



***“Working Together to Make Trade Work”***

**NAEGA MAP Trip Report – IPPC CPM – Rome, Italy  
14-20 April, 2018**

**Names of Travelers:**

Katy Lee, Secretariat, International Grain Trade Coalition (IGTC)

**Dates of Travel:**

April 14-20, 2018

**Purpose of Travel:**

Consistent with advancing NAEGA UES objectives Katy Lee, Secretariat of the of the International Grain Trade Coalition (IGTC), travelled to Rome, Italy beginning on April 14 in conjunction with and to attend the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) 13th Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM). In addition to observing the CPM, individual Meetings were arranged with the leaders of the CPM, countries sitting on the Standards Committee and IPPC staff.

The agenda of the CPM included issues of highest importance to the U.S. GRNOS trade, including:

- The role of the grain trade in global food security and economic development;
- The status of the draft International Standard on Phytosanitary Measures (ISPM) for grain;
- Discussions among IPPC contracting parties on “Conceptual challenges in commodity standard development”;
- The IPPC ePhyto Solution and progress of the worldwide pilot project on IPPC ePhytos.

**Summary of accomplishments**

*The draft International Standard on Phytosanitary Measures (ISPM) for grain*

While in Rome, the IGTC Secretariat was able to gather information on the status of the ISPM for grain, as well as the role of the private sector in the next steps of the process. This effort is of crucial importance for the IGTC, given the convening of grain trade representatives to share expertise on the draft ISPM, including specific issues such as pest risk analysis; availability of international guidance and pest lists; measures to mitigate pest risks along the value chain; and actions specific to individual exporting and importing countries. Outreach via IGTC member associations and Corporate Stakeholders with regional and national governments took place over the course of 2017 and the CPM in April 2018 was a significant opportunity for the IGTC to interact and provide an in-person update for IPPC and its Contracting Parties at large.

Critical to the IGTC’s mission to achieve a market and regulatory environment supportive of the international trade of grain, oilseeds, pulses and derived products, the CPM meeting saw agreement to assign “pending” status to the ISPM for grain. It is expected that IPPC will convene a focus group of governments to discuss the concept of a commodity standard more generally.

*The concept of a commodity standard*

The IGTC observed discussions among governments attending the CPM who were asked to discuss and evaluate the value of commodity standards being elaborated under the IPPC. A summary of the discussions is as below, with the acknowledgement that in general, IPPC Contracting Parties felt that the elaboration of commodity standards remains an important part of their work at international level, and that they are a central focus of the IPPC’s 2030 Strategic Framework.



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It should be noted that the meetings on this matter were chaired by the Government of Australia, with the support of the IPPC Secretariat and the Government of Canada as rapporteur.

- Confirmation that the ISPM for grain will be assigned “pending status” until at least April 2019.
- After-hours negotiations on the concept of “commodity standards”, addressing specifically whether or not to continue with the ISPM for grain. The negotiations brought together the Africa regional group (Sierra Leone), Argentina, Australia, Austria, Canada, Chile, China, COSAVE (Brazil), Costa Rica, EU, Finland, France, Ghana, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Kenya, Liberia, Malaysia, Peru, New Zealand, Russia, South Africa, UK, Uruguay, USA, Zambia.
- Commodity standards should intersect with existing best practices elaborated by industry.
- ISPMs can provide “ready-made” guidelines and baseline levels of risk management for all governments – including those without significant phytosanitary resources - thereby offering an important trade facilitative mechanism.
- Agreement that select governments will form a “small focus group” to look at the “purpose, outcomes and benefits of developing the concept of commodity and pathway standards”. The focus group will meet for two days in October 2018, it may/may not include industry – this will be decided by governments at the June 11-15, 2018 CPM Bureau meeting. The focus group will analyze practical examples including:
  1. The development and adoption of commodity standards for mango fruit for consumption and chilli seed by the Asia and Pacific Plant Protection Commission (APPPC).
  2. Other commodity and pathway standards under development or in use.
  3. The establishment of production systems that enable exports to multiple markets with harmonized import requirements.
  4. Identifying and describing common elements from existing import/export conditions or protocols for a number of plant products that are widely traded.
  5. Integrating new measures into existing pathways for new pests, e.g. control measures for *Tuta absoluta*.
  6. Replacing existing pest control measures with integrated pest management options for specific or general pests
  7. Topics that may be provided in response to the 2018 call for topics for standards and implementation
- Agreement to launch a “call for topics for Standards and Implementation”. This is launched every two years, it will start on May 1, 2018 and end on August 31, 2018.
- Confirmation of membership and potential replacements for CPM Bureau and the Standards Committee.

