



Food and Agriculture  
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## High Level Political Forum 2021

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*“Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development”*

### ANNEX 6

#### **Inputs by the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) Secretariat**

The International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) is an intergovernmental treaty signed by 184 countries, aiming at protecting the world's plant resources from the spread and introduction of pests, while promoting safe trade. The Convention introduced International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs) as its main tool to achieve its goals, making it the sole global standard setting organization for plant health as recognized by the World Trade Organization's Agreement on the application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement).

The IPPC Secretariat, established in 1992 and hosted at FAO headquarters in Rome, coordinates the IPPC work programme and supports the work of IPPC contracting parties to achieve the Convention's goals, linking the work of the IPPC community to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The IPPC community reacted promptly to the global sanitary crisis and held virtual meetings amongst all its contracting parties (CPs) aiming to assess the preliminary impacts of COVID-19, noting negative impacts for both developing and developed countries, including food loss and increased food insecurity, especially for the most vulnerable groups. The IPPC Secretariat has initiated several activities to link the work on preventing the spread of plant pests and diseases in international trade and food security, including recent discussions on food value chains in different fora. The expected outcome is to include the importance of plant health in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly for SDGs 1, 2, 8, 12, 13, 15 and 17, through the establishment of resilient food systems and value chains internationally while facilitating safe trade.

#### **a. Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the implementation of the SDGs under review in the 2021 HLPPF**

The COVID-19 outbreak highlighted the risks related to delays or potential downfall of the phytosanitary capacity at the national level: national phytosanitary services had to adapt quickly and exposing their staff at higher risks of contagion because measures such as lockdowns did not stop plant pests and diseases from spreading. The necessity to ensure continuity to phytosanitary services exposed them to severe sanitary risks.

The IPPC community faced the difficult challenge of exposing individuals to higher risks of contagion or causing significant delays in the international trade of plants and plant products, including agriculture. This situation placed hundreds of millions at risk and caused delays in advancing the work linked to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly relevant for the SDGs 1, 2, 3, 8, 12, 13 and 17, currently under review. The IPPC community reacted promptly to the global sanitary crisis and held virtual meetings amongst all its contracting parties (CPs) aiming to assess the preliminary impacts of COVID-19, noting negative impacts for both developing and developed countries, including food loss and food security.

The IPPC Secretariat promoted the dissemination of existing solutions such as phytosanitary electronic certification (ePhyto) to continue facilitating the international trade of plants and plant products while ensuring safety for the staff of the National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs) of each contracting party. The organization of the first informal meeting of IPPC contracting parties allowed the sharing of many good practices in support of prevention of food loss and waste in addition of pests and diseases.

**b. Actions, policy guidance, progress, challenges and areas requiring urgent attention in relation to the SDGs and to the theme within the area under the purview of your intergovernmental body**

The IPPC Secretariat has been promoting the inclusion of plant health into the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through other policy instruments, such as the recently approved Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition of the Committee on World Food Security.

The IPPC Secretariat has been very successful in raising awareness on plant health globally, particularly in relation to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Regrettably, there are currently no indicators to assess the advancements on plant health globally and the IPPC Secretariat is planning to focus on collecting the necessary data to publish *The State of Plant Health in the World*, as prescribed by the IPPC text.

The IPPC Secretariat sits in the unique position to collect, compile, analyse and present comprehensive data on the state of plant health in the world, which contributes to all SDGs under review but also to the 2030 Agenda as a whole.

**c. An assessment of the situation regarding the principle of “ensuring that no one is left behind”**

All staff involved in plant health activities did not halt their activities to ensure continuity to international trade of plants and plant products, particularly in agriculture, to avoid additional detrimental effects on international value chains. The COVID-19 impacts have not been fully assessed yet as the pandemic continues to plague the world, but several IPPC contracting parties expressed their grievances on their internal social divides. The necessary sanitary protocols that restrict mobility of people generated cascade effects at the expense of the most vulnerable groups.

