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Your Ref.:

28 July 2008

To: National Plant Protection Organizations and Regional Plant Protection Organizations

Dear Sir/Madam,

Notification of release of online system for submission of comments on draft International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs)

As mentioned in the letter of 20 June 2008 regarding the submission of draft ISPMs for member consultation, the IPPC Secretariat has developed an online comment submission system. This system allows members to submit comments on draft ISPMs through the International Phytosanitary Portal (IPP).

As noted by the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM), the IPPC Secretariat has limited resources. Each year the Secretariat receives thousands of comments on draft ISPMs, which are compiled manually and this involves many hours of work. The online system has been developed in order to alleviate this workload and to compile the comments more rapidly and accurately.

Contracting parties are encouraged to make full use of this system and to provide feedback for its improvement.

Submission of comments online through the International Phytosanitary Portal (IPP)

This online system will be the main method of collecting member comments. All members should use this method unless appropriate internet facilities are not available. Instructions for the use of the system are enclosed and links to access the online submission forms are available on the IPP at <https://www.ippc.int/id/201049>. The online submission forms are available only to IPPC contact points and IPP editors with existing usernames and passwords for logging in to the IPP. If you do not already have a username and password for the IPP and would like to use the online comments system, please contact Melanie Bateman (MelanieLynn.Bateman@fao.org).

The following points on the functioning and use of the system should be noted:

- Comments should follow the "Guidelines for submission of comments on draft International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures [updated 31 May 2008]" (<https://www.ippc.int/id/203018>).
- IPP editors and IPPC contact points can enter comments, but only contact points can submit them to the Secretariat.
- Multiple users from the same country or RPPO should not comment simultaneously on the same draft ISPM.
- Comments must be submitted by contact points in order for them to be compiled by the Secretariat and submitted to the Standards Committee.
- Comments may be entered, edited and submitted multiple times up to the deadline. The last set of comments submitted before the deadline will be compiled.
- Navigation of the system is available in English, French and Spanish. Once the navigation language is selected, it is important to consistently use that same navigation language to navigate the online system and enter comments for a given standard.
- The text of the draft ISPMs displayed in the online comment tool is in English and the draft ISPMs in French and Spanish are available for download as separate files (<https://www.ippc.int/id/201049>). Comments may be entered in the language of choice however, due to the short time available between the end of the consultation period and the Standards Committee meeting, and to avoid misinterpretation in translation, countries sending comments in a language other than English are encouraged to send an English translation as well.
- All comments entered into the system are strictly confidential and can only be accessed by the contact point or IPP editor via the IPP using their password protected user accounts.
- Countries that have entered but not submitted their comments will be sent a reminder email to complete the process two weeks before the deadline.
- Upon submission of comments a confirmation email message will be sent to the IPPC contact point.

- It is not necessary to also submit the comments to the IPPC Secretariat by email or other means once they have been submitted through the online system.

In addition to the attached instructions, short demonstrations of how to use the online system are available on the following page of the IPP: <https://www.ippc.int/id/203702>. For questions or information in relation to the system, please contact Melanie Bateman (MelanieLynn.Bateman@fao.org). To provide feedback on the online system, please feel free to make use of the online form (<https://www.ippc.int/id/201049>) or send comments via e-mail to Ms Bateman.

Submission of comments using the provided templates (backup system)

If appropriate internet facilities are not available, templates (similar to those used in previous years) will also be available for submission of comments. Electronic versions of the templates can be downloaded from the IPP at <https://www.ippc.int/id/201049> or can be obtained by e-mail from the IPPC Secretariat on request to IPPC@fao.org. The templates have changed and instructions are provided at the end of each template. Please follow these instructions as closely as possible and in particular follow the instructions regarding the paragraph numbering in order to ensure that the comments submitted in the template align with the numbering in the draft standards.

The templates completed with comments should be submitted to the Secretariat by e-mail to IPPC@fao.org. Comments should be submitted through the IPPC contact point, and e-mails should contain sufficient information so that this can be verified.

In addition, for the purpose of facilitating the compilation of comments, if the comments submitted are exactly identical to those submitted by another contracting party or RPPPO, it would be very helpful if this could be indicated in a letter or e-mail to the IPPC Secretariat, instead of resubmitting the comments.

Deadlines

The online system will be closed at midnight in Rome, Italy (GMT+2) on 30 September 2008. Members are encouraged to submit comments well before the deadline.

We look forward to your input on these important draft standards.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Kenmore
Secretary
International Plant Protection Convention

cc: IPP editors
AGP-registry

ENC:

- Instructions for the use of the online comments system
- Guidelines for the submission of comments on draft International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs)