



منظمة الأغذية
والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

联合国
粮食及
农业组织

Food
and
Agriculture
Organization
of
the
United
Nations

Organisation
des
Nations
Unies
pour
l'alimentation
et
l'agriculture

Organización
de las
Naciones
Unidas
para la
Agricultura
y la
Alimentación

INTERIM COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

Third Session

Rome, 2-6 April 2001

Other Business The Structure and Organization of Meetings

Agenda Item 11 of the Provisional Agenda

1. In an effort to increase transparency and encourage consistency, the Secretariat has prepared this summary to identify different types of meetings and their arrangements based on current practice.

I. Introduction

2. Because the office of the Secretariat and the work programme are administered under FAO, most aspects of meetings done under the auspices of FAO are according to policies and procedures of the Organization. However, certain IPPC meetings may be organized and/or sponsored by other organizations, hereafter known as collaborators. Meetings organized with collaborators can take different forms and require different arrangements depending on particular situations. Such meetings can result in substantial savings to the Secretariat in both effort and costs. Meetings organized with collaborators often have the advantage of providing a degree of flexibility and efficiency that is not available with FAO, and they have the additional benefit of providing opportunities for other organizations to be directly involved in the work programme.

3. Variations in procedures and policies are unavoidable due to the number of different kinds of meetings needed to support the work programme and the variety of different arrangements that may be made with collaborators. As a general rule, the Secretariat strives for consistency in key areas such as nomination and invitation procedures, geographical representation, funding arrangements, meeting procedures, and reporting procedures - whether the meeting is organized by FAO, in collaboration with FAO, or completely outside FAO.

For reasons of economy, this document is produced in a limited number of copies. Delegates and observers are kindly requested to bring it to the meetings and to refrain from asking for additional copies, unless strictly indispensable.

II. Types of meetings

4. Meetings may be categorized into two broad groups depending on whether participants are invited experts or designated representatives of their government or organization. The various titles used to describe meetings sometimes make it difficult to understand whether a meeting is for experts or government designated representatives. Likewise there has been confusion about which meetings are open-ended and which are closed, and the criteria for these designations.

5. The most important meeting of the IPPC is the annual session of the ICPM. This is also a good example of a meeting where the participants are designated representatives of their governments or organizations. It is also an open-ended meeting to the extent that it is open to all FAO Members and approved observers.

6. The ICPM has the possibility to form or request the formation of other groups, including subsidiary bodies and informal or ad hoc groups to address specific topics or items of business. These arrangements may be agreed and perhaps completed during the session of the ICPM. In other cases, the responsibility for arrangements may be delegated to the Bureau, Chairperson, or Secretariat. In addition, the Chair and/or Bureau may take the initiative to request special meetings for topics or business that was not anticipated by the ICPM. In all cases however, the proceedings are reported to the ICPM.

7. Following are other examples of recent meetings where participants are designated by governments or organizations:

<u>Meeting title</u>	<u>Nature of meeting</u>
Open-ended working group on official control	Open - technical discussion
Informal working group on the Standards Committee	Closed - ICPM business meeting
Informal working group on dispute settlement	Closed - ICPM business meeting
Regional technical consultation on ISPMs	Open - (regional) technical discussions

8. The Interim Standards Committee (ISC), previously known as the Committee of Experts on Phytosanitary Measures, is an example of a meeting of invited experts. It is also an example of a closed meeting. Although participation in the ISC is based on nomination by governments or regional plant protection organizations, the experts are ultimately approved by FAO based on qualifications and geographic representation and are invited by FAO to participate as individual phytosanitary experts.

9. Following are other examples of recent meetings of invited experts:

<u>Meeting title</u>	<u>Nature of meeting</u>
Expert working group on non-compliance	Closed - technical discussion and drafting
Glossary working group	Closed - technical discussion and drafting
Expert working group on non-manufactured wood packing	Closed - technical discussion and drafting
Ad hoc informal meeting on information exchange	Closed - Chair's technical consultation

10. The ICPM may specify whether a meeting is open or closed and, if it is open, the criteria regarding who may attend and any limitations on their participation. In the absence of explicit guidance from the ICPM, the Secretariat decides these matters in consultation with the Bureau. The primary criteria used by the Secretariat is whether the proceedings are designed for an open exchange or devoted to a specific task such as the formulation of a standard.

11. Open-ended meetings have proven useful to encourage broad representation and the exchange of diverse views. Closed meetings have been most beneficial for detailed discussions on a specific topic or task such as a draft standard. Closed meetings also provide the best conditions for experts to contribute as individuals.

12. Other factors considered by the Secretariat include constraints due to the physical space limitations and the availability of funds to assist participants. Another important limitation for some meetings is the limited number of experts from certain regions or for certain topics.

