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y la
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COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

Second Session

Rome, 26 – 30 March 2007

Independent Evaluation of the Workings of the IPPC and its Institutional Arrangements

Agenda Item 10.8.1 of the Provisional Agenda

1. At its Seventh session in 2005, the Interim Commission on Phytosanitary Measures decided that an independent evaluation of the IPPC funding and structures should be initiated, which would include the implications relating to the future transition of the ICPM to the CPM. The evaluation of the IPPC and its structures was designed to provide independent:
 - i) input on future policy, organizational structure, funding negotiations, strategy and management of the IPPC; and
 - ii) analysis of the current administrative and working structures of the IPPC, their functioning and output in relation to existing goals and their suitability to implement the strategic plan of the IPPC.
2. A five member team was established to carry out the evaluation. Activities undertaken by the team included a comprehensive documentation review, benchmarking analysis of relevant institutions (e.g. World Organisation for Animal Health - OIE, Codex Alimentarius), and the conduct of detailed desk studies on technical assistance and standard setting. In addition, the team visited 19 countries where it met with representatives of the Government (including NPPO), as well as of industry. It also met with four Regional Plant Protection Organizations and a number of international organizations (e.g., World Trade Organization, Convention on Biological Diversity, OIE and Codex Alimentarius). An extensive questionnaire was sent to 192 countries (including both contracting and non-contracting parties) and a detailed analysis of the 92 respondents was undertaken. A number of teleconferences with key informants that could not be visited were made. The Evaluation Team also had extensive consultation with various bodies operating under the IPPC.
3. A representative of the FAO Evaluation Service gave an update on the progress of the evaluation at the First Session of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (2006). The process, timetable and milestones were presented, and it was noted that preliminary findings and

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recommendations would be presented at CPM-2, with the objective of receiving feedback in order to see which issues merited further clarification.

4. The attached Annex describes the preliminary findings of the evaluation and resultant draft recommendations for discussion by the CPM. (A special session on the evaluation will take place during CPM).
5. The final report is planned for June 2007. It will be presented to the FAO Programme Committee at its 98th Session in October 2007.
6. The CPM may wish to consider establishing a focus group to:
 - review the final evaluation report
 - propose a work-programme for the CPM that takes into account the recommendations of the final evaluation report (to be submitted to CPM 3 via the SPTA)
 - prepare inputs for discussion by the FAO Programme Committee of FAO.
7. In order to meet the deadline for the FAO Programme Committee (60 days prior), the focus group would need to meet in early July, 2007.
8. The CPM is invited to:
 1. *Consider* the draft evaluation report as attached in Annex 1;
 2. *Provide* advice to the evaluation team on issues and recommendations meriting further clarification;
 3. *Note* that the final evaluation report will be presented to the FAO Programme Committee at its 98th session in September 2007;
 4. *Agree* that a Focus Group be established to:
 - review the final evaluation report
 - propose a work-programme for the CPM that takes into account the recommendations of the final evaluation report (to be submitted to CPM-3 via the SPTA)
 - prepare inputs for discussion by the FAO Programme Committee;
 5. *Note* that the final evaluation report will be further discussed at CPM-3.

**Independent Evaluation of the Workings of the International Plant
Protection Convention and its Institutional Arrangements**

Emerging Findings and Recommendations for Discussion

February 2007

Table of Contents

	Pages
I. Background and Conduct of the Evaluation	1
II. The Global Context and Challenges faced by the IPPC	1
III. Standards and Standard Setting Process	2
A. RELEVANCE OF STANDARDS	3
B. THE QUALITY OF STANDARDS	3
C. THE STANDARDS SETTING PROCESS	4
D. THE COST OF STANDARDS	6
E. IMPLEMENTATION AND IMPACT	7
F. RECOMMENDATIONS	7
IV. Information Exchange	9
A. ASSESSMENT OF INFORMATION EXCHANGE ACTIVITIES	9
B. RECOMMENDATIONS	12
V. Technical Assistance	13
A. ASSESSMENT OF PROJECTS: RELEVANCE, EFFICIENCY, EFFECTIVENESS	14

B. RECOMMENDATIONS	15
VI. Dispute Settlement	15
VII. Governance of the IPPC	16
A. COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES	16
B. BUREAU AND THE INFORMAL WORKING GROUP ON STRATEGIC PLANNING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE	17
C. STANDARDS COMMITTEE	18
D. RECOMMENDATIONS	18
VIII. The Secretariat	19
A. RECOMMENDATIONS RELATING TO THE SECRETARIAT AND STAFFING	20
IX. Roles of the Regional Plant Protection Organizations	21
X. IPPC Financial Resources	22
XI. Overall Conclusions	23

The final step in the evaluation process is to seek CPM feedback on emerging findings and recommendations. This paper should not be read as a final document; its purpose is to seek inputs from the CPM before the finalization of the full evaluation report.

I. Background and Conduct of the Evaluation

1. The seventh Session of the Interim Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (ICPM) in April 2005 requested an evaluation as soon as possible which would provide:
 - i) “an input on future policy, organizational structure, funding negotiations, strategy and management of the IPPC”; and
 - ii) “an analysis of the current administrative and working structures of the IPPC, their functioning and output in relation to existing goals and their suitability to implement the strategic plan of the IPPC”.
2. It was further stated that the “evaluation shall have considerations for the future on an examination of past performance, current and emerging challenges and innovative ideas. It shall also determine if IPPC activities and administration are satisfactory to meet the needs of surveyed members”.
3. The New Revised Text of the Convention was adopted in 1997. Since then, there has been a substantial increase in the amount of work carried out under the Convention. Given this bigger workload the effective funding and resourcing of IPPC activities has become a major concern to the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM). The new text of Convention came into force in October 2005. Given these developments, an evaluation of the IPPC was considered timely.
4. A five-member team¹ was established to carry out the evaluation. It planned the work in consultation with the IPPC Bureau and Secretariat. The activities included a comprehensive documentation review; benchmarking analysis of relevant institutions (e.g. World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), Codex Alimentarius); and the conduct of detailed desk studies on technical assistance and standard-setting.
5. In addition, the team visited 19 countries during which it met with representatives of the Government, including National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs), as well as of Industry. It also visited four Regional Plant Protection Organizations (RPPOs) and a number of international organizations (e.g. World Trade Organization (WTO), Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), OIE and Codex Alimentarius). The Evaluation Team sent an extensive questionnaire to 192 countries including all Contracting Parties and non Contracting Parties, and conducted a detailed analysis of the 92 responses. A number of teleconferences with key informants that could not be visited were made. The Evaluation Team also had extensive consultations with different IPPC structures (e.g. Bureau).

II. The Global Context and Challenges faced by the IPPC

6. Modern transportation, travel, and communication technologies have facilitated large increases in global movement of people and goods. Natural borders that once were effective barriers to the introduction and spread of pest organisms are now under increasing pressure.

¹ Core Team Members included: Lukas Brader (Team Leader), John Mumford (Technical Specialist, Team Member), Kevin Nalder (Technical Specialist, Team Member), Erin Holleran (FAO Evaluation Service), Rachel Sauvinet-Bedouin (FAO Evaluation Service).

In addition, two regional experts accompanied the team in country visits in their region: Peter Ooi (Asia) and Marco Bertussi (Latin America).

Along with this reduction in phytosanitary barriers and major increases in international agricultural trade, phytosanitary measures have become more prominent as a potential impediment to trade. World trade in agricultural products has increased in value by 42% over the period 2000-2004, reaching almost US\$² 800 billion. Over the period 1980-2000, the share of fruit, vegetables and cut flowers in agricultural exports has grown from 13.7% to 18.9%. In addition, over the last 20 years the flow of air passengers has more than doubled, entailing a significant increase in the number of accidental introductions of unwanted organisms in many countries. All these changes strongly demonstrate on the one hand the need for internationally agreed phytosanitary measures, and on the other hand the magnitude of the challenges faced by the IPPC.

7. With increasing globalization, the growing levels of international trade, and the increased concerns about sanitary and phytosanitary safety, IPPC interactions with other international and regional agreements are ever more important. The most relevant international agreements to the IPPC are the WTO Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement), Convention on Biological Diversity (and the associated Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety), and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and Codex Alimentarius. Additionally, over 200 Regional Trade Agreements exist.

8. The IPPC provides the only global forum to exchange views on how best to address phytosanitary and related issues. It is an important instrument to facilitate the continuously expanding international trade in plant produce and other regulated articles capable of vectoring plant pests into areas where they are absent. IPPC's importance is clearly shown by the rapid increase in the number of Contracting Parties to the Convention. The major challenge in this respect is the development and implementation of International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPM). These standards are expected to be developed and approved through a process that ensures that they have a strong scientific phytosanitary basis and economic justification, that they can be applied in practice, and that they are consistent and understandable. Consequently, this is a labour-intensive and time-consuming process, to ensure the delivery of high-quality products. Standard setting under the IPPC is recent. To date, 27 ISPMs have been adopted. However, the demand goes well beyond this number and many are under development.

9. A pre-condition to meet this demand for standards, and to address the IPPC's various information needs and other challenges, is the availability of adequate funding and human resources for an effective Secretariat and the organisation of a wide range of technical and administrative meetings. To some extent, the IPPC seems to have become a victim of its own success because the workload has grown rapidly, well beyond the Convention's budgetary resources. This is a constant concern to the Governing Body of the IPPC, the CPM, but for which no effective and sustainable solution has yet been found.

