

27th Session of the Committee on Agriculture
Written Correspondence Procedure – inputs from Members (English version)
 Item 4.5 Proposal for an International Day of Plant Health

Member Name	Comments
Costa Rica (Tue 22/09/2020 07:19)	By the means of this communication, the delegation of Costa Rica would like to express its support to the proposal introduced by the delegation of Zambia, regarding the promotion of May 12th as the International Day of Plant Health. The contribution, that such a celebration will add to the efforts of highlighting the importance of Plant Health as a key factor to combat pests and disease, is undeniable. Specially during our times, when the global community gathers to coordinate efforts to stop the mass spread of new and dangerous diseases
Australia Wed (23/09/2020 17:07)	Australia supports the proposal to establish the observance on the 12 May of an International Day of Plant Health and endorses the related draft Conference Resolution. We believe this will provide a very important opportunity annually to raise awareness of the essential role that plant health plays in human health, food security, and trade, and the importance of plant health for maintaining a healthy and productive planet. Australia would like to have a better understanding of the implications on workload of the IPPC Secretariat in the eventual establishment of the International Day of Plant Health. We would also like to understand if there are minimum funding requirements from the UN prior to the Day being declared.
Dominican Republic (Tue 22/09/2020 18:52)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We recognize that the selection of the items relating to International Days and Years are the result of meticulous proposals and selection processes that demonstrate the importance of raising awareness of issues that have limited exposure. • We support the item to protect plant health against pests and diseases, as this is an issue of vital importance, given that pests and diseases are responsible for up to 40 percent of global food crop losses, as well as the effects they have on biodiversity loss and soil health. We also support the initiative of the International Year of the Date Palm. Although we as a country do not grow palms, we recognize and appreciate their contribution to soil sustainability, to the fight against desertification and the extraordinary value that this plant and its fruit provide in terms of calories and nutrients for local consumption and for international trade. • The Dominican Republic therefore accepts the draft resolution and recognition of both the International Day and International Year, which we will support at the next Session of the FAO Council.
Zambia (Wed 23/09/2020 18:03)	Plants make up 80 percent of the food we eat, and produce 98 percent of the oxygen we breathe. Yet, they are under constant and increasing threat from pests and diseases. Every year, up to 40 percent of global food crops are lost to plant pests and diseases. This leads to annual agricultural trade losses of over \$220 billion, leaves millions of people facing hunger, and severely damages agriculture the primary income source for poor rural communities. By preserving plant health, we contribute to food security, environmental protection, economic development, and our own health. Despite their importance, plants are increasingly threatened by the climate crisis, invasive pests and diseases and unregulated movement of people and goods. We need to strengthen the capacity of national, regional and global institutions to develop and implement phytosanitary standards and actions to improve plant health. To raise awareness about the importance of plant health for achieving Zero Hunger and the Sustainable Development Goals, Zambia proposes 12 May the International Day of Plant Health.

Argentina (Wed 23/09/2020 23:05)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Argentina expresses its support for 12 May to be declared “International Day of Plant Health”. 2. It likewise supports the draft conference resolution attached in Annex A to Document COAG/2020/20. 3. It also suggests that a new paragraph be included in the Background which recognizes the contribution that other international instruments can make to plant health, such as the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA). 4. In this respect, it is suggested that, if the COAG takes up the proposed resolution, a paragraph be included in the relevant document for presentation to the Council, which reads: “recognizing the importance of access to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture as a form of developing crops resistant to pests and changing climatic conditions”. This paragraph could be included between paragraphs 26 and 27 in document COAG/2020/20.
Canada (Thu 24/09/2020 14:43)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canada is supportive of raising the profile and awareness of plant health activities worldwide. • A focus on plant health is critical to support food security, environmental sustainability, and the trade of agricultural products • Canada appreciates all efforts to increase awareness on plant health globally and to help civil society and decision-makers understand the importance of protecting the world's plant resources.
Peru (Thu 24/09/2020 10:03)	<p>Having reviewed the document submitted to the members of the Committee on Agriculture, the only comment to make is that we agree with the proposal by the Government of Zambia to establish the observance an International Day of Plant Health (IDPH) to continue to create awareness on the importance and repercussions of plant health in combatting hunger, poverty, threats to the environment and economic development; as well as contributing towards the United Nations Development Goals for 2030.</p> <p>Therefore, I am in favour of issuing the relevant resolution and raising this item to the Secretary-General of the United Nations so that the United Nations General Assembly may consider the possibility of declaring the 12 May the International Day of Plant Health.</p> <p>This issue was agreed at the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), the Commission for Phytosanitary Measures (CPM), the Bureau of the CPM and the International Steering Committee on the International Year on Plant Health. The National Organization for Plant Protection of Peru, (Department of Plant Health) agrees.</p>
China (Thu 24/09/2020 17:32)	<p>China actively supports FAO's efforts in establishing an International Day of Plant Health. The promotion of plant health has been very important for China for a long time. Every year, China organizes a plant health awareness month in order to better inform the public of plant health. In an effort to create a favorable climate for the society as a whole to collectively focus its attention on plant health, China stands ready to participate in activities related to "Plant Health Year" and "Plant Health Day" organized by FAO and the International Plant Protection Convention.</p>
New Zealand (Thu 24/09/2020 18:16)	<p>New Zealand notes that plants account for over 80 percent of the human diet as direct or indirect food supply, including animal feed. Plant pests are responsible for losses of up to 40 percent of global food crops and trade losses exceeding USD 220 billion in agricultural products annually. Therefore, healthy plants are the foundation for all life on earth, ecosystem functions and food security.</p> <p>Promoting and preserving plant health globally is essential to food security and achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular, those aimed at eliminating hunger and malnutrition as well as reducing poverty and threats to the environment.</p> <p>The development and implementation of globally recognized standards and policies including International Standards on Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs) and Commission on Phytosanitary Measures Recommendations adopted under the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) framework contributes to minimizing the risks posed by plant pests and diseases and their management, and facilitating safe international trade of plants and plant products.</p> <p>Recognition, advocacy and support for the promotion of plant health is of paramount importance for protecting global plant</p>

