

***REPORT***

**San Diego,  
USA  
11-13 October  
2000**

# **Twelfth Technical Consultation among Regional Plant Protection Organizations**



**Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations**

**RPPO-2000/REPORT**

**REPORT OF THE  
TWELFTH TECHNICAL CONSULTATION AMONG  
REGIONAL PLANT PROTECTION ORGANIZATIONS**

**San Diego, USA 11-13 October 2000**

**FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
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## TWELFTH TECHNICAL CONSULTATION AMONG REGIONAL PLANT PROTECTION ORGANIZATIONS

### Opening of the Consultation

1. Mr Jeffrey Jones (IPPC Secretariat) opened the Consultation and welcomed the representatives of RPPOs.

### Election of the Chair, Vice-Chair and Rapporteur

2. Mr Ian McDonnell (NAPPO) was elected Chair. Mr Abdul Bari (APPPC) was elected Vice-Chair. Dr Ian Smith (EPPO) and Mr Richard Ivess (PPPO) agreed to serve as Rapporteurs.

### Adoption of the Agenda

3. Dr Smith proposed the addition of the discussion paper *Use of Indicator Pests as the Basis for Rejection of Propagative Material* and an agenda point on Information Exchange. Mr Canale proposed an agenda point for Coordinated Activities on Technical Assistance in the Andean region. These modifications were agreed upon and the agenda was adopted.

### Actions arising from the Eleventh Technical Consultation

4. Mr Jones reviewed points arising from the Eleventh Technical Consultation. These included the status of acceptance of the New Revised Text of the IPPC, the revision of the Plant Protection Agreement for Asia and the Pacific Region and the upcoming NAPPO annual meeting session on "Phytosanitary Alternatives to Methyl Bromide." A discussion paper on emergency response protocols prepared by Bill Roberts was made available for participants.

5. Mr Jones reviewed the status of acceptance of the New Revised Text of the IPPC and noted that 16 contracting parties out of a total of 110 had submitted their acceptance.

6. Mr Kwang-wook An (APPPC) stressed the importance of non-chemical and systems approaches as alternatives to chemical treatments, referring specifically to the system for bagging fruit during development in Korea.

7. Concerning emergency actions in Central and South America and the Caribbean, Ms Sandra Vokaty (IICA) reported that there was good progress toward eradication of *Bactrocera carambolae* (carambola fruit fly) in Brazil, Guyana and Suriname. There was concern that the French Government was not taking active measures to eradicate the pest in French Guyana. She stressed that the objective was to eradicate this pest from the American Continent.

8. Dr Gene Pollard (CPPC) reported on the situation with *Maconellicoccus hirsutus* (pink hibiscus mealybug) in the Caribbean and Central America. NAPPO and OIRSA workshops had been held in the last year, and had provided detailed guidance on biological control of this pest. This was very effective, to the extent that *M. hirsutus* was no longer considered to be a major pest in the countries where this biological control has been applied. However, the pest continues to spread and was recently found in Barbados. Dr Pollard was preparing a joint publication with CABI in *Review of Applied Entomology*. Mr Juan José May (OIRSA) indicated that in Central America, the pest had only been found in Belize, where it is subject to successful biological control. Mr Cesar Wandemberg (CAN) added that it had recently been found in Margarita Island, Venezuela, where it is now under eradication. This was the first record of the pest in the Andean Community. Dr Smith reported that *Diabrotica virgifera* was continuing to spread in the Danube

basin and beyond. Since last year, it had been found in Albania and Slovakia, with an isolated incident in Italy (near Venice). The European Union, with several major maize-producing countries, was very concerned about preventing introduction of this pest.

### **Discussion papers**

#### *GUIDELINES FOR THE RECOGNITION OF RPPOS*

9. Mr Robert Griffin, Coordinator, IPPC Secretariat, explained that the provisional guidelines agreed by the Eleventh Technical Consultation (RPPO-99/REPORT, Appendix II) had been reviewed by the FAO Legal Department. A modified version was now proposed. Discussion opened on several aspects of this proposal.

