



# Introduction to the International Plant Protection Convention e-course

## Lesson 4 – Institutional arrangements

### Learning Objectives

At the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

1. Explain the institutional arrangements under the IPPC
2. Describe how the IPPC works with other Agreements with similar scope

### 1. Commission on Phytosanitary Measures

The IPPC is governed by the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM), which was established under Article XI of the IPPC and serves as the Convention's governing body. The CPM meets during March or April each year usually at FAO headquarters in Rome, Italy.

Its aim is to promote cooperation to help implement the objectives of the IPPC. In particular, the CPM:

- Reviews global plant protection needs;
- Develops and adopts ISPMs;
- Establishes procedures for dispute resolution;
- Promotes technical assistance to build phytosanitary capacity; and
- Cooperates with RPPOs and other international organizations on matters relating to the Convention.

The Commission meetings are attended by contracting parties and by observers from organizations such as the RPPOs, the WTO Sanitary and Phytosanitary Committee, the Standards and Trade Development Facility, and the Convention on Biological Diversity. Meetings also host a scientific session to discuss important issues. Past sessions have covered topics such as pest movements through food aid shipments, the potential impact of climate change on the spread of invasive alien species, and challenges posed by e-commerce.

In between CPM sessions interests of the CPM are represented by the Bureau. The Bureau consists of 7 representatives of 7 FAO regions and meets several times a year. The Bureau deals with a strategic direction, and financial and operational management.

## **2. CPM subsidiary bodies**

There are 2 subsidiary bodies: Standards Committee and Implementation and Capacity Development Committee.

### **2.1. Standards Committee**

The SC meets twice a year and is responsible for:

- overseeing the IPPC standard setting process;
- managing the development of International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs); and
- providing guidance and oversight to the work of Technical Panels (TPs) and Expert Working Groups (EWGs).

Details of the SC operations are described in Unit 2 - International Standards of Phytosanitary Measure.

### **2.2. Implementation and Capacity Development Committee (IC)**

The IC develops, monitors and oversees an integrated programme to support the implementation of the IPPC and strengthen the phytosanitary capacity of contracting parties. The IC meets twice a year.

The scope of the IC includes:

- Identification and review of the baseline capacity and capability required by contracting parties to implement the IPPC.
- Analysis of issues constraining the effective implementation of the IPPC and development of innovative ways to address impediments.
- Development, facilitation and delivery of the implementation support programme to enable contracting parties to meet and surpass the baseline capacity and capability.
- Monitoring and evaluation of the efficacy and impact of implementation activities and reporting on progress which indicates the State of Plant Protection in the World.
- Oversight of dispute avoidance and settlement processes.
- Oversight of national reporting obligation processes.

## **3. Secretariat**

The Secretariat of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) was established in 1992 by FAO in recognition of the increasing role of the IPPC. The Secretariat is responsible for coordinating the CPM work programme and it:

- Facilitates the development and adoption of ISPMs;
- Facilitates information exchange between contracting parties and RPPOs by hosting and maintaining the [www.ippc.int](http://www.ippc.int) website;

- Reviews implementation of the Convention, its standards and CPM recommendations to identify challenges faced by NPPOs;
- Provides technical support to contracting parties, in particular to least developed nations, to build their phytosanitary capacity to implement the Convention and its standards;
- Helps contracting parties resolve disputes;
- Organizes meetings and other CPM activities.

#### **4. Relationship with other international organizations and agreements**

##### **4.1. World Trade Organization**

Of the international organizations and agreements whose objectives and activities overlap with those of the IPPC, the WTO, dealing with the rules of trade between nations, is particularly important.

The WTO:

- Administers multilateral trade agreements, acts as a forum for trade negotiations and seeks to resolve trade disputes.
- Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures — the SPS Agreement — is of particular relevance to the IPPC.
- SPS Agreement requires that WTO members should base their phytosanitary measures on international standards developed by the IPPC; however, the Convention and the SPS Agreement are distinct in their scope and purpose and have slightly different membership.

The IPPC complements the SPS Agreement by providing international standards on which all countries base their phytosanitary measures to have a scientific basis and ensure they are not used as unjustified barriers to international trade.

The IPPC is one of SPS's "three sisters" together with FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission (Codex) that deals with food safety and the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) that deals with animal health. These are three standard-setting organizations designated as reference bodies in the SPS Agreement.

##### **4.2. Environmental Organizations and Agreements**

Because the scope of the IPPC extends to protecting natural flora, CPM collaborates with environmental programmes to ensure that its activities take into account the intergovernmental environmental agreements and that people working in environmental frameworks understand the role of the IPPC.

The IPPC environmental strategic objective is closely related to the mandate of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to reduce the direct pressures on biodiversity and promote sustainable use.

Specifically the CBD Aichi Target 9 seeks to identify, control, eradicate or have measures in place to manage pathways to prevent the introduction and establishment of invasive alien species (IAS) ecosystems, habitats and other species. While the CBD addresses biodiversity and the environment in general, the IPPC specifically concentrates on IAS that are pests of plants and provides guidance for protection against them.

Although the mandates of the IPPC and CBD differ slightly in their protection of the environment, there are many synergies between the two conventions, which have been identified within the context of Biodiversity-related Conventions, of which both are members. To enhance cooperation between the conventions, the Biodiversity Liaison Group was established to facilitate work.

By identifying areas where IPPC and CBD can work together, such as in prevention of IAS movement and focusing on specific environmentally related trade issues like trade in invasive aquatic plants and e-commerce pathways, both the IPPC and CBD can share the benefits gained from protecting the environment and biodiversity while using fewer of their Secretariat resources.