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IPPC Secretariat's Relationship with Other Organizations

Agenda item 8.1

Prepared by the IPPC Secretariat

1. The purpose of this document is to provide clarity regarding the relationships which the IPPC Secretariat maintains with other bodies and focuses on the differing types of relationships in which the Secretariat is engaged. It also provides a proposed procedure for determining whether or not to go forward with a full partnership. For the purposes of this document, and in line with the FAO Strategy for Partnerships with the Private Sector¹, the following terms and related concepts will be used:
2. **Partnership** - Partnerships can range from informal, flexible arrangements to highly defined relationships based on the full sharing of risks, resources and responsibilities. The characteristics and complexity of these partnerships depends on the organizations involved, as well as the objectives, duration and scope of the collaboration in question. Sometimes, partnerships are accompanied by new financing and/or legal arrangements. The types of organizations with which the IPPC may interact should not be limited to any specific form.
3. Organizations fitting under this particular definition include the regional plant protection organizations (RPPOs), the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Codex).
4. The relationship between the IPPC and the FAO has unique characteristics. The IPPC is hosted under Article 14 of the FAO convention and receives roughly 50% of its annual budget from the organization. The Secretariat does have some independence of operation, but is dependent on the FAO to sustain operations.
5. **Cooperation** - the action or process to work with others for mutual benefit and towards the same goal. Cooperation does not involve the full sharing of risks, resources and responsibilities. Therefore, not all forms of cooperation require a formalized partnership. Informal cooperation can be an initial step prior to forming a partnership.

¹ FAO Strategy for Partnerships with the Private Sector: <http://www.fao.org/partnerships/private-sector/en/>

Liaison - communication and contact between groups or units, and **liaison officer** - a person who liaises between organizations. These definitions apply to the IPPC as personnel in the IPPC Secretariat frequently act as liaison between the IPPC Secretariat and other organizations, be they national, international, public or private, and, IPPC Secretariat staff engage in the act of liaison by establishing and maintaining mutual understanding between the two organizations. In the majority of situations in which the IPPC Secretariat liaises, the activity is focused on maintaining or enhancing mutual understanding, rather than on any specific cooperative activity.

1. Background

6. In the IPPC framework, the only procedure related to a partnership adopted until now has been the three step approach adopted at ICPM-7 (2005) for initiating contacts with the World Animal Health Organization (OIE) and Codex Alimentarius.

- a) The Interim Commission Bureau initiates contacts with the OIE and Codex Alimentarius
- b) Meetings as necessary between IPPC, Codex Alimentarius and the OIE to identify potential topics and priorities and develop draft procedures for cooperation.
- c) Adoption by the Interim Commission of the potential topics, priorities and draft procedures.

7. This precedent is not fully applicable to the current situation or for the future actions of the establishment of concrete partnerships with industry, research, and teaching and civil society.

8. Consequently, the IPPC Secretariat is proposing a procedure for considering the examination and approval of different levels of agreement with other organizations. This procedure will enhance the development of a pro-active approach to partnerships to effectively contribute to the IPPC's strategic objectives.

9. In 2012, the Secretariat presented a paper on liaison, cooperation and partnership to the Strategic Planning Group (SPG) and received the following recommendations:

- Partnerships should be structured, so as to identify win-win options. Identifying benefits in partnering with IPPC is paramount for a successful partnership strategy.
- Consider the objectives of any relationship, for example, with standards that are currently being developed (sea containers, seeds, grains, etc..) link to scientific organizations as well as industry.
- Seek guidance from NPPOs and RPPOs on their experience related to specific relationships with other organizations. Liaising with the private sector is acknowledged to be a complex issue, but also a potentially productive one.
- Focus on organizations that are involved in current projects.
- Linkages with industry need to be active; these efforts should get quick results and meet specific targets on time.
- Build strong relationships with universities as it would be useful if students could get internships with the IPPC Secretariat which resulted in credits towards their education. This would also benefit the Secretariat, by providing short term staff.

10. The SPG:

- concluded that the IPPC Secretariat should develop a strategy for building partnerships and cooperating and liaising with other organizations, even though resources are limited;
- noted that a significant amount of time is needed to research and develop clear parameters for future relationships which clearly outlined the mutual benefits;
- suggested that research should be undertaken to find partners for the development of specific standards, and to build relationships with universities.

2. Recent developments

11. In March 2013, FAO presented to the 113th Session of the Programme Committee and 147th Session of the Finance Committee a document on FAO Strategy for Partnerships with the Private Sector². A similar document, FAO Strategy for Partnerships with Civil Society³ was presented to the 140th session of the Council.

12. One of the issues described in the FAO Strategy for Partnerships with the Private Sector is the implementation of a risk management system, intended to identify and manage potential risks that could affect FAO's intergovernmental character and its independence and impartiality. Such risks include: conflict of interest, undue influence on standard setting and unfair advantage to specific companies. The risk assessment system includes 1. preliminary screening, 2. review, 3. decision and monitoring and, 4. reporting. It also promotes multi-stakeholder approaches, similar to the one used for the IPPC Capacity Development Trust Fund.