10. Key issues and concerns for the evaluation fall under the three major activity areas of the IPPC: (i) the standard setting process, (ii) information exchange and (iii) technical assistance. It also includes the scope and governance of the IPPC, the functioning of the Secretariat, and budget matters. The following sections provide an analysis of current operations, including the identification of strengths and weaknesses. Recommendations have been developed to build on strengths, while addressing weaknesses.

III. Standards and Standard Setting Process

11. The IPPC started its standard setting work in 1991, with the first ISPM approved in November 2003. Many of the early ISPMs address "concept" issues of general relevance to all plant protection services such as pest risk analysis, glossary of phytosanitary terms, and pest eradication guidelines. More recent standards are "specific" to particular modes of transmission

² All monetary values in the report are given in U.S. dollars.

and infection (e.g. wood packaging), taxonomic groups (fruit flies), risk mitigation measures (irradiation), or diagnostic protocols. There is a development pipeline that includes a dozen specifications for future ISPMs and the outline for over 100 more topics that could eventually be considered for development as standards.

12. Nearly all evaluation questionnaire respondents indicated that standard setting was “very important” and stated that IPPC standards help to ensure and facilitate safe movement of plants and plant products. Both concept standards and specific standards are rated as “very important”.

A. RELEVANCE OF STANDARDS

13. The relevance of IPPC standards was examined taking into account the extent to which IPPC standards cover the most relevant and important issues in plant health.

14. The current mix of concept and specific IPPC standards is appropriate since there are general and specific issues to deal with. Concept standards are essential to establish frameworks within which specific standards are applied. Ultimately, standards should be specific so that they can be consistently applied amongst individual trading partners. The current concept standards already cover most of the fundamental international plant quarantine and inspection functions. In the future, there will be increased demand for specific standards.

15. In evaluation interviews, issues related to the interface with the CBD were commonly mentioned as an activity on which more attention should be focussed. Some believe that the CBD will become increasingly important in the regulation of world trade and that IPPC standards need to reflect the risks associated with the movement of articles capable of vectoring plant pests of environmental concern, including invasive species. To a certain extent, plant pests of environmental concern are covered under the IPPC. The Preamble itself refers to “internationally approved principles ...and the environment”. More recently, ISPM #11 (*Pest risk analysis for quarantine pests including analysis of environmental risks and living modified organisms* 2004) covers environment pests of plants.

16. There will be even greater need to ensure that environmental issues, particularly those related to pests of plants that are alien invasive species affecting the natural environment, are included in relevant IPPC standards in the future. Consequently, certain stakeholders expect the IPPC to liaise more actively with the CBD. Both the standard setting process and the standards themselves are expected to show evidence of consideration of these environmental risks, including appropriate measures to deal with these risks. However, while IPPC liaises with the CBD to include environmental concerns in plant health standards, there is no person with specific environmental/bio-diversity responsibility in the IPPC Secretariat to follow up on these matters.

B. THE QUALITY OF STANDARDS

17. The quality of standards has been examined from the point of view of their technical validity, applicability, and consistency. The response from the questionnaire on the quality of IPPC standards shows that the overwhelming majority (92%) considered the standards to be at least “satisfactory”. However, there is room for improvement as indicated by the proportion of respondents judging them to be of the highest quality (less than 50%). Funding for technical expertise and additional professional support top the respondents’ list of changes that would improve the quality of IPPC standards.

18. The **technical validity** of plant health standards derives from the participation of members in Expert Working Groups (EWGs) and Technical Panels (TPs) selected due to their specific experience related to the issues contained in the standards. The Evaluation Team concludes that the current system of selecting experts to draft standards, followed by extensive consultation to review the technical content, is sufficient to ensure technical quality for conceptual standards and the broader level of specific standards. For highly specific standards or rapidly emerging problems, there may be very limited technical expertise in the world and consultation

may not be constructive if most involved in the process do not have sufficient technical knowledge to participate effectively.

19. In the case of specific standards, it is important but difficult to reach consensus on the technical content of the standards. Offering equivalent measures is an important issue in specific standards, particularly in cases where there are significant differences in practices, acceptability of different measures and costs of implementation. This can give rise to critical differences of opinion on the scientific basis of comparisons.

20. **Applicability** of standards is more difficult to achieve than technical validity, since the circumstances of trade and regulation vary greatly from country to country, and more so than any variations in technical conditions. Some developing countries have complained about the difficulty of implementing standards due to the cost or lack of necessary skills required to implement the standards.

21. Despite being included in the current “Strategic Direction Number 1 for the IPPC”, Implementation of ISPMs by Contracting Parties is not monitored by the IPPC after adoption of standards, and there is no process to review standards for applicability. A number of concerns over specific lapses in the application of standards are brought to the WTO Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Committee each year. From an examination of these concerns, it is apparent that both developed and developing countries have difficulties in meeting expectations of implementing some IPPC standards. Further, no implementation timeframes are agreed at the time of adoption. Unlike technical validity, applicability of the standards is difficult to assess prior to the development and adoption because it can not be experimentally tested. During ISPM development, consideration could be given on how a standard would be implemented, and what expectations of positive and negative impacts may occur.

22. At a practical level for industry, standards are often too vague for direct application, particularly concept standards. Specific standards are seen as more likely to be implemented and more useful. As standards become more specific, there will need to be more industry involvement to ensure industry practices can be appropriately considered and made compliant where required. Industry involvement in standards setting is essential to ensure standards are practical. At present, it is up to Governments to seek industry advice through the NPPOs, or to RPPOs liaising with industry in their regions. The degree to which this occurs is variable, and is often driven by an active position of involvement by an industry that recognises the role of phytosanitary standards. Industry involvement in the development of ISPMs should improve implementation by increasing industry’s understanding of the need for a standard while at the same time incorporating common industry practise and experience into the standard while maintaining efficacy.

23. **Consistency** in standards is difficult to achieve, but efforts are made. These efforts include: (i) the repeated participation of some experts in Expert Working Groups and (ii) the use of Technical Panels with standing members that are selected for their technical expertise and oversee the development of a suite of standards in a given topic area. Stewards responsible for drafting standards are chosen, in part, on the basis of previous experience with other standards.

C. THE STANDARDS SETTING PROCESS

24. A wide range of issues were raised concerning the standards setting process by stakeholders in the evaluation interviews and questionnaire. However, it should be noted that 90% of questionnaire respondents indicated that the standards setting process is at least “satisfactory” in meeting the expectations and needs of the member countries. Overall, while the process is considered efficient, room for improvement was acknowledged by all. In contrast, interviewees focussed more on difficulties or frustrations with the standards setting process regarding participation and transparency, including from experts with considerable experience working within the process.

25. The rate of standard setting (number per year) was thought variously to be too little and too great. Some interviewees indicated that it was frustrating to operate with so few standards, while others commented that it was important to allow time for sufficient transparency and consensus. There was also a concern in some countries, particularly developing countries, that the capacity to implement existing standards, let alone more new standards was not available and that the pace of standards adoption should be better matched to the ability of implementation. Nevertheless, the large majority of questionnaire responses indicated that the speed of the IPPC standards setting process was “satisfactory” or “very satisfactory” and considered the quantity of standards adopted to be at least “satisfactory”. Overall, the current level of standard setting appears to satisfy most participants.

26. Many countries indicated a lack of capacity for effective participation in the standards setting process, either for themselves or for other countries. In many cases, this involved limited technical capacity within the phytosanitary services, with too few staff and too little experience. In some of these cases there were inadequate funds to release staff to participate in standards setting, even where expertise was sufficient. This is one of the main reasons for the organisation of regional workshops on draft ISPMs, which provide the opportunity for representatives from developing countries to meet as a group, to have the draft ISPMs explained and to enable them to discuss them and to identify areas requiring additional attention. It provides them with a mechanism for giving input into the standards setting process.

27. An inefficient Standards Committee (SC) structure (too many people with insufficient technical knowledge, and issues related to representational roles for all members to be completely engaged and useful) was a common complaint in interviews, which included participants from groups involved in the standard setting process (i.e. SC, TPs and EWGs). There is a perception of insufficient rigor in the selection of SC members. The Evaluation team considers that the selection of SC members could be strengthened through a more active involvement of RPPOs in the identification of appropriate candidates in their respective FAO regions.

28. Language has been cited as a major issue, and was the subject of considerable discussion at the CPM-1 in 2006. Greater provision of interpretation is expected to improve participation, but at the expense of resources that might be used for other purposes. There is a perception that comments in English have more impact in the consultation stage. Semi-formal side sessions to negotiate the text of draft standards during the CPM (e.g. redrafting the Establishment of pest-free areas for fruit flies (Tephritidae) during CPM-1) are seen by some participants as a barrier to full participation, especially if they do not include interpretation and do not use agreed procedures to hear, accept, and record comments.

29. The current standard setting process puts enormous time commitments and stress on the Stewards, the Standards Committee, and the limited number of people working in the Secretariat. A frequent comment in interviews was that the current reliance on in-kind contributions of technical expertise may not be sustainable. The SC does not have sufficient time to thoroughly complete its assigned tasks which include developing and approving ISPM specifications, reviewing comments on draft ISPMs, and revising draft ISPMs, and an increasing number of additional tasks assigned by the CPM. This lack of time results in more comments submitted during the country consultation stage, which leads to rushed changes at the last minute at the CPM. Any increase in the number or complexity of standards would exacerbate these problems. Furthermore, the minutes of meetings in the standard setting process do not adequately reflect the issues and solutions that were discussed, making it difficult for members to make informed comments during the consultations.

