

DRAFT STRATEGIC CONSIDERATION OF FUTURE FOR THE APPPC

Introduction

In any consideration of the future of the Asia and Pacific Plant Protection Commission (APPPC) and the preparation of a Strategic Plan, a number of factors need to be taken into account. There should be:

- (1) an understanding and appreciation of the past activities of the Commission,
- (2) a view of the present situation,
- (3) a brief analysis of the strategic directions that could be considered by the Commission,
- (4) a consultation among APPPC members of what could be included in the future work of the Commission,
- (5) an evaluation of the possible options for future work given the preferences of APPPC members and considering the health, financial and travel constraints operating in the in the Covid-19 environment.

This document will provide material to begin the process of developing an APPPC Strategic Plan 2022-2026. It will look at points (1), (2) and (3) listed above. It will also provide questions for APPPC member countries to answer regarding their preferences for future work of the Commission (4). The evaluation of options mentioned in point (5) will be discussed in a later document, after APPPC members have provided their opinions (4), for final discussion at the 32nd biennial session of the APPPC.

1. Summary of some of the achievements of the Commission

It may be the case that some National Plant Protection Organisation (NPPO) representatives to the Commission have not had the opportunity to become familiar with the history of the Commission and its leading role in phytosanitary matters. It is felt that this knowledge is important in helping the development of APPPC plans for its future work. In order to supply a background for such representatives, this historical summary is presented as Appendix I to this paper.

Benefits for members from the APPPC

The benefits of membership of the APPPC include:

- collaboration between senior plant health officials on matters of mutual concern as a result of face-to-face meetings at APPPC sessions or workshops. This may cover a range of issues - including regional priorities and work programmes, future directions, responses to the incursion and outbreak of new pests, trade issues, to responses to issues arising at IPPC Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) meetings,
- cooperation between specialist officers to develop specialist programmes at regional workshops including plant quarantine, phytosanitary systems, integrated pest management (IPM) and pesticide management, and capacity development programmes,

- the establishment of regional standards for phytosanitary measures (RSPMs) - these may deal with regional issues or act as precursors for international standards,
- the development and presentation of regional viewpoints on draft International Standards on Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs) developed at the ISPM country consultation regional workshops on draft ISPMs,
- the development of regional positions to influence international positions, on any of the matters under consideration at the CPMs that are discussed at regional workshops or pre-CPM meetings,
- using an agreed regional position to influence the FAO management or the IPPC Secretariat on a particular matter of concern,
- developing regional training programmes to assist APPPC members with new measures or procedures in pest control, diagnosis and inspection, trading procedures, IPM or pesticide management.

Examples of this effective cooperation can be seen in the historical summary in Appendix I.

2. A view of the present situation

The increase in global trade in plants and plant products, has led to a greater incidence in the introduction of pests that negatively impact on the productivity, profitability and sustainability of natural and managed plant systems.

Climate change, land-use change, global trade and travel are facilitating the emergence of new pests including expanded host and geographic ranges. These include present and future changes that we will need to consider. Perhaps more immediately the global pandemic of Covid -19 will affect the way we operate our NPPOs – from the finance available to the operational systems we use.

In a consideration of the present situation in how it might affect the development of a strategic plan, a number of factors need to be considered; these include:

- the present international situation as regards trade
- present issues
- the situation with the IPPC
- the position of many NPPOs regarding the Plant Protection Agreement for the Asia and Pacific region

2.1 The international situation

Over the past few years, the international enthusiasm for the development and maintenance of rule-based trading system among nations appears to have waned. Support for the WTO has diminished, and countries are looking toward developing national protection for their trade. The disfunction of the mechanisms for dispute settlement have not helped with the non-replacement of the WTO Panel members. However, with the new Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala and the present work of the WTO Committee on Agriculture, it is hoped that some progress to assist in facilitating trade will be made. More recently, the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic has had a great effect on trading nations. The WTO DG has said that the multilateral trading system has been a solid and effective bulwark against

any acceleration of protectionism but noted that trade recovery will not be sustainable unless vaccine equity is assured.

The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum has recently supported a reaffirmation of the WTO and global rules. But this could take some time. So, it would not be wise to expect useful developments to occur in the period of the next strategic plan.

2.2 Present issues

These are many – perhaps we should look at these areas:

- pest distribution – including emerging pests and outbreaks
- increase in use of technology
- the modern form of international meetings.

