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The 29th Technical Consultation (TC) among Regional Plant Protection Organizations (RPPOs) - Summary Report
Agenda item 13.2
Prepared by the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization - EPPO
<i>English only</i>

1. The 29th Technical Consultation among regional plant protection organizations (TC) was hosted by the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization (EPPO) in Paris from October 30 to November 3 2017. The French Direction General de l'Alimentation (DGAL) of the Ministry of Agriculture hosted a technical visit for delegates to see phytosanitary and sanitary controls in action in the world's largest wholesale food market at Rungis.

2. Present at the Consultation were representatives of the IPPC Secretariat, the CPM Bureau and nine recognised RPPOs:

- Asia and Pacific Plant Protection Commission (APPPC),
- Comité de Sanidad Vegetal del Cono Sur (COSAVE),
- Comunidad Andina (CAN),
- European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization (EPPO),
- Inter-African Phytosanitary Council (IAPSC),
- North American Plant Protection Organization (NAPPO),
- Near East Plant Protection Organization (NEPPO),
- Organismo Internacional Regional de Sanidad Agropecuaria (OIRSA), and

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- Pacific Plant Protection Organization (PPPO).
 - The Caribbean Agricultural Health Food Security Agency (CAHFSA) attended as an observer.
3. This is a short summary of key points. The full report of the meeting is available at https://www.ippc.int/static/media/files/publication/en/2017/11/Report_29th_TC-RPPO_Final.pdf

I. An RPPO for the Caribbean Region

4. The TC considered the revised agreement establishing the Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency signed February 2011, and in line with the legal advice received from FAO agreed that CAHFSA covers the following relevant functions:

- coordinates activities among National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs) in the countries covered, in order to achieve the objectives of the IPPC;
- harmonises phytosanitary measures;
- participates in activities to promote the objectives of the IPPC;
- gathers and disseminates information.

5. Therefore the 29th TC recommended to CPM that CAHFSA be recognised as an RPPO, under Article IX of the IPPC. A document to that effect was signed by RPPO representatives during the meeting and will be presented to CPM-13.

II. Update from IPPC Secretary and Bureau

6. The IPPC Secretary updated the TC on activities, in particular concerning resource mobilization and new financial mechanisms, the novel topics of sea containers and e-commerce, the IYPH with the annual IPPC themes and internal management to implement the enhancement evaluation study. He highlighted the Secretariat's commitment to involving RPPOs in all IPPC activities in a coordinated way. RPPOs agreed that there was a need to have a mechanism to represent their interests at various IPPC meetings, to share information on topics of common interest and enhance coordination amongst themselves.

7. The Bureau representative from Europe updated the TC on its latest decisions. The Chair of the TC welcomed the possibility that the Strategic Planning Group could be opened to RPPO representation and suggested that there should be some planning and coordination in this respect.

III. Updates from RPPOs

8. Each RPPO (including CAHFSA) presented updates on their activities since the previous TC. Presentations are all available on the IPP at <https://www.ippc.int/en/core-activities/external-cooperation/partners/technical-consultation-among-rppos/2017-29th-tc-among-rppos-1/> Topics of common interest included:

- Emerging pests
- Surveillance
- Diagnostics
- Pest risk analysis
- Sharing training activities (e.g. on inspection)
- Activities on sea containers
- Activities on e-Phyto
- Attending other RPPOs events
- Sharing factsheets/datasheets and formats for these (possibly through the phytosanitary resources page)
- Climate change
- Implementation of ISPMs 15 and 38

- Contingency planning exercises

IV. IPPC Strategic Framework

9. A brainstorming session was carried out on the draft IPPC Strategic Framework. The TC discussed the mission statement and agreed that it should be simplified to reflect the primary objective of the IPPC as an agreement aimed at protection of plants, but that the vision and ambition statements could emphasize other benefits such as trade facilitation. The TC proposed additional amendments to be sent to the authors of the draft.

10. The RPPOs suggested that an evaluation of the current strategic framework 2012-2019 would be useful to understand what worked, what did not and what still needs to be undertaken, and that the new 2020-2030 strategic framework should have a means to measure its implementation.

