



New Zealand's Strategic Objectives for the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC)

2019-2023

Publisher

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What are we doing?

We are setting out New Zealand's Strategic Objectives for the IPPC 2019-2023 to guide our participation in the IPPC, and to advance our objectives in a clear and transparent manner.

Why are we doing this?

The international trade in plants and plant products is facilitated in accordance with international rules and guidelines. The World Trade Organization's (WTO) Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement) requires that any sanitary and phytosanitary measures that are applied to plant and plant products in relation to international trade are based on international standards, science and risk assessment. The intent behind these standards is that safe international trade is facilitated, while still allowing importing countries to apply appropriate measures to the extent necessary to protect human, animal, or plant life or health.

The IPPC is the international standards setting body for plant health recognised by the WTO. It is a 1951 multilateral treaty placed within the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). It aims to secure coordinated and effective action to prevent and control the introduction and spread of pests and pest plants associated with plants and plant products in international trade. The Convention extends beyond the protection of cultivated plants to the protection of natural flora and plant products. It also takes into consideration both direct and indirect damage by pests, so it includes pest plants (weeds).

The IPPC's broad objectives¹ include:

- protecting sustainable agriculture and enhancing global food security through the prevention of pest spread;
- protecting the environment, forests and biodiversity from plant pests;
- facilitating economic and trade development through the promotion of harmonized scientifically based phytosanitary measures; and
- developing phytosanitary capacity for members to accomplish the preceding three objectives.

As WTO members, we are required to base our measures on these international standards. New Zealand has a world leading reputation for adherence to WTO SPS Agreement principles in that all our (domestic, import and export) SPS requirements are risk-based, proportionate to the specific risks involved and do not create unnecessary technical barriers to trade. These rules are the cornerstone of our international trading arrangements.

Our participation in the IPPC is focused on supporting science² based harmonisation of standards while ensuring consistency with WTO SPS principles. This in turn enhances New Zealand's reputation as a trusted trader and the reputation of our New Zealand Inc. brand. We must take every opportunity to influence and gain maximum value from participation in the IPPC.

¹ Note these objectives will be updated once the IPPC have signed off the new IPPC Strategic Framework (2020-2030).

² Science is the pursuit and application of knowledge and understanding of the natural and social world following a systematic methodology based on evidence. Scientific methodology includes i.e. objective observation: measurement and data, evidence that either supports or disproves active hypotheses, experiment and/or observation as benchmarks for testing hypotheses, induction, reasoning to establish general rules or conclusions drawn from facts or examples, reproducibility, critical analysis and verification.

Additionally, New Zealand’s participation in the IPPC can be used as a platform to address elements of the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the targets that New Zealand (as a United Nations member) has adopted³.



³ The work of the IPPC is directly correlated to several of the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) including:

Goal #1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere.

Goal #2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.

Goal #8: Facilitating sustained economic growth.

Goal #12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.

Goal #13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impact.

Goal #15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

Goal #17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development, in particular, target 17.11: “Significantly increase the exports of developing countries, in particular with a view to doubling the least developed countries’ share of global exports by 2020”.

Strategic Objectives

Strategic Objective 1:

Influence IPPC standards to reflect New Zealand's commitment to rigorous transparent and impartial science-based standards (so called rules-based trade) in the international trade of plants and plant products.

Comment

Harmonised standards simplify trade and provide our trading partners with a common starting point for market access negotiations. Harmonised standards can also reduce the need for multiple bilateral agreements to trade in specific commodities.

How do we do it?

As relevant to MPI's priorities, New Zealand will:

- identify and prioritise areas of importance to New Zealand's trade in plants and plant products, and risks to plant health and the environment, that can be addressed through the IPPC;
- consult with appropriate stakeholders including the plant and plant product sectors, public and plant health experts, and government agencies, on the development of IPPC standards, guidance, tools, and capacity development programmes;
- maintain and develop capacity and capability within MPI;
- lead and participate in strategic planning, working groups, technical panels, ad hoc groups, forums, Committees and Specialist Commissions (including Regional Plant Protection Organisations), in the development of IPPC or regional standards and their implementation; and
- partner with IPPC contracting parties of mutual or common interest to support the development and implementation of IPPC standards.

How do we know if we are successful?

