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Main features, obligations and benefits under the *Plant Protection Agreement for the Asia and Pacific Region*

OVERVIEW

Plants make up to 80 percent of our daily calories and are responsible for 98 percent of the oxygen we breathe. However, plant pests and diseases cause the loss of up to 40 percent of the yearly global crop production, which cost the global economy over USD 220 billion. Coupled with an estimated need for the world to sustainably produce 50 percent more food by 2050 to feed the increasing global population in the context of natural resource constraints, environmental pollution, ecological degradation and climate change, sustainable plant pest and disease management have a critical role to play.

The [Plant Protection Agreement for the Asia and Pacific Region](#) ("APPPC" or "the Agreement") focuses on preventing, through concerted action, the introduction into and spread within the Asia and Pacific Region of destructive plant diseases and pests.

Initially approved by the FAO Council on 26 November 1955, the Agreement came into force on 2 July 1956. It has undergone several revisions, in 1967, 1979, 1983 and 1999. The Agreement currently has 25 Parties. There are two versions of the Agreement in force – with and without the inclusion of an amendment concerning certain mandatory contributions (the Mandatory Contribution amendment), respectively - for two different sets of Parties – six Parties which have not accepted the Mandatory Contribution amendment and eighteen Parties which have accepted the Mandatory Contribution. The 1999 amendments (i.e."the IPPC and SPS alignment amendment" and "the Leaf Blight amendment") have not entered into force yet. The IPPC and SPS alignment amendment has been accepted by 8 Contracting Parties, and the Leaf Blight amendment by 5 Contracting Parties.

While a standalone treaty, the APPPC is also a "supplementary agreement" under Article III of the International Plant Protection Convention, 1951.

OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives of the APPPC are to: (i) coordinate and promote the development of regional plant protection systems; (ii) assist Parties to develop effective plant protection regimes; (iii) set standards for phytosanitary measures; and (iv) facilitate information sharing.

MAIN ELEMENTS

The APPPC is administered by the Asia and Pacific Plant Protection Commission (the Commission), which consists of representatives of all Parties. The Commission convenes at least once every two years and, to oversee the implementation of APPPC, has established three standing committees, namely: the Standing Committee on plant quarantine; the Standing Committee on integrated pest management; and the Standing Committee on pesticides. The main functions of the Commission include:

- the determination of procedures and arrangements necessary for the implementation of the Agreement and the making of recommendations to the Parties accordingly;
- the review of reports submitted by the Parties of progress in the implementation of the Agreement;
- the consideration of problems requiring cooperation on a regional basis and of measures for mutual assistance.



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POTENTIAL BENEFITS FOR PARTIES

Nations stand to gain various benefits from their adherence to the APPC, as the Agreement:

- Offers a unique platform for senior plant health officials to engage directly with one another. Through in-person meetings at APPC sessions or workshops, officials collaborate on issues of shared concern, including:
 - Regional priorities and work programmes
 - Strategic directions for the future
 - Responses to new pest incursions and outbreaks
 - Trade-related challenges
 - Issues raised during IPPC Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) meetings
- Fosters collaboration amongst specialized officers through regional workshops on focused programmes related to plant quarantine, phytosanitary systems, integrated pest management (IPM), pesticide management, and capacity development.
- Plays a key role in developing regional standards for phytosanitary measures (RSPMs), giving each Party a voice in shaping these standards, and to prioritize issues specific to the region that may not receive global attention. In some cases, these regional standards serve as a foundation for future international standards, ensuring the input of these countries is considered early in the process of developing global standards.
- Provides a forum, in yearly APPC/International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) regional workshops, to review draft International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs), where unified regional perspectives on draft global standards to be adopted under the IPPC are developed and presented.
- Promotes regional positions on matters under consideration at the IPPC's CPM meetings, influencing international outcomes, particularly on issues of importance to the Asia-Pacific region.
- Provides regional training programmes that strengthen biosecurity and food security while providing Parties with new pest control measures, diagnostic and inspection procedures, trading protocols, ISPM, and pesticide management. Parties benefit by participating in training on unfamiliar topics and contributing to programmes where they have expertise.
- Facilitates the harmonization of ISPMs and RSPMs, paving the way to the trade of plants, plant products and plant-related items, thereby simultaneously contributing to the improvement of phytosanitary conditions and regional trade, with positive impact on food security, farmers' revenues and broader ecosystems health.

FOR MORE INFORMATION on the APPC, model instruments for adherence to the APPC and treaty processes in FAO, please contact: treaties@fao.org



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