V. Standard Setting Process

11. The IPPC Secretariat explained the various ways in which RPPOs can contribute to the Standard setting process. The TC agreed that when possible RPPOs would support the IPPC Secretariat for example by ensuring that experts from their region are nominated and, on a case by case basis, would discuss possible options for hosting standard setting meetings. In addition, the IPPC Secretariat was requested to prioritize the list of documents that need translation and forward this to RPPOs for their consideration,

VI. IPPC Regional Workshops

12. The IPPC Secretariat presented an update on the 2017 IPPC Regional Workshops. The TC concluded that the organization of 2017 IPPC regional workshops was, for the most part, positive but that the steering committees for each workshop should have clear composition and terms of reference. RPPOs will make efforts to mobilize resources again for the 2018 IPPC Regional Workshops. The TC concluded that all contracting parties should be invited to their corresponding regional workshop, recognising that some may have to cover their own costs. The TC felt that there was a role for RWs in identifying possible formal objections to Standards, and starting work to resolve these. For the 2018 RWs the key points were to get a good balance between commenting on draft ISPMs and information sharing, and to get full benefits from sharing information on emerging pests within each region.

VII. On-line commenting system

13. The RPPOs discussed the use and functionalities of the new OCS tool. RPPOs vary in how much they use OCS, depending on their involvement in co-ordinating regional comments on draft ISPMs. The TC agreed the RPPO account could be used instead of IPPC Regional Workshops account for the APPPC, PPPO, NEPPPO and EPPO. CAHFSA, once officially recognized as an RPPO, would have its own RPPO account. IPPC Regional Workshop accounts might be used for countries of Central Asia which are not EPPO Member States and for Latin America, because several RPPOs are involved in this region.

14. A number of specific points were agreed as follows: an “accept all” function should be available; contact points may add only one general comment indicating they agree with all the regional comments; when coordinating sub-reviews, deadlines need to be set carefully to allow time to aggregate comments; and finally that it should be possible to test any significant changes to OCS prior to live use.

VIII. Implementation and Capacity Development

15. The IPPC Secretariat updated the TC on the composition and functions of the Implementation and Capacity Development Committee (IC) and the agenda of its first meeting in December. The TC agreed that the expert nominated by APPPC should represent RPPOs on the sea container task force (SCTF). NAPPO was confirmed as the RPPO representative to IC meetings for a 3 year term, with the flexibility that other RPPOs could replace NAPPO if necessary in venues outside of Rome.

16. The TC discussed RPPO contributions to the Implementation pilot project on surveillance and agreed that RPPOs should share methodology used to categorize emerging pests at the next TC and consider the consequences of a pest being identified as an emerging pest. There could also be a scheme to help assess whether a pest fits the agreed definition. . NAPPO, on behalf of all RPPOs, would prepare a proposal to the SC proposing the addition of the term “emerging pest” to the TPG work programme.

IX. e-Phyto

17. The chair of the IPPC e-Phyto steering group presented an update on the ePhyto project. The TC acknowledged the APPPC financial contribution to the ePhyto symposium in Malaysia. The TC recommended that the e-Phyto steering group could produce a short recorded PowerPoint presentation or video on what ePhyto is and what countries need in order to participate. RPPOs offered to translate such a video and assist, where possible, to encourage countries which are identified by the e-Phyto Steering Group as having had little engagement thus far with the project. RPPOs were encouraged to participate in the next IPPC e-phyto symposium to be held in Malaysia in January 2018. The IPPC Secretariat agreed to provide information to RPPOs on who among their Members was registered to attend so RPPOs could promote the event within their Member countries. The TC also proposed that there should be further discussion on single window systems and related developments, and that the WCO should be involved in the e-Phyto project.

X. International Year of Plant Health

18. The IPPC Secretariat briefed the RPPOs on the latest developments on the IYPH. The TC discussed developments and concluded that advocacy efforts could be made at high level meetings where RPPOs attend to present the IYPH initiative. The TC considered that training of journalists on plant health and related topics should be considered in preparation for the IYPH. A common slide on IYPH could be included in every presentation given by RPPOs to raise awareness.

XI. Plans for co-ordination in 2018

19. It was agreed that when one RPPO representative is nominated to attend a meeting on behalf of all RPPOs they should coordinate the sharing of information regarding the points to be discussed with RPPOs, gather their inputs and then after the meeting report back briefly to other RPPOs. If invited to participate in the SPG, RPPOs would work together to ensure participation. RPPOs are now responsible for coordination of their side meeting during CPM and for convening additional virtual meetings during the year when necessary. The RPPOs will further discuss TC preparation during the CPM side meeting.

XII. CPM 13

20. The TC agreed that RPPOs would support side sessions at CPM13 on next generation sequencing technology and on international collaboration in research. The RPPOs asked to be seated together for CPM plenary sessions to improve visibility and co-ordination.

XIII. 30th TC-RPPOs

21. The 30th meeting of the TC RPPOs will take place in Lima, Peru at the invitation of the Comunidad Andina, from 29th October - 2nd November.