

Travel Milestone Report for CRCNPB June 2008

Travel applicant:

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Travel Proposal Title:

Attendance at meeting of the International Plant Protection Convention's Technical Panel on Diagnostic Protocols (TPDP)

Main objective and purpose of the travel/visit and how does it relate to the objectives of the CRCNPB?

To attend the International Plant Protection Convention's Technical Panel on Diagnostic Protocols (TPDP) annual meeting 2 - 6 June 2008 Braunschweig, Germany.

This activity relates to CRCNPB objective "preparedness for and prevention of establishment of nationally significant target organisms..." Diagnostic protocols will provide rapid identification of emergency plant pests in order to decrease the cost of eradication and impacts through rapid response.

Dr Malipatil is a member of TPDP as a discipline lead to cover quality assurance issues with particular reference to entomology and acarology, and is the only member from Australia. The panel meets once a year and comprises seven members serving as discipline leads as well as informally representing major regions, and one member serving as steward – functioning as link between TPDP and Standards Committee (SC). The strategic support to the panel and the annual meeting is provided by the IPPC Secretariat.

Major tasks of the TPDP include - producing diagnostic protocols for specific pests; identifying priorities for specific protocols to be developed and submitted to the Standards Committee (i.e. availability of existing regional standards and/or protocols used by individual countries, suggestions for new protocols and criteria for clarification and agreement on diagnosis); determining the mechanism for production of protocols and any rules of procedure; proposing flexibility within specific protocols for a range of methodologies for different situations.

The main agenda items that were discussed during this meeting were –

1. Reports of the last meeting, update on meetings of the CPM and SC, and report on the work of EPPO diagnostic panel
2. Procedures adopted at CPM-3 - hierarchy of terms, general considerations for standard setting, standard setting procedure (Annex I of the Rules of Procedure of CPM), procedure and criteria for identifying topics for inclusion in the IPPC standard setting work programme, terms of reference and rules of procedure of technical panels
3. Diagnostic protocol for *Thrips palmi* - finalization of protocol for member consultation (based on process decided by CPM-3), determination of horizontal issues arising from Australia's, Japan's and EU comments (and from previous TPDP meetings) needing to be taken into account in other draft protocols and reported to SC
4. Proposed changes to TP procedures (to ensure consistency with CPM-3 decisions) - instructions for authors, checklist for diagnostic protocol leads, working procedure, criteria for prioritization of protocols, Australia's comments on the process
5. Update on the development of diagnostic protocols (DP) - general overview with reports on individual DPs by discipline leads, review of experts associated with the work programme, composition of the technical panel, new terms and possible members needed based on SC decision on overlap, referees for protocols expected to be completed in 2008-

2009, update of authors and editorial board information, including approval of new nominations

6. Scrutiny of other draft protocols - *Trogoderma granarium*, *Anastrepha* spp., *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus*, *Xanthomonas axonopodis* pv. *Citri*, *Xanthomonas fragariae*, *Erwinia amylovora*, *Tilletia indica*, *Guignardia citricarpa*, *Phytophthora ramorum*

7. QA issues related to DPs - combination of methods, use of the terms sensitivity/specificity/reliability, validation of methods, ring testing, general discussion on possible guidance for national reference laboratories

8. Priorities for new protocols

9. Work plan for 2008-2009

Dr Malipatil actively participated and contributed to discussions on several agenda items that were relevant to his expertise, as well as to some general issues listed above. He also led a discussion session on quality assurance with reference to entomology and acarology. Mali, as co-discipline lead for entomology and acarology, has lead responsibility for diagnostic protocols that are currently under preparation on *Bactrocera dorsalis* and Tephritidae larval molecular diagnostics, also the ones being considered for preparation in future years on *Ips* spp and *Dendroctonus ponderosae*. Each of these DP is being (or will be) prepared by a 3 or 4 member team of international specialist editors / authors appointed by the IPPC TPDP. Because of his considerable expertise Mali was selected as lead author of a protocol proposed for *Liriomyza* leafminers with an international specialist / editorial team. He was nominated to assist with the refereeing of the revised instructions to authors of diagnostic protocols for regulated pests, and also two of the protocols under development on *Thrips palmi* and *Trogoderma granarium*.

Most of the above mentioned pests / pest groups are exotic significant target organisms in Australia, hence are of considerable quarantine / biosecurity significance. The various QA issues related to DPs, such as validation of methods, sensitivity /specificity/reliability, combination of methods, ring testing that were discussed at this meeting are of considerable relevance and interest to plant health diagnostic activities in Australia, including those of Subcommittee on Plant Health Diagnostic Standards (SPHDS). SPHDS in the long term aims to establish, implement and monitor professional and technical standards within Australia's plant health diagnostic laboratories through the development and maintenance of an accreditation system, and national diagnostic standards for emergency plant pests.

Dr Malipatil's representation in and contribution to TPDP meeting as detailed above was made possible through this travel funding from CRC Plant Biosecurity (CRCTP046). Diagnostic protocols and their issues discussed and resolved at this meeting will directly contribute towards improving Australia's capability in rapid identification of emergency plant pests, and to the CRCNPB objective "preparedness for and prevention of establishment of nationally significant target organisms..."

Date and duration of proposed travel:

Travel Destination Braunschweig, Germany

Start date 30 May 2008 Finishing date 09 June 2008

How will this trip advance/benefit the applicant's career?

This trip has benefited Dr Malipatil's career by providing him an international exposure as well as opportunities for the development of interactions and collaborations with international experts in areas including quality assurance issues relating to diagnostic protocols of entomological pests in particular.

Mali's technical specialist role and participation in this international panel and meeting has provided him an insight into the processes and issues associated with the diagnostic protocols of exotic pests at an international level. This will be utilised for improving Australia's

preparedness for exotic incursions and ensure that protocols developed in Australia meet international standards.

What are the expected outcomes/benefits for the Australian Plant Biosecurity system?

The expected outcomes / benefits for the APBS are via the development of an improved overall capability in producing diagnostic protocols for specific pests of quarantine significance to Australia; improved mechanisms in identifying priorities for specific protocols to be developed and submitted to the Standards Committee; improved mechanisms for production of protocols and any rules of procedure; and quality assurance issues relating to diagnostic protocols being / to be developed.

Budget:

The total trip expenditure was within the approved budget.

Analysis of likely opportunities/long-term collaborations for the CRC NPB:

Likely opportunities / long-term collaborations for the CRC NPB would be in activities relating to the development of diagnostic protocols for major exotic threats, also with relevant plant health bodies in overseas countries in developing plant health priorities.