



منظمة الأغذية
والزراعة
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de las
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para la
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y la
Alimentación

INTERIM COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

Seventh Session

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Role and Functions of the Informal Working Group on Strategic Planning and Technical Assistance

Agenda Item 8.7 of the Provisional Agenda

1. At ICPM-6 the role and function of the Informal Working Group on Strategic Planning and Technical Assistance (SPTA) was discussed. A number of issues in relation to the operation of the SPTA were raised which included, amongst others, that no formal terms of reference for the SPTA had been established. In its discussions the ICPM "... recognized the very important role the SPTA has played and its contribution to increasing the profile of and the funding for the IPPC." It also recognized that the open-ended nature of the SPTA had enabled the input of those particularly interested in this subject and had allowed flexibility. However, ICPM-6 also noted that there were some shortcomings in the current operation of the SPTA and decided that a proposal on a sound structure be developed by a Focus Group, analyzed by the SPTA and be submitted to ICPM-7. See ICPM 6 Report, paragraph 84.
2. In July 2004 the Focus Group (Meeting on SPTA Matters) met and discussed the roles and function of the SPTA (for reference see report of the Focus Group, Section 6). The discussions focussed on three major topics:
 - timing of implementation for a SPTA structure
 - structure and composition of the SPTA
 - terms of reference (TOR) for the SPTA
3. In regard to the timing for the implementation of a SPTA structure, the Focus Group believed that the restructuring of the SPTA be part of an evaluation of the organization and its administrative structure to be undertaken in the future (see Agenda Item 8.4.2, describing the two-stage evaluation). The FG believed that it was premature to make administrative changes before this evaluation. The Focus Group, however, felt the need for a minimal degree of formalization of SPTA on an interim basis. It recommended that an administrative structure for the ICPM be developed after the evaluation of the IPPC has been conducted and, on an interim basis until a final structure has been decided, draft TORs for the SPTA be developed and presented to the ICPM for adoption.

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4. The FG discussed the interim structure and composition of the SPTA, on the understanding that the current flexible approach as well as the present advantages of the informality should be maintained as much as possible. It agreed that, for the moment, the SPTA should remain a working group with proposed TORs and with open-ended participation. In relation to the composition of the SPTA the Focus Group thought that a small group of members should function as the core of the SPTA with other participants joining at their own wish. The Focus Group also drafted interim TORs for the SPTA and recommended them to the SPTA for consideration.
5. Based on the scope and functions of the SPTA described in the draft interim TORs, the Focus Group questioned if the current name “Informal Working Group on Strategic Planning and Technical Assistance” would adequately cover its activities. The Focus Group referred this question to the SPTA for consideration.
6. At its meeting in October 2004 the SPTA welcomed the recommendations of the Focus Group on the role and functions of the SPTA. It also welcomed the attempt by the Focus Group to introduce a balance between developing and developed country participation. In regard to the proposed composition in the draft TORs the SPTA believed that the core group should consist of the ICPM Bureau and seven representatives; one from each FAO region. The SPTA changed the recommendations of the Focus Group to this effect. It also indicated that the core group members may request funding for travel and subsistence to attend meetings (further described in Annex I). The SPTA also introduced some editorial and structural changes to the TORs recommended by the Focus Group. In regard to the name “Informal Working Group on Strategic Planning and Technical Assistance” the SPTA thought that no change would be necessary.
7. Taking into account the above, the SPTA developed a revised draft of the interim Terms of Reference (Annex I), and recommended this revised draft to the ICPM for adoption as an interim measure until a final structure for the Informal working group on strategic planning and technical assistance will be agreed upon.
8. The ICPM is invited to:
 1. *Consider* the recommendations made by the SPTA on the role and functions of the SPTA.
 2. *Adopt* the draft interim Terms of Reference for the Informal Working Group on Strategic Planning and Technical Assistance as laid down in Annex I.

Annex I**DRAFT INTERIM TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE
INFORMAL WORKING GROUP ON STRATEGIC PLANNING AND TECHNICAL
ASSISTANCE**

These interim terms of reference will be in place until the final structure for the Informal working group on strategic planning and technical assistance will be agreed upon.

1. Establishment

The Informal working group on strategic planning and technical assistance was established by the Second Interim Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (ICPM-2, 1999).

2. Scope of the Informal working group on strategic planning and technical assistance

The Informal working group on strategic planning and technical assistance is to deal with issues in the areas of:

- strategic planning
- technical assistance
- administrative matters (such as financial matters, staffing etc.)
- procedural matters.

3. Objective

The objective of the Informal working group on strategic planning and technical assistance is to formulate recommendations, advise the ICPM on issues referred to it and report on those issues.

4. Structure of the Informal working group on strategic planning and technical assistance

The Informal working group on strategic planning and technical assistance will consist of:

- a core group of 10 members consisting of:
 - the Bureau of the ICPM
 - plus seven representatives, one from each FAO region
- chairpersons of the Subsidiary Body on Dispute Settlement and Standards Committee on invitation for relevant agenda points
- plus other members (interested persons from contracting parties).

Meetings of the informal group will be chaired by one member of the Bureau of the ICPM.

Whenever possible, members of the Informal working group on strategic planning and technical assistance voluntarily fund their travel and subsistence to attend meetings. Members of the core group may request financial assistance from FAO for meetings with the understanding that the priority for financial assistance is given to developing country representatives.

5. Functions of the Informal working group on strategic planning and technical assistance

The Informal working group on strategic planning and technical assistance has the functions listed below, and also provides recommendations and advice to the ICPM, as appropriate, in relation to these functions:

- review of the strategic plan and business plan
- review of the work programme
- review of technical assistance activities
- review of information exchange activities
- recommendation of strategic priorities for new standards
- undertaking of financial planning
- development of appropriate procedures
- consideration of a possible ICPM response to emerging issues
- undertaking of any other activity referred by the ICPM.

6. IPPC Secretariat

The Secretariat provides administrative, technical and editorial support as required by the Informal working group on strategic planning and technical assistance. The Secretariat is responsible for reporting and record keeping regarding the activities of the Informal working group on strategic planning and technical assistance.