30. The development of a formal specification for standards helps in planning resource inputs into the standard setting process by defining standards with clear boundaries and limits to the work required. It has resulted in a shorter and more consistent process.

31. The fast-track approach to standard setting has had a slow start. It is not clear what expectations there are for the use of this approach, or to what extent it is encouraged or supported. It would be particularly suited to adoption of validated non-IPPC generated technical standards, for instance from NPPOs, RPPOs, or industry groups.

32. The CPM is diverted from higher priority issues at its meetings because it devotes great attention to minute details of draft standards. The SC-approved draft ISPMs are only posted on the International Phytosanitary Portal (IPP) in January prior to the CPM. Member comments on those SC-approved draft ISPMs are required 14 days before the CPM, and these comments are only distributed at the CPM meeting in the languages in which they were received. Consequently, there is not enough time for members to review the comments before the CPM, so that too much CPM time is taken on detailed issues. Interviewees reinforced the Evaluation Team's view that the IPPC is poor at long-term planning and setting clear and useful priorities for the standard setting process, and that it continues to add to the work programme without properly addressing the resources needed to achieve it. For example, there are more potential standards, both concept and specific, in the pipeline than could be adopted (at any realistic rate) over the next ten years. This implies major gaps in the current set of standards, and confirms the lack of priority setting in the current standards setting process.

33. It may be concluded that the current rate of standards production represents a compromise between demand and available resources both in the Secretariat and within the Contracting Parties. Priorities in standards setting must reflect both needs and opportunities, particularly as they rely to a large extent on voluntary contributions of in-kind participation from national experts. Without a fully-funded system in which the required expertise is paid for, it will be impossible to set priorities purely on a needs basis. Greater use could be made of RPPOs in the standard setting process, but this may depend on strengthening the weaker RPPOs to ensure that developed RPPOs do not dominate the process if they are given a greater role. Industry groups are also under-used, and their inclusion would require greater flexibility in the selection of invited experts. Questionnaire respondents considered that standards developed by other bodies (e.g. RPPOs, ISTA, etc.) could be used more extensively in IPPC standards (with a score of 7.8 on a range of 10), but this implies a need for a process to validate such standards, which does not currently exist within the IPPC procedures.

D. THE COST OF STANDARDS

34. For 10 standards examined in detail (ISPMs 2, 7, 15, 21-27) an estimate of total cost was compiled. Most recent standards have been costing approximately \$130,000 per standard at a marginal rate, and \$193,000 at a full-cost rate³. However, ISPM 26 (*Establishment of pest free areas for fruit flies* – (2006)) has been almost twice as expensive as other recent standards due to the large team of experts involved. The earlier standards ISPM 2 (*Guidelines for pest risk analysis* (adopted 1995) and ISPM 15 (*Guidelines for regulating wood packaging material in international trade* (adopted 2002, revision adopted 2006)) were considerably more expensive than the above-mentioned level. Both ISPM 2 and ISPM 15 required many more meetings than the norm, both before and after adoption. The overall number of meetings per newly adopted standard has increased at a rate faster than the number of new standards produced, primarily due to the increasing revision of earlier standards, in addition to the drafting of new standards.

³ These estimates are based on the number of man-days recorded for EWGs or TPs attributed to each ISPM, consultant costs, and an estimate of 75 days per standard for the Steward. Costs of the IPPC Secretariat are considered to be fixed costs, and are not attributed to individual standards. Costs are allocated for travel (assumes an average of \$1,400 per participant), subsistence (meeting days plus one), and three ranges of salary costs (low, based on an FAO rate of \$250 per day; marginal, based on a typical non-overhead salary rate of \$500 per day; full, based on a full overhead salary rate of \$1,000 per day).

35. If the IPPC had to pay full costs for expert time to produce the current level of three new standards per year, it would need to budget approximately \$600,000 per year for standard setting, in addition to maintaining the Secretariat. Standards need regular revision and as the number of standards increases, the cost of revision will also increase, with each revision likely to cost as much as a new standard. A planned average revision after five years would indicate 5-6 revisions per year, requiring a full-cost budget of approximately \$1 million per year to carry out the revisions.

E. IMPLEMENTATION AND IMPACT

36. Implementation and impact of standards are difficult to identify and even more so to quantify. No monitoring of the impact of standards is carried out on standards after a period of adoption to consider lessons on the extent or distribution of impact, either in benefits or costs. It can only be examined on a case by case basis. Case studies have been undertaken for ISPM 2, ISPM 7 and ISPM 15, further details of which will be presented in the full evaluation report.

37. ISPM 2 has provided a conceptual basis (along with the closely related ISPM 11 *Pest risk analysis for quarantine pests including analysis of environmental risks and living modified organisms*) for Pest Risk Analysis (PRA) that has been adopted on a substantial scale by major importing countries. As a result of these ISPMs, an estimated 2,000 PRAs have been documented. PRAs will have helped to expedite many billions of dollars in new trade in fresh produce and other commodities.

38. An important benefit of ISPM 7 *Export certification systems* (adopted 1997) is that certification adds confidence to help ensure pests are not spread through trade and is sometimes used as a basis for the reduced application of phytosanitary interventions, including inspection regimes by importing country NPPOs. For example, the European Union (EU) now operates reduced inspection levels for a range of produce, requiring as little as 3% of consignments of imports from some countries to be inspected. Phytosanitary certificates issued by exporting country NPPOs in accordance with ISPM 7 are required for all consignments to be eligible for reduced inspection regimes. However, while this shows that export certification systems have contributed to this evolution, it is difficult to assess to what extent it can be attributed to ISPM 7.

39. Even though ISPM 15 *Guidelines for regulating wood packaging material in international trade* (adopted 2002, revision adopted 2006) imposes significant costs on the industry (estimated at some \$ 2 billion annually for the application of ISPM 15 approved treatments and the related certification of wood packaging materials), these phytosanitary measures could reduce greater losses from the affects of pests that might have been spread through the international movement of untreated wood packing materials. These treatment costs are small in relation to the overall trade on pallets.

F. RECOMMENDATIONS

40. In order to maintain, and to further enhance, the quality and usefulness of standards, it is recommended that:

- **A priorities study should be undertaken as a basis for the development of the future IPPC work programme;**
- **The IPPC should give priority to specific standards rather than concept standards;**
and
- **Industry stakeholders should be consulted and their knowledge and experience used at an early stage of the standard setting process, particularly for specific standards.**

41. To ensure that biodiversity concerns are effectively addressed by the IPPC, it is recommended that:

- **An Environmental Liaison Officer position should be created in the IPPC Secretariat; S/he could also carry out liaison functions with other international organizations for the Secretariat;**
 - **A Technical Panel on Biodiversity should be established to propose standards related to environmental issues, biodiversity threats, and invasive species pathways that could be given accelerated priority; and**
 - **At least one standard per year should have a primary theme directed at biodiversity issues, and all standards should have a statement regarding their biodiversity impact.**
42. To ensure the quality and to enhance the implementation of standards, it is recommended that:
- **Explanatory documents, which offer guidance on implementation and monitoring, should accompany each standard;**
 - **A procedure for monitoring implementation and impact of standards should be adopted by the IPPC, and used to inform both revisions of standards and the priorities and processes for developing new standards;**
 - **Each standard should have an implementation statement indicating the expected timeframe for implementation, the potential impacts and costs and benefits of implementation, and outline a plan on how implementation could be achieved and monitored; and**
 - **Regional workshops reviewing draft ISPMs should continue and new regional workshops developing regional implementation plans should be initiated, with the assistance of RPPOs.**
43. To maintain even the current level of standard setting, which is heavily reliant on in-kind contributions of expertise, it is recommended that **the IPPC should ensure that there is both sufficient direct funding either from the FAO Regular Programme or extra-budgetary sources, to recruit expertise in standard setting, and that there is a commitment for continued in-kind contributions from sufficiently diverse sources to draft standards.**
44. To ensure the widest participation of Contracting Parties in the standards setting process, it is recommended that **sufficient IPPC financial and technical support should be directed at full participation.**
45. To enhance the transparency of the standard setting process, it is recommended that:
- **Minutes of standard setting committees (EWGs, TPs, SC) should provide sufficient details on the nature and depth of the debates on key issues in draft standards, and be available prior to member consultations; and**
 - **Greater time should be left between the end of member consultation on draft ISPMs and the SC meeting and the posting of SC approved draft ISPMs and the meeting of the CPM to allow time for feedback on comments and to achieve greater consensus prior to the CPM.**
46. To arrive at a more realistic workplan for the CPM and its technical bodies, it is recommended that:
- **Each session of the CPM should produce a clear set of priorities for future standard setting and review the previous year's performance in meeting priority targets; and**
 - **Targets should be set in which the number and type of standards are indicated, and whether normal or fast-track approaches will be used.**
47. Finally, in order for the Secretariat to fulfil its role adequately in the standard setting process, including the proposed additional tasks, it is recommended that **the Secretariat increases the number of core professional staff involved in supporting the standard setting process. Details will be provided in the full evaluation report.**

IV. Information Exchange

48. Contracting Parties to the IPPC have primary responsibility for the exchange of official phytosanitary information, while the IPPC Secretariat provides the forum for information exchange. This ensures that there is a recognised international forum for phytosanitary information sharing. That is, there are formal channels for notification of changes to phytosanitary measures and pest reporting. Contracting Parties have a number of mandatory and optional information reporting obligations and responsibilities under the Convention.