Pest distribution

Since pest and plant distribution, pest epidemiology and pest impacts may change considerably as a result of climate change, robust surveillance and monitoring systems are vital at national, regional and international levels. This should have considerable effect on the future work of the Commission.

Increase in the use of technology

The increased use of electronic data exchange in information and communication technology will affect many of the activities of each NPPO at global, regional and national levels. The Commission should ensure that it is leading, coordinating, and implementing such changes, and able to support NPPOs in developing their systems. The use of ePhyto, the IPPC hub for electronic transmission of phytosanitary certification will be the beginning of digitalization; it is hoped that such developments, with the use of cameras and artificial intelligence, will eventually remove the human involvement in crop and product inspection of export consignments.

The modern form of international meetings

The lack of face to face meetings in 2020 and 2021 caused by the covid-19 global pandemic will change the approach of all APPPC member countries to meetings in the future and how they work together. It is highly likely that most meetings will have a virtual format. Many countries have grave misgivings about such a format – particularly when the language used is English for those whose mother tongue is not English. Also, there may be greater limitations on the number of interventions possible in such virtual meetings. However, these problems may be addressed or minimized by the use of smaller more regular meetings. With reduced travel and less funding being required, more meetings will be able to be held and more within-country contributions may be possible. It may also create opportunities for others to participate that may not have been able to in the past - perhaps because of the lack of travel funds.

2.4 The situation with the IPPC

The IPPC Strategic framework charges all countries having the capacity to implement harmonised measures to reduce pest spread and minimise the impact of pests on food security, trade, economic growth, and the environment. It has three strategic objectives (global food security, environmental protection and trade facilitation) and three core

activities (standard setting, implementation and capacity development, communication and international cooperation). The key elements of the development agenda are the following:

- harmonisation of electronic data exchange;
- commodity and pathway specific ISPMs;
- management of e-commerce and courier mail pathways;
- enabling the use of third party entities;
- strengthening pest outbreak response systems;
- assessment and management of climate change impacts on plant health;
- global phytosanitary research coordination;
- and diagnostic laboratory networks.

The Commission is already dealing with some of these subjects. Others are included in the next biennium work plan.

2.3 The position of many NPPOs regarding the Plant Protection Agreement for the Asia and Pacific region

It appears that few APPPC Members have ratified the amendments of 1999. However, now would be a good time to ratify the agreement; there is a South American leaf blight (SALB) standard, which countries have been informed of by FAO Legal, and a number of associated documents, with the final workshop on molecular diagnostics being planned for the next biennium. Therefore, APPPC Members that grow rubber should seriously consider the formal ratification acceptance of the amendments. Information on the amendments is available under the section on 1999 - in Appendix I.

3. Consideration of future work of the Commission

3.1 Brief Analysis

3.1.1 Previous work on a strategic plan

It is suggested that the Commission continue to support the mission statement and basic strategic directions (Revised long-term strategic plan for the APPPC 2012-2019 – 27th Session report). These have been slightly amended to bring them up-to-date and are the following:

To support the common purpose to secure effective action in preventing the introduction and spread of pests of plants and plant products to:

- *protect plant, human and animal health and the environment, (from the Preamble to the Agreement)*
- *facilitate trade,*
- *protect the sustainability of agriculture*

within the Asia and Pacific region.

This is accomplished by providing a regional forum for cooperation and promoting of the full implementation of the Plant Protection Agreement for the Asia and Pacific region through:

- *the development of measures for plant protection including the promotion of IPM and the Code of Conduct on the Management of Pesticides*
- *the development of information management*

- *capacity development including the coordination and training of staff*
- *input into international systems including assistance with the development of international standards for phytosanitary measures*
- *the development of administration systems - promoting and implementing the IPPC ePhyto Solution*
- *regional coordination and collaboration including various regional agreements on cross-cutting issues – such as climate change.*

3.1.2 The strategic directions viewed today.

In grouping the activities or objectives under the headings below, it is recognized that many of them could fit into several of the groups. So the groupings could be changed if thought to be advantageous. Also, many of the objectives will be linked to work in the IPPC or in other regions.

