



Report from the CPM chairperson

COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

NINETEENTH SESSION

REPORT FROM THE CPM CHAIRPERSON

AGENDA ITEM 6

(Prepared by the CPM chairperson)

- [1] This report won't repeat the detailed information presented in other Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) documents by the IPPC Secretariat and representatives of the various committees and focus groups.
- [2] The CPM bureau met physically three times in 2024 and had virtual meetings in September and December (including dedicated meetings of the bureau's Finance Committee chaired by Dr. Gabrielle VIVIAN-SMITH of Australia).
- [3] The bureau's meetings have included several sessions on budgets and funding for the IPPC. Our budgetary discussions in 2024 were focused largely on specific funding arrangements for the IPPC e-Phyto system. However, the need to improve stability for, and predictability of, ongoing long-term funding remains an important factor for ensuring that our work proceeds as planned. As part of this, the Secretariat was able to arrange for two new special trust funds to be established. One is for the annual contributions to support the e-Phyto hub system to be made under the funding model agreed to at the CPM-18 (2024). Once the majority of contracting parties are making their required payments, this will stabilize long-term funding for the system. The other new trust fund is for contributions to be made to support the Africa Phytosanitary Programme (APP) which will allow its implementation to be further advanced.
- [4] Returning to the e-Phyto system, usage continues to grow and the importance of maintaining the system and ensuring its reliability is clear. Stable financing is part of this, with the advances noted above being important, but effective governance is also key. The bureau presently performs the governance roles for decisions related to the e-Phyto system, but this will be revisited in 2025, with one of the options for future governance to be a dedicated governance group being formed for e-Phyto.
- [5] There are several CPM Focus Groups currently active undertaking dedicated works on climate change, one health, sea containers, provision of safe food aid, and global phytosanitary research. The establishment of such focus groups represents several current priorities and challenges. Each group comprises expert members and they are making clear progress in their respective areas throughout the year, as requested and directed by the CPM. Other issues that dominate concerns include emerging and continuing spread of pests, such as fusarium wilt of bananas that is causing huge impacts in several regions.
- [6] As is evident from the reports of the bureau and the Strategic Planning Group (SPG), we are halfway through the time frame envisioned for the IPPC's Strategic Framework (2020-30). It is, therefore, appropriate to start considering the next phase in strategic planning. This coincides with similar time frames for the FAO's Strategic Framework. The 2024 SPG meeting included discussion on the IPPC's Strategic Framework with preliminary observations being presented which are contained in its report.

Planning for and identifying the IPPC's Strategic direction from 2030 will become an increasingly intensive and important effort over the next few years. Therefore, preparing for the next phase of strategic direction for the IPPC is expected to become a progressively dominant theme for the bureau and the SPG.