49. At the request of the ICPM, the IPPC Secretariat developed an electronic internet-based forum, called the International Phytosanitary Portal (IPP), for the exchange of official phytosanitary information by Contracting Parties, the Secretariat, and RPPOs as required by the IPPC. While the IPP officially went “live” in August 2002, it was not until 2005 that its development phase was complete and Contracting Parties began in earnest to use it for posting and accessing information. Currently, navigation of the IPP is available in four of the five official FAO languages.

A. ASSESSMENT OF INFORMATION EXCHANGE ACTIVITIES

50. Contracting Parties believe that information exchange is important to facilitate trade and to institute appropriate national phytosanitary measures, as they reported in country visits, meetings, and the questionnaire. There are two categories of information on the IPP: i) *IPPC-related information* (e.g., meeting documentation, ISPMs, and calendar of events) and ii) *Country information concerning NPPOs* such as lists of regulated pests. Questionnaire respondents placed greater importance on the first category than the second. Information on standards developed under the IPPC was ranked as the most important type of information on the IPP.

51. The Evaluation Team believes that information exchange is of critical importance in today’s global world and that the IPPC Secretariat is the most appropriate and relevant entity to provide a central forum for information exchange, given its relationship to the Convention and the need for a central, international forum for official information exchange.

52. There is some ambiguity over who should receive Contracting Party information for meeting reporting obligations within official IPPC documentation. The 1997 revision of the IPPC sets out the reporting obligations, and provides a forum for information sharing – which is now officially the IPP. The Convention specifies which parties should receive the information. Some articles of the Convention⁴ specify the source of information and to whom it shall be provided (i.e. Secretary, Contracting Parties concerned, and RPPOs). Others⁵ do not. ICPM-3 (2001) adopted clearly defined guidance on the exchange of information as required by the IPPC and agreed that official phytosanitary information provided through the IPP would be deemed as having met the reporting obligations under the IPPC. Yet, ISPM 17 (2002) states that pest reports which are obligations under the IPPC should be made available via one of three systems: direct communication, publication on an accessible official national web site, or the IPP. Therefore, it is difficult to assess the extent to which Contracting Parties are meeting all of their information reporting obligations through the various systems. Efforts should be made to harmonize and clarify reporting channels.

53. Overall, the extent to which Contracting Parties meet their reporting obligations via the IPP is minimal. Only a small percentage (20%) of questionnaire respondents reported using the IPP to meet their reporting obligations.

⁴ e.g. Article VII.6 for emergency actions

⁵ e.g. Articles IV.2 (b) and VIII.1 (a)

54. The area with the greatest reporting compliance is the national IPPC contact point, the most basic of all mandatory reporting obligations. Contracting Parties barely use the IPP for optional reporting, just for the posting of some publications. The minimal use of the IPP for optional reporting is not surprising given the IPPC's priority on mandatory reporting.

55. Contracting Parties offered many reasons for low or non-utilization of the IPP in fulfilling their reporting obligations. The main reason for not complying with reporting obligations via the IPP is the lack of personnel and capacity according to questionnaire results. Respondents also cited other reasons that were repeated in country visits: the lack of easy access to internet facilities and computers; the absence of regulated pest lists in the countries; and the existence of other information reporting mechanisms (e.g. EPPO for European and Mediterranean countries). Some Contracting Parties who are EPPO members stated that they did not want to duplicate their reporting and advocated for more information sharing between RPPOs and the IPP.

56. During country visits and other meetings, Contracting Parties noted other reasons for not utilizing the IPP to meet reporting obligations. Certain types of phytosanitary information are provided directly to trade partner countries and some countries consider some data to be of a trade sensitive nature (such as pest reporting and emergency actions).

57. Finally, meeting reporting obligations is not an area that has been greatly emphasized by the IPPC Secretariat or the CPM. Rather, Contracting Parties have been 'urged' to meet their reporting obligations, but there is no monitoring and compliance system or other such incentive to encourage countries to comply.

58. In late December 2006, the IPPC Secretariat began generating statistics showing national phytosanitary information reported through the IPP. Until then, data were gathered on an *ad hoc* basis in preparation for meetings. The Evaluation Team believes that the development of this system represents a good first step in monitoring Contracting Parties' data on the IPP, and has the potential to be more fully developed.

59. Contracting Parties consider the IPP to be a user-friendly tool, according to their comments on the questionnaire and in country visits. Many cited satisfaction with accessibility, general lay-out, speed-response time, and navigational language. Current data indicate the IPP gets approximately 30,000 to 40,000 hits per month, suggesting that a large number of people find the IPP to be of interest. Utilization of the IPP is primarily for IPPC meeting preparation, standards download, access to national IPPC contact points, and national country phytosanitary information.

60. The capacity and needs of Contracting Parties and stakeholders vary considerably which impacts on IPP usage. A number of developing countries, for example, have trouble using the IPP due to poor information technology infrastructure and/or lack of capacity. Language issues also affect use. English is the most common language for documents on the IPP. All documents on the IPP are not available in all official languages, affecting the usefulness of some documents to certain countries. Although navigation is available in four FAO languages⁶, only certain general pages about the IPPC, Secretariat and IPP have been translated into the official languages. Currently, there is a general policy not to officially translate all documents, especially those uploaded by countries. One step taken by the Secretariat and supported by the Evaluation Team to address this issue has been to encourage NPPOs and RPPOs to provide translations of their own pages and documents.

61. A very important aspect that affects usage of the IPP is the existence of other information exchange mechanisms (often containing both official and unofficial information) available to Contracting Parties. One mechanism is the various RPPOs' sites, such as those of COSAVE, EPPO and NAPPO which are widely used by some Contracting Parties for phytosanitary

⁶ Programming for Chinese is underway and should be available in 2007.

information exchange purposes. Another is direct communication between countries. Much information, because of its nature, is still exchanged directly; this is a key reason why the listing of the contact points on the IPP was rated of such high importance as countries now know who the official national contact point is.

62. The existence of other exchange mechanisms limits the effectiveness and relevance of the IPP. There are opportunities for further developing synergies with the existing electronic mechanisms, particularly between the IPP and the RPPO sites. Some opportunities are more costly and time-consuming than others. Basic web site links already exist. But, overall, linkages have been poorly developed. This is an area where further work should be done, especially since the IPP has now completed its initial development phase.

63. During country visits and meetings, Contracting Parties strongly emphasized the importance of having reliable information on the IPP, and many of them raised the issue of the lack of reliability of some national information on the IPP. This is particularly worrisome to the Evaluation Team because the value and usefulness of the IPP will be undermined if Contracting Parties do not have confidence in data on the IPP. Given the volume of information on the IPP and possible legal liability issues, the Secretariat is not in a position to assume the role of technical data verifier and this should remain the sole responsibility of Contracting Parties.

64. As a result of a series of sub-regional workshops organized by the Secretariat, there has been a substantial increase, albeit from a low starting point, in the amount of national information available on the IPP. Workshops have not yet taken place in all regions; the remaining ones are planned for 2007. One could expect the growing usage trend to continue given the increased capacity and quantity of those trained. The Evaluation Team supports the IPP Support Group's recommendations to plan follow-up regional workshops in the near future to assist countries with reporting obligations and to ensure that momentum is not lost.

65. Over the last three years, funding from extra-budgetary sources has permitted the recent development of the IPP. The primary funding source was the one-off extra-budgetary resources of \$668,000 that the IPPC received as a result of arrears funding, which represented nearly 28% of the total that the IPPC received from that source. Taking into account its core funding level from the FAO Regular Programme, the IPPC does not have sufficient funds for such development efforts. Core funding should, however, be sufficient to enable the basic maintenance of the IPP and the activities the Secretariat staff need to undertake to meet its reporting obligations.

66. It is recognized that the current two full-time plant protection professionals who manage IPPC information exchange activities are overwhelmed by routine operational and technical daily management of the IPP and have thus insufficient time for more strategic and technical support activities. In addition to these two full-time posts, there appears to be a real need for a junior professional who takes overall responsibility for the daily management of the IPP (webmaster), thereby freeing up the Information Officers from these time-consuming tasks. In addition and given the nature of information technology, routine updates and developments to the IPP require the services of IT professionals.

67. In conclusion, Contracting Parties are not properly meeting their information exchange reporting obligations as required under the IPPC Convention. While information exchange is recognized as important by Contracting Parties, mandatory reporting obligations are only being partially met via the IPP. Further, Contracting Parties contend that they find information on the IPP to be important, the reality is that there is still a general lack of country information on the IPP beyond the basic contact points. As outlined above, there are various reasons for these Contracting Party reporting difficulties.

68. There is general satisfaction with the IPP as a tool. Data show that there has been increased usage of the IPP both for reporting on information obligations and for accessing information, particularly over the last two years. The increasing usage trend appears to be continuing, driven in large part by a series of Secretariat workshops on the IPP. While Secretariat

training efforts have been successful, there is still a need among countries for national capacity building and training on reporting obligations and how to meet them using the IPP.

