CAREC POLICY DIALOGUE ON REGIONAL PEST SURVEILLANCE PROGRAM

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SESSION 4 – Draft Concept Note Regional Pest Surveillance Program

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Outline

- Why Pest Surveillance?
- Challenges faced by National Plant Protection Organisations (NPPOs)
- How regional cooperation can overcome pest surveillance challenges
- Regional Action Plan

Regional Agricultural Trade Setting

The WTO SPS agreement

Trade is often constrained by deficiencies in the basic infrastructure underpinning plant health

Many countries lack technical capacity and resources to:

- Survey for pests to provide baseline data on pest status
- Accurately and rapidly identify pests
- Keep database records of pests and retrieve this information
- Detect and control invasive pests, especially quarantine pests

Categories of pests important for Regional Pest Surveillance Programs

- Pests identified as 'regulated pests' (IPPC*) in one or more countries in the region
 - Quarantine pests
 - Regulated non-quarantine pests
- Emerging pests being considered as regulated pests
 Invasive, non-native, species of potential environmental impact

*International Plant Protection Convention

Why Pest Surveillance?

Pest surveillance impacts on three phytosanitary areas:

- Early exotic pest detection results in emergency action for pest eradication or containment measures
- Pest surveillance for detecting, and/or monitoring pest occurrence is important for establishing and maintaining a Pest Free Area
- Pest surveillance also provides data for pest listing and pest categorisation required for the Pest Risk Analysis (PRA) to provide scientific justification for phytosanitary measures

Types of Pest Surveillance

Specific surveys provide the means for NPPOs to actively gather pest distribution information through structured programs (detection, delimiting, and monitoring surveys)

Plant quarantine inspection officers, trained in sampling and pest detection techniques, are conducting pest surveillance at import entry and export exit points

Challenges faced by NPPOs

- National Legislation not addressing WTO principles expressed in IPPC
- Poor Funding and Sustainability
- Integrating Surveillance Management into industry policies
- Limited Human Resources
- Information Management
- Communication
- Supporting Operations

How Regional Cooperation can overcome Pest Surveillance Challenges

Regional cooperation can address national issues of:

- Strengthening Plant Health Legislation
- Budgetary constraints
- Lack of strategic and operational plans
- Lack of operational guidelines for carrying out pest surveillance
- Lack of properly trained staff
- Difficulties faced by countries on the implementation of International Standards Phytosanitary Measures (ISPM) 6 (Surveillance)

National Legislation

- Countries to work together to harmonise plant health legislation, regulations, policies and approaches where this is appropriate and practicable
- Primary legislation adopting principles of IPPC
- National secondary laws/regulations could be based on a common ISPM framework, where individual countries can then further adapt secondary legislation according to their country's specific legal requirements

Funding and Sustainability

Investment plans for surveillance and diagnosis of regionally significant pests and diseases will form part of national strategies for each agricultural sector

Need a platform for sharing surveillance funding issues and regional case studies on how pest surveillance funding has been supported from government funds and industry funding, particularly for those agriculture sectors where there is large regional trade

Surveillance Management

Country NPPO Surveillance Managers to build government-industry partnerships that will establish stakeholder consultative processes to ensure appropriate consultation with industry and other relevant groups where these processes do not currently exist



Human Resources

Need to ensure adequate numbers of appropriately trained staff through arranging for the compilation of regional training resources



Information Management

Intelligence gathered through sharing and consolidation of surveillance data, science and research findings needs to be available to inform decision making at a regional level, in particular decisions regarding emergency responses to new or emerging surveillance risks



Communication

Best practices with NPPO internal and external communication could be shared among CAREC countries for strengthening their national pest surveillance programs

For national surveillance programs that have been conducted on similar pests in CAREC countries, the lessons learned need to be compiled for regional distribution

Supporting Operations

Pest Risk Analysis Management

Crucial steps needed to be taken for Pest Risk Analysis work are:

- Recognition of the Pest Risk Analysis prompt
- Establishing a PRA Project Team
- Planning Sessions
- Gathering Information
- Conducting the PRA
- Developing a Pest Management Plan