*ePhyto solution*

The IGTC gathered information to report back to its Working Group on electronic trading documentation on the ePhyto Solution. In Rome, updates about the ePhyto solution were shared with IPPC Contracting Party governments. Most relevant was the news that the ePhyto pilot has now seen 11,000 certificates exchanged through the testing environment, according to figures from the IPPC. From the perspective of National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs), there have been minimal technical issues with the system itself, though more time and collaboration across governmental authorities are needed to fully implement the harmonization with ePhyto schema. A new “Beginner’s Guide” to ePhytos has also been published.

The discussion on the floor saw a range of governments speaking out about the ePhyto Solution. These included Australia, Argentina, Brazil, Cameroon, Canada, China, EU, Ghana, Honduras, Kenya, Jamaica



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and Senegal. From China – an ePhyto pilot country – the feeling was that this is an important but complex initiative, and that efficient work has been carried out so far.

The idea of a 5-year business plan was supported by the likes of the EU. Countries in the Caribbean and in North Africa felt that onboarding and recruitment of other countries in the project would be crucial.

More general messages “from the floor” included those of gratitude to the funders and supporters of the project such as Australia, and agreement that “business imperatives require the ePhyto Hub to operate globally, without interruption, and at a reasonable cost. The project is underpinned by IT expertise at the UN Computing Centre (UNCC) and personnel in Morocco and Argentina.

Via the IGTC, the grain trade is exploring new tools to convey the evolution of industry innovation and uptake of electronic trade documentation, and holds a seat on the Industry Advisory Group of the ePhyto pilot.

#### *IPPC institutional and organizational matters*

The IPPC’s budget and resources were a key part of this annual meeting among governments. In addition, there was discussion on whether to change the name of the IPPC to the “World Organization for Plant Health”, an idea supported by the EU and others.

#### *IGTC outreach with countries and the IPPC Secretariat*

In terms of country outreach, while in Rome the IGTC was able to signal the grain trade’s ongoing commitment to engagement with the IPPC and Contracting Parties. Contact was made with a number of governments including the African Union, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Mexico, New Zealand, South Korea, UK, Ukraine and USA. The agenda raised by the IGTC with these governments followed these general lines:

- i) Availability of the IGTC to provide significant representation and expertise in IPPC work
- ii) Interest of the grain trade in the ISPM for grain, specifically on issues such as traceability, scope of regulated articles (“quarantine pests” versus “pests”) and the exclusion of “quality” and contractual provisions such as foreign material
- iii) Engagement of the IGTC in innovation of electronic trading documentation and the in-country focal points that have been dedicated on the ePhyto solution

A meeting also took place with the FAO members staff dealing with the Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS), a tool that is provided by Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Group on Earth Observations Global Agricultural Monitoring, International Grains Council (IGC), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), UN High-level Task Force on the Food Security Crisis, World Bank Group, World Food Programme and the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Importantly for further IGTC engagement, the CPM Bureau meeting that took place in Rome, chaired by Côte d’Ivoire and Mexico, saw the following outcomes:

- Support for the IPPC Action Plan for Trade Facilitation ([Action Plan here](#)). Main elements include the globalization efforts of the IPPC, and the pilot project on ePhytos.



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- No agreement on how and if to establish a “Stakeholders Industry Advisory Group” for the IPPC. The ePhyto agenda was pointed to as an example of where stakeholder participation is “beneficial”, however, the report from CPM Bureau also states:

*“[55] Stakeholder Advisory Group – as having industry as an active part of the IPPC Community, contentious issues, such as commodity and pathway standards, need to be resolved before their full participation can be considered. The Bureau is mindful that industry will single out projects to be involved with, based on self-interests, and, therefore, broad-spectrum involvement by industry will be challenging. An analysis of the projects that could be of mutual interest and benefit, as well as an identification of which industry players will wish to cooperate with, must be carefully determined, before including them in a Stakeholder Advisory Group. As this issue needs further discussion, the Bureau agreed to add it to their June meeting agenda.”*

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- IGTC should provide a template letter for its member associations and Corporate Stakeholders, outlining the availability of the grain trade to be involved in the ISPM process during the next steps of the process.
- IGTC Policy Team on the International Standard for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPM) for grain should evaluate:
  - Whether collective action is needed at IGTC level to engage with governments on the “call for topics for Standards and Implementation”.
  - Whether IGTC policy and advocacy should be updated to support and define appropriate parameters for the inclusion of industry groups like IGTC in the IPPC community.
  - When advocacy should begin again on specific outstanding issues raised in the draft ISPM.
- IGTC member associations “in-country” should be informed about discussions with their governments that took place in Rome, contact details should be provided where appropriate.
- The IGTC’s Working Group on electronic trading documentation should evaluate the outcomes of the CPM meeting and the leadership role of the IGTC focal points in ePhyto countries should be strengthened.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- CPM 13 agenda
- Outcome document on the issue of “commodity standards”
- Outcome document of the CPM Bureau meeting
- Beginners Guide to the ePhyto Solution published by IPPC