

THE PHYTOSANITARY CONFERENCE 2020

Theme: "Enhancing Phytosanitary Systems for healthy plants, safe and sustainable trade"

Dates: 14th to 18th September 2020

Venue: KEPHIS Headquarter, Oloolua Ridge-Karen,
Nairobi, Kenya

INTRODUCTION

Globally pests and diseases are known to affect production of crops and reduce productivity by 33% on average resulting in loss of income and disruptions of international markets, thus affecting trade between countries. To discuss and address such challenges; phytosanitary conferences have been used to offer forums for exchange amongst stakeholders. Two such conferences have already been organized in the year 2016 and 2018. It is envisaged that in 2020 another international phytosanitary conference will be held in line with International Year of Plant Health 2020. KEPHIS as the organizer of these Phytosanitary Conferences notes that the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) specifies that contracting parties agree to cooperate in the development of international standards. Consequently the IPPC has established a programme to develop and adopt "International Standards on Phytosanitary Measures" (ISPM). The convention makes also provision for application of phytosanitary measures by governments to protect their plant resources from harmful pests which may be introduced through international trade. Phytosanitary measures include any legislation, regulations or official procedure aimed at preventing the introduction and spread of harmful pests.

The UN General Assembly in December 2018 adopted a resolution proclaiming 2020 as the International Year of Plant Health (IYPH). The IYPH is expected to increase awareness among the public and policy makers on the importance of healthy plants and the necessity to protect them in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Moreover, the resolution will help push the Global food security and nutrition agenda which is in line with one of the Government of Kenya Big Four agendas on "Food security and nutrition". The International Year of Plant Health is a key initiative to highlight the importance of plant health for enhanced food security, protecting the environment and biodiversity, and boosting economic development. Despite the increasing impact of plant pests and diseases, resources are still scarce to address the problem. It is hoped that the new International Year of Plant Health will trigger greater global collaboration to support plant health policies at all levels, which will contribute significantly to the Sustainable Development Agenda.

Therefore, it is proposed that an International Phytosanitary Conference be held from 14th to 18th September, 2020 as part of marking the International Year of Plant Health 2020. As such, the conference will give KEPHIS a wide recognition and high visibility both locally and internationally. Therefore, KEPHIS/COPE have planned for this International Phytosanitary Conference in 2020 in Nairobi dubbed "International Phytosanitary Conference 2020" whose theme is "Enhancing Phytosanitary Systems for healthy plants, safe and sustainable trade". The venue will be KEPHIS headquarters. This will be the 3rd phytosanitary conference which will allow phytosanitary practitioners in Africa and beyond to share their own phytosanitary experiences and challenges.

The International Year of Plant Health (IYPH) 2020 offers opportunity to raise global awareness on how protecting plant health can help end hunger, reduce poverty, protect the environment and boost economic development. It is imperative to note

that healthy plants constitute the foundation for all life forms on earth, making up the oxygen we breathe and over 80% of the food we eat. Plant health is the key to sustainable intensification of agriculture to feed the growing global population by 2050. Thus, recognition, advocacy, and support for the promotion of plant health is of paramount importance if the international community is to guarantee plant resources for a food secure world based on stable and sustainable ecosystems. In line with IYPH 2020, some of the messages that will be part of the conference are:

- The need to pay attention to existing exotic pests like Fall Army Worm (FAW), Maize Lethal Necrosis Disease (MLND), *Tuta absoluta*, tomato leafminer, Fruit Flies (*Bactrocera dorsalis* complex) and new emerging pests such as tropical Race 4 of fusarium wilt of bananas.
- The need to focus on native pests that may become pests of international importance due to their increased value in agriculture such as False Codling Moth (FCM).
- Increasing importance of exotic invasive weeds which impact on local agriculture competitiveness but also may have impact on trade, e.g. Parthenium weed, Dodder weed.
- Developing effective strategies for increasing funding to agricultural sector. For example, under CAADP policy framework, agriculture in Africa is expected to grow by 6%, national budgets to agriculture at 10% and funding to agricultural research at 1% of GDP. These targets are yet to be achieved by most African countries, which hinders realisation of expected domestic food production to feed an ever growing population.
- Mainstream Plant health in the activities of CAADP, NEPAD and other initiatives.
- What needs to be done as climate change is having a big impact on plant health; it threatens to reduce both the quality and quantity of crops leading to lower yields.

The Objectives of the conference are: 1- to celebrate the International Year of Plant Health in 2020, 2- to provide an opportunity to share achievements and challenges; create linkages; promote market access and identify potential areas of cooperation on phytosanitary regulation at regional and international levels. The thematic areas are: 1- International year of plant health 2020, 2- pest Surveillance, import and export controls, 3- pest diagnostics, Technologies and Innovation, 4- Industry views/Agricultural export business, 5- Emerging Phytosanitary Issues including Biosecurity issues, capacity building including Phytosanitary capacity evaluation, Pest Risk Analysis (PRA), Plant variety development and seed certification in Phytosanitary systems, food safety & phytosanitary systems and communication. A practical field day and exhibitions will be held during the conference.

Over 300 participants are expected from government, policy makers and horticultural industry. The conference is open to NPPOs from Africa and beyond, Government bodies (food safety, agricultural policy, horticulture, extension), National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS), Farmer and exporter organizations, FAO, Donor agencies, and individual participants among others. The language of communication during the conference will be English.