III. Funding for participants

13. The provision of resources for the participation of individuals in different types of meetings is a key factor. As noted above, FAO makes a distinction between individuals that are government-designated representatives and those invited as subject matter experts.

14. Government-designated representatives are nominated by governments. They may or may not be experts, but are ultimately invited as representatives of their government, organization, or region. They normally represent positions or views on specific topics and areas of business. Although the Secretariat encourages geographic representation and balance for meetings of such individuals, the final composition is determined by countries depending on the availability of qualified individuals and their level of interest in the material under discussion. In principle, the travel and subsistence of participants for such meetings is the responsibility of the participant's government or organization, but it has been the practice of the IPPC Secretariat to ensure that funds are available for developing country participants before organizing the meetings. This funding may be provided from the budget of the Secretariat or by one or more donors.

15. Expert participants may be nominated by the Secretariat, governments, regional plant protection organizations, or other organizations but are ultimately invited to participate based on their individual expertise. The IPPC Secretariat attempts to ensure that experts are nominated and selected from different geographic regions. Funding for the travel and subsistence of expert participants is provided from the budget of the Secretariat (except when the experts are funded by a collaborator).

16. At its Second Session in 1999, the ICPM adopted a recommendation for developed countries to voluntarily provide resources for the participation of their experts in meetings related to standard-setting. The savings resulting from these voluntary contributions has helped the Secretariat to expand and accelerate standard-setting in the past year and increased the possibilities for funding additional expert meetings and other participants from developing countries.

IV. Invitations

17. Meetings organized by or for FAO, or organized by the Secretariat within the framework of FAO, require that invitations be issued by the Organization. Such invitations are normally issued by or through the Secretariat but may also come from different levels and offices within the Organization depending on the nature of the meeting. Meetings organized directly by the Bureau, collaborators, or other organizations will normally not be by invitation of FAO even though the Secretariat may distribute the invitations.

V. Procedures

18. A variety of procedures are involved with the organization and conduct of meetings. These include procedures for:

- transport, accommodation and subsistence for participants;
- the development and distribution of information and documents;
- the establishment of a programme;

- conduct of the meeting;
- recording and reporting;
- logistical support; and
- hospitality.

19. For FAO meetings, the procedures are set by the Organization. However, meetings organized by or with collaborators may follow the procedures of the collaborator, respecting to the extent possible the need for consistency with FAO procedures. In general, the Secretariat assumes most of the responsibility for procedures but a high degree of flexibility may be required to accommodate different conditions, cultures, and policies when working with collaborators.

VI. Languages

20. Article XIX of the IPPC (1998) describes language requirements with respect to specific provisions of the Convention, including meetings of the ICPM. Communications related to IPPC meetings not covered by these provisions fall under policies and procedures of FAO for those meetings done under the auspices of FAO. In general, this allows for working meetings to be in one language only as appropriate for the participants and location (most commonly this is English). As a general rule, translation and/or interpretation into two or more languages is not done unless it is appropriate for the situation or location or involves all five official languages of the Organization (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, and Spanish).

21. Collaborators are free to provide translation and/or interpretation as appropriate except that the Secretariat will not provide funding for this purpose unless the provision of translation/interpretation is consistent with FAO policies and essential to the purpose of the meeting.

22. Following is a summary table describing the current practice of the Secretariat regarding IPPC meetings.

23. The ICPM is invited to:

1. *Note* the procedures and criteria described by the Secretariat.
2. *Request* clarifications, and if required, *recommend* modifications.

Table 1. IPPC MEETINGS WITH INVITED EXPERTS

Purpose of meeting	Examples	Funding for participants	Procedures	Language(s)
Examine and modify ISPMs for consultation by governments or adoption by the ICPM	Interim Standards Committee (previously known as CEPM)	Secretariat (except where governments voluntarily waive funding)	FAO	English
Review or draft ISPMs	Expert Working Group Expert Consultation	Secretariat (except where collaborators provide funding)	FAO or Collaborator	English
Review and/or develop technical positions	Expert Working Group Expert Consultation	Secretariat (except where collaborators provide funding)	Those agreed for the meeting or required by the collaborator	English (unless another language is voluntarily provided by the collaborator)

Table 2. IPPC MEETINGS WITH GOVERNMENT-DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVES

Purpose of the meeting	Examples	Funding for participants	Procedures	Language(s)
Commission or multilateral negotiations	ICPM	Governments	FAO	FAO
Develop policy, positions, or conduct business of the ICPM	Informal working group Ad-hoc working group Focus group Open-ended working group Exploratory working group	Governments or organizations that the participants represent (except that the Secretariat or collaborators may fund developing country participants)	FAO or Collaborator	English or as required
Technical consultation among regional plant protection organizations	Technical consultation	Governments or organizations that the participants represent (except that the Secretariat or collaborators may fund developing country participants)	FAO	English (except where collaborators voluntarily provide translation and/or interpretation in another language)