	<p>resources from pests, through developing and implementing ISPMs, improving capacity building for effective phytosanitary systems at international, regional and national level, strengthening international collaboration, and promoting harmonised phytosanitary measures through standard setting.</p> <p>New Zealand has supported the proclamation and observation of International Year of Plant Health (IYPH) 2020. As with many other member nations, New Zealand has organised a range of national activities to increase public awareness of the importance of plant health.</p> <p>New Zealand supports the establishment of the International Day of Plant Health on 12th of May as a legacy of the IYPH, with the purpose of promoting globally recognized standards, policies and sustainable agricultural practices.</p> <p>New Zealand supports the endorsement of the draft Resolution with the intention to submit the proposal for approval by the 165th Session of the FAO Council and adoption by the 42nd Session of the FAO Conference.</p>
Thailand (24/09/2020 23:20)	<p>Thailand endorses the proposal for an International Day of Plant Health on May 12 as per draft Resolution contained in Appendix A of the related document, to be submitted to Council 165 for approval and to Conference 42 for adoption.</p> <p>We encourage the establishment of the IDPH and the implementing actions among all relevant stakeholders that contribute to the preservation of plant resources, as well as the increased awareness of the importance roles of plant health in addressing global issues, including hunger, poverty, threats to the environment and economic development</p>
Mexico (Thu 24/09/2020 09:05)	<p>As well as celebrating the International Year of Plant Health (IYPH), with the aim of encouraging global awareness of how the protection of plant health can help to eliminate hunger, reduce poverty, protect the environment and drive economic development, in this same respect, Mexico will join with the proposal to celebrate an International Day of Plant Health, since, as stated by the United Nations, celebrating International Days gives us the opportunity to raise awareness among the public in general of subjects related to relevant points. It encourages, on the one hand, governments to take action and, on the other, citizens to have a better understanding of the issue.</p>
EU (Thu 24/09/2020 19:00)	<p>2. We are fully aware of the threat of plant pest diseases and their serious effect on food security and nutrition, as they are responsible for a big amount of global food losses. We see also other harmful impacts like climate change that enhance the risks posed by plant pest diseases by decreasing the resilience of crops and spreading invasive species.</p> <p>3. We recognise the importance of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and its International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs) in combating plant pests and diseases by providing globally harmonised guidance for countries to manage pest risks. The International Year of Plant Health (IYPH) 2020 contributes to this important goal, by raising awareness of the crucial challenges we are facing in this sector – despite limitations to public engagement opportunities as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. For all these reasons, we would also support an International Day of Plant Health, in order to continue raising awareness on this important subject.</p> <p>4. We agree that implementation of globally recognised standards and policies contributes to minimizing the environmental risks posed by plant pests and diseases and their management. We encourage FAO to continue to pay due attention to the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) as a means to contribute to the protection of the environment.</p>
USA (Fri 25/09/2020 09:33)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The United States strongly supports Zambia’s proposal. This will be an important initiative to continue raising awareness of plant health worldwide annually. • Invasive plant pests are a major agricultural, environmental, and ecological threat. Every year, a significant portion of the global harvest is lost to plant pests. • The establishment of an International Day of Plant Health would be an important step to address future pest risk challenges that may have serious impacts on food security, the environment, and the global trade system. • The United States looks forward to collaborating with others in establishing this UN proclamation.