

**MULTILATERAL TRADE
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THE URUGUAY ROUND**

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TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IN THE FIELD OF PLANT PROTECTION

Paper Submitted by FAO

The IPPC provides for the establishment of national plant protection organizations with clearly described duties. FAO operates a substantial programme of technical assistance to developing countries to establish plant protection capabilities. Projects are funded from many resources. The main funding agencies are UNDP and bilateral donors for long-term assistance and the Technical Cooperation Programme of FAO for short-term assistance (not exceeding one year). The projects cover all aspects of plant protection, from regional co-operation on locust control to the implementation of Integrated Pest Management, pesticide regulation and legislation, plant quarantine and general infrastructural assistance. The total size of projects that are chiefly addressing plant protection is in the order of US\$35 million per annum and covers many developing countries. Projects that deal exclusively with plant quarantine exist in several countries, e.g. Madagascar, Ethiopia, Republic of Korea and Cyprus (long-term assistance) and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, Iraq, Dominican Republic and Malaysia (short-term assistance). In total, over the last ten years, FAO provided assistance through sixty-eight projects to fifty-nine different countries. Several developed countries also provide direct bilateral assistance in the field of plant protection. Lists of active and completed multilateral and bilateral plant protection projects are available from FAO.

Assistance in plant quarantine concerns institutional support and consists of training, expert services, equipment, advice on plant protection legislation, execution of surveys, etc.

In the future, stricter application of harmonization, sound scientific evidence and notification and counter-notification procedures will require a higher level of capabilities in importing and exporting developing countries. Harmonization of the principles of quarantine legislation and regulations will require a review of existing legislation in most countries. The application of strict rules on sound scientific evidence for regulations, restrictions and prohibitions will require very substantial technical assistance to countries. Many countries will not be in a position to do the risk assessment required, whilst for many countries surveys will be needed to ascertain the status of quarantine pests.

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For exporting countries, inspection and treatment procedures will have to be considerably strengthened to meet the requirements of importing countries. To establish that certain areas or certain countries are free of specific pests, elaborate survey and trapping schemes are required which are often beyond the technical and financial capabilities of the countries concerned.

All activities indicated above require a substantive infrastructure. This infrastructure will exist in many developed countries. Although assistance may indeed support the establishment of these services in developing countries, its sustainability after the cessation of the assistance is questionable. Services to meet the demands for export may be covered by levies; however, the provision of sound scientific evidence for each and every import regulation will require an infrastructure that will be difficult to fund from the resources of the country. Obviously, developing countries will have priorities other than the maintenance of large infrastructures for the justifications of import controls.

Some solutions are found in regional and global co-operation on the determination of pests of quarantine significance. However, a substantial increase of activities would also be required at regional and global levels to meet the concerns of exporting countries.

It remains doubtful, however, that all demands for scientific evidence can be met in the future. At least a transition phase is needed in which rules for sound scientific evidence are flexible to allow importing countries to avoid risk to their crops and natural vegetation.