- **the development of measures for plant protection** and facilitation of safe trade—this work will include the:
 - development of RSPMs, in particular for plant and plant product commodity standards. The Commission is conducting ground breaking work in this area and this should continue – as the commodity RSPMs will be of considerable value to APPPC members and provide valuable examples for IPPC commodity standards development, e.g. APPPC RSPM on mango fruit adopted in 2019.
 - the development of treatment methods for the elimination of certain pests in crops as they are growing or in plant products prior to export
 - the strengthening of pest outbreak and preparedness systems for such pests as FAW, Cassava Mosaic virus, Fusarium TR4, wheat blast, the marmorated stink bug, *Xylella fastidiosa*.
 - the development of systems to monitor the impacts of climate change on plant health in the region.

It is most important that these programme activities are linked with those of the IPPC. Also, the APPPC should consider undertaking a performance review of the implementation of this programme in APPPC countries.

- **Sharing pest management information:** –
 - the continuation of the development of the APPPC surveillance systems for members (as led by Australia). Such surveillance information and that arising from pest alert systems will need to have an effective information management database for the information to be effectively used.
 - the management of e-commerce and courier mail pathways as information movement needs urgent follow-up for APPPC members using IPPC systems as a base.
 - the development of pest alert schemes run on a regional basis.
 - the development of diagnostic laboratory networks could be considered.
 - the development of an electronic data exchange system.
- **capacity development including the coordination and training of staff:** –

- it is expected that the Commission will continue with work with training programmes on IPM and pesticide management as in the past.
 - the Commission has achieved worthwhile results with the work on SALB information, detection, and measures. It is time to decide what further pests should be studied in depth by the Commission members.
 - it is suggested that new methodologies for product inspection would be a useful area to work on.
 - the pest outbreak systems mentioned above could be items for staff training programmes.
- **input into international systems** – This will include:
- the present input into the development of ISPMs and the continuance of the regional workshop.
 - the regional workshops could be modified to offer greater opportunities for sharing information or for training staff on an inter-regional basis.
 - the Commission working with other international or regional organisations e.g. Secretariat for the Pacific Community, Convention for Biological Diversity, International Maritime Organisation etc.
- **the effective operation of the regional system.** This could include work with the:
- financial mechanism. Not all countries have been able to contribute to the trust fund for the Commission. It is hoped that those countries not yet contributing will be able to arrange this in the future.
 - utilisation of ePhyto systems. Most countries are using the system. Assistance will be available for those not yet within the system.
 - the use of third party authorization in phytosanitary certification systems
 - the acceptance of the 1999 amendments. FAO Legal system will be available to assist those countries with acceptance of the 1999 amendments.
 - sharing of information via profiles and digital systems – with the harmonization of electronic data exchange. The Secretariat will be making every effort to resuscitate the country information profile system used some time ago. The sharing of information may be able to extend beyond this to measures used by countries in trade.
 - development of sub-commissions within the Commission – which could be used for sub-regional programmes or initiatives.
 - development of programmes for coordination and support e.g. ePhyto. Programme coordination, sea container programme support

Appendix 1 – Short historical summary of some of the achievements of the Commission

1956 – The Commission was convened for the first time in 1956. It was originally known as the Plant Protection Committee for Southeast Asia and the Pacific Region. The name was changed to the Asia and Pacific Plant Protection Commission in 1983. The main force behind the development of the Commission was Malaya.

Influential officials who had a role in developing the Commission in the early years included: the pathologist Anthony Johnston working for Malaya who expressed the concern of the region regarding the disease South American leaf blight of rubber (Johnston later became the FAO Regional Plant Protection Officer (RPPO) and APPPC Executive Secretary (EO)) and then the Director of the Commonwealth Mycological Institute), D. Bap Reddy (also RPPO and EO and author of *Plant Protection in Asia and the Pacific, an overview* that marked the 25 years of the Commission), Kang Soo Ming, Asna Booty Othman, Wan Normah Wan Ismail, SA Suparno, Wang Fuxiang, Vanham, Somboon Chareonridhi, Udorn Unahawatti, Dam Quoc Tru, R. Ikin, J.R. Morschel, S. Navaratnam, L.G. Morrison.

1983 - 13th session of the APPPC. This was a particularly important meeting in that it brought forward amendments to the Plant Protection Agreement for Asia and the Pacific to:

- extend the geographical coverage of the Agreement to include the People's Republic of China and
- institute mandatory contributions by member countries to the funds of the Commission.

