DRAFT SPECIFICATION FOR IPPC GUIDES AND TRAINING MATERIALS

Submitted by
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1. Title
Guide on Performing Audits in the Phytosanitary Context.
2. Type of IPPC guide or training material
New implementation resource
3. New implementation resource
Guide
4. Convention articles, ISPMs and CPM recommendations to be addressed by the proposed implementation resource
• Article V – Phytosanitary Certification 2(a) • Draft ISPM on Audit in the Phytosanitary Context • ISPM 14 The use of integrated measures in a systems approach for pest risk management • ISPM 45- Requirements for national plant protection organizations if authorizing entities to perform phytosanitary actions • All other ISPMs which make reference to the concept of audit: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 15, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26, 30, 33, 34, 36, 41, 42, 43, and 44.
5. Scope
This guide aims to provide implementation resources and examples to provide National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs) with an understanding of the concept of audit in the phytosanitary context and how to implement it as part of the activities forming their national phytosanitary system.
6. Purpose
With the increasing number of countries using audits in the conduct of their phytosanitary activities and with the development of an ISPM on this topic undergoing country consultation, proper guidance on implementing audits in the phytosanitary context would provide NPPOs with the necessary guidance to help them in implementing this ISPM once it is adopted. The increasing importance of audits in the phytosanitary context is reflected in the newly adopted IPPC Strategic Framework 2020-30 which makes reference to audits under Development Agenda 8.2 Commodity- and Pathway-specific ISPMs, and 8.4 Developing guidance on the use of third-party entities. Many adopted ISPMs also refer to audits and many NPPOs are already using third parties for phytosanitary activities. The draft ISPM on audit in the phytosanitary context is currently undergoing its second round of consultation (as of July 2021). In its report dated June 2019, the Expert Working Group (EWG) in charge of drafting the standard identified a number of potential implementation issues, including the need for audit guidance tools and the need for auditor training resources. In addition, the potential for resistance from a number of NPPOs in delegating responsibilities to third-party entities was also identified in the report and it was recommended by the EWG to identify the reasons for such resistance and solutions to address them. We are thus proposing the development of a guide to support the implementation of the ISPM on audit through a broader understanding and adoption of the concept of audit in the phytosanitary context by the CPs.
7. Content for the IPPC Guide or training material

As much as possible, the guide should follow the same outline as the one used in the draft ISPM:

1. Purpose of an audit
2. Types of audits
3. Circumstances that may initiate an audit
4. Roles and Responsibilities
   a) Responsibilities of the NPPO
   b) Responsibilities of the auditor
   c) Specific responsibilities of entities authorized to conduct an audit
   d) Responsibilities of the auditee
5. Selection of auditors (audit team)
6. Frequency of audits
7. Conflicts of interest
8. Confidentiality
9. Financial arrangements
10. Settlement of disputes
11. Steps in the audit process
    a) Planning an audit
    b) Scheduling of audits
    c) Preparing for an audit
    d) Undertaking an audit
       i. Initiation
       ii. Performing and evaluation
       iii. Closure and reporting
12. Types of non-conformity
13. Follow-up on non-conformities

In particular, the guide should address the possible implementation issues identified by the EWG in charge of developing the ISPM (Audit in the phytosanitary context)in its report. The following is only a summary and, should this proposal be endorsed, the EWG that would be charged with developing the guide should take note of section 7 of the report for a full description:

- Audit guidance tools. The mandatory elements of a checklist could be considered in an implementation material – with examples provided.
- Rotation of auditors. Good practices on audit to ensure that the auditor does not become too familiar and to maximize the identification of non-compliances.
- Auditor training. Auditors should have relevant skills and expertise depending on the scope of the audit. Implementation issue to consider the minimum training and what soft skills are required for a good auditor.

The EWG should also consider ways of raising awareness about the ISPM and the guide (implementation plan of the guide). Impediments and concerns identified during the consultation phases of both the ISPM and the guide should be considered when recommending communication options, including the sharing of positive examples, case studies, or experiences with the use of audits.

8. References and supporting materials (optional)

Specification 66: Audits in the phytosanitary context (2015-014).
In-house guides and courses developed and used by NPPOs which already make use of audits as part of their phytosanitary systems.
Draft ISPM- Audit in the phytosanitary context (currently undergoing second country consultation)

10. Selection criteria for working group experts (optional)

1) Combined knowledge of and experience in audits in the phytosanitary context, including audits of entities in the exporting country conducted by the NPPO of the exporting country, audits of the phytosanitary certification system carried out by the NPPO of the

	importing country in the exporting country, and audits of entities other than NPPOs who are authorized to perform phytosanitary actions.
2)	Combined knowledge and experience in the development of training material, workshops, and courses on audit principles or lead auditor.