**Roles and functions of RPPOs in their relationship with the Commission**

*Document presented by the IPPC Secretariat in the Bureau meeting in June 2013.*

The ICPM-7 (2005) considered the recommendation made on the roles and functions of RPPOs in their relationships with the ICPM and adopted recommendations on the relationship with RPPOs, with the following disclaimers:

- None of the following recommendations limit the rights or obligations of members or affect the role of RPPOs.

- This list is not a comprehensive list of the activities that RPPOs may undertake.

- Collaboration or information exchange between RPPOs and the IPPC does not substitute for the obligations of contracting parties under the IPPC.

Areas of cooperation between RPPOs and the IPPC include the following:

Standard setting process

1. participation in the development of standards (such as providing comments in the consultation phase, identifying topics for standards, etc.)
2. identification of regional standards that could be proposed as ISPMs
3. nomination of experts for IPPC expert working groups and technical panels
4. action as collaborators/hosts for standard setting meetings
5. preparation of draft explanatory documents on ISPMs according to paragraph 111 of the Report of the Sixth Session of the ICPM, under the auspices of the IPPC Secretariat
6. as appropriate, provision of technical and administrative support to Standards Committee members.

Information exchange

1. operation of an effective International Phytosanitary Portal (IPP)
2. assistance to member countries in meeting IPPC obligations in relation to information exchange
3. provision of information on regional IPPC-related activities (such as pest interceptions, pest status, pest reports, regional standards, regulations, etc.)
4. provision of translations of IPPC documents in languages other than the five official FAO languages.

Technical assistance

1. involvement in regional workshops on draft ISPMs in their region (such as participation and logistical and technical support)\*
2. facilitation of the implementation of ISPMs and identification of implementation difficulties\*
3. report on implementation difficulties and successes to the Technical Consultation among RPPOs and the IPPC\*
4. as appropriate, cooperation with the IPPC Secretariat in the delivery of technical assistance.

Dispute settlement

1. assistance in obtaining nominations for expert rosters
2. assistance, as appropriate, in the settlement of disputes (according to the report of ICPM-3, Appendix 11.L).

Funding issues

1. assistance to the IPPC in obtaining funding to support its work plan.

*\* Items marked with an asterisk may also be considered under the standard setting process.*

**Technical consultation among RPPOs**

Technical consultations of representatives of RPPOs are convened annually to promote the development, adoption and harmonization of phytosanitary measures. In the cooperative endeavor to implement the Convention, RPPOs play an important role. To date there have been 24 technical consultations.

Role and functions of the Technical Consultation

Prior to the existence of the Interim Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (ICPM), the Technical Consultation of RPPOs was the sole international forum for discussion of phytosanitary matters. As such, the Technical Consultation of RPPOs was instrumental in the development of several of the early International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs). In addition, the Technical Consultation of RPPOs played an active role in the revision of the IPPC and the plans for an Interim Commission.

Current situation

The Technical Consultation continues to be the most important point of contact between the RPPOs, which have no other opportunity to consult as a group. Since the establishment of the new revised text of the IPPC, the Technical Consultation has concentrated its objectives on its aims as stated in Article IX/4 of the IPPC:

- promote the development and use of relevant international standards for phytosanitary measures; and

- encourage inter-regional cooperation in promoting harmonized phytosanitary measures for controlling pests and in preventing their spread and/or introduction.

The new revised text of the IPPC (1997) also creates the concept of the Regional Standard on Phytosanitary Measures, their establishment being one activity of RPPOs to "achieve the objectives of this Convention" (Article IX/2, X/3).

Contribution of the Technical Consultation to the Work Programme of the CPM

- identification of problems associated with the implementation of ISPMs and recommendations to the Commission regarding their resolution;

- development of explanatory documents to support ISPMs;

- discussion of draft concept papers and regional standards for phytosanitary measures (RSPMs) and proposal of RSPMs as the basis for ISPMs (Article X/3);

- contribution to the standard-setting process;

- support of the country consultation process of draft ISPMs;

- platform for identifying new phytosanitary priorities for standard setting;

- supporting technical capacity building in developing countries;

- contributions to the achievement of the Programme of Work of the Commission in alignment with Article IX of the IPPC.

Talking points:

The Secretariat proposes to address the following talking points to clarify the roles and activities of the RPPOs in the IPPC framework.

* Roles in the IPPC.
	+ - At the CPM.
		- Out of the CPM.
		- During the TC.
		- In the meetings of the IPPC bodies
		- In other technical meetings
		- In strategic meetings
* Participation of the RPPOs in the activities of the IPPC.
	+ Is the annual TC enough?
	+ Are all the roles dully recognized?
	+ Is the role on IPPC implementation appropriately implemented?
	+ Are all RPPOs having the same level of participation in IPPC activities?
	+ Is the production of regional standards an IPPC related activity?
	+ Is there overlapping between RPPOs and RECs?
	+ Should the IPPC have a new policy about the recognition of RPPOs?