Success indicators

New Zealand can demonstrate it has:

- considered the use of, or is using, the IPPC standards setting process to improve New Zealand's plants and plant products imports and exports systems and to protect plant health and the environment;
- focused on areas of the most importance to New Zealand's plants and plant products system, and to protect plant health and the environment;
- successfully consulted relevant stakeholders, as appropriate, and that stakeholders continue to participate as they see value in the process;
- appropriately resourced and prioritised the work to participate in delivery of the IPPC programme of work;
- provided relevant active support to strategic planning, working groups, technical panels, ad hoc groups, forums, Committees and Commissions in the development of IPPC standards; and
- partnered with trading partners to progress shared interests in developing IPPC standards.

Strategic Objective 2:

Strengthen strategic relationships and alliances.

Comment

Strong strategic relationships both domestically and internationally and alliances are central to getting the most out of New Zealand's input into the IPPC. In addition to maintaining and building on the very strong relationships we have with our key trading partners, we recognise a need to work collaboratively, on the development of IPPC standards with other IPPC contracting parties of growing trade importance.

How do we do it?

- Ensure the IPPC standard development and implementation programme reflects consultation with relevant stakeholders including the plant and plant products sectors, and government agencies, as appropriate.
- Work collaboratively on the development of IPPC standards and implementation programme with our trading partners through forums such as the Plant Health Quadrilaterals group, the regional plant protection commissions/organisations and trading partners.
- Work with trading partners that are seeking support, (particularly within the Asia and Pacific region), to participate more effectively in the IPPC by assisting with capacity and capability development. This includes providing expertise and training opportunities.
- Support and encourage developing countries, (particularly within the region), with IPPC development initiatives.

How do we know if we are successful?

Success indicators

- Consultation is shown to reflect feedback from relevant stakeholders, and stakeholders feel that it is truly a consultative process.
- Have put forward shared proposals or interventions with key trading partners/blocks.
- Risk is managed at the source through initiatives with other IPPC contracting parties, or groups of contracting parties, including but not limited to within Asia, the Far East and Oceania, and the Quads (New Zealand, Australia, Canada and the United States).
- Provided support (including on IPPC development initiatives), expertise and training opportunities to assist developing countries, e.g. responded as appropriately to the increasing demand from IPPC contracting parties for New Zealand to provide expertise in the area of plant pest control.

Strategic Objective 3:

Promoting a strong, efficient and responsive IPPC.

Comment

To be a strong, efficient, and responsive organisation, the IPPC must continue to successfully provide, maintain and assist IPPC contracting parties to implement standards that they use as the foundation on which they build their plant health, import, and export assurance systems.

Improving the provision of timely and expert technical advice from IPPC contracting parties is crucial to decision making and the advancement of the IPPC's work programme, including accessing the expertise needed to develop high quality standards and harmonise their implementation. New Zealand has an interest in ensuring expertise is made available, to maintain high quality standards that uphold WTO SPS principles.

An improvement in the level of adoption of IPPC standards (including their correct application) is expected to have a two-fold effect. It will both ensure a robust plant-based primary sector, facilitate safe trade and protect biodiversity in our environment, and also enhance the role and significance of the IPPC in fostering international trade.

A greater focus on collaborating with other international standard setting bodies is expected to leverage limited resources and ensure efficiencies for stakeholders. Closer collaboration and co-operation should be encouraged between the FAO, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), Codex Alimentarius and other multilateral plant health and environmental protection partnerships and programmes. For example IPPC and Codex have shared an online commenting system, and the IPPC is working with OIE and Codex to see if the ePhyto hub could be used to exchange animal health and food safety certification. IPPC and Codex could consider harmonizing a risk management approach that would be used by both organisations. IPPC and FAO could consider if there were any options for collaboration and co-operation on how trans-boundary pests are managed and controlled.

How do we do it?

Implementation strategies and actions

- Work with other members to find a way to promote a new and sustainable funding model for IPPC activities.
- Supporting the IPPC organisational focus on standard implementation rather than standard setting alone.
- Ensure closer collaboration and co-operation between IPPC and other international standards setting bodies is promoted to achieve benefits.
- Ensure New Zealand has clear priorities, based on primary sector consultation, for our technical participation in standards development and other work programme items, and resources those priorities appropriately.
- Promote and support the use of IPPC standards and WTO SPS Agreement in New Zealand's trade agreements and implementation agreements.

How do we know if we are successful?

Success indicators

New Zealand has:

- worked with other members to consider how to pursue options for greater security of funding for financial support for IPPC activities;
- supported an increased focus on implementation of IPPC standards rather than purely standard setting;
- established clear priorities for its engagement with the IPPC;
- promoted collaboration with other international standards setting bodies to gain efficiencies; and
- made efforts to incorporate IPPC references into bilateral and plurilateral trade agreements and implementing arrangements.



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