#### *Recognizing Body*

10. The question was first raised whether the text of the IPPC provided for any recognition or whether, on the contrary, contracting parties were free to establish RPPOs as they wished. It was concluded that the ICPM must recognize any bodies that are considered to be RPPOs under Article IX of the IPPC, otherwise their status would be open to challenge by ICPM members. It was clear that the ICPM must be the recognizing body.

#### *Review of RPPOS*

11. The discussion at the Eleventh Technical Consultation had opened the possibility that existing RPPOs should be given a period of transition to meet the criteria. This implied that the ICPM would in due course make a judgement whether the criteria were met. The participants concluded that this was not appropriate and considered that the existing RPPOs were already recognized as such. The majority of participants considered that there was no need for the position of the existing RPPOs to be reviewed.

12. Professor Chong-Yao Shen (APPPC) and Mr Wandenberg suggested that the RPPOs themselves could review their position in relation to the criteria and make the necessary adjustments.

#### *Type of Agreement*

13. There was concern that the proposed wording "international agreement concluded between sovereign states" represented a level of agreement higher than that within several of the existing RPPOs. On the other hand, it was accepted that an RPPO was more than a simple agreement for cooperation between NPPOs. The wording "official intergovernmental agreement" was suggested by Messrs Canale (IPPC consultant) and Fésüs (EPP0) and accepted (without reference to sovereign states, since RPPOs have members that are not sovereign states, but do have governments).

#### *Role with Respect to Regional Standards*

14. Ms Diana Guillén (COSAVE) and Mr Orlando Morales (COSAVE) stressed the importance of the standard-setting role of RPPOs. For this to be effective, a high level of agreement was needed in the establishment of an RPPO. Within COSAVE, Ministers of Agriculture have reached agreement to implement COSAVE standards. It was noted that other RPPOs do not necessarily have an agreement to implement regional standards; they may only recommend implementation. The nature of regional standards depends on the exact text of the agreement establishing an RPPO. Ms Guillén hoped that RPPOs would evolve as standard-setting bodies. COSAVE saw a distinction between RPPOs that establish regional standards and those that do not. It was noted that regional standards of RPPOs are not international standards, in the terms of the



SPS Agreement. However, COSAVE considered that, when no ISPM was available, members could justify their phytosanitary measures by reference to COSAVE standards. RPPOs are recognized in the SPS Agreement as participating in standard setting under the aegis of the IPPC.

*Coverage of RPPOs*

15. The existing RPPOs were recognized to cover most regions of the world, so that individual contracting parties that were not at present members of RPPOs had a clear possibility of joining an appropriate existing organization. There was one principal exception – the Near East Region. Countries of this region had the option of signing the agreement creating NEPPO (Near East Plant Protection Organization), but had not done so in sufficient numbers for the Organization to come into being.

16. It was noted that there were possibilities for sub-regional organizations. APPPC was envisaging the possible creation of several sub-commissions (in South Asia, Southeast Asia and in the Pacific). In Africa, it was possible that certain countries might create new sub-regional organizations complementary to IAPSC.

17. The Consultation concluded that the guidelines proposed by the Secretariat were non-controversial and could be recommended to the ICPM with a few minor modifications (Appendix II). It urged RPPOs to consider whether they meet the guidelines and, if not, what action they could take to ensure that the guidelines would be met (including revision of their agreements).

*REVISION OF THE PLANT PROTECTION AGREEMENT FOR THE ASIA AND PACIFIC REGION*

18. Professor Shen reported on the revision of the Plant Protection Agreement for the Asia and Pacific Region that established the Asia and Pacific Plant Protection Commission (APPPC). The Agreement came into force in 1956 and since that time international plant protection practices, and the structure and membership of the APPPC, have changed sufficiently to warrant a major review. An expert working group was established and met in April 1998 to discuss the objectives of the Agreement and functions of the Commission. These included the geographical coverage of the Agreement, the measures required to exclude *Dothidella ulei* (South American leaf blight of rubber, or SALB) from the region; information sharing, development of regional standards, the future structure of the Commission and whether a new Agreement would be required or if amendment would suffice. A second working group met in February 1999 to further progress issues particularly the problem of exclusion of SALB from the Region.

