

**INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS FOR
PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES**

[PARAGRAPH 1]

Revision of ISPM No. 7

[2] **EXPORT PHYTOSANITARY CERTIFICATION SYSTEM**

[Work programme topic: Revision of ISPM No. 7]
[Specification No. 38]

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[4] INTRODUCTION

[5] SCOPE

[6] This standard contains requirements for an export phytosanitary certification system to be addressed by NPPOs involved in phytosanitary certification.

[7] REFERENCES

Glossary of phytosanitary terms, 2009. ISPM No. 5, FAO, Rome.

Guidelines for the notification of non-compliance and emergency action, 2001. ISPM No. 13, FAO, Rome.

International Plant Protection Convention, 1997. FAO, Rome.

Guidelines for phytosanitary certificates, 2001. ISPM No. 12, FAO, Rome.

[8] DEFINITIONS

[9] Definitions of phytosanitary terms used in this standard can be found in ISPM No. 5 (*Glossary of phytosanitary terms*).

[10] OUTLINE OF REQUIREMENTS

[11] The IPPC requires its contracting parties to make arrangements to issue phytosanitary certificates certifying compliance with the phytosanitary regulations of other contracting parties. This standard describes an export phytosanitary certification system to produce valid and credible phytosanitary certificates. Exported consignments certified under these systems should meet the current phytosanitary requirements of the importing country.

[12] The basic elements of the phytosanitary certification process include ascertaining the relevant phytosanitary requirements based on official information from the importing country, verifying that the consignment conforms to those requirements at the time of certification and issuing a phytosanitary certificate.

[13] The requirements for an export phytosanitary certification system to fulfil these functions comprise both the legal authority and the management responsibility, including resources, documentation, communication and a review mechanism.

[14] **REQUIREMENTS**

[15] The framework for an export phytosanitary certification system includes the following components.

[16] **1. Legal Authority**

[17] The National Plant Protection Organization (NPPO) should have the sole authority by legislative or administrative means to conduct phytosanitary activities related to exports, including phytosanitary certification.

[18] In using this authority, the NPPO should:

- bear the legal authority for its actions
- implement safeguards against potential problems such as conflicts of interest and fraudulent use of certificates.

[19] The NPPO may have the authority to prevent the export of consignments that do not meet an importing country's requirements.

[20] **2. NPPO Responsibility**

[21] An NPPO involved in phytosanitary certification should:

- have a management system that ensures that all related requirements, including phytosanitary certification specifications and legislative and administrative requirements, are satisfied
- identify a person or office responsible for the export phytosanitary certification system
- identify the duties and lines of communication of all personnel involved in phytosanitary certification
- employ or authorize personnel who have appropriate qualifications and skills
- ensure that adequate and sustained training is provided
- ensure that adequate personnel and resources are available.

[22] **3. Resources and Infrastructure**

[23] **3.1 Personnel**

[24] The NPPO should have personnel with the level of expertise appropriate for the duties and responsibilities of the positions being occupied. NPPOs should have (or have access to) personnel with training and experience to undertake the following functions:

- sampling, performing inspection and testing of consignments of plants, plant products and/or other regulated articles for purposes related to phytosanitary certification
- detection and identification of pests
- identification of plants and plant products
- performing or supervising phytosanitary treatments required for the certification in question
- survey, monitoring and control activities
- interpreting importing countries' requirements and documenting and maintaining such information where needed for export certification and incorporating it in instructions for personnel
- production of operational instructions to ensure that importing country phytosanitary requirements are satisfied
- developing and implementing the export phytosanitary certification systems
- development of bilateral or multilateral protocols if necessary
- dissemination of phytosanitary certification-related information
- completion and issuance of phytosanitary certificates
- auditing of authorized personnel and export phytosanitary certification systems, where appropriate
- verification of the authenticity and integrity of phytosanitary procedures
- document storage and retrieval
- training
- review of the effectiveness of export phytosanitary certification systems
- investigation of non-compliant consignments.

[25] All personnel performing these tasks should be technically qualified and skilled and have no financial interest in the outcome. Best practices for NPPOs issuing phytosanitary certificates are specified in Appendix 1 [under development].

[26] Except for the issuance of phytosanitary certificates, which can be issued only by public officers, non-governmental personnel may be accredited by the NPPO to carry out specified certification functions. To be accredited, such personnel should be qualified and skilled, and responsible to the NPPO. To ensure independence in their exercise of official functions, they should be subject to restrictions equivalent to those for government officials and have no financial interest in the outcome.

