



## **EXPERT GROUP - PLANT HEALTH AWARENESS RAISING, 8 FEBRUARY 2019, BRUSSELS**

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### **Minutes**

Participants:

MS: all except Luxembourg

COM - DG SANTE: Unit G1 (Plant Health) and 0.2 (Communication)

**Stakeholders:**

1. Welcome to representatives of Member States and stakeholders
2. Commission's platform EUROPHYT COMMUNICATION
3. Leaflet on wood packaging material
4. Information for travellers and postal services
5. Preparation of plant health awareness raising activities at EU and Member States level during the International Year for Plant Health - 2020

Encl.: Report of the Expert Group meeting on Plant Health Awareness Raising on 28/09/2018

The Commission welcomed the representatives of Member States (MS) and the stakeholders, highlighting the importance to have a common discussion on plant health issues in these crucial months ahead of the application of the new legislation and in preparation for the international year of plant health in 2020 (IYPH).

#### **Commission's platform EUROPHYT COMMUNICATION:**

Presentation of the platform: purpose, access and different folders.

MS suggested having a dedicated folder for green spaces and the activities related to the international year of plant health. They also suggested facilitating the search of information by relevant key words (e.g. professionals, general public, children).

A discussion took place on the possibility to upload under the folder on wood packaging material a list of the operators authorized to apply the ISPM15 mark. Due to privacy issues and the risk of facilitating fraudulent duplication of marks, it was agreed to only publish a contact point for each MS, responsible for the list of authorized operators.

Member States and EU Stakeholders were invited to share with the Commission relevant material on plant health communication to be uploaded on the platform for further distribution.

### **Leaflet on wood packaging material**

The Commission presented the content of the WPM draft factsheet, inviting MS to comment on it. The target audience are trade partners who need to be informed of the EU import requirements for WPM the new emergency measures and horizontal rules under the official control regulation.

It will also be translated in Chinese and Russian.

Three options were presented for the factsheet:

- an EU official document (in PDF).

- an EU document with a specific editable section for contact points from the MS, national logos and further information.

an editable template for MS use (NB. This would not be a EU document and would not carry the EU/EC logo)

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MS welcomed the factsheet and expressed their preference to have it translated in all the EU official languages.

CLECAT (representing EU freight forwarders): said they would be in favour of a customized factsheet and requested information on Brexit.

The Commission explained that as the situation with Brexit is not yet clear, the factsheet might be amended/updated at a later stage.

Action: The Commission will send a word version of the factsheet for the inclusion of MS comments in track-changes, preferably in one of the Commission working languages. After the consultation exercise, there will be a consolidated factsheet. Deadline for reacting to the factsheet: 28 February.

### **Information for travelers and postal services**

The Commission informed that the awareness raising video for passengers– in the format of an animation and with subtitles in all EU languages- will be ready before the summer.

A discussion took place on the fares paid or to be paid to airlines and airport authorities, in order to have the video distributed and screened in planes and at entry points in the EU.

Some MS pointed out how important it is to have available information for passengers at ports and airports. In addition, travel agencies and websites could be used for disseminating the video.

The Commission also invited the MS to disseminate the final product via their social media channels.

A question was raised on possible penalties that MS can apply to passengers not complying with the rules. COM recalled that financial penalties are a competence of MS, under the general indications of the official control regulation (OCR).

On article 45 of Regulation (EU) 2016/2031 on plant health, there is the empowerment for the Commission to develop posters for travellers and postal service information. That communication material will be prepared, translated and distributed by September this year.

The Commission suggested adding a link to the EPPO poster in DG SANTE's website. EPPO

informed about recently published Chinese and Arabic versions of the EPPO poster. COM informed about a parallel ongoing discussions under the OCR regarding information for food of animal origin.

### **Preparation of plant health awareness raising activities at EU and Member States level during the International Year for Plant Health – 2020**

The Commission presented the state of play of the consultation launched by the Austrian presidency of the Council in November 2018. Few MS reacted to the consultation. From the EU side, a clear focus on plant health will be maintained, without the inclusion of any discussion on plant protection products.

Many MS presented their suggestions for the activities to be organized:

- Art competitions with plant health as topic
- Plant health activities within international fairs (e.g. Green Week in Berlin or Salon de l'Agriculture in Paris)
- Promotion of success stories (e.g. eradication of *Anoplofora* in Austria)
- Production of educational material to be used in language classes
- Synergies with FAO and EPPO
- Involvement of political actors (MEPs, Ministers...)
- Festivals and open days at the phytosanitary facilities

FAO will provide the logo of the IYPH and guidelines in the coming months.

EPPO informed about a standard for supporting NPPO with emerging pests or quarantine pests, containments and eradication campaigns. It will be approved by September and then distributed.

Following a suggestion by some MS, depending on the needs, COM could organize dedicated webinars of the expert group between subsequent meetings.

Overall, for the promotion of the activities of awareness raising, the EUROPHYT platform has to be improved and organized in order to facilitate the exchange of views between members (use of the Forum tool). Some MS stressed the importance of the communication exercise on the new plant health regulation, since the date of application is approaching.

*Action:* MS and Stakeholders comments are expected by 28 of February.