19. The Agreement was endorsed by the 21<sup>st</sup> Session of the APPPC, July 2000, in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The Agreement would be updated in harmony with the revised IPPC and the WTO SPS Agreement, sub-Commissions could be formed and regional and sub-regional standards could be developed as the need arose. A regional standard on SALB would be developed to replace the current Article (IV) and Appendix (B) relating to the exclusion of *D. ulei* from the region. In order to accelerate the revision, the 21<sup>st</sup> Session agreed that the amendments would be adopted in two sets: all amendments other than those relating to SALB to be accepted as soon as possible, and those relating to SALB would be adopted once the regional standard had been developed on the basis of a PRA. The first set of amendments was adopted by the 107<sup>th</sup> Session of the FAO Council and will come into force following ratification by two-thirds of the Contracting Governments. The second set of amendments will be proposed for adoption following the development of the regional standard for SALB.

20. Following questions from the floor, Professor Shen clarified the following:
- Funding of the standard – TCP funding was sought for the PRA and the APPPC members would develop the standard
  - Proposed sub-regions – South Asia, South-East Asia and Pacific, where the APPPC would maintain a “coordinating role” across the sub-regions
  - Japan would not join the APPPC as long as the Article (and Appendix) relating to SALB was in the text; it was anticipated that once the regional standard was developed and the Article (and Appendix) removed from the text, Japan would apply for membership.

### *TRANSIT AND RE-EXPORT*

21. Dr Smith explained that the current Glossary definitions of "consignment in transit" and "re-exported consignment" opened up various questions that needed to be resolved. These were analysed in a document presented to the Consultation. The immediate aim was not to reply in detail to these questions, but rather to compare notes on how the concepts of transit and re-export are understood in different continents.

### *Transit*

22. Dr Smith noted that the Glossary introduces a concept of transit for phytosanitary purposes, whereas transit is strictly speaking an administrative concept, linked to customs regulations and procedures. Discussion showed that each country might have its own regulations defining transit, but that, within some regions of the world, an international concept of transit may be defined within a customs agreement. It was not possible to say how the phytosanitary concept of transit in the Glossary related to the various administrative concepts, and Mr Griffin proposed that the IPPC Secretariat could make contact with international customs authorities to obtain further information.

23. Messrs Wandenberg and May described transit arrangements in Andean and Central American countries. Essentially, they allowed commodities that were normally prohibited entry into the country concerned to pass through in transit to another country, provided the necessary import permit was granted. Such arrangements were individually negotiated for each commodity. Safeguards have to be included in case of accidents in transit. Ms Guillén explained that, in the southern cone of South America, different transit arrangements are made according to the risk arising from each commodity. Dr Smith explained that in Europe, a customs agreement allows many commodities to transit freely through several countries in turn, provided certain conditions are respected. These arrangements are not commodity-specific, nor individually negotiated. Ms Reinouw Bast-Tjeerde (NAPPO) explained that, in a similar way, many commodities transit freely through Canada, though there are special arrangements for certain high-risk commodities.

24. Dr Smith noted that the Glossary definition of transit was concerned with the risk that commodities in transit might become infested or contaminated, creating an additional risk for the importing country. In the EU, the concern was whether commodities in transit might carry pests that could spread in the country of transit. Both these concerns were evidently important.

25. The Consultation concluded that expert input was needed to develop guidelines on transit. It proposed that a specification should be prepared, with a view to setting up a working group to develop a draft ISPM. Information from RPPOs on transit systems in the different regions would be useful for this working group.

### *Re-Export*

26. Dr Smith explained certain inconsistencies between the Glossary definition of a re-exported consignment and the wording of the phytosanitary certificate for re-export. Participants explained aspects of the use of this certificate in different regions. Ms Bast-Tjeerde stressed that the

maintenance of the identity of the consignment was a key element in the use of the certificate, and that the re-exporting country had the obligation to verify the requirements of the ultimate importing country.

