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y la
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INTERIM COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

Seventh Session

Rome, 4-8 April 2005

Report by the Chairperson

Agenda Item 3 of the Provisional Agenda

I. Introduction

1. The activities of the ICPM and the IPPC Secretariat can be found in the various reports provided to the ICPM 7. This report aims at identifying specific subjects of importance which have been addressed during the last twelve months and notes several issues which will be discussed in ICPM 7. The report also discusses possible future developments.

II. Financial Situation

2. Many of the activities of the ICPM Bureau were focused on the improvement of the financial situation of the IPPC. To recall, in December 2003 the 32nd Session of the FAO Conference agreed to a budget which substantially increases the IPPC allocation and which meets the financial requirements calculated in the IPPC Business Plan. A considerable part of the IPPC allocation, however, is not a component of the FAO regular programme budget but comes from contributions that have become available from earlier budget periods. The resources from such arrears are available for a two year period and cannot be used for all activities. This leads to the situation that, in order to maintain the current budget level, the part of the IPPC budget which is now provided from arrears would have to be covered by FAO's regular programme budget in the budget for the biennium 2006-7. Additionally, the business plan of the IPPC also foresees an increase of the IPPC budget of approximately 1 million USD for the budget period 2006/7.

3. To prepare the negotiations in FAO bodies dealing with budget matters the ICPM Bureau undertook activities to inform the chairpersons and members of the Programme and Finance Committees about the financial situation of the IPPC. The ICPM Bureau also discussed with the director of the FAO Programme of Budget and Evaluation the difficult situation of the IPPC budget and possibilities to increase the regular budget of the IPPC. Although the importance of

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the IPPC was generally recognized in these discussions, impressions received by the ICPM Bureau indicated that an increase in the regular budget of the IPPC for the budget period 2006-7 may be very difficult. This means that ICPM Members and the ICPM? must continue to undertake major efforts so that in the budget negotiations of FAO the importance of the IPPC in securing agricultural production and facilitating world trade is adequately publicised. I would therefore urge ICPM members to contact their authorities responsible for FAO matters in order to secure wide support for an increased IPPC budget.

III. Long Term Funding Options

4. In 2004 ICPM decided to establish a Focus Group to analyse long term funding options for the IPPC. It was thought that the IPPC budget is critically dependent on the overall priorities of FAO Members and that these priorities may change over time. The ICPM Bureau organized the meeting of the Focus Group to develop long term funding strategies for the ICPM to secure sufficient funding in the future. However, due to the complexity of the task the Focus Group could not make definite recommendations on long term funding options. Instead, the Focus Group recommended that a careful analysis of long term funding options, as well as a general evaluation of the IPPC and its structures, is necessary.

5. Under agenda item 8.4.2 of ICPM 7 the ICPM is asked to consider the proposals for conducting the evaluation of the IPPC, its structures and its funding. Members should consider that this evaluation will provide a solid basis for the development of a long term policy and, more importantly, its implementation. Members may also consider that such an evaluation may assist in obtaining increased funding for the IPPC.

IV. IPPC Workshops

6. In the report of the Chairperson at ICPM 6 it was suggested that IPPC workshops on new developments or the application of ISPMs, such as the implementation of ISPM No. 15, could perhaps be organized on a regular basis. ICPM 6 took up the suggestion and decided that an IPPC Workshop on the implementation of ISPM No. 15 should be organized, dependent on the availability of extra budgetary funds. The ICPM Bureau was involved in the planning of the workshop with the Canadian Government, the local organizers, and the IPPC Secretariat. With the generous support of the Canadian Government and the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF), amongst others, the IPPC workshop on the implementation of ISPM No. 15 took place in March 2005 in Vancouver. Almost 200 participants, many of them coming from developing countries, came to Vancouver to discuss how ISPM No. 15 may be implemented. The overwhelming success of the Vancouver workshop is perhaps the best argument to continue the practise of organizing IPPC workshops on emerging topics, such as regionalization or the application of ISPMs.

7. Another series of workshops was organized by the IPPC during 2004: regional workshops on draft ISPMs. For the first time such regional workshops on draft ISPMs were organized in every FAO region with developing countries. Members of the ICPM Bureau attended a number of these regional workshops to assist with their expertise. The results of these regional workshops are encouraging. Developing countries have been successfully participating in the standard setting process and the many valuable comments received through these regional workshops have improved the draft standards and introduced specific developing country perspectives. It should be the aim of the ICPM to continue with the practise of organizing regional workshops on draft ISPMs in every FAO region with developing countries to involve developing countries efficiently in the standard setting process.

V. Cooperation with other International Organizations

8. The cooperation between the IPPC and the CBD has continued in 2004. In May a meeting took place in Montreal between the secretariats of the IPPC and CBD, which was also attended by the ICPM Bureau. Further information on this can be found under agenda item 12.1 of ICPM 7. ICPM 6 invited the ICPM Bureau to explore possibilities for closer cooperation between the ICPM and the Conference of the Parties (COP) of the CBD. Preliminary discussions on the subject were held at the meeting in Montreal and it was agreed that a meeting between the ICPM Bureau and the COP Bureau would take place in the fall of 2004. A meeting was finally agreed to take place in Bangkok in February 2005. This was, however, cancelled at the last minute by the CBD. It is planned that this meeting should take place in the near future.

9. In the report of the Chairperson at ICPM 6 it was suggested that the three standard setting organizations under the SPS Agreement, namely the Codex Alimentarius Commission, the OIE and the IPPC, cooperate closer in their activities on general issues which may be of importance to the SPS Agreement. Based on a discussion paper by the ICPM Bureau, the SPTA discussed possible cooperation between the three sisters in order to promote synergy and to avoid overlaps. A programme for activities is proposed by the SPTA to ICPM 7 under item 12.2 of the agenda.

VI. Regionalization

10. The topic of “regionalization” has been discussed for some time in the SPS Committee. Within these discussions reference is continuously made to the IPPC and its mandate to work on this subject. Also in ICPM bodies demands for an ICPM activity on regionalization are made. The Focus Group and the SPTA discussed possibilities for the ICPM to establish a work programme on regionalization, however without making any recommendations to this effect. Considering the broad interest to discuss the topic of regionalization within the IPPC, as well as continuous requests for an ICPM work programme on this matter, the ICPM Bureau introduced the subject for discussion under item 7.4 of the agenda of ICPM 7. The ICPM Bureau has anticipated a long discussion on the subject so an evening working group has been organized to discuss it in detail.

11. The outcome of the discussions on regionalization will be very important for the IPPC. It will show how the ICPM can react to demands for standards and systems by developing countries and the SPS Committee. The discussions on regionalization will go even further than having an influence on the work programme of the ICPM. Having an IPPC recognition of pest free areas will introduce a new quality to the international harmonization of phytosanitary matters. Such a policy may in the end not be restricted to pest free areas only. Considering the importance of this subject the ICPM Bureau would like to invite all delegations to participate at the open ended working group on regionalization.

VII. Special Trust Fund

12. ICPM 5 decided that a special trust fund be established under the IPPC and that this special trust fund would be for the benefit of developing countries. The special trust fund was formally established by the IPPC Secretariat and is active and ready for contributions. Only a few countries, however, have donated to the IPPC Trust Fund. Once again, the ICPM Bureau would like to invite ICPM Members and IPPC observer organizations to contribute to the IPPC Trust Fund. Members should consider that the effective participation of developing countries in the activities of the ICPM will raise the understanding and application of the IPPC and its ISPM provisions and consequently lead to better phytosanitary situation in both developed and developing countries.