69. Unreliable national information on the IPP undermines the quality and usefulness of the IPP. Future Secretariat workshops and refresher courses on the IPP should include sufficient discussion and guidance on the critical importance of the integrity of national and regional information posted on the IPP. In the Evaluation Team's judgement, only the Contracting Parties, and not the Secretariat can verify the reliability of technical information posted. However, the Secretariat does have a role to play in actively promoting the need and benefits of having reliable information on the IPP.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

70. The IPPC Secretariat should continue to assist countries to better understand their information reporting obligations and to provide training on how to use the IPP to meet those obligations. Once the Secretariat finishes giving the basic workshops to Contracting Parties in all the regions, the Evaluation Team concurs with the suggestion that future training support involves the development and provision of short refresher courses to reinforce the training and maintain the momentum. It is recommended that:

- **The IPPC Secretariat should consider developing a basic form, available on the IPP, for countries to use to auto-evaluate their reporting obligations status, as well as the accuracy of the data provided. Countries could be encouraged to auto-evaluate their status on a regular basis (e.g. yearly); and**
- **In view of the arrival of new editors and the need for refresher information by existing ones, the IPPC should continue the pursuit of the development of appropriate capacity-building tools.**

71. It is also recommended that **the IPPC Secretariat should urgently establish formal linkages with other information exchange mechanisms and their databases through Memoranda of Understanding or other appropriate mechanisms to improve the availability of information and to increase the usefulness of the IPP. Further, reporting channels for mandatory reporting obligations should be unambiguous and consistent for Contracting Parties.**

72. It is recommended that **compliance with mandatory information exchange obligations should be given much greater emphasis by the CPM and the Secretariat. A monitoring and compliance system for meeting mandatory IPPC reporting obligations should be developed and implemented. This system should specifically track Contracting Party compliance with all reporting obligations.**

73. **More specifically, countries could be assigned reporting ratings based on their level of compliance (e.g. red for very poor compliance, yellow for almost meeting obligations, and green for meeting all mandatory reporting obligations, etc). The ratings could be publicly posted on the IPP on a list which may also be included as a report or annex to CPM documents. For those Contracting Parties rated at the lower compliance levels, the IPPC Secretariat may want to offer support to help them prepare an action plan for how to improve their reporting compliance. The CPM may want to develop an incentive system to recognize countries that are fully compliant. A culture for compliance with IPPC obligations should be promoted within the IPPC by the CPM, Bureau, and the Secretariat.**

74. It is recommended that:

- **The Secretariat should hire a Webmaster for information exchange⁷; and**

⁷ Currently, the Secretary is recruiting an Associate Professional Officer (APO) webmaster that will be funded by the United States.

- **Funding should be made available for hiring external IT professional assistance to support further development of the IPP.**

V. Technical Assistance

75. Article XX of the Convention addresses technical assistance. It reads as follows: “The contracting parties agree to promote the provision of technical assistance to Contracting Parties, especially those that are developing Contracting Parties, either bilaterally or through the appropriate international organizations, with the objective of facilitating the implementation of this Convention”.

76. Technical assistance supported by the Secretariat can be divided into two types of activities:

- i) Technical assistance related to IPPC activities, including attendance at IPPC meetings, and workshops on draft standards and training on IPP development and use; and
- ii) Strengthening of national phytosanitary capacity.

77. **Technical assistance related to IPPC activities:** this category was essentially financed by the Secretariat FAO Regular Programme Budget and by Trust Funds, including the Special Trust Fund for the IPPC⁸ and projects from the European Commission (EC). The latter was exclusively for facilitating developing country attendance at IPPC meetings. The IPPC Secretariat organised and supported during the period 2001-2005 approximately 25 regional workshops on draft ISPMs, as well as on other IPPC-related matters. There is no documentation to assess the relevance and effectiveness of this type of technical support. However, both country visit interviewees and questionnaire respondents underlined the importance and the usefulness of this type of activities. In particular, regional workshops on draft ISPMs were judged very useful by respondents.

78. **Technical assistance for strengthening national phytosanitary capacity:** this type of project includes a wide range of activities, such as the modernization of plant quarantine facilities; training of manpower and establishment of properly equipped laboratories; the drafting and promulgation of phytosanitary laws compliant with the WTO-SPS agreement; and the establishment of surveillance systems to assist with the creation of pest-free areas.

79. The Evaluation Team carried out a desk review of technical assistance for strengthening national phytosanitary capacity provided by FAO/IPPC through a range of projects over the past five years. The review consisted of a detailed analysis of 25 projects, selected according to types of activities, regional distribution, and available information. This analysis included projects that were implemented in countries visited by the Evaluation Team. Most of the findings below are drawn from this desk review.

80. Over the 2001-2006 period, technical assistance was provided by FAO/IPPC through 55 projects for a total value of \$12.7 million, of which 85% was financed by the FAO Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), i.e. FAO Regular Programme Budget. In fact, only a few donors supported IPPC-related technical assistance activities through FAO. This rather low level of donor funding shows that the IPPC Secretariat did not succeed in involving donors in a substantial manner in its technical assistance activities. Lack of planning on how to meet donor objectives and the absence of clear priorities about the type of technical assistance to be provided are probably some of the reasons for this limited donor participation. Thus, the technical assistance provided was almost entirely an FAO-funded effort.

⁸ MTF/GLO/122/MUL: Special International Plant Protection Convention Trust Fund (Voluntary Trust Fund)

A. ASSESSMENT OF PROJECTS: RELEVANCE, EFFICIENCY, EFFECTIVENESS

81. Projects generally were considered relevant to the problems to be addressed, but most of them experienced delays of several months in start-up and implementation. These delays negatively affected project operations and reduced project effectiveness. According to the desk review, satisfactory results (achievement of specific objectives and planned outputs), were reached in about 50% of the projects.

82. Based on feedback obtained during the country visits and on the questionnaire results, positive results have been achieved in particular with regard to staff training. This included training of NPPO staff and policy-makers on matters such as phytosanitary measures, information technology and use of databases, awareness-raising workshops, pest surveys and eradication techniques. Another positive aspect of IPPC/FAO support relates to the work of the FAO Legal Office on legislative aspects which was carried out in a satisfactory manner, usually with the effective assistance of national consultants.

83. Overall, outcomes and the longer-term impact, as well as sustainability of projects implemented over the last five years by the IPPC Secretariat are likely to be limited. This is due to a number of issues ranging from high turnover in NPPO staff, lack of funding or other necessary support to the Plant Protection Service to effectively maintain the strengthened capacity, as well as lack of collaboration and coordination with other donors' initiatives. Above all, with a limited timeframe of two years and a ceiling of \$500,000, TCP projects are not well suited to effectively address complex capacity building needs in a comprehensive and sustainable manner.

84. Furthermore, staffing of the Secretariat to provide effective support to all the projects was inadequate, with only one technical officer dealing with a wide range of operational and technical issues in various countries and regions and limited collaboration with other services. This limited possibilities to follow up on results achieved. In order to address this issue, some measures have been taken, including the delegation of project responsibility to FAO Regional Plant Protection Officers and the use of consultants.

85. The FAO IPPC Regular Programme budget provides funding for Regional Plant Protection Officers' time. However, in practice, the effective use of these officers' time and their contribution to technical assistance have been uneven. There are several reasons for this. Firstly, their tasks are not well defined in their terms of reference. Secondly, they do not report directly to the Secretariat, making it difficult for IPPC staff to coordinate and oversee technical assistance as a whole. Moreover, involving FAO Regional Plant Protection Officers requires coordination as well as timely and detailed planning which is made difficult by insufficient capacity at the IPPC Secretariat. So far, the involvement of these Officers has not resulted in a significant reduction of the workload for the IPPC Secretariat staff.

86. Questionnaire findings highlight a great need for the provision of technical assistance. Requirements are particularly high for training programs, including upgrading skills of technical staff in the implementation of standards, inspection, surveillance and pest identification. Also, support on pest risk analysis and pest listing, addressing issues relating to limitations due to infrastructure and equipment, are mentioned as highly important for a great majority of developing countries. A detailed review by Canale⁹ of the results of the Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation (PCE) tool conducted in developing countries also indicates that legislative constraints and constitutional issues are major limiting factors.

87. Technical assistance requirements including capacity building are thus broad. To properly address these requirements would require a comprehensive development strategy including the involvement of various donors in a well defined long-term technical assistance

⁹ F. Canale. Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation and its Application in Developing Countries. December 2004.

programme. FAO/IPPC support to phytosanitary capacity is a small part of global support which takes place essentially with funding from donor agencies (The World Bank, the European Commission and a number of bilateral agencies are major donors in this domain). In that respect, lack of coordination between various donor agencies is a common feature in virtually all technical assistance projects. The desk review shows that FAO/IPPC acted in isolation, establishing partnerships with other donors in only a few limited cases in the Caribbean.

88. Notwithstanding the ICPM-3 recommendations, in particular with respect to the development of a system for determining general priorities and for meeting priority needs, priorities for the Secretariat's technical assistance activities have not been established. And, a list of general phytosanitary assistance needs submitted by Members has not been maintained. In addition, there is no clear evidence of the results achieved by the technical assistance provided. More importantly, there is no clear prioritization and focus. Projects are primarily undertaken upon the demand of the countries concerned, without any overall strategic vision.