1985 – 14th session of the APPPC. This meeting included sessions on the use and handling of pesticides, integrated pest management, the updating of Annex A of the agreement (pest lists of countries), recommendations on measures for quarantine pests, and contingency planning. The meeting also considered the plant quarantine control of cargo containers – recommending that countries “strengthen their plant quarantine arrangements for the control of cargo containers”. This meeting set up an APPPC Executive Committee. A report on the progress in implementing the provisions of the international code of conduct on the distribution and use of pesticides brought forward a number of recommendations to APPPC members.

1989 – 16th session of the APPPC. The Commission established a Standing Committee on Plant Quarantine and a Standing Committee on Integrated Pest Management. An APPPC Initiative for Harmonization of Phytosanitary Principles and Procedures was introduced and endorsed – concerning the harmonization of phytosanitary principles, the use of Pest Risk Strategies and guidelines for Import Protocol Development.

1990 – The APPPC Expert Consultation on the Harmonization of Phytosanitary Principles, Pest Risk Assessment and Plant Quarantine Procedures was held at FAO in Bangkok. This was one of the first RPPO meetings with global representation on phytosanitary

harmonization. The work on phytosanitary principles formed the basis of ISPM 1 of the IPPC adopted by FAO Conference in 1993.

1998 – Two meetings were held on the implementation of the Rotterdam Convention on the prior informed consent procedure for certain hazardous chemicals and pesticides in international trade for countries in the region. Phases of the IPM programmes on rice and vegetables were continued.

1999 – 21st session of the Commission. Regarding the Plant Protection Agreement for the Asia and Pacific Region (that established the Commission in 1956), two sets of amendments were put forward. The first set of amendments dealt with the updating of the agreement and provided for the establishment of regional sub-commissions and the development and adoption of regional phytosanitary standards. The second set of amendments provided for the deletion from the Agreement of the detailed measures to exclude South American leaf blight of *Hevea* from the Region, as set out in Article XIV and Appendix B of the Agreement. The rubber-producing countries at the Twenty-first Session of the APPPC stated they would accept this second set of amendments only when a satisfactory regional standard dealing with South American leaf blight had been adopted by the Commission, whether on an interim or final basis.

At the Hundred and Seventeenth Session of the FAO Council in November 1999, the amendments of Plant Protection Agreement for the Asia and Pacific Region were approved.

2000 – APPPC held its first meeting on draft ISPMs. This was funded by New Zealand and FAO Bangkok Regional Office with 16 countries attending. This was the first meeting of this nature in the global phytosanitary community allowing international discussions on the draft standards outside of the CPM and IPPC Standards Committee. This meeting became an annual event up to the present day – with other regions following the APPPC example with annual meetings.

2001 – As a precursor of an ISPM on SALB, a TCP Project was set up to undertake “Pest Risk Analysis for South American Leaf Blight of Rubber”. An APPPC Regional Standards Committee was set up and the topics for the first two RSPMs identified. APPPC member countries actively participated in the development of the FAO programme for community IPM in Asia.

The Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation (PCE), as a mechanism to assist countries access their phytosanitary capacity, was first trialled in the Asia Pacific region. The PCE went on to be utilised worldwide.

2001 – 22nd session of the Commission. The first two RSPMs were adopted: Guidelines for the development of heat disinfestation treatments of fruit fly host commodities and Training requirements for plant quarantine inspectors. It was reported that the FAO-EU IPM programme for cotton in Asia officially started in October 1999 and six APPPC member countries had joined the project.

2003 - The IPM programmes for rice, vegetables and cotton were continued by the FAO. Two Regional Phytosanitary Standards were developed led by Australia, namely, the Guidelines for the Confirmation of Non-Host Status of Fruits and Vegetables to Tephritid Fruit Flies and The Requirements for the Establishment and Maintenance of Pest Free Areas for Tephritid Fruit Flies. The non-Host Status standard was a world first. A workshop on on Assisting ASEAN countries to achieve pesticide regulatory harmonization was held with ASEAN countries.

2005 - 24th session of the Commission. The Commission adopted the ground-breaking standard APPPC RSPM No. 4: Guidelines for the Confirmation of Non-Host Status of Fruit and Vegetables to Tephritid Fruit Flies. This was done prior to that developed by the IPPC. The region held two PCE workshops. Work continued on the development of the SALB PRA. A Regional International Phytosanitary Portal Pilot (IPP) Workshop for Asia and the Pacific was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from 17 to 20 January 2005. The meeting noted that the IPM programme in Asia has undergone many changes that reflected the strength and sustainability of the approach adopted towards farmers' education. FAO Workshops on the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent (PIC) Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticide in International Trade and the International Code of Conduct on Distribution and Use of Pesticides were held in the region.