13. The document highlights that within the UN system, FAO is one of the organizations with a broad range of standard setting responsibilities. The standards are intended to protect the public interest and often have a bearing on operations of private sector businesses. FAO follows a policy to ensure that views of private sector stakeholders are heard, and that the private sector is encouraged to respect the standards, ensuring at the same time that there are adequate safeguards against undue influence and that full independence of decision making on such standards is guaranteed.

3. Procedures

14. The IPPC Secretariat proposes a partnership strategy which will have the Secretariat, with input from the Bureau, analyze whether or not to pursue a partnership by: 1) systematically identifying potential conflicts of interest that could affect the credibility and neutrality of the Organization, with a specific focus on areas of policy development, standard setting, and technical programs, 2) including the full sharing of risks, resources and responsibilities and, 3) ensuring that specific cooperative activities, with concrete objectives, are the basis of the partnership. The overarching goal is to establish partnerships which will further the Convention's objective of protecting plants from pests while maintaining the independence of the IPPC to act in accordance with the IPPC Strategic Framework.

15. Considering the above information and in line with the FAO Strategy for Partnerships the relationship with other organizations that the IPPC Secretariat is working with is described as follows:

² FAO Strategy for Partnerships with the Private Sector: <http://www.fao.org/partnerships/private-sector/en/>

³ FAO Strategy for Partnerships with Civil Society: www.fao.org/docrep/018/i3443e/i3443e.pdf

Table 1: Organizations for which the IPPC Secretariat has established Partnerships

Organization or type of organization	Relationship	Legal arrangement⁴	Work plan	Duration	Work plan approved by
RPPOs	Partner	Described in the IPPC along with legal recognition by CPM	WP developed through the TC-RPPOs	On-going	TC RPPOs and CPM
CBD	Partner	MOU and WP	Joint Work plan	Till one of the partners decides to conclude the arrangement	WP, jointly by Secretariats MOU agreed by CPM
Codex	Partner for Online Commenting System	Recognized as one of the three International Standard Setting Bodies (ISSB) for sanitary and phytosanitary measures by the SPS Agreement.	Yes	Annual	Jointly by Secretariats

⁴ Legal arrangements used by FAO are: MoU, Partnership agreement and Exchange of letters.

Table 2 is list of organizations with which the IPPC Secretariat interacts, but without any formal partnership framework. For some of the organizations the relationship is dynamic and subject to change. For others, the relationship has been one in which specific expertise was sought for comments and interaction on a proposed standard, or a letter of agreement has been executed for the purposes of capacity development work.

Table 2: Other organizations with which the IPPC Secretariat cooperates and liaises

Organization	Relationship	Legal arrangement ⁵	Work plan	Duration	Work plan approved by
SPS Agreement Secretariat		No	No	Not specified	N/A
Biological Weapons Convention (BWC)			No	Not specified	N/A
CABI	Cooperation	No	Yes	Not specified	N/A
Container Owners Association (COA)	Liaison for standard setting	No	No	Not specified	N/A
Imperial College	Cooperation for CD	LoA	No	Not specified	N/A
Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)	Cooperation for CD	LoA	No	Not specified	N/A
International Air Transport Association (IATA)	Liaison for standard setting	No	No	Not specified	N/A
International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)	Liaison and cooperation for standard setting	No	No	Not specified	N/A
International Chamber of Shipping	Liaison for standard setting	No	No	Not specified	N/A

⁵ Legal arrangements used by FAO are: MoU, Partnership agreement and Exchange of letters.

Organization	Relationship	Legal arrangement⁵	Work plan	Duration	Work plan approved by
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)	Liaison for standard setting	No	No	Not specified	N/A
International Forest Quarantine Research Group (IFQRG)	Liaison for standard setting	No	Yes with the TPFQ	Not specified	N/A
International Grain Trade Coalition	Liaison for standard setting	No	No	Not specified	N/A
International Maritime Organization (IMO)	Liaison	No	No	Not specified	N/A
International Seed Federation (ISF)	Liaison for standard setting	No	No	Not specified	N/A
International Seed Testing Association (ISTA)	Liaison for standard setting	No	No	Not specified	N/A
ISO	Liaison for standard setting	No	No	Not specified	N/A
Ozone Secretariat (United Nations Environment Program)	Cooperation	MoU approved by CPM	No	Not specified	N/A
United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNCEC)	Liaison	No	No	Not specified	N/A
United Nations Programmes (UNIDO, UNEP etc.)	Liaison	No	No	Not specified	N/A

Organization	Relationship	Legal arrangements ⁵	Work plan	Duration	Work plan approved by
World Animal Health Organization (OIE)	Liaison	An ISSB, recognized by SPS	No	Not specified	N/A
World Customs Organization (WCO)	Liaison	No	No	Not specified	N/A
World Health Organization (WHO)	Liaison for standard setting	No	No	Not specified	N/A
World Shipping Council (WSC)	Liaison for standard setting	No	No	Not specified	N/A

16. The CPM is invited to:

- 1) *Approve* the IPPC Secretariat's proposed flexible system of use of models for partnerships, based on the FAO Strategy for Partnerships.
- 2) *Note* the description of the relationships with other organizations outlined in Tables 1 and 2.
- 3) *Charge* the Secretariat, with input from the Bureau, to examine new proposals for partnerships from the IPPC Secretariat or other organizations on a case by case basis, using the criteria and processes provided herein, paying special attention to the resources available to the IPPC Secretariat for engaging in any proposed partnership.