89. The above shortcomings show that the overall responsibilities and role of the IPPC Secretariat should be defined more explicitly. There is insufficient clarity with respect to the overall technical assistance needs and the role of the FAO/ IPPC Secretariat in this respect. The Secretariat's current role in technical assistance is not adequately focused, too ambitious, and much beyond its capacity. Moreover, it diverts scarce resources from core business activities.

90. The Convention states that Contracting Parties agree to promote the provision of technical assistance either bilaterally or through the appropriate international organizations, to facilitate the implementation of the Convention. The IPPC can not be rated as an appropriate international organization for implementing technical assistance activities. At the same time, it is recognised that there is a tremendous need for the provision of technical assistance to developing country Contracting Parties to strengthen their phytosanitary capacities, and it is evident that this requires a much better planned and coordinated approach than is currently the case.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

91. The Evaluation Team is of the view that **FAO, and not the IPPC Secretariat, is best placed to coordinate global support for strengthening national phytosanitary capacity, and recommends that an international consultative group (coordinated by the FAO Plant Production and Protection Division) on strengthening phytosanitary capacity should be set up. The group would be open to all donors and recipient countries in the field of phytosanitary capacity. The group's objectives would be to define priority needs, facilitate resource mobilization, and ensure coordination.**

92. It is also recommended that **FAO, through the Plant Production and Protection Division, should organise the necessary technical capacity outside the IPPC Secretariat as part of its regular programme with a view to providing technical assistance in support of phytosanitary capacity. FAO should do so taking into account its resources and in partnership with other main actors. FAO should report to the CPM on its phytosanitary technical assistance.**

93. The Evaluation Team highly recommends that **technical assistance carried out directly under the IPPC should be limited to the core business of the IPPC, i.e. closely linked to better understanding of draft standards and monitoring of the impact of these standards, the development and use of the IPP as a tool for information exchange among Contracting Parties and support to developing country attendance at technical and governance meetings.**

VI. Dispute Settlement

94. The IPPC's dispute settlement mechanism is described in Article XIII of the Convention and a Guide to dispute settlement under the IPPC was prepared for the Informal Working Group

on Strategic Planning and Technical Assistance (SPTA) in 2005. Like the dispute settlement of the OIE, the IPPC's is not meant to replace the WTO mechanism or to prejudice the rights and obligations of WTO Members who might seek to resolve disputes through the WTO.

95. Dispute settlement procedures have formed an integral part of the IPPC since the adoption of the original 1952 text (Article IX), but have never been used since the establishment of the IPPC Secretariat. Therefore, the Evaluation Team is not in a position to assess its effectiveness.

96. A comparative analysis of the IPPC, OIE, and WTO procedures for dispute settlement was carried out as part of a desk review for the evaluation. The OIE process, which is the least formal, results in a confidential technical report to the disputing parties. The IPPC process is more formal and more transparent, involving in the final analysis, all of the Contracting Parties to the IPPC, because of the IPPC Secretariat obligation to report the outcome of formal consultations in the dispute settlement process to the CPM.

97. From discussion with some of its delegates, it appears that WTO-SPS Secretariat would welcome disputes being handled by the IPPC, since it is a big drain on resources at WTO. An IPPC dispute process is viewed as being more technically focussed than the more legally focussed WTO-SPS disputes. In that respect, the IPPC settlement dispute process could relieve part of the workload carried out under the WTO-SPS settlement mechanism by dealing with technically based disputes. However, the extent to which the IPPC has the capacity to deal with a full-scale dispute is uncertain.

VII. Governance of the IPPC

A. COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

98. The Commission on Phytosanitary Measures, the IPPC's Governing Body, has been responsible for the overall implementation of the objectives of the Convention since October 2005, when the amendments adopted in 1997 came into force. Until that date, these responsibilities were handled by the Interim Commission on Phytosanitary Measures. Participation in CPM meetings has grown steadily over time; there is a fair participation from all regions, though the Pacific, Near East and Africa regions are less represented than the others. Representation from the Africa region has increased significantly since ICPM-4, due to support from the IPPC's Special Trust Fund and an EC-funded project.

99. In each meeting, the adoption of international standards is a major discussion item. Contracting Parties are aware of the difficulties to effectively address all the opinions expressed during CPM meetings. Notwithstanding, it is generally felt that there is a genuine effort to consider all important points in reaching a consensus.

100. The CPM meetings entail substantial costs; costs of CPM-1 (2006) paid from the Secretariat budget were \$232,000, and for 2007 they are estimated at \$258,000, representing approximately 10% of the annual core budget of the IPPC. In addition, \$240,000 have been allocated from the EC and IPPC trust funds to assist developing countries (Contracting Parties) meet their cost of attendance. In particular, document printing/translation costs charged by FAO are extremely high compared to those of other alternative printing and translation services and very significant cost savings could probably be made by outsourcing translation activities.

101. In its first meeting in 1998, the ICPM adopted detailed rules of procedure, which were completed in the following meeting by the adoption of standard setting procedures. A draft business plan was developed by the Bureau in 2002. After reviews by the FAO Finance and Programme Committees and by ICPM-6 (2004), the revised Business Plan and Strategic Plan were endorsed by ICPM-7 (2005). A revised 5-year Business Plan will be presented to CPM-2, which will include revised 5-year goals, including major activity areas and expected outcomes, as well as means of measuring the efficacy of the programme over time. It is intended that this plan

will be supported by an annual operational plan, with an associated budget, outlining the year's activities aimed at meeting the agreed goals. To achieve this, the CPM should review and formally adopt the annual programme of work and related budget.

102. Surprisingly, under the main functions of the CPM there is no mention of the gathering and management of information on IPPC-related matters. In the resolution adopted by the FAO Conference in 1997, this is the only technical matter raised. Article 11.2(a) of the IPPC states that one of the functions of the Commission will be to "review the state of plant protection in the world and the need for action to control the international spread of pests and their introduction into endangered areas". The Evaluation Team considers that the CPM is a unique forum to review phytosanitary issues at the global level. Such a review would be an effective means to determine the overall importance of the IPPC, and is an essential tool to monitor the relevance of the work undertaken, and to determine progress achieved over the years. This could take the form of a State of International Plant Health Report, published at regular intervals.

103. In general, the Evaluation Team concludes that over time the ICPM/CPM has addressed the various activities to be covered under the IPPC in an effective manner. It has developed and set the strategic direction for the IPPC-related activities and has adopted the necessary policies and supporting procedures. However, it has not established priorities needed to cope with the limited resources available in the actual budget. This was confirmed by questionnaire respondents who, while expressing satisfaction with the governance by the CPM and subsidiary bodies, indicated much less satisfaction with the establishment of priorities. This should in particular address a more rigorous and realistic review of the standard setting workplan, as discussed earlier in this report.

B. BUREAU AND THE INFORMAL WORKING GROUP ON STRATEGIC PLANNING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

104. The Bureau is composed of the Chairperson and the two Vice-Chairpersons of the CPM. Its task is to work with the Secretariat throughout the year on executing the CPM's work programme. Over the years, the Bureau has made substantial and useful contributions to the Secretariat's work, including assistance in the preparation of working papers for the CPM and other meetings. While the Bureau has been working quite effectively, concerns have been expressed by some Contracting Parties about a small group of individuals taking important decisions on behalf of the CPM.

105. Since its establishment at ICPM-2 in 1999, the SPTA has been operating as an informal open-ended working group. ICPM-7 (2005) adopted the interim terms of reference for the SPTA. The SPTA's activities have allowed for the development over a relatively short period of time of the structures and rules of procedure necessary for the effective functioning and implementation of the IPPC. There is, however, some overlap and a lack of clarity on the respective roles of the Bureau (formal structure) and the SPTA (informal structure). Furthermore, the informality of the SPTA may have created among certain Contracting Parties an impression of insufficient transparency. Transparency is essential to good governance.

106. CPM-1 held in 2006 considered the option of an enlarged Bureau of seven members, one from each FAO region, which would carry out in future also the functions allocated so far to the SPTA and Focus Groups. The enlarged Bureau would form the core group of the SPTA. This matter was reviewed by the SPTA at its October 2006 meeting. It agreed to keep the SPTA informal until such time that the effectiveness of the enlarged Bureau could be evaluated. However, such an evaluation will be delayed considerably because, according to current plans, the selection of the new members of the extended Bureau will only be completed by CPM-3 (2008). In addition, there is a lack of clarity in the CPM-1 report on what the future structure is aimed at, a separate Bureau and SPTA, or one combined body, and little information is provided in the various documents on the real purpose of the proposed changes.

107. The SPTA made extensive use of the experience and advice of various people, and this has strongly benefited the development of the various procedures and structures necessary for the effective implementation of the IPPC responsibilities. The Evaluation Team considers that the time has come to combine the functions of the Bureau and SPTA into one enlarged Bureau, for the following reasons: (i) the coming into force of the IPPC and its permanent structures requires transparent and formal governance mechanisms; (ii) the necessary structures are well established including their rules of procedure; (iii) making the best use of the available resources; (iv) streamlining the decision-making process; and (v) providing clarity on the role and responsibilities of the Bureau. Such an enlarged Bureau should build on the experience of the SPTA by exploring opportunities for the continued effective use of outside expertise.

