

Guide to implementing international standards for phytosanitary measures in the forest sector

Concept Note

Background and rationale

Prevention and management of pests (including pathogens, insects and other invasive species) plays a key role in ensuring forest health and meeting sustainable forestry objectives. The International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) is an international treaty to encourage harmonization of action to prevent the introduction and spread of quarantine pests of plants and plant products, and to promote appropriate measures for their containment or eradication. The IPPC develops guidelines for national programmes, as well as mechanisms for the exchange of technical information at an international level.

International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs) provide guidance on forest health, monitoring, and the safe movement of trees, tree seeds, wood and wood products (including wood packaging materials) both nationally and internationally. The ISPMs are developed and adopted through an international consultative process, and provide a technically justified basis upon which countries may establish appropriate phytosanitary measures.

Under the framework of the IPPC, national plant protection organizations (NPPOs) are responsible for the implementation of ISPMs. NPPOs may operate as separate agencies, often linked to agricultural authorities and therefore may be distant from those responsible for forest management, who in turn may have little or no understanding of ISPMs. Therefore, while ISPMs apply to forest health issues, the administrative distinction between the forest and plant protection sectors may not fully reflect the particular characteristics of forest pest risk and may inhibit the practical implementation of ISPMs in the forest sector.

An explanation of the existing ISPMs using language and examples applicable to the forest sector is envisaged to improve communication and ensure the effective application of ISPMs within the forest sector. This will assist NPPOs and forestry policy-makers, planners and managers, thereby enabling them to provide relevant phytosanitary information and support to the NPPOs and stakeholders. This explanatory material will be based on the guidelines contained in the ISPMs and clarify how forestry agencies can utilize the existing international framework for plant health established under the IPPC to contribute towards global cooperation in forest health.

Objective

Develop a written guide, *Guide to implementing international standards for phytosanitary measures in the forest sector*, to clarify how existing ISPMs apply to forestry. The Guide should interpret the standards relevant to international forestry pest risks into the appropriate terminology and framework of forest health, outlining how generic principles, such as pest risk analysis and surveillance, can be applied by forest health agencies and forest managers at all levels. It should provide practical examples of the application of ISPMs in forestry.

Scope

The Guide will build upon ISPMs and, when available, explanatory documents approved by the Standards Committee of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures and will focus on the practical application of the standards in the forest sector.

Major outputs

- A written guide, *Guide to implementing international standards for phytosanitary measures in the forest sector*, which places ISPMs in the context of forest health. The document will provide interpretation of glossary definitions in the forestry context as well as explanations on:
 - pest risk analysis of forestry pests;
 - determination of pest status and methods for surveillance relevant to forest pests;
 - the application of the concepts of pest free areas, pest free places of production, pest free production sites and areas of low pest prevalence in forestry;
 - export certification of wood and non-wood products;
 - establishment of import controls for wood and non-wood products;
 - inspection of wood and non-wood products;
 - determination of equivalence of phytosanitary measures for different wood and non-wood products;
 - pest reporting, notification of non-compliance and emergency action;
 - forest pest surveillance, eradication and long-term management.
- Training material to support programmes and workshops that promote communication between forestry agencies and NPPOs.

Main activities and process

To initiate the activities a core group of forest health specialists (see Annex 1), some with extensive knowledge of and experience with ISPMs as well as those unfamiliar with the language of the standards, have been engaged in a continuous e-mail consultation (October 2008-March 2009). The e-mail consultations focus on the following issues:

- outlining the purpose, scope, objectives, target audience, etc. of the Guide;
 - discussing best methods and approach for preparing the Guide;
 - developing a plan of action for the drafting process;
 - deciding upon and prioritizing the forestry-related ISPMs and related information to be discussed in the Guide;
 - developing the content of the guide and drafting an outline for the document;
 - selecting portions of the document outline to prepare a draft based on recommendations and guidance from the core group.
- The chosen topics of the Guide will be drafted by the Coordinator in collaboration with the IPPC Secretariat (March-May 2009)
 - A core group meeting will be held in Rome (May 2009) to:
 - review the drafted portions of the Guide in consultation with the IPPC Secretariat;
 - further refine the preparation process and the draft outline;
 - discuss best methods for explaining and presenting information on ISPMs to the target audiences.
 - Meeting follow-up and preparation of first draft of the Guide will be prepared by the Coordinator and the IPPC Secretariat with the support of a drafting committee selected during the core group meeting (June-December 2009)

- A meeting will be held to review and discuss the first draft. As well as core group members, participants will include the private and public sectors as potential users of the guide (February 2010)
- The draft document will be finalized as a Working Paper for presentation to the next Committee on Forestry (COFO) meeting for Committee decisions on appropriate actions to be taken (October 2010).
- Workshop and training materials will be developed for regional and national training workshops, with involvement of participants from both the forest sector and NPPOs (2011).
- A workshop will be held to test the Guide and to facilitate greater linkage between NPPOs, the forest sector and other key stakeholders such as environmental agencies, regional invasive species networks, non-governmental organizations, etc. (2011).

Beneficiaries

By demonstrating the applicability of ISPMs to forestry, the Guide will benefit both the forest sector and NPPOs. Forest management decision-makers, particularly in developing countries, will benefit by gaining increased understanding of decisions taken to protect forest health. Increased collaboration at a national level between forestry and plant protection ministries will strengthen the coherence of national, regional and international environmental management practices.

Legal status

ISPMs are not legally binding and are intended only to provide guidance to NPPOs. This Guide will therefore have no legal status.

References

The *Guide to implementing international standards phytosanitary in the forest sector* will be based upon the International Plant Protection Convention, adopted ISPMs and their respective explanatory documents. These materials are available online:

<https://www.ippc.int/id/13399?language=en>

In addition, the Guide will consider:

- the identification of risks and management of pests using the IPPC framework;
- pest risk analysis training material developed by the International Pest Risk Analysis Advisory Group (based on ISPMs);
- relevant guidance developed by International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO), Global Invasive Species Programme (GISP), CAB International (CABI), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and other organizations;
- guidance and input provided by the International Forestry Quarantine Research Group (IFQRG).

Planned Inputs

Collaboration will draw upon in-kind contributions from the core group of experts*, support from the FAO Forestry Department and the IPPC Secretariat.

* It is anticipated that the core group could also play an advisory (observer status) role for new ISPMs under development and those under revision through participation in IFQRG, IUFRO, and IPPC bodies (Standards Committee, Glossary group, TPFQ, etc.).

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