



Report from the SPG

COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

TWENTIETH 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 Ethiopia Room, FAO headquarters in Rome, Italy, the week of October 27- 29, 2025. The SPG is responsible for providing strategic analysis, planning, and advice to the IPPC Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM).

[2] The meeting was chaired by SPG Chair Dris BARIK (Morocco, Near East and Nord Africa Representative). The FAO Deputy Director General, Beth BECHDOL and the newly appointed IPPC Secretary Enrico PEROTTI delivered the opening remarks.

[3] A total of 41 participants participated in the SPG session including:

- 7 CPM Bureau members;
- 30 contracting parties from all FAO regions;
- 2 Regional Plant Protection Organizations (RPPOs).

[4] The SPG meeting was a mix of plenary sessions, breakout sessions and Mentimeter interactions. Over 40 papers were prepared for discussion, including 13 papers on the subject of rethinking ISPMs.

[5] The most significant issues discussed by the SPG were:

- Progress on the Strategic Framework DAIs;
- IPP role on raising the profile of plant health for national plant protection organisations;
- IPPC ePhyto Solution;
- Rethinking ISPMs;
- Update on safe provisions of food and other humanitarian aid
- IPPC Plant Health Campus and Mentimeter
- Africa Phytosanitary Programme (APP) update;
- Preparations for CPM-20 (2026).

Progress on the Strategic Framework development agenda items

[6] The SPG noted the updates on each of the eight development agenda items (DAIs). Following the updates the SPG participants broke into five groups to discuss the IPPC strategic framework, what comes next.

IPP role on raising the profile of plant health for national plant protection organizations

[7] The SPG discussed the importance and challenges of communication to raise the profile of plant health. The SPG agreed that CPs need to work together to elevate the importance of biosecurity and safe trade by sharing IPPC communication materials on their own platforms.

IPPC ePhyto solution

- [8] The SPG noted the implementation status, the roadmap activities and the unsustainable financial situation of IPPC ePhyto Solution.
- [9] The SPG agreed to strengthen the governance body of ePhyto which is currently insured by ePhyto steering group (ESG) as more countries were coming to depend on the solution, and it was embedded in IPPC contracting parties (CPs) import and export systems. The SPG agreed to make recommendations to CPM-20 (2026) on possible alternatives
- [10] The SPG noted the successful ePhyto implementation experiences of certain CPs.

Rethinking ISPMs

- [11] The SPG extensively discussed the topic related to rethinking ISPMs and noted the papers received from the various parties (Standards Committee (SC), Implementation and Capacity Development Committee (IC), CPs and RPPOs).
- [12] The SPG stated that this is an important issue and that it is necessary to take the first steps to make ISPMs more understandable. The SPG agreed that CPM-20 provided an opportunity to consolidate thinking on this issue and present CPs with a consensus.
- [13] The SPG recommended the CPM Bureau prepare a paper for CPM-20 (2026) on initial steps regarding this topic with input from the IC and SC.
- [14] Following the debate, the SPG participants broke into five groups to discuss rethinking ISPMs.

Update on safe provisions of food and other humanitarian aid

- [15] As part of this extended mandate of the focus group and approval of its terms of reference (ToR) at CPM-18 (2024), several new tasks were identified, including the development of an action plan. The SPG agreed to involve the three sister agencies, ensuring their input was represented in the final document, as well as focusing more on the role of the IPPC within the broader context of the safe provision of humanitarian aid.

IPPC Plant Health Campus and Mentimeter

- [16] Following an IPPC Secretariat and FAO elearning Academy update, the SPG welcomed the launch of the IPPC Plant Health Campus and participants engaged in a Mentimeter survey on the campus and provided useful feedback to guide the type of learning content, communication, visibility, outreach and user experience.

Update on the Africa Phytosanitary Programme

- [17] Following an IPPC Secretariat update, the SPG noted the progress which had been made and provided recommendations for the effective implementation of Africa Phytosanitary Programme (APP).

Preparations for CPM-20 (2026)

- [18] The SPG welcome improving the process of publishing the final CPM report and the organization of innovation fair featuring a successes and challenges event and a poster session during CPM-20 in the atrium at FAO headquarters.

Recommendations

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