recommendation on AMR.

Review of the format of ISPMs and expediting their development

- [6] The SPG discussed the question, “is it time to rethink ISPM’s?”. It was highlighted that the format, length and language used in ISPMs can create implementation challenges for some contracting parties. Suggestions for improvements included the use of ‘plain language’, removing content which would be better placed in guidance and reviewing the number of definitions in ISPM 5. The SPG broke into five groups to discuss expediting the development of ISPMs, key themes identified included reducing the number of ISPMs, making requirements clearer, having only one round of consultation, disestablishing the Task Force for Topics and the use of artificial intelligence.

Progress on the Strategic Framework development agenda items

- [7] The SPG noted the updates on each of the eight development agenda items (DAIs). Following the updates the SPG broke into 5 groups to consider the next iteration of the IPPC Strategic Framework, key themes identified included ongoing funding constraints, is 10 years too long a time period and that building on the current framework maybe better than developing a new framework from scratch.

Pest Outbreak Alert and Response Systems

- [8] The SPG broke into five groups, each was assigned a specific pest and tested the proposed criteria for determining “emerging pests”. Key lessons learned from this exercise included the need for clear guidance materials, more work is needed on the appropriate level of geographical granularity and the need to consider social impacts and management practices.
- [9] The challenges in predicting pest emergencies were also recognised.

Update on the Africa Phytosanitary Programme

- [10] Following a secretariat update, the SPG noted the progress which had been made and provided recommendations on the future of the APP work programme.

Preparations for CPM-19 (2025)

- [11] The SPG agreed that the CPM chair should invite the newly appointed Director-General of the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH) to deliver the keynote address on one health. The meeting discussed three potential themes for side sessions – commodity standards, contingency planning for emerging plant pests and the APP. It was agreed that it was too early for the side session on commodity standards, and this should be reviewed again for the CPM in 2026. The CPM bureau was requested to further discuss the side session proposals.

Meeting feedback and discussion on format and possible themes for future SPG meetings

- [12] The SPG noted that the new format with breakout sessions worked well and that the smaller groups allowed for easier networking, creative and collective brainstorming. It was suggested that the delay for SPG papers be adjusted so that it did not coincide with the holiday season and discussed logistical improvements for ensure effective and productive meetings when holding the SPG in FAO HQ.

Recommendations

- [13] The CPM is invited to:
- (1) *Note* the report from the SPG.