27. The Consultation noted, however, that procedures connected with re-export were already covered in part by ISPM No 7 on Export Certification, and by the new draft standard Guidelines for Phytosanitary Certificates. It noted that the Glossary, besides the term "re-exported consignment", also retained the old term "country of re-export" and that the two definitions contradicted one another. Finally, Dr John Hedley (Chairman of the ICPM) stressed that the wording of the phytosanitary certificate for re-export could not be changed until the New Revised Text of the IPPC entered into force.

28. The Consultation did not wish the new draft standard to be held back by further discussions on the implications of the re-export certificate. The Interim Standards Committee should concentrate on comments received in reaction to the current request from the IPPC Secretariat. Accordingly, the Consultation did not propose any specific action at the present time. It was anticipated that the question would return to the Glossary group at some later time.

#### *REGULATING NON-MANUFACTURED WOOD PACKING MATERIALS*

29. The Chair, on behalf of NAPPO, introduced the discussion paper on "Guidelines for regulating non-manufactured wood packing in use for the transport of commodities". He stressed that the draft standard was not yet finalized, and could not be approved by the ICPM before April 2002 at the earliest. NAPPO was concerned that countries were already putting measures in place for wood packing. This could give rise to various inconsistencies and conflicts. It was suggested that a harmonized timetable for implementation of new measures could be agreed upon.

30. Mr Morales stressed that countries needed to implement measures now, and not in 2002, in reaction to the newly identified risk. COSAVE had now agreed a regional standard, based on the measures developed by Chile. The Chair replied that NAPPO countries had for the moment implemented measures only for wood packing from China and Hong Kong. The USA was currently undertaking an overall PRA to justify further measures, and this was taking a considerable time. Mr May indicated that OIRSA countries had applied measures, but that these were not harmonized between OIRSA members. Dr Smith recalled that the EU had taken emergency measures in mid 1999 in relation to *Anoplophora glabripennis* (Asian longhorn beetle) from China. Further EU measures were currently under consideration. Other EPPO countries had not yet taken any measures (other than in some cases adding *A. glabripennis* to the list of regulated pests). Ms Bast-Tjerde stressed that the EU measures under consideration concerned wood packing from countries where *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus* (pine wood nematode) is present and from where non-compliance with the current EU requirements had been noted.

31. Dr Smith noted that the draft standard was primarily concerned with "universal measures" for wood packing of unknown origin. The general application of such measures needed wide international agreement, since they were not pest-specific and could not be directly justified by PRA. On the other hand, measures specifically targeting a pest such as *B. xylophilus* should be justified by PRA, and could be handled through the normal notification procedures. Ms Guillén stressed that the COSAVE measures are universal measures, and not specific to particular pests.

32. Dr Hedley noted that contracting parties faced a new problem. Suitable provisional measures had to be established in reaction to a newly identified risk, in anticipation of international agreement on an ISPM. In addition, the ICPM would have to consider the nature of the technical justification needed for the adoption of a specific treatment.

33. The Chair concluded that the Consultation did not apparently share NAPPO's concern on the need for harmonizing the implementation timetable for new measures. Mr Morales suggested that minimum requirements could be agreed for the interim period. The Chair suggested that any such requirements should take account of the new draft standard as far as possible. The Consultation supported these suggestions. It was noted that many notifications of phytosanitary measures now sent to the WTO concerned wood packing. Countries could verify which measures were being taken by reference to this source.

### *CARIBBEAN HEALTH & FOOD SAFETY ORGANIZATION*

34. Dr Pollard and Ms Vokaty presented the current proposal for development of a Caribbean Agricultural and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA). Discussions in 1999 and 2000 had led to a workshop which recommended that CAHFSA should be a functional body to coordinate services that assist Members in facilitating safe agricultural trade, strengthening food safety systems, meeting WTO/SPS requirements, compliance with IPPC, OIE and Codex obligations and strengthening inter-governmental cooperation. The agency would have a coordinator, a small core of professional staff, and support staff. It would monitor and evaluate national programs, provide technical support and develop regional standards. Plans were under evaluation for funding the agency, with a phased involvement of countries.

