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Proposal for IPPC Secretariat Enhancement Study

Agenda item 20

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Proposal for IPPC Secretariat enhancement study

The International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) has been an active and successful organization since the development of the New Revised Text of the Convention in 1997. The scope and rate of standard setting in the past fifteen years has been impressive, and the ongoing implementation of these standards has undoubtedly had a significant impact on the spread of pests, furthering the aims and objectives of the IPPC and bringing about benefits for all of its members and the world as a whole. The existence and successful and effective operation of the IPPC, and the achievement of its objectives is of critical importance to the plant resources of the world and, therefore, to all Contracting Parties.

One of the tenets of a successful organization such as the IPPC is that efforts must be taken to ensure that such success continues and that plans are made to ensure that this is facilitated in the future. The IPPC has adopted this approach already in many areas, hence the IPPC's strategic framework, its communication strategy, its capacity development strategy and workplan, and its Implementation Review and Support System (IRSS).

Since 1997, the world has changed in rapid, unpredictable and fundamental ways, including in the area of information technology, due to the inevitable economic ebbs and flows that affect us all, and based on the evolving multinational nature of commerce and increasing and diversifying trade in plant-based commodities. Faced with such a dynamic operating environment, any organization must ensure that it frequently reviews its own procedures, structures and systems to maximize its ability to adapt to changes and to continue to function effectively and efficiently. This is as vital for the IPPC as for any other organization and, of course, we all have a vested interest in ensuring that the IPPC continues to operate in the most effective way possible in order to achieve its objectives.

As part of its strategic planning, the IPPC has developed the Resource Mobilization Strategy. At this Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) meeting, a paper that identifies strategic approaches to improve implementation by members has been presented. In addition, key challenges, and proposals for ongoing activities to respond to these, have been identified in the IRSS report on *Findings of the general survey of the International Plant Protection Convention and its Standards*. While these planned strategies and proposed activities should position the IPPC well to adapt to current and future changes on a policy and procedural basis, it is important to consider all areas in which strategic approaches are essential if future successes are to be realised to their fullest extent. With this objective in mind, and taking into account the significant global changes that have occurred since the development of the New Revised Text of the Convention and which continue to occur, the strategic focus should be extended to consider how best to ensure that the critically important organization that is the IPPC Secretariat itself is best positioned to support the broad policy-based strategic approaches that have been developed and to ensure that the needs of the Contracting Parties are represented most effectively.

Like any central organization, and as a practice that many of the Contracting Parties pursue, the IPPC Secretariat can best ensure its adaptability and effectiveness through a process of continuous improvement. This approach will allow the Secretariat to ensure that all successful structures, practices and procedures can be maintained and enhanced, while identifying prospective optimization, or new initiatives in other areas. Such an approach would, therefore, be in the interests of both the IPPC Secretariat and all Contracting Parties.

The IPPC is, of course, not alone in facing numerous challenges and uncertainties. All Contracting Parties face similar challenges, and other multilateral bodies operate in a similar environment. Therefore, identification and development of strategic approaches to enhancing the organizational structure and procedures should be based on both internal and an external factors and considerations. Given the limited resources available to the IPPC and its Contracting Parties, the strive for efficiency not only applies to existing activities, but also to the *process* of considering and implementing any changes, and to minimizing any negative impacts or impediments that can accompany organizational reviews. In consideration of all of these factors, Canada suggests that an external consultant be engaged to conduct the review and to provide recommendations to the CPM. The scope of the review could include the approaches outlined below.

Possible scope of IPPC Secretariat enhancement study

In order to identify all existing strengths in the Secretariat's structure and operation, and also possible enhancements for considerations, the external consultant could carry out the analyses and make associated recommendations as identified below. If the CPM supports this study, Contracting Parties may also wish to propose additional components.

- Review existing organizational structure of the Secretariat and its relationships within the hosting organization of the FAO, with other multilateral bodies, and with Contracting Parties;
- Consult with Contracting Parties on perceived strengths of, and possible initiatives for, the Secretariat;
- Conduct a benchmarking exercise based on review of and comparison with relevant multilateral, regional or national organizations;
- Identify successful Secretariat organizational structures and procedures that are critical to the IPPC and that must be maintained, and areas where enhancements and/or new initiatives could be considered;
- Prepare a report that outlines findings and recommendations

Resource availability is a common theme and topic for discussion during CPM meetings, and it will not have escaped notice that the proposal for engaging an external consultant would be accompanied by costs! Canada is pleased to have provided significant funding this year to the IPPC Trust Fund which may allow for the allocation of other resources to conduct such a study. Alternatively, if the CPM supports the concept of such an approach, it may also be the case that

some Contracting Parties would be willing to provide funding to offset these costs. In this regard, the CPM could consider both the proposal and whether any Contracting Parties may be in a position to offer dedicated funding for the initiation and completion of this study.

Given that the IPPC's operation under the New Revised Text of the Convention will soon reach the 20 year mark, and in consideration of the pressures currently facing the IPPC, completion of this study should take place as soon as possible. Therefore, if the CPM supports this proposal and if dedicated funding is identified, Canada proposes that the analytical component of the study be completed between July and October of 2014 with the objective that the final recommendations are presented at CPM-10.

The CPM is invited to:

- *Consider* the proposal for an IPPC Secretariat enhancement study and *contractual engagement* of a dedicated external consultant
- *Confirm* the scope of this study
- *Identify* potential sources of funding
- *Agree* on time frames for completion of the study and presentation of recommendations at CPM-10.