[27] **3.2 Information on importing country phytosanitary requirements**

[28] The NPPO should, to the extent possible, have available official current information concerning the import requirements of its trading partners. Phytosanitary certification should be based on official information from the importing country. This may also be made available by Regional Plant Protection Organizations (RPPOs) or on the International Phytosanitary Portal (IPP: www.ippc.int). The NPPO may request exporters to provide such information and encourage them to inform the NPPO about any changes in such requirements.

[29] **3.3 Technical information on pests**

[30] The NPPO should provide the personnel involved in phytosanitary certification with adequate technical information concerning regulated pests for the importing countries including:

- their presence and distribution within the exporting country
- the biology, surveillance, detection and identification of the pests
- pest management, where appropriate.

[31] **3.4 Equipment**

[32] The NPPO should ensure that adequate equipment and facilities are available to carry out sampling, inspection, testing, treatment, consignment verification and other phytosanitary certification procedures.

[33] **4. Documentation**

[34] In order to adequately support the export phytosanitary certification system, the NPPOs should have a documentation system in place for the relevant procedures and records that allow the traceability of consignments.

[35] **4.1 Phytosanitary certificates**

[36] Phytosanitary certificates are the main output of the export phytosanitary certification system. Specific guidance is provided in ISPM No. 12 (*Guidelines for phytosanitary certificates*). The model phytosanitary certificates as described in the Annex of the IPPC should be used.

[37] **4.2 Procedures**

[38] The NPPO should maintain guidance documents, procedures and work instructions as appropriate covering every aspect of the export phytosanitary certification system.

[39] Key export procedures include:

- [40] - instructions relating to phytosanitary certificates:
 - control over issuance (manual or electronic)
 - identification of issuing officers
 - inclusion of additional declarations
 - completion of the treatment section of the certificate
 - completion of phytosanitary certificates
 - issuance of phytosanitary certificates
 - authorization for the replacement of, issuing certified copies of, or making alterations to phytosanitary certificates
 - verifying certificate data where appropriate
- [41] - instructions or procedures relating to other components:
 - working with industry

- sampling, inspecting, testing and verifying consignments
- security over official seals/marks
- traceability of consignments including their identification and security (as appropriate) through all stages of production, handling and transport prior to export
- investigation of notification from importing countries of non-compliant consignments, including, if requested by the importing country, a report of the outcome of such an investigation (this procedure should be in line with ISPM No. 13: *Guidelines for the notification of non-compliance and emergency action*)
- record keeping
- system review.

[42] **4.3 Records**

[43] In general, records should be kept concerning all activities mentioned in this standard. The NPPO should be able to retrieve these records when required, over an appropriate period of time. The use of secure electronic storage and retrieval is recommended for standardized documentation of records.

[44] A copy of each phytosanitary certificate should be retained for purposes of validation and trace-back.

[45] For each consignment for which a phytosanitary certificate is issued, records should be kept as appropriate on:

- any inspection, testing, treatment or other verification that was carried out
- any samples taken
- the names of the personnel who undertook these tasks
- the date on which the activity was undertaken
- the results obtained.

[46] It may be useful to keep equivalent records for those non-conforming consignments for which phytosanitary certificates were not issued.

[47] **5. Communication**

[48] **5.1 Within the exporting country**

[49] The NPPO should have procedures in place for timely communication to relevant government personnel and to industry concerning changes in:

- importing country phytosanitary requirements
- pest status and geographical distribution
- operational procedures.

[50] **5.2 Between NPPOs**

[51] NPPOs should designate an IPPC contact point (IPPC, Article VIII.2). This contact point is where official communications should be sent. However, if bilateral arrangements exist, an NPPO may designate an alternative contact point.

[52] In order to clarify and confirm phytosanitary import requirements, the exporting NPPO should liaise with the importing country's IPPC contact point. Communication between IPPC contact points is considered to be authentic unless the NPPO of the importing country designates alternative official sources.

[53] If cases of non-compliance have been identified, or if after certification the exporting NPPO becomes aware that an exported consignment may not have complied with the importing country's phytosanitary requirements, the IPPC contact point or designated alternative contact point in the importing country should be so advised as soon as possible.

[54] **6. System Review Mechanism**

[55] The NPPO should periodically review the effectiveness of all aspects of its export phytosanitary certification system and implement changes to the system if required.

[56] *[Preliminary title]*

[57] **BEST PRACTICES FOR NPPS ISSUING PHYTOSANITARY CERTIFICATES** *[under development]*