

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

Summary note

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Rome, Italy

- 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.
- 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 forest pest risks and may inhibit the practical implementation of ISPMs in the forest sector.
- In some developing countries and countries in transition there is very little communication between NPPOs and the forestry sector. In some cases, while extreme, there is total unawareness of the existence of NPPOs and thus of ISPMs.
- An explanation of the existing ISPMs using language and examples applicable to the forest sector is envisaged through this process to improve communication and ensure effective application of ISPMs within the forest sector.
- Major outputs from this process:
 - A written guide, *Guide to implementing international standards for phytosanitary measures in the forest sector*, which places ISPMs in the context of forest health.
 - Training material to support programmes and workshops that promote communication between forestry agencies and NPPOs.
- The Guide 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.
- The Guide 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.
- Forest management decision-makers 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.
- This core group meeting is being held to:
 - further refine the preparation process and the draft outline;
 - discuss best methods for explaining and presenting information on ISPMs to the target audiences.
- The first target date for output of the draft guide has been provisionally set for October 2010 for presentation to the Committee on Forestry (COFO).