35. The Consultation noted that, as described, CAHFSA had the potential to replace CPPC as the RPPO for the Caribbean. Though the initiative came from CARICOM (the English-speaking group of Caribbean countries, including Suriname and Belize), membership would be open to all Caribbean countries. Dr Hedley suggested that the scope of CAHFSA could extend to concerns arising from the Convention on Biological Diversity.

### *USE OF INDICATOR PESTS AS THE BASIS FOR THE REJECTION OF PROPAGATIVE MATERIAL*

36. Dr J K Uyemoto (NAPPO) spoke about the paper prepared by NAPPO relating to the use of the presence of indicator pests as a means of rejection of propagative material that did not comply with specifications. The proposal related to the use of virus-free certification programmes as the basis for phytosanitary certification for nursery and fruit tree planting material and the detection of any pathogen (regardless of its quarantine status) not meant to be present would be an indication of the failure of the programme. This would be analogous to the detection of live insects in a supposedly fumigated consignment indicating the failure of the treatment. Mr Fésüs (EPPO) asked whether there was any experience of such a system in practice and Dr Uyemoto explained that it had been useful in identifying problems with certified material moving between states of the USA.

37. Discussion revolved around the importation of material that was not required to be free from all known viruses but rather free from quarantine pests. As an example, Mr Ivess gave a short description of New Zealand's off shore accreditation programme where there was a requirement for testing propagation material for specified viruses only. The question of certification schemes that allow tolerances for some viruses was also discussed and it was noted that system was not suitable for such schemes.

38. The Consultation felt that the NAPPO concept had merits in a bilateral situation (i.e. if an importing country accepted a certification program guaranteeing freedom from all known viruses) but should not be used as the basis for a general international standard.

### *USE OF STERILE GROWING MEDIA*

39. Dr Smith described the phytosanitary procedure EPPO was developing to determine whether growing media had been sterilized or not. Rooted planting material was permitted entry

into various member countries provided it could be demonstrated that the production system involved the use of sterile growing media. Dr Smith explained that EPPO had developed a simple test based on the presence/absence of nematodes. The presence of nematodes (regardless of quarantine status) indicated that the medium either contained non-sterilized organic matter or had been in contact with such. The system had similarities to that prescribed by NAPPO involving the presence of indicator pests on propagation material in that the nematode test was used to confirm that a system had been implemented. Testing for endoparasitic nematodes could be used as a test to see whether the material had been collected from the wild or from mother stock held in protected conditions.

40. While there was some discussion over the pros and cons of the system, its use was noted as a means of monitoring adherence to specified requirements (e.g. grown in a sterile medium from selected mother stock). Several RPPOs considered that such a system could only be used within a bilateral agreement.

### **Coordinated activities**

#### *MODERNIZATION OF THE SERVICES FOR AGRICULTURAL PROTECTION AND FOOD SAFETY IN THE ANDEAN REGION*

41. Mr Canale reported on the methodology utilized by the technical assistance programme (TCP/FAO RLAC 8929), which is being undertaken in the five countries of the Andean sub-region (Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia). He emphasized the need to introduce the concept of "national phytosanitary systems" to address the real needs of the developing countries. Also, there was a need to change the traditional role of international consultants to that of "facilitators" to enable self-assessment of the countries' needs by national teams consisting of representatives of both the private and public sectors. The questionnaire developed by New Zealand proved to be an excellent tool to support the countries' assessments of their individual needs for technical assistance with respect to their capacity to comply with the ISPM/IPPC and SPS regulations.