C. STANDARDS COMMITTEE

108. The terms of reference and rules of procedure for the Standards Committee were adopted by ICPM-3 (2001). The main objective is to prepare draft ISPMs according to the standard-setting procedures. The SC has 25 members, four from each of five FAO Regions, and three from the Pacific and two from North America (ICPM-6 (2004)). An expert working group of seven (SC-7) is selected from its members; its functions include the review and revision of specifications and draft standards. The SC serves as a forum to manage the standard setting process, including the development and approval ISPM specifications and administrative documents for standard setting, selection of members for TPs and EWGs and stewards, review of member comments, the revision and approval of draft ISPMs for submission to the CPM, and other tasks assigned by the CPM. The SC met twice per year.

109. Realizing the expectations of ICPM members regarding standards development and the current slow standard setting procedure, ICPM-5 decided to establish a Focus Group to examine the current standard setting mechanism with a view to improve the standard setting procedure. It developed a set of recommendations to address these issues including the establishment of a Fast Track procedure and the establishment of Technical Panels in specific areas. These recommendations were adopted by ICPM-6 (2004). Both the Fast Track procedure and the Technical Panels could potentially facilitate the work of the Standards Committee. But, so far the experience is too limited to determine if this has really happened.

110. The issues raised by the Focus Group highlight not only some of the shortcomings, but also the complexity of the SC's work. Given the results achieved, it may be concluded that the SC has carried out its tasks in a relatively productive manner as discussed in chapter 3 of this report. The process requires extensive monitoring and management of the wide range of activities undertaken. Currently, this is done following a two-step approach through the SC-7, and subsequently the full SC, with extensive input from the Secretariat, the stewards, the technical panels and the working groups.

111. For the SC to operate in the most effective manner, it requires the dedicated input of all members. In practice, this is difficult to achieve with a group of 25 people who also have other obligations. This has been partly solved by the creation of the SC-7, but this does not constitute the most efficient use of the human and financial resources. The Evaluation Team, therefore, has come to the conclusion that the complex tasks could be undertaken in a more effective and efficient manner by a smaller Standards Committee, supported by a stronger Secretariat. It also considers, as noted in paragraph 27, that the selection of SC members could be strengthened through a more active involvement of the RPPOs in the identification of appropriate candidates in the respective FAO regions.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

112. **Cost: In order to reduce the CPM's cost, it is recommended that translation costs should be reduced by outsourcing more of these activities.**

113. **Programme of work:** It is recommended that the CPM should review and formally adopt the annual programme of work and related budget.

114. **Information:** Acknowledging that one of the CPM's key functions should remain the review of phytosanitary issues at the global level, but noting that the Secretariat does not have the capacity to carry out such a review on a regular basis, it is recommended that **FAO (and not the IPPC Secretariat) should integrate into its core work programme a review of the phytosanitary status of the world as part of the technical services provided by the Plant Production and Protection Division to the IPPC.**

115. **Structures:**

- **It is recommended that an enlarged Bureau of seven members be established as soon as possible, to undertake the tasks carried out by the current Bureau and SPTA. The Bureau's draft terms of reference and draft rules of procedure, discussed at the Eighth Meeting of the SPTA could serve as the basis for the establishment of the enlarged Bureau;**
- **To ensure the effective management of the work to be undertaken by the Standard Committee, it is recommended that the total membership of the Committee should be reduced to 14: two from each FAO Region, RPPOs should be involved in the identification of appropriate candidates. The Secretariat should ensure that proposed members meet the requirements as described in the Standard Committee's rules of procedure. Subsequently, candidates should be endorsed by the Bureau against agreed criteria before being submitted to the CPM for confirmation.**

VIII. The Secretariat

116. In 1992, the Secretariat was established within FAO's Plant Protection Service. The Secretariat's mandate is broad and includes administration of the CPM work programme, implementation of the policies and activities, publication of information relating to the IPPC, support to the standards setting process, facilitation of information exchange between Contracting Parties and coordination with the technical cooperation programme of FAO to provide technical support on matters relating to the IPPC. The role of the IPPC Secretariat is unique compared to other standards-setting bodies, i.e. the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), Codex Alimentarius and the International Standards Organisation (ISO), in the sense that it is the only Secretariat given the authority to enter into the substance of standard setting. It has specific responsibilities at four stages:

- i) Initiation of a standard (Procedural Manual, section 9.1 page 34);
- ii) Drafting of specifications for standards (in collaboration with the steward);
- iii) Consulting with the Chair of the Standards Committee prior to the submission of a draft standard for consideration; and
- iv) Resolving comments on draft standards in the fast-track procedure prior to submission of the draft and the comments to the Standards Committee.

117. A number of interlocutors expressed concerns about the lack of leadership and team cohesion within the Secretariat. This translates, among other things, into a lack of strategic prioritization of the work of the Secretariat, late reporting in some cases, and limited sharing of information among the team resulting in information and knowledge for each of the main functions of the Secretariat being very much divided between the members of the team.

118. There are several reasons for this. While all Secretariat staff are highly committed, they face extraordinarily heavy workloads. It is well recognized that the Secretariat is under-staffed to adequately fulfil its growing tasks. As per terms of reference and budget allocation, the Secretary

devotes time to the IPPC on a part-time basis. In the past few years, the former Secretary devoted in practice only 20% of his time, the remaining being for other tasks of the Plant Protection Service. The Coordinator, who takes a leading role in the provision of the Secretariat of the CPM, is the only senior staff member (after the Secretary). The two most important functions, Standard Setting and Information Exchange, are carried out by officers with inadequate post seniority vis-à-vis the responsibilities to be undertaken. Indeed, these functions imply frequent negotiations with senior government officials. The work for these two functions should be strengthened in priority and be headed by two senior staff with additional support.

119. The Plant Protection Officers in the FAO Regional Offices are expected to spend at least 25% of their time on IPPC. Within the overall IPPC budget, the contribution to the cost of these officers amounts to about \$350,000 - 400,000 per year. However, there is no report indicating the actual contribution of them to the work of the IPPC and the extent to which this capacity is tapped is unclear.

120. There is little control and influence by the IPPC Governing Bodies (i.e. CPM and the Bureau) on the operations and management and staffing of the Secretariat, which, nevertheless, serves and reports to the CPM. The Secretary and the staff of the Secretariat are all appointed by FAO's Director-General through FAO selection and recruitment procedures (Article XII of the Convention). While the rationale for this is linked to the history of the development of the IPPC within the Plant Protection Service, this is no longer valid today. This contributes to a situation where the IPPC Governing Bodies and the Secretariat are to a certain extent disconnected and do not fully engage the responsibilities of the Contracting Parties.

121. In the past two years, the presentation of budget planning by the Secretariat to the SPTA demonstrates efforts towards greater accountability. Furthermore, there is a growing feeling among Contracting Parties for greater independence from FAO and increased accountability of the Secretariat to the Governing Bodies it serves. Inadequate consideration seems to have been given at the time of the drafting of the new Convention to the wide range of new activities to be undertaken and the need for a mode of governance that would bring greater ownership to the large number of Contracting Parties.

A. RECOMMENDATIONS RELATING TO THE SECRETARIAT AND STAFFING

122. **The Secretary post should not be associated with other functions and should be a full-time D1 (Manager). There should be open competition for this post and the final decision on appointment should be taken by the new Bureau and representatives of the FAO Director General (e.g. from the Plant Production and Protection Division). The Coordinator post should then be abolished. The seniority of the posts dealing with the IPPC's two core functions (i.e. standard setting and information exchange) should be upgraded to P5, supervising other professionals as discussed in the relevant sections above.**

123. **In view of the proposed changes regarding the role of the Secretariat on technical assistance, part of the funding for Regional Plant Protection Officers should continue to be "contributed" from the IPPC budget. Activities funded from this source should be concerned with the primary role of the IPPC (e.g. standards setting, information exchange, and dispute settlement). Moreover, the activities carried out by the Regional Officers should be reported annually in the CPM as part of the activity and financial report of the Secretariat to the CPM.**

124. **The Secretary and the professional staff of the IPPC Secretariat should be selected and appointed jointly by representatives of the CPM through the expanded Bureau and FAO, against agreed selection criteria. This will enhance transparency, accountability and greater ownership by the Contracting Parties. This will also bring coherence between lines**

of reporting and decision-making. Finally, this will reduce the risks of adjustments in posts and budgets in the IPPC resulting from corporate policy.

125. Based on the analysis in the previous chapters, some changes are proposed regarding the structure of professional staffing of the Secretariat as follows:

- D1 IPPC Secretary (Manager)
- 1 P5 Senior Environmental Liaison Officer and Coordination with other international organizations
- 1 P5 IPPC Senior Standards Officer
- 2 P4 Standards Officers

- 1 P5 IPPC Senior Information Exchange Officer
- 1 P4 Information Officer
- 1 P2 Webmaster

- FAO Regional Plant Protection Officers: The Evaluation Team recommends that an appropriate proportion of these Officers' time be dedicated to core IPPC functions.

This proposal assumes that technical assistance functions are moved to the FAO AGP. Also, the above does not take into account neither the requirements for administrative support nor other temporary professional support needed for specific tasks (e.g. programme development of the IPP, editing and meeting preparations for standards setting activities, CPM-related planning and support).

IX. Roles of the Regional Plant Protection Organizations

126. The roles of the Regional Plant Protection Organizations (RPPOs) are described in Article IX of the Convention: RPPOs. In addition, a detailed set of recommendations on the roles and functions of RPPOs and their relationship with the CPM were adopted by ICPM-7 (2005), following proposals prepared by an IPPC *ad hoc* working group. The areas of cooperation listed are: standard setting process, information exchange, technical assistance, dispute settlement and funding issues.