2006 – A third regional workshop on the PRA for SALB was held in Malaysia. The SALB expert that worked on the SALB PRA was Dr Chee Khen Hoy. Subsequent examination and recommendations gave rise to more information and technical justification of the recommendations being added.

2007 – 25th session of the Commission. The completed SALB PRA, with detailed annexes, was the basis for the development of a standard on measures for protection of the region from SALB that was adopted by the Commission. An APPPC Strategic Plan and Business plan were also adopted. The Commission developed a procedure for producing country Plant Protection Profiles. A meeting on developing IPM for coconut leaf beetle, *Brontispa longissimi* was held.

2009 – 26th session of the Commission. The financial provisions of the 1983 amendments came into force and rules and procedures were agreed to at the Commission meeting. This was a major step in the development of the Commission.

The RSPM concerning SALB was adopted. This was meant to allow CPs to now accept the revised text of the Agreement which includes the amendments providing for the deletion of detailed measures to exclude South American leaf blight of Hevea. The RSPM Guidelines for the exterior cleanliness of containers was not adopted by the Commission (also developed prior to that of the IPPC). The Commission began holding pre-CPM meetings to allow CPs to discuss CPM topics prior to the meeting.

In 2010 APPPC members were informed by FAO of the opportunity for the potential acceptance of the 2nd set of amendments from the 1999 meeting.

2011 – The Commission set up its own website, continued with the development of RSPMs, adopted a Strategic Plan 2012-2019, and held a pest incursion meeting that developed plans

for SALB incursion. Countries began providing their mandatory contributions to the APPPC Secretariat. An SALB workshop developed guidelines to support the SALB RSPM.

2012 – Thailand hosted the APPPC Regional workshop on the Enhancement of Regional Collaboration in Pesticide Regulatory Management.

2013 – 18 countries were financial contributors. Countries were encouraged to accept the 1999 amendments. APPPC hosted a Global Symposium on Pest Surveillance which provided the basis of manual guides on the management of surveillance programmes. The APPPC discussed the development of an RSPM on minimizing pest movement by machinery moved in international trade - before the IPPC developed an ISPM. As of August 2013, 80 percent of the APPPC countries have posted general plant protection information on the APPPC website, and roughly half the countries had provided specific information on plant quarantine, pest surveillance, pest and pesticide management. There was continued development of a training programme and reference materials for the protection against SALB.

2015 – 29th session of the Commission. This session reported on workshops on ePhyto, surveillance, SALB, ISPM 15 and Systems Approaches. APPPC adopted a 6-year surveillance training programme led by Australia. Also, in 2015 Nepal hosted an APPPC Workshop on the Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management. IPM workshops were also held.

2017 – 30th session of the Commission. The session discussed commodity standards – relating to the movement of seeds.

A first commodity treatment RSPM was developed for HWIT for mango fruit. A survey of emerging plant health issues undertaken. An APPPC country, the Republic of Korea, held first CPM outside of Rome. The APPPC held workshops on Methodologies for Sampling consignments, surveillance, NRO and SALB with a 3rd Global meeting on ePhyto being held in the APPPC region. Collaboration with FAO re the Rotterdam Convention continued. Also, Nepal hosted the APPPC Workshop on IPM FFF in support of Sustainable Intensification of Crop Protection in the context of Climate Change in 2017.

2019 – 31st session of the Commission. The first commodity standard – APPPC RSPM for mango fruit was adopted. Work is to progress on the seed commodity material with chili into a regional implementation guidance document.

Further work on developing ePhyto systems within countries is to be undertaken. A symposium on contaminating pests was held in Australia. Viet Nam hosted an APPPC Regional Workshop on Phytosanitary Irradiation Treatments in 2019.

All through this period the Pesticide Management Standing Committee promoted the furtherance of the FAO Code of Conduct on the Use and Distribution of Pesticides. This was linked to the supporting of IPM programmes throughout the region on rice, cotton, and vegetables. These programmes were not led by the APPPC groups but by FAO specialists with the APPPC members providing support.

It is remarkable how much of a leadership role the APPPC has taken over the years - with new topics for standards, the regional workshops, the initial work with the PCE etc. However, it is disappointing to note how CPs have not managed to arrange the accepting of the amendments to the Plant Protection Agreement of 1999.