### **Pest reporting and information exchange**

42. Mr Griffin presented short reports on two IPPC meetings held in early September, one an expert working group on pest reporting and the other an informal ad hoc meeting on information exchange. He recalled that the pest reporting obligations under the IPPC needed to be defined and explained in an ISPM, whereas the ICPM had been given the task of developing procedures for the exchange of information between contracting parties, as specified in Article VIII of the IPPC. He reported that FAO is proposing to develop an electronic "clearing-house" (on the Worldwide Web) through which IPPC contracting parties could publish the information which they are obliged to report.

43. Dr Smith, who had proposed addition of this item to the agenda, suggested ways in which RPPOs might contribute to the process of information exchange. They could collect and compile pest reports from their region, validate them with their members and disseminate the information within and outside their regions. In doing this, they could partly take on the general surveillance required of the individual countries. RPPOs could also disseminate the lists of regulated pests of their members. They could also put in place the electronic means for dissemination of information proposed in the draft standard. Several RPPOs already use Web pages for this purpose. Mr Morales reported that COSAVE collects and disseminates information on the regulated pest lists of its members. Mr May reported that OIRSA has used consultants to compile information on the regulated pest lists of its members, and that the members were currently validating the draft. The

Chairperson indicated that NAPPO is developing a phytosanitary alert system. Dr Pollard said that CPPC collects and disseminates pest records from the Caribbean region.

44. Mr Rapp (PPPO) recalled that FAO participates in ECOPORT, a database system through which pest reports could be disseminated. Mr Griffin explained that ECOPORT contains information from many sources, and on many subjects besides plant protection. The IPPC Secretariat is currently concerned only with official sources of information, and proposed that this should be handled separately from other information. Professor Shen commented that communication of information through the Worldwide Web was cheap and easy for those who had access, for example between RPPOs. However, some contracting parties did not have access to the Web and still requested hard copy.

45. After some discussion, the Consultation concluded that the capacities of the different RPPOs for contribution to information exchange under Article VIII of the IPPC were very different. It was not possible at present for the RPPOs to put themselves forward as components of the ICPM information system. However, the ICPM should be invited to consider a possible future role of RPPOs in information exchange.

### **Venue and date of the Thirteenth Technical Consultation**

46. The Consultation agreed to accept the invitation of the APPPC to hold the Thirteenth Technical Consultation in Auckland, New Zealand on October 29-31, 2001.

### **Closure of the meeting**

47. The Chair expressed gratitude to the participants for their cooperation.

**AGENDA**

1. Opening of the Consultation
2. Election of the Chair, Vice-Chair and Rapporteur
3. Adoption of the Agenda
4. Actions arising from the Eleventh Technical Consultation
5. Discussion papers
  - Guidelines for the recognition of RPPOs
  - Revision of the Plant Protection Agreement for the Asia and Pacific Region (APPPC)
  - Transit and Re-export (EPPO)
  - Regulating Non-manufactured Wood Packing Materials (NAPPO)
  - Caribbean Health & Food Safety Organization (IICA/CPPC)
  - Use of Indicator Pests as the Basis for the Rejection of Propagative Material
  - Use of Sterile Growing Media
6. Coordinated activities
  - Modernization of the Services for Agricultural Protection and Food Safety in the Andean Region
7. Pest reporting and information exchange
8. Venue and date of the Thirteenth Technical Consultation
9. Closure of the meeting

**Revised Guidelines proposed to the ICPM for the Recognition of Regional Plant Protection Organizations**

The guidelines on the recognition of Regional Plant Protection Organizations, prepared by the Eleventh Technical Consultation (RPPO-99/Report, Appendix II), were reviewed and revised by the FAO Legal Department. Following this review the Legal Department suggested that the following text be proposed to the Interim Commission on Phytosanitary Measures:

To be recognized as a Regional Plant Protection Organization (RPPO) in the sense of article IX of the New Revised Text of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), an RPPO should:

1. Have been established under an inter-governmental agreement to accomplish the objectives of the International Plant Protection Convention in their region.
2. Have the following functions:
  - coordinating among NPPO in the regions covered;
  - harmonizing phytosanitary measures;
  - participating in activities to achieve the objectives of the IPPC; and
  - gathering and disseminating information.



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