



## ANTI-MICROBIAL RESISTANCE (AMR)

### 1. Background

- [1] Anti-Microbial Resistance (AMR) is a very dynamic area that requires multi-sectoral response. At the international level, AMR has gained increasing attention due to its recognized impact on human, and animal health, as well as potential risks to environmental health.
- [2] The health and economic costs of AMR are significant and further compounded by a growing global population with rising food demands. Resistant bacteria and their genes cross species barriers and geographic borders, and have impacts across sectors such that by 2050, AMR may strip the global economy of more than \$6 trillion dollars annually – nearly 4% of Gross Domestic Product. Aware of this, the UN General Assembly approved a resolution<sup>1</sup> to ensure sustained and effective global action to address AMR. This resolution mandated the establishment of an [Inter-Agency Coordination Group](#) (IACG) on Antimicrobial Resistance, in consultation with the World Health Organization (WHO), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE). The IACG's mandate is to provide practical guidance for approaches needed to ensure sustained effective global action to address antimicrobial resistance; and to report to the UN Secretary-General in 2019. In a recent FAO/WHO (in collaboration with OIE) scientific advice meeting<sup>2</sup>, experts agreed that there is clear scientific evidence indicating that foods of plant origin may serve as a vehicle of foodborne AMR. As such, concerted efforts should be made to mitigate their contamination at all stages of the food chain, from production to consumption. This should also include work on improving and controlling plant health.
- [3] The focus of the international AMR action has recently shifted from the management and use of antimicrobials for humans, animals and crops, towards an increased interest on prevention through good agricultural practices. There is an increasing understanding of the importance of prevention of pests and diseases to reduce the need for antimicrobials in agriculture. In this context, the role and activity of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) Secretariat, CPM subsidiary bodies and contracting parties to the IPPC becomes instrumental to contribute to the fight against AMR. In fact, the International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs) adopted by the CPM play a very relevant role in helping countries to improve their plant health status through plant surveillance, pest eradication and control, among other activities. ISPMs contribute to strengthening the capacities of National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPO) in the prevention and control of plant pests and, in doing so, they play a role in reducing the need for antimicrobials. This can contribute to reduce the burden and development of AMR in agriculture and food. In this sense, the IPPC and the ISPMs become an important element of the global action against AMR.
- [4] The increasing understanding on the role of plant health has resulted in the realization that references to plant health should be adequately present in global AMR documents, including FAO, IACG and tripartite (FAO, WHO, OIE) documents. To this end, it would be important to ensure that the plant health perspectives are accurately and sufficiently captured in these references.

### 2. Considerations

- [5] FAO has recently sent a letter to the CPM Chair (FAO letter: Annex 1, reply Annex 2 to this paper) requesting the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) help address the global issue of Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) as a priority. This would involve incorporating the IPPC community's legal and management frameworks, experience and network on preventing the introduction and spread of

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<sup>1</sup> [A/RES/71/3](#)

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/agms/pdf/Other\\_Scientific\\_Advice/FAO\\_WHO\\_AMR\\_Summary\\_report\\_June2018.pdf](http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/agms/pdf/Other_Scientific_Advice/FAO_WHO_AMR_Summary_report_June2018.pdf)

plant pests into the FAO AMR initiative and help reduce the use of antimicrobials. If supported, FAO would like to request the technical support and participation of the staff from the IPPC Secretariat in the FAO interdepartmental working group on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR WG), as well as the involvement of CPM subsidiary bodies into related activities as needed. Established in 2015, the AMR WG is composed of all the different FAO technical divisions and regional offices that have a role to play in preventing and containing AMR. From early stages of the WG activity, the FAO departments in charge of plant production, including the pesticide risk-reduction team, as well as the departments in charge of environmental health and soil quality have been engaged on the activities of the group, but there is still a gap in supporting the group from the perspective of plant health.

[6] With this understanding, the purpose of this request is to:

- Identify a role for the IPPC community, the IPPC Secretariat, contracting parties, CPM, NPPOs and Regional Plant Protection Organizations (RPPO) and associated networks, in the global fight to curb AMR;
- Request the support of staff from the IPPC Secretariat to the work of the AMR WG, particularly in relation to global documents that include references to plant protection, to ensure that these are fully consistent and aligned with the IPPC and its ISPMs.
- Propose that a side event on AMR is organized in the framework of CPM-14 in April 2019, to discuss with the members of the CPM the importance of plant health in curbing AMR.
- To encourage the IPPC community, including the CPM, RPPOs and particularly contracting parties (NPPOs) to participate in the formulation of the National Action Plans to combat AMR, as well as in the national self-assessment AMR questionnaires distributed by the tripartite. For this purpose, the communication channels of the IPPC Community would be instrumental to spread AMR messages and gathering AMR-related data.