127. Before the adoption of the New Revised Text of the Convention in 1997, the RPPOs constituted the main link between the NPPOs and FAO. Matters of joint interest were reviewed in the Technical Consultations between FAO and the RPPOs, the first of which was held in 1989. At that time, it was recommended that a clearly identifiable Secretariat of the IPPC be created within FAO and that FAO should explore the possibility of creating an official body (the current CPM) to support the IPPC. Technical Consultations organised in the following years played a major role in the revision of the IPPC.

128. The involvement of the RPPOs and their member countries in IPPC activities was discussed by the Evaluation Team on several occasions, including the 2006 Technical Consultations with RPPO representatives and visits to headquarters of some of the RPPOs. RPPOs are key actors for the achievement of IPPC strategic objectives, in particular with respect to the development and implementation of ISPMs and to information exchange. However, the diversity of the existing nine RPPOs makes it difficult to follow a uniform approach in the collaborative arrangements between the IPPC and the RPPOs.

129. As noted above, the RPPOs played an active and strong part in the development of the 1997 Convention. The Evaluation Team is convinced that they can and should play an equally important and effective role in the planning and implementation of the Convention's ongoing activities.

130. The Evaluation Team **identified a number of areas in the above sections where RPPOs could have a greater role in the implementation of the Convention** which are:

- **Information Exchange:** The development of Memoranda of Understanding for the establishment of systematic links with databases of RPPOs; EPPO, NAPPO and COSAVE have particularly well-developed databases.
- **Standards:** RPPOs could play a greater role regarding the development and implementation of ISPMs, including the organization and conduct of regional workshops to review draft ISPMs and plan the regional implementation of adopted ISPMs in cooperation with the FAO Plant Protection Officers. This could also involve the coordination of technical assistance requirements for Contracting Parties to meet their obligations as well as the provision of technical assistance support to facilitate the implementation of ISPMs.

131. The Evaluation Team was not in a position to conduct an evaluation of the RPPOs. However, **it identified issues that need to be further explored and that should be addressed by FAO in the near future:**

- The Asia and Pacific Plant Protection Commission and the Caribbean Plant Protection Commission (CPPC)¹⁰ are FAO subsidiary bodies¹¹. FAO should review carefully its support to these bodies. In particular, it should define ways of ensuring greater independence and long-term sustainability;
- Efforts should be undertaken to finalize the establishment of the Near East Plant Protection Organization; and
- FAO, in collaboration with relevant regional bodies, should explore opportunities to strengthen the capacity of certain RPPOs, such as the Inter African Phytosanitary Council, in collaboration with the African Union (AU).

X. IPPC Financial Resources

132. The funding of the IPPC comes from three sources:

- i) a core budget paid by the Regular Programme of FAO and decided by the FAO Conference, but subject to adjustment by the Director-General;
- ii) voluntary trust funds; and
- iii) in-kind contributions.

133. In constant terms, the total funding of the IPPC has increased by nearly 150% between 1998 and 2005¹², with a particular increase in 2003 due to the availability of arrears and a sharp increase in voluntary and in-kind contributions. Since 1998, the proportion of core funding of the IPPC, within the total FAO Regular Programme budget has increased over the years from 0.38% in 1998 to 0.62% in 2006, indicating the degree of priority given by FAO to the work of the Convention. However, over the years the total cost of the activities to be undertaken has increased substantially and, as a result, the relative proportion of funding coming from the FAO Regular Programme budget has decreased, while the part from extra-budgetary resources has increased. In that respect, some contracting parties have been particularly generous in the past few years and their extra-budgetary funding and contributions in-kind have been instrumental in ensuring the level of delivery by the Secretariat.

¹⁰ The CPPC is currently being dismantled and the RPPO activities will be taken over by the Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA), which will function as the RPPO for the Caribbean sub-region in accordance with Article IX of the New Revised Text of the IPPC.

¹¹ Article XIV of the FAO Constitution for the Asia and Pacific Plant Protection Commission, and Article VI for the Caribbean Plant Protection Commission.

¹² from \$ 1.46 to US\$ 3.6 million (1998 base)

134. As the source of funding determines the use, the relative reduction in FAO funding of the total budget has resulted in a situation where insufficient resources were available for expanding the core business of IPPC (i.e. essentially funding the services of the Secretariat). Thus, an increasing part of the Secretariat's work has had to rely on human resources provided either through other funding sources or "in-kind" contributions. The review of activity reports over the 1999-2006 period, as well as the Programme and Budget plans of 2006 and 2007, show clearly under-funding for certain core activities of the Secretariat. There is a fundamental problem of insufficient sustained resources on the basis of which the Secretariat can plan its core activities, and there is also a large amount of unpredictability with voluntary funding not necessarily tying in with the programming cycle. In addition, the combination of cost-saving recommendations and proposals for additional staffing developed by the Evaluation Team will likely result¹³ in additional net costs that should, in principle, be funded by the FAO Regular Programme budget.

135. Another issue is the disconnect between the Regular Programme budget decisions made by the Conference and the IPPC's strategic planning and programming by the SPTA and approved by the CPM. Finally, the financial reporting is insufficiently transparent, due to the lack of separation between IPPC and wider FAO budgets and activities. These should be split, but where the FAO budget and activities relate to the IPPC mission, they could be shown in the accounts as related financial contributions to IPPC activities. The annual financial reports presented to the CPM do not permit a good understanding of expenses against resources.

136. In view of the above, funding options and responsibilities have been examined and the Evaluation Team **concludes the following:**

- i) There is little margin for significant increases in the funding by FAO from its Regular Programme budget given the overall budget situation. However, FAO should preferably ensure systematic annual core funding of the Secretariat's core activities on a basis agreed upon by the CPM's expanded Bureau and FAO.
- ii) In the same way that technical staff of the Secretariat should be selected by both FAO and the expanded Bureau of the CPM, the annual budget and programme should be defined by the expanded Bureau. The Secretariat should be fully accountable to the expanded Bureau and should provide detailed and clear financial reports.
- iii) There is strong resistance from many Contracting Parties to the setting up of assessed contributions, which would increase the autonomy of the IPPC vis-à-vis FAO. Consequently, extra-budgetary funding will have to remain the primary additional source of funding of the IPPC in the future. The Secretariat should have a more solid resource mobilisation strategy, including a preference for multi-donor trust funding over bilateral funding. Donor Contracting Parties should make an effort to tie their contribution to the annual planning cycle of the IPPC.
- iv) More innovative approaches of funding such as cost-recovery schemes will have to be systematically and carefully considered in the future, using models and experience of other standard setting bodies, in cases where the Secretariat expands its functions and/or takes upon additional tasks (e.g. pest-free certification system, compliance system, certification system for plant protection-capacity evaluation using the PCE tool, etc.).

XI. Overall Conclusions

137. The IPPC is an essential instrument facilitating the continuously expanding international trade in plants, plant products and other regulated articles. It also provides the only global forum to exchange views on how best to address phytosanitary and related issues. The Convention's importance has been strongly confirmed by the wide range of people met by the Evaluation Team. The revised Convention, in addition to the OIE and Codex Alimentarius, is one of the three

¹³ An attempt will be made in the full report to provide rough estimates of costs and cost-savings associated with the evaluation's recommendations.

standard setting bodies recognised under the WTO SPS agreement. Having been created more recently, the IPPC has a more limited record of achievements than the other two. At the same time, its late development has undoubtedly offered an opportunity to build on the experience of others and to establish an effective standard development and adoption process.

138. So far, the IPPC has evolved and worked quite efficiently and effectively due to the strong conviction and commitment, as well as to the spirit of partnership and cooperation of a core number of actors, though with a certain degree of informality. Moreover, despite countries' increasing interest in the IPPC, the level of compliance vis-à-vis obligations has been disappointing. After all, the importance and the relevance of the Convention are considerably diminished if Contracting Parties do not fully meet their obligations.

139. With the coming into force of the revised Convention in 2005 and the increasing number of Contracting Parties, this is the time to strengthen formal arrangements which will guarantee proper governance and a true partnership in which all parties fully participate. It is recognized that the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures has developed a solid basis for the overall governance of the IPPC. Strengthened structures will also enhance the overall effectiveness of the activities undertaken under the Convention, and hopefully ensure that all contracting parties meet their obligations in a consistent and sustainable manner. It also calls for a more balanced and secured relationships with fully shared responsibilities between the governing bodies of the IPPC and FAO, in particular regarding budget level and management as well as staffing of the Secretariat.

140. Moreover, the IPPC should concentrate on what it can do best vis-à-vis the needs of the Contracting Parties, given the limited financial and human resources. The IPPC needs to prioritize strategies and activities at all levels. In that respect, more effort needs to be put on strengthening the core work relating to information exchange and standards, while technical assistance under the IPPC should be strictly limited to IPPC- related activities. However, the significant country requirements for phytosanitary capacity-building and the need for coordination of assistance give a special role for FAO and other technical assistance agencies to play.

141. While some recommendations will lead to cost savings, it is evident that the trend is towards an increased workload. Improvement in the working of the Secretariat cannot be realized without additional human and financial resources. Realistically, given the current budget situation, this will have to be mostly met through additional and sustained efforts from donors through the multi-donor IPPC Trust Fund.