- [7] A linked aspect arising in conjunction with the 2024 SPG meeting relates to our core role of developing International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs). The SPG discussions on how standard setting may evolve in the future included how to shorten the time required to develop and adopt ISPMs, how to improve the process and efficiency of preparing associated guides, and considerations on maximising the accessibility and utility of ISPMs by making them easier to read, understand, and apply. On this latter point, we have a CPM-19 discussion paper on the subject, which again was first discussed by the SPG and the bureau.
- [8] I hope that proactive IPPC engagement and advocacy within the One Health framework will be a key part of our future strategic approaches. Following the SPG meeting in 2023, and related discussion and decisions taken at CPM-18 in 2024, members of the bureau and the IPPC Secretariat have been very active on One Health throughout the last 12 months. This work has included providing the keynote address and a dedicated plant health session at the 8th World One Health Congress in September, the delivery of a side session at the 29th Session of Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations Committee on Agriculture in October, continued liaison between the IPPC Secretariat and the FAO's One Health Coordinator, ongoing surveys on anti-microbial resistance in relation to plant protection-based pesticide usage, and planning for further activities in 2025 (including during this CPM meeting). More activities are planned for 2025, including having the theme for the International Day of Plant health to be devoted to the role of plant health in One Health. As CPM-18 established a dedicated CPM Focus Group on One Health, we will be well served and represented throughout the year.
- [9] Another area in which more focus may be required is our engagement with the private sector; for example, the role and use of third-party service delivery (also known as alternative service delivery), the establishment of public-private partnerships, and inclusion of industry representatives in our work activities where appropriate. Of course, we now have an ISPM on the subject of alternative service delivery, but it seems that the use of such approaches varies immensely. Nevertheless, given the periodic peaks and troughs in public funds available for plant health activities among the various contracting parties, such approaches may often provide the means to fill gaps in plant health activities that may otherwise result in pest spread. The bureau has also discussed the importance of public-private partnerships this year in relation to challenges such as Fusarium TR4 wilt of banana and, I expect, will continue to do so. An example of one such approach pursued with great effect in South Africa in relation to fruit flies is expected to be published on the International Phytosanitary Portal¹ (IPP).
- [10] Continuing on the role of the private sector, as part of my role as a member of the bureau I have been fortunate to be involved in the work of the CPM Focus Group on Sea Containers. The significant developments and the potential systemic improvements occurring in relation to minimising the spread of pests through this pathway are being realised much more rapidly than I had anticipated. I am confident that this reflects our clear efforts to include industry associations in the focus group and their clear and supportive engagement in this work. I would especially like to recognise the related activities being pursued on container design and custodial responsibility, both initiatives being led by industry groups.
- [11] Moving to the IPPC Secretariat, in 2024, Osama EL-LISSY retired from his position as Secretary to the IPPC. In his tenure he was able to bring about numerous significant outcomes and advancements, and to achieve an astounding amount in a comparatively short space of time. I cannot thank Mr. EL-LISSY enough for his initiatives, efforts, and effectiveness. I would also like to note the recent retirement of other key and effective staff: Arop DENG and John GILMORE. Among their numerous efforts and achievements, both Mr. DENG and Mr. GILMORE played key roles in the development and

¹ International Phytosanitary Portal (IPP): <https://www.ippc.int/en/>

implementation of the APP. Mr. DENG also served very effectively as Officer-in-Charge of the Secretariat following the retirement of Mr. EL-LISSY. I also extend my thanks to Mr. Avetik NERSISYAN and Ms. Sarah BRUNEL for also serving very effectively as Officer-in-Charge on a rotating basis. Finally, I would also like to express my sincere thanks to FAO Deputy-Director General (DDG), Beth BECHDOL, and Don SYME, Senior Adviser to DDG BECHDOL for their leadership and oversight of the IPPC Secretariat during the transitional period between the departure of Mr. EL-LISSY and the appointment of a new Secretary.

- [12] Of particular note in relation to the IPPC's engagement within the FAO and more broadly, DDG BECHDOL joined the bureau during its October meeting and provided several key observations and perspectives. These included: the importance of working on One Health in alignment with FAO and other bodies; the importance of the IPPC e-Phyto Solution; implementation of the APP; and how to elevate the climate-change agenda related to food and agriculture at the Thirtieth Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 2025.
- [13] Several current members of the bureau are expected to leave the bureau immediately after CPM-19. I thank them for their diligent efforts and expertise, and I extend a warm welcome to all new members of the bureau.
- [14] Finally, at the end of this week's CPM meeting, our new CPM chairperson, Mr. Samuel BISHOP of the United Kingdom, will commence his chairing role. The CPM and the entire IPPC community will be well served and equally I have no doubts that we will all work to support Mr. BISHOP in this role. While there are several challenges facing us in the next two years, as always, we can count on clear leadership and expertise from Mr. BISHOP as CPM chairperson.
- [15] I should note that this report has been prepared almost three months prior to the CPM meetings and so unforeseen current events relating to plant health that may be evident in March 2025 cannot be referred to.

Recommendation

- [16] The CPM is invited to:
- (1) *Note* this report from the CPM chairperson.