Supporting Operations

Diagnostic Laboratories

Regional cooperation can support plant health diagnostic laboratory capacity through:

- Sharing of scientific expertise in all disciplines relevant to pest identification, including access to specialists for pest verification
- Harmonizing laboratory standard operating procedures
- Strengthening formal arrangements with laboratories in the CAREC region, such as sharing of pest images to assist in pest diagnosis
- Preparation for diagnostic laboratory accreditation
- Harmonizing training in pest diagnostics

Case Study

Australia's plant biosecurity surveillance system

Some of the current issues facing the Australian plant biosecurity surveillance system include:

- An increased threat of plant pests because of the growth in passenger and cargo movements
- An increased need for "evidence of absence data" for high priority pests to satisfy requests from trading partners
- Need for consistent methodologies to underpin surveillance activities across all jurisdictions and industry groups
- Limited capacity of existing regulation to enforce surveillance and compliance activities and meet the WTO Agreement SPS Agreement requirements and agreements
- Lack of knowledge transfer, information sharing and key skill shortages

Pest Surveillance - Key Areas

- Border surveillance (monitoring, risk management, data capture, stakeholder engagement)
- Industry involvement (industry groups invest in pest surveillance)
- Funding (management of post-border surveillance costs)
- Research and development (research organisations, universities, and state agencies)
- Biosecurity legislation, regulation and standards (implementation of relevant IPPC International Standards Phytosanitary Measures)
- Market Access (evidence from formal surveillance programs to support claims of area freedom from a range of quarantine pests and to ensure importing countries' quarantine requirements are met)

CAREC Regional Action Plan

Need to address the following issues:

- How to increase awareness among the member countries on the importance and content of ISPM 6 and other IPPC ISPMs (short-term)
- Where to provide technical assistance to member countries to build their capacities in application of pest surveillance, including specific program training (short-term)
- How to encourage countries to establish crop pest list data base to facilitate information exchange and trade within the region (mediumterm)
- Formulating a list of accredited labs and institutes available for pest identification (long-term)

Indicative timelines: short-term (1-2 years), medium term (1-3 years), long-term (1-5 years)

Recommendation #1

Enhance the national surveillance systems by adopting consistent legislation and regulatory approaches

Actions:

- Facilitate a legislative framework to harmonise and increase consistency of regulatory approaches for plant pest surveillance at a national level to align with the principles and requirements of the IPPC standards (shortterm)
- Support nationally consistent application of legislation by fostering a collaborative approach between industry and government to regulations, compliance and enforcement mechanisms (long-term)
- Ensure activities relating to plant pest surveillance have the necessary legislative backing (medium-term)

Recommendation #2

Establish a regional surveillance information framework

Actions:

- Facilitate development and maintenance of a regional pest surveillance information management system to capture, share and analyse surveillance information across the CAREC region for assisting with decision making and market access issues (longterm)
- Develop a framework to identify and establish priority plant pests and high risk areas based on pest risk analysis (medium-term)
- Establish and communicate minimum standards and protocols for plant pest surveillance to ensure monitoring is done in the right places, on a sound statistical basis, using the best methods, resources and skills (medium-term)
- Develop and maintain a regional market access information package containing relevant trade requirements to assist with the coordination, alignment and planning of plant pest surveillance activities (short-term)
- Facilitate the analysis of risk pathways, using data collected from pre-border intelligence, border inspections and post border surveillance, to update risk management strategies and measures (long-term)

Recommendation #3 Provide mechanisms for coordinating and establishing an integrated CAREC regional plant pest surveillance system and network

Actions:

- Develop and implement regional surveillance policies including guidelines and procedures to facilitate the establishment of risk and science based pest surveillance systems which are consistent with international standards (medium-term)
- Develop and establish regional agreements for funding and managing surveillance activities including infrastructure and capacity building in a collaborative manner (long-term)
- Define capacity requirements and facilitate training to support surveillance activities (short-term)
- Develop work plans defining resources, timeframes, stakeholder responsibilities and communication strategies required to implement principles of the regional cooperation (long-term)