



THIRTY-SIXTH SESSION

TECHNICAL CONSULTATION AMONG REGIONAL PLANT PROTECTION ORGANIZATIONS

Review IPPC Regional Communications Networks and Steering Group TORs

Objectives

- [1] The IPPC Regional Communication Networks (RCNs) will serve as a formal and structured platform to achieve the following:
- (1) widen the reach and strengthen the impact of communications on plant health.
 - (2) facilitate information and knowledge sharing, collaboration, cooperation and capacity development of communication professionals in promoting plant health in the IPPC community and;
 - (3) strengthen communication between RPPOs and NPPOs in their respective regions and between RPPOs, the IPPC Secretariat, with other RPPOs, FAO regional and national offices and with relevant organizations.

Structure and governance

- [2] The IPPC Secretariat will centrally manage and coordinate the RCNs as well as provide technical support to establish and maintain them, with advice and guidance from the Steering Group of the IPPC Regional Communication Network (to be established).
- [3] Seven regional networks will be established to represent each region including Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Europe and Central Asia, Latin America, the Near East and North Africa, and Southwest Pacific. Each network will be led by the respective RPPO and composed of members from NPPOs in that region, and centrally coordinated by the IPPC Secretariat.
- [4] The governance mechanism is envisioned to help facilitate the exchange of information concerning various events, campaigns, communication materials and activities, as well as opportunities, challenges and solutions related to communications within each region. It will also provide a platform for the IPPC Secretariat to stay informed about opportunities for potential collaboration or lending support to their respective communications campaigns.
- [5] Each Regional Communication Network is expected to:
- (1) nominate a plant health communication focal point.
 - (2) organize regular meetings, the frequency of which will be determined by the RPPO according to their needs.



Review IPPC Regional Communications Networks and Steering Group TORs

- (3) develop and implement an annual communications workplan based on the needs and opportunities in that region.
- (4) populate their respective communications webpages on the IPP by submitting content to the IPPC Secretariat (that meets IPPC and FAO standards and guidelines on web publishing); and
- (5) liaise with the IPPC Secretariat on communication-related opportunities or matters.

Steering Group

- [6] The IPPC Secretariat will establish a Steering Group tasked with providing advice and guidance on how to establish and maintain these networks. The Steering Group, which will meet virtually every two months, will develop and implement an annual workplan together with the IPPC Secretariat to ensure that the networks remain active. It will also develop and implement communication initiatives that will build the networks' capacity in communication related to plant health. For information regarding membership, the process of selection, tasks and other details, see the Terms of Reference outlined in Annex 2 of this paper.

Membership

- [7] Membership in the regional networks will be voluntary and open to all communication practitioners in each region, including those involved in advocacy and partner engagements and those performing communication functions in NPPOs, RPPOs, FAO regional and national offices, for IPPC partners and other relevant organizations. The IPPC Secretariat will support each network in sending out calls for members as well as managing and updating the member database in each region.

Information and knowledge management

- [8] A landing page about the Regional Communications Network on the IPPC website or the International Phytosanitary Portal (IPP) will be created, managed and maintained by the IPPC Secretariat. A subpage will be created for each of the regional networks, which will serve as a central platform for communications related to plant health in that region. The following information will be posted on each of the regional subpage:
- (1) campaign materials, digital assets, publications related to communicating on plant health that can be used for cross-promotion.
 - (2) calendar of relevant communication and advocacy events, such as trainings, conferences, workshops and webinars (could be linked to the external event website, if available).
 - (3) opportunities for training and employment (could be linked to the external website); and email address of the network's official plant health communications focal point as a contact.
- [9] Each regional network will be invited to generate content and update it on their respective subpages, to be submitted for the secretariat to post (provided that they meet IPPC and FAO standards and guidelines on web publishing).



Review IPPC Regional Communications Networks and Steering Group TORs

- [10] Each subpage will be available in English and in the official language of the region (Arabic, French, Chinese, Russian or Spanish) to encourage participation and information exchange on the part of NPPOs and RPPOs.

When creating the subpages, care will be taken not to duplicate existing platforms, such as the [EPPO Plant Health Information website](#), which can be linked to the IPP page.

Potential key activities

- [11] IDPH 2025 – getting RPPOs, NPPOs and FAO regional and national offices involved in early planning and promotion; finding out what NPPOs are planning to do and exploring opportunities for collaboration with the IPPC Secretariat.
- [12] Capacity development activities – webinars on various topics to be held throughout the year (2024–2025), including:
- (1) developing year-round digital campaigns on plant health, e.g. EFSA's #planthealth4life campaign; Don't Risk it campaign, etc.;
 - (2) engaging national and local media on plant protection and plant health – potential resource speaker from an FAO regional or decentralized office or from an NPPO or RPPO;
 - (3) best practices in advocacy and outreach; developing effective advocacy materials for policymakers; and
 - (4) measuring the reach and impact of communications.



Terms of Reference of the Steering Group of the IPPC Regional Communications Network (RCN)

Background

- [13] In 2023, the seventeenth session of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM-17) adopted the IPPC Communications Strategy 2023–2030. CPM-17 (2023) also approved the IPPC Secretariat's proposal to establish a Community of Practice in Communications to provide a two-way platform for communication among NPPOs, RPPOs, IPPC partners, FAO regional and national offices, relevant organizations and the IPPC Secretariat.
- [14] After consultations with RPPOs in July-August 2023 and internal discussion within the IPPC Secretariat in November 2023, the IPPC Secretariat decided that the best way to facilitate a two-way communication process is through Regional Communications Networks, which can better address communication issues and opportunities at the regional rather than global level with contracting parties as initially envisaged for the Community of Practice.
- [15] In April 2024, CPM-18 approved the IPPC Secretariat's proposal to establish the IPPC Regional Communication Networks and Steering Group.

Purpose

- [16] The Steering Group for the IPPC Regional Communication Networks will serve as an advisory body to the IPPC Secretariat with a view to establishing and maintaining the seven regional communication networks.

Membership

- [17] The Steering Group will be composed of up to 11 members with relevant skills and experience in communications as well as knowledge of the IPPC and related activities of the IPPC Community. The CPM Bureau, having consulted the IPPC Secretariat and considered the skills and experience required, gender balance and geographical representation, will be a requirement in the selection and appointment of members.
- [18] Members will include:
- (1) 7 representatives (one from each region)
 - (2) CPM Bureau member
 - (3) TC-RPPO member
 - (4) Up to 2 members from IPPC partners or interest groups



Review IPPC Regional Communications Networks and Steering Group TORs

Functions

[19] The key tasks of the focus group will be to:

- (1) provide guidance and advice on establishing and maintaining the networks by sharing best practices or lessons learned from similar undertakings, including key considerations or potential barriers and challenges, and recommended solutions.
- (2) provide guidance and advice in establishing and maintaining the knowledge- sharing platform on the IPP, ensuring that it is used in the most efficient and impactful way for the collective benefit of all the NPPOs in each of the regional network.
- (3) develop procedures and processes to ensure that the regional networks remain active and functioning, including providing recommendations to address potential issues.
- (4) propose capacity development activities on communications and advocacy for members of the regional network; develop a communications toolkit on plant health; best practices in advocacy and outreach for policymakers; and engage with media by pitching stories to raise the public's awareness of plant health.
- (5) elaborate procedures and processes on how the IPPC, the regional networks and NPPOs can plan for future International Days of Plant Health campaigns at the global, regional and national levels.
- (6) prepare updates on the progress of its annual workplan to be presented at CPM sessions, at annual meetings of the CPM Bureau, the SPG, TC-RPPOs, IPPC Regional Workshops and FAO regional communications meetings.
- (7) identify, solicit and help to mobilize resources for the establishment and maintenance of the IPPC Regional Communication Networks; and
- (8) perform other related functions as required.

Process

[20] The establishment of the Steering Group for the IPPC Regional Communications Networks was approved at CPM-18 (2024).¹ The IPPC Secretariat will publish a call for nominations on the IPP for contracting parties and RPPOs to nominate their representatives to become a member of the Steering Group. The IPPC Secretariat Management Team will review the nominations and select the group members, ensuring gender and geographical balance, and submit nominations to CPM Bureau for endorsement.

Funding

[21] The Steering Group meetings will be held virtually but, in the event that face-to-face meetings or workshops are agreed on by the group, the organization that employs an IPPC meeting participant will be responsible for funding the travel and daily subsistence allowance for that person to attend the in-person meetings or workshops. If the employer is unable to allocate sufficient funds, participants are first encouraged to seek assistance from sources other than the IPPC Secretariat. Where such



Review IPPC Regional Communications Networks and Steering Group TORs

demonstrated efforts to secure assistance have proved unsuccessful, requests for assistance (i.e. travel and subsistence costs) from the IPPC Secretariat may be made. However, any support is subject to available funds. The IPPC Secretariat will consider funding assistance for participants following IPPC criteria for funding. Full details on these criteria can be found on the IPP.

(<https://www.ippc.int/publications/criteria-used-prioritizing-participants-receive-travel-assistance-attend-meetings>).

Duration

- [22] The Steering Group will commence work once the CPM Bureau has endorsed the members and will remain effective until CPM-20 (2026) to effectively carry out its mandate, subject to possible subsequent CPM Bureau decisions on extending its mandate.