The drastic drop in international trade disrupted the linkages some smallholders established with international markets for plants and plant products, particularly in agriculture. The reduced movement of people and goods internationally may further impact on the ability to proceed on other issues such as reducing food loss and waste but also in the resources allocated in mitigating climate change effects as well as further decreasing the available incomes in various sectors, including agriculture.

**d. Cooperation, measures and commitments at all levels in promoting sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic**

The IPPC Secretariat has been proactive in addressing the shifting international environment by discussing and proposing concrete actions to move beyond the COVID-19 crisis, particularly in terms of continuing to facilitate safe trade. Collaboration with other FAO units and division became even more crucial to

address cross-cutting topics relating to the IPPC core activities, namely standard setting and implementation.

The IPPC Secretariat proposed the following policy actions, amongst others, to also support the advancement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development:

- the IPPC Strategic Framework 2020 – 2030, expected to be endorsed at the fifteenth session of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM-15), where the work of the IPPC community focuses on its contributions to several Sustainable Development Goals, namely SDGs 1, 2, 8, 12, 13, 15 and 17; and
- Project Proposal for the Food Coalition, titled *Phytosanitary approaches for sustainable and resilient food systems: continuing facilitating safe trade by preventing the introduction and spread of plant pests*.

The IPPC community had drafted the Commodity Standard, currently submitted for adoption at the coming CPM-15, marking a new era in which the IPPC community is going to set science and evidence-based standards on many agricultural commodities, amongst others, with positive outcomes for the economic social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

2020 was also the International Year of Plant Health (IYPH), which is delivering the following policy instruments that aim to contribute to the 2030 Agenda:

- study on *The Impact of Climate Change on Plant Health*, which will be launched on 1 June 2021;
- publication of a Youth Declaration on Plant Health to promote inclusive and broad participation of various youth groups on such a key topic to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

**e. Various measures and policy recommendations on building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development**

The General Assembly of the United Nations (UNGA) declared 2020 the International Year of Plant Health (IYPH) and its activities are still ongoing until the 1 July 2021, as the IPPC Secretariat adapted the IYPH planned activities after the eruption of the pandemic. With over six hundred events, the IPPC Secretariat is convinced that the international community expressed a clear interest in including plant health as a priority in the international agenda. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development should rely on specialised agencies and intergovernmental bodies such as the IPPC to include plant health in the SDGs.

The primary instrument is by ensuring continued support to IYPH legacies, such as the proclamation by the UNGA of an International Day of Plant Health on 12 May each year. The IPPC Secretariat proposes to increase the number of discussions on plant health, pests and diseases, particularly focusing on prevention through the adoption of the IPPC International Standards on Phytosanitary Measures. Other objectives of the IPPC Strategic Framework 2020 – 2030 also include research coordination on plant health issues.

**Selected recommendations for accelerating progress towards achievement of specific SDGs under review in 2021, which are, 1 on no poverty, 2 on zero hunger, 3 on good health and well-being, 8 on decent work and economic growth, 10 on reduced inequalities, 12 on responsible consumption and production, 13 on climate action, 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions, and 17 on partnerships.**

Recognising further that in addressing these concerns, the IPPC's strategic focus contributes directly to the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of ending poverty and hunger, achieving food

security, facilitating economic growth, combating climate change, strengthening global partnership for sustainable development and more as stated in the UN SDGs number 1, 2, 3, 8, 12, 13 and 17,

We, Ministers, reaffirm the Strategic Objectives of the International Plant Protection Convention to:

- (a) Enhance global food security and increase sustainable agricultural productivity
- (b) Protect the environment from the impacts of plant pests; and
- (c) Facilitate safe trade, development and economic growth;

by developing, promoting and implementing harmonized scientifically based phytosanitary measures; and by developing phytosanitary capacity for members to accomplish the objectives.