



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



International  
Plant Protection  
Convention

# **REPORT**

## **IPPC Financial Committee**

**11 March 2025**

**Rome, Italy**

**IPPC Secretariat**

Required citation:

IPPC Secretariat. 2025. *Report of the IPPC Financial Committee, 11 March 2025*. Published by FAO on behalf of the Secretariat of the International Plant Protection Convention.

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## 1. Opening of the meeting

- [1] The Chairperson of the Financial Committee (FC), Gabrielle VIVIAN-SMITH, welcomed all participants to the meeting and drew their attention to the main agenda items.

## 2. Meeting arrangements

- [2] The FC elected Jan Hendrik VENTER (Africa) as rapporteur.
- [3] The list of participants is attached to this report as Appendix 1.

## 3. Objectives of the meeting

- [4] The chairperson noted the objectives of the meeting: to discuss considerations related to the Nineteenth Session of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM-19) in March 2025, including the FC workplan and budgets for 2024 and 2025, and the financial stability of the IPPC Secretariat (hereafter referred to as “the secretariat”) considering global events.

## 4. Adoption of the agenda

- [5] The FC adopted the agenda (Appendix 2).

## 5. CPM-19 related considerations

- [6] **IPPC Secretariat financial report for 2024.**<sup>1</sup> The secretariat presented the IPPC Secretariat financial report for 2024, which highlighted available funds for 2024 as USD 8.7 million (including a contribution of USD 3.4 million from FAO). The secretariat noted that spending in 2024 was slightly below the predicted target, with a total of USD 6.9 million aiming to be spent across the years 2024 and 2025. The FC discussed the “surplus” of funding which will be carried through to 2025,<sup>2</sup> and the efficiency of the use of funds throughout 2024, particularly regarding the savings from the IPPC secretary salary vacancy and redistribution to CPM travel fund shortfalls, thereby ensuring travel support for contracting parties attending the CPM.
- [7] The FC noted the contributions from five contracting parties towards IPPC activities under the IPPC Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF) amounting to USD 1.2 million, and thanked the in-kind contributions to the secretariat amounting to approximately USD 1.2 million from contracting parties and organizations. The FC also noted the creation of two further MDTFs in 2024: the ePhyto MDTF and the Africa Phytosanitary Programme (APP) MDTF. The FC discussed the possibility of earmarking contributions from contracting parties who wished to contribute towards a particular project.
- [8] The FC noted concerns regarding the status of three frozen secretariat positions. The FC discussed the need for the three positions – noting that the business case remains the same and the roles are crucial in supporting the sustainability of the secretariat – and agreed for the incoming IPPC secretary to discuss these recruitment issues at the next FC meeting in June.
- [9] **IPPC Secretariat workplan and budget for 2025.**<sup>3</sup> The FC noted the revised IPPC Secretariat workplan and budget for 2025, which included a budget proposal of USD 8.35 million in 2025, to strengthen further results and achievements across IPPC governance and strategies, standard setting, implementation facilitation, and integration and support. The FC noted that the proposed workplan and budget would be discussed at CPM-19 (2025) for approval.

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<sup>1</sup> CPM 2025/51.

<sup>2</sup> This “surplus” relates to the payment of consultancy wages, which are in fact split equally across the two-year reporting period (USD 250 000 for 2024 and USD 250 000 for 2025). At the end of the reporting period (31 December 2025) there will be no surplus of funds.

<sup>3</sup> CPM 2025/50.

- [10] The FC discussed concerns regarding the lack of assessed contributions for contracting party contributions and the rate of payment. The secretariat clarified that the ePhyto MDTF does have a breakdown of proposed voluntary contributions to be received by contracting parties, which are, however, not compulsory.
- [11] The secretariat noted the proposed budget increase of USD 500 000 through the FAO Regular Programme fund for the next biennium. The FC raised concerns regarding the financial stability of the IPPC and the implications of unspent funds, particularly regarding the two-year spending window for the Regular Programme funds (which ultimately revert back to FAO if unspent, versus the IPPC MDTF, which retains unspent funds and generates interest).
- [12] **Potential financial implications of certain CPM decisions.** The FC noted the proposed changes to several CPM papers with budgetary implications, following earlier discussions with the secretariat. The FC noted the adjustment to the wording of “requests” to “recommendations”, to clarify that budgetary matters will ultimately be decided by the IPPC Financial Committee, to streamline decision-making and to avoid the CPM being asked to make direct recommendations on financial matters. The secretariat acknowledged that clearer wording would be reflected throughout the CPM-19 (2025) report.
- [13] The Financial Committee:
- (1) *thanked* the five contracting parties (Australia, Canada, Republic of Ireland, Republic of Korea and United States of America) for their contributions under the IPPC MDTF in 2024, totaling USD 1.2 million;
  - (2) *thanked* contracting parties and organizations for their in-kind contributions towards IPPC Secretariat activities, totaling approximately USD 1.2 million;
  - (3) *acknowledged* that countries wishing to donate to a specific MDTF (ePhyto or APP) should specifically earmark this in their contribution letter;
  - (4) *agreed* to request that the incoming IPPC secretary review the status of the three frozen secretariat positions; and
  - (5) *acknowledged* the change in wording within certain CPM-19 (2025) papers to revise recommendations, whereby instead of tasking the CPM to directly approve financial allocation for a certain activity, the CPM should direct that discussion to the IPPC Financial Committee.<sup>4</sup>

## 6. Discussion on financial stability of the IPPC Secretariat

- [14] **FAO Regular Programme fund.** The FC discussed the presumed stability of the FAO Regular Programme fund and noted the proposed additional funding of USD 500 000 from the fund to support IPPC activities and provide financial security. The FC noted the clarification from the secretariat that the IPPC budget is approved biennially by the FAO Conference and is secured once approved. The FC discussed recent global events and potential impacts on FAO funding and noted that while proposed IPPC funds may be protected within the Regular Programme fund, there could be a significant shortfall in FAO assessed contributions to programme activities, raising the concern of IPPC staffing processes, which may have to be filled by existing FAO staff if a freeze were to occur.
- [15] The FC also discussed the need to articulate the IPPC’s global value and benefits to contracting parties, similar to efforts by Codex Alimentarius, to ensure its continued support. The secretariat proposed to collaborate with the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) and Codex Alimentarius on a joint publication to showcase this positive impact on countries (making them stronger, safer and prosperous) through a compelling narrative, case studies and aggregated data.
- [16] **IPPC Multi-Donor Trust Fund.** The FC discussed the contributions to the IPPC MDTF, noting emerging trends to assess potential work that could be achieved. Following a request for clarification

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<sup>4</sup> During CPM-19 (2025), interventions were received from contracting parties proposing that the (incoming) IPPC secretary should also approve these financial decisions, alongside the IPPC Financial Committee. This is reflected in the CPM-19 (2025) report.

from one member, the FC discussed how the IPPC compares to other conventions and treaties (such as Codex Alimentarius and WOA), noting that Codex Alimentarius has a narrower scope with no implementation activities and WOA has significantly greater funding and is not an FAO body. The FC noted how this comparison could be used to request an increase in Regular Programme funding, based on its identified position as the least funded of the “three sisters”.

[17] The FC also discussed the critical need to engage with permanent representatives to raise the IPPC's profile and advocate for increased Regular Programme funds (including for initiatives such as the IPPC ePhyto Solution) and to leverage the IPPC's growing recognition at the FAO Conference to secure more resources.

[18] **Other projects.** The FC discussed the significant reduction in the number of new IPPC projects, and the secretariat's search for further projects, with a particular focus on opportunities within the European Union. This included a DG TRADE project (with travel and observatory components), and a South-South cooperation project, DG SANTE. The FC noted ongoing discussions with Qatar, Germany, Finland and Switzerland to secure funds. The FC also noted the IPPC's engagement with the Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation to explore private sector funding for the IPPC ePhyto Africa Initiative, contingent on due diligence and procedures.

[19] The FC welcomed the exploration of public-private partnerships (noting several cases of private sector involvement across Africa) and discussed the potential alignment of the aforementioned projects to the APP. The secretariat clarified that although no obvious alignment existed at present (noting difference competencies), further assessments could be carried out to understand possible synergies. The FC noted the potential for success within the DG SANTE project, with its plans to conduct phytosanitary capacity evaluations at the national, regional and global levels; and how the DG TRADE travel funding is designated to support country participation in CPM and Strategic Planning Group (SPG) meetings.

[20] The FC also noted APP staffing issues and other implications that were unresolved that would be discussed at the next FC meeting in June.

[21] The FC:

- (6) *acknowledged* the financial stability of FAO Regular Programme funds, as a result of financial approval from the highest body of FAO (FAO Conference); however, noted the potential financial instability across the wider organization as a result of recent political events; and
- (7) *acknowledged* the development within the newly established EU project with DG SANTE and plans to develop projects on DG Trade, and South-South cooperation.

## 7. Any other business

[22] There was no other business.

## 8. Next meeting

[23] The next meeting of the FC is scheduled for June 2025 in Rome, Italy (date to be confirmed).

## 9. Close of the meeting

[24] The FC chairperson thanked everyone and closed the meeting.

**Appendix 1: Participants list**

	<b>Region/ Role</b>	<b>Name, mailing, address, telephone</b>	<b>Email address</b>
✓	North America	<b>Mr Gregory WOLFF</b> Canadian Food Inspection Agency 59 Camelot Drive Ottawa, Ontario K1A0Y9 <b>CANADA</b>	<a href="mailto:greg.wolff@inspection.gc.ca">greg.wolff@inspection.gc.ca</a>
✓	Europe	<b>Mr Samuel BISHOP</b> Head of International Plant Health Policy Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs <b>UNITED KINGDOM</b>	<a href="mailto:sam.bishop@defra.gsi.gov.uk">sam.bishop@defra.gsi.gov.uk</a>
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**IPPC Secretariat**

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**Appendix 2: Agenda**

AGENDA ITEM		DOCUMENT NO.	PRESENTER
1.	Opening of the meeting	--	BRUNEL/ VIVIAN-SMITH
2.	Meeting arrangements	--	BENOVIC
3.	Objectives of the meeting	--	VIVIAN-SMITH
4.	Adoption of the agenda	01_FC_2025_Mar	VIVIAN-SMITH/FC
5.	CPM-19-related considerations		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- IPPC Secretariat financial report for 2024</li><li>- IPPC Secretariat workplan and budget for 2025</li><li>- Potential financial implications of certain CPM decisions</li></ul>	CPM 2025/51  CPM 2025/50	BENOVIC/FC
6.	Discussion on financial stability of the IPPC Secretariat		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Regular programme</li><li>- IPPC Multi-Donor Trust Fund</li><li>- Other projects</li></ul>		FC
7.	Any other business	--	VIVIAN-SMITH
8.	Next meeting	--	VIVIAN-SMITH
9.	Closing of the meeting	--	VIVIAN-SMITH//BRUNEL