[7] The IPPC Secretariat notes these concerns and recognizes the importance of this issue and if given a priority by the CPM would need the CPM to reflect carefully on how limited resources should be utilized and which other activities should be given lower priority.

### 3. Decision points

[8] The SPG is invited to:

- (1) *consider* to what level the CPM should be involved in Anti-Microbial Resistance (AMR) efforts.
- (2) *develop* a discussion paper for CPM with recommended decisions on how the IPPC Community should be involved in addressing Anti-Microbial Resistance, including, as appropriate, assigning a champion from within the IPPC Community.

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Our Ref.:

Your Ref.:

Rome, 9 August 2018

Dear Mr Trujillo,

This letter is to request the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) to engage with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to help address the global threat of Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR).

At the international level, AMR has gained increasing attention due to its potential impact, not only on human, animal and environmental health, but also on world trade. The health and economic costs of AMR are significant and further compounded by a growing global population with rising food demands. Resistant bacteria and their genes cross species barriers and geographic borders, and have impacts across sectors such that by the year 2050, AMR may strip the global economy of more than USD 6 trillion dollars annually – nearly 4% of global Gross Domestic Product. Aware of this, the UN General Assembly approved a resolution<sup>1</sup> to ensure sustained and effective global action to address AMR.

An FAO Conference Resolution of 2015 called on FAO to provide capacity building for sustainable food production systems that prevent diseases through good agriculture practices, including good plant production management, and furthermore to ensure that all relevant parts of the Organization are actively engaged in promoting work on combatting AMR. To lead this work, an AMR Working Group (AMR WG) was established comprised of focal points from all the different FAO technical divisions and regional offices that have a role to play in preventing and containing AMR across crop, fisheries and livestock sectors, and other specialist disciplines.

The focus of the international AMR actions has recently shifted from management and use of antimicrobials for humans, animals and plants, towards prevention of emergence and spread of AMR through good production practices and environmental protection. In this context, International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs), adopted by the CPM, play a relevant role by helping countries to prevent the introduction of pests and improve and maintain their plant health and thereby reduce the need for using antimicrobials, decreasing the risks of AMR.

With this understanding, the purpose of this letter is **to seek your agreement to launch a process of consultation** in order to identify a role for the IPPC community, the IPPC Secretariat, contracting parties, CPM, National and Regional Plant Protection Organizations (NPPO / RPPO) and associated networks, in the global fight to curb AMR, and to ensure that future global measures are in line with the IPPC and ISPMs.

Mr Francisco Javier TRUJILLO ARRIAGA  
Director General de Sanidad Vegetal  
CPM Chairperson

<sup>1</sup> [A/RES/71/3](#)


To this end we propose:

- A series of meetings of member(s) of the IPPC Secretariat with the FAO AMR WG to identify the role for the IPPC community in addressing AMR.
- That a side event on AMR is organized in the framework of CPM-14 in April 2019, to enable direct engagement between the FAO AMR WG and members of the CPM on opportunities for collaboration, at international and national levels, in curbing AMR.

I hope that this letter has generated your interest in exploring, with FAO, the role and relevance of the IPPC Community for AMR management.

I myself, and the members of the AMR WG, remain at your disposal if further clarification is needed.

Yours sincerely,



Juan Lubroth  
FAO Coordinator on AMR  
FAO Chief Veterinary Officer

## Annex 2

**RESPONSE FROM CPM CHAIR TO FAO, 2018-08-15**

*Dear Juan Lubroth,*

*FAO Coordinator on AMR, FAO Chief Veterinary Officer*

*I welcome your invitation for the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures to engage with FAO, to address the global threat of Antimicrobial Resistance. This is a subject that I keep listening frequently about in my country, from veterinary groups; although with limited practical relevance on my side, because, at least in the Mexican experience, the use of antibiotics for purposes of plant protection is practically null. To the best of my knowledge, a similar situation applies for some member countries of CPM. However, I gather from your letter, that you are acquainted with different situations in which use of antibiotics in plant production, is a reality. This scenario gives enough reason to engage, in the best of CPM's capabilities, despite availability of limited resources.*

*I can see that the subject of AMR could be adopted as a Recommendation of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures, in a similar fashion that the CPM adopted for methyl bromide not long ago, to assist the outcomes of the Montreal Protocol. Either through a process of consultation, a CPM side session, or any other procedure alike, CPM will be in the position to carry on activities which could become a Recommendation that could be in place, in the course of two or three years.*

*Your initiative to start a conversation between IPPC Secretariat with the FAO AMR WG is well taken. One of the outcomes of this conversation could result in a side event in a forthcoming CPM.*

*Thanks for your initiative to consider CPM to engage in this endeavor,*

*Sincerely,*

*Javier Trujillo  
CPM Chair*

*Dr. Francisco Javier Trujillo Arriaga,  
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