Submissions for topics for Standards and Implementation

1. General information

Submission number	2021-011
Title of Proposal	Field Certification for export oriented fruits and vegetables
Submitted by	IPPC Contracting Party Sri Lanka
Submission supported by	National Plant Protection Organization of Sri Lanka

2. Contact information

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3. Summary of proposal

Summary of justification for the proposal	In line with the purpose of NPPO is to prevent the introduction and spread of plant pests the development of proper procedure to obtain plant products from the pest free site is a prerequisite for phytosanitary certification especially for fresh fruits and vegetable aiming to prevent the internal feeding pests like fruit fly, melon fly, pod borer etc. Further, plant microorganisms such as virus, fungi, bacteria and other organism also considered as quarantine or regulated pests. To obtain a pest free product from the production site it should have proper procedure to certify the field as pest free production site or certified field as pest free. Certification of field as being free of pest was done an individual country basis resulted in lack of standardization between countries. As such development of proper guideline to ensure the pest free status throughout the value chain of production cycle is immense important for international trade facilitation especially for fruits and vegetables where pest mitigation practices cannot be effectively manage through standard regular programs like visual inspection and laboratory testing. Under this situation the pest mitigation strategies should be employed at the point of origin or at the crop establishment and verified at the point of arrival of the system. The aim of development of this ISPM is to full the specific are taken from the pest free site of production.
Expected outcome of standard / implementation resource	1. Production of pest free product in compliance with Phytosanitary measures of the importing country 2. Trade facilitation of perishable commodities which are impossible to prove pest free status through visual inspection and non-destructive methods.
Contribution to filling gaps in the Framework for Standards and Implementation	1. Meet the Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) requirements of the importing country while ensuring food safety measures as well. 2. Development and standardization of field certification process for perishable commodities

4. Type of proposed material

Proposed material	Standards
Type	New ISPM or component to an existing ISPM ISPM

5. Literature review

Literature review	According to the Phytosanitary requirement of importing country, plants and planting materials should be free from potential quarantine pests such as viruses, bacteria, phytoplasma or fruit flies, melon flies and other pests. The fulfilment of those Phytosanitary requirements are impossible through visual inspection and laboratory inspections only. In order to fulfil this requirement, the exporting country should have officially established and maintained pest free area or place of production and appropriate safeguard measures for maintain the pest free status. To comply with the requirements the exporting country should have appropriate measures to maintain the freedom of required pest by additional inspections and during cropping cycle and certification at the final stage for suitability of the consignment for export. (manual) The certification and authorization is made subjected to compliance with the requirements such as maintain a growing season and post harvest pest control program approved and monitored by the NPPO. Required freedom standards outline by the importing country is fulfilled through assuring that NPPO is responsible for growing season and post-harvest pest control and quality control monitoring and implementation of a pest and quality control program that include post packing and pre-shipment checks of final products finally shipping only the plant material named in agreement. Fruits and vegetables for export to EU are no longer sourced from the open market but from known producers or harvesting allowed only from certified plots and forwarded through designated pack houses approved by NPPO. (Eu Sri Lanka audit recommendation 2015. Ares (2015) 2687281-26/06/2015) Horticultural crops are potentially threatened by a great diversity of pests and diseases and therefore it is essential to NPPO to implement Phytosanitary measures to avoid the introduction and spread of pests via commercial exchange of plant products in order to maintain horticultural crops in good health and to produce healthy products. Hence both plant quarantine and field certification are useful tools which can be used by NPPO to improve the health status of the horticultural crops. Establishment of field certification system is strengthening backward linkage and traceability in fresh fruits and vegetables at various levels up to farms to ensure pest free production and export to various destinations. This can be achieved by establishing a system for registration of farms introducing to export fruits and vegetables having a monitoring system for pests and diseases and there control during value chain process. Lalani, G. G. ., & Kumarasinghe, D. C. H. (2019). Analysis on failure to comply with export phytosanitary requirements by Sri Lanka. Annals of the Sri Lanka Department of Agriculture, 21, 168. Lalani, G. G. ., & Kumarasinghe, D. C. H. (2020). Ab overview on interception of consignments of plant and plant products exported to European Union due to the presence of regulated harmful organisms. Annals of the Sri Lanka Department of Agriculture, 22, 99. Hewage, L. ., & Nathavitharana, N. J. . (2015). New field certification procedure for the export fruit and vegetable from Sri Lanka. Annals of the Sri Lanka Department of Agriculture, 17, 373. http://www.fao.org - Requirements for Phytosanitary certification. http://www.standardsfacility.org - Manual for export certification http://nationalplantboard.org - Plant quarantine, Nursery inspection and certification ISPM 10 – Pest free production site Ares (2015)2687281-26.06.2015 FINAL REPORT OF AN AUDIT CARRIED OUT IN SRI LANKA FROM 03 FEBRUARY 2015 TO 13 FEBRUARY 2015 IN ORDER TO EVALUATE THE SYSTEM OF OFFICIAL CONTROLS FOR THE EXPORT OF PLANTS AND PLANT PRODUCTS TO THE EUROPEAