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COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

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| Eighth Session |
| Rome, 8 - 12 April |
| Status of ISPM 15 Implementation |
| Agenda item 8.2.1 |
| Prepared by CPM Bureau |

ISPM 15 Symbol Registration: A Strategy for Going Forward

I. Background

- Members of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) have discussed on an on-going basis the challenges and persistent concerns related to the registration of the ISPM 15 symbol at the national level among all contracting parties. Both the costs and legal complexities associated with the registration process have been the subject of countless CPM, Bureau, IPPC Secretariat, Strategic Planning Group (SPG), and other meetings and sessions.
- Many, if not all, members engaged in these discussions agree on the necessity to register and protect the symbol in order to ensure the safety and credibility of the trade system as it relates to the movement of millions of shipments annually - shipments which involve wood packaging material (WPM) and billions of dollars in commercial activity. The plant protection stakes are high. Still, there remain a number of countries (70 at present) where the symbol has not been registered and another set of countries (114) where the symbol needs to be renewed. These gaps pose a significant risk from a global plant health perspective and a legal and commercial standpoint as well.
- It is the unanimous view of the Bureau that decisive action is required to address this priority phytosanitary concern. There have been numerous exhaustive discussions. Now it is time to act. The Bureau proposes the below 2-stage strategy.

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II. Strategy

1. Five Year Plan: A plan is proposed for the next five years. This plan includes the following elements:

- A senior level FAO letter will be prepared and sent to senior foreign affairs counterparts and senior permanent representatives in the countries where registration has not occurred. This letter will communicate the urgency and importance of registration in order to effectively manage the ubiquitous commercial movement of wood packaging materials between countries, prevent pest spread, and avoid agricultural crop and other losses in their territories.
- It is thought that higher level governmental officials in many countries, at least where the symbol remains unregistered, need to get engaged in order to get the registration process initiated. NPPOs may not always be in a position to initiate and pursue these legal registration actions. The IPPC Secretariat will take the lead in drafting this high level letter and engage senior FAO officials in sending this communications.
- The FAO legal office will be available to advise and support the registration process within countries. The average cost of registration is an estimated USD 4 500 This effort to complete the registrations over the next five years will be undertaken in collaboration with the FAO legal office.
- The Bureau recommends that this registration and renewal work be funded by allocating a minimum of USD 70 000 per annum over the next five years from FAO Regular Programme funds. Countries will be informed of the cost of registration of the symbol in their country. Consistent with previous CPM discussions, countries are expected to reimburse FAO for the renewal of registrations (not first time registrations).¹

2. Long Term Plan:

4. To address the long term future, beyond five years, it is proposed that the SPG be directed to develop longer term options and approaches for maintaining registrations into the future, as renewals will be required (normally 10 year life span of registrations).
5. SPG would be requested to consider alternative funding mechanisms, including Trust Funds, special fee collection/reimbursement options, and other possibilities for funding, sustaining and protecting the ISPM 15 program and symbol on an ongoing basis.
6. The SPG may also be requested by CPM to consider other relevant aspects of maintaining the ISPM 15 standard and symbol in the long run, such as implementation or other issues.

III. Summary

7. The plant health and legal stakes are significant. The billions of dollars associated with agricultural and forestry resources, pest eradication programs, and disruptions in trade dwarf the costs associated with registering the symbol. Such registration has become an integral part of implementing ISPM 15 around the world and managing the WPM pathway.

¹ Trade volume will be the primary criteria for ordering the registrations over the next five years for those countries where the symbol remains unregistered, consistent with the criteria used by the Legal Office thus far.

8. The Bureau feels that the phytosanitary community, through the IPPC, needs to move forward with some decisive action to address these high risk issues. The proposed set aside of a minimum of USD 70 000 from the FAO Regular Programme (for the next five years) reflects a high priority need to close the gaps in ISPM 15 coverage around the world and ensure phytosanitary security in the global trade system. The SPG would identify long term funding mechanisms and options to sustain the ISPM 15 program and symbol into the future.
9. The Bureau urges the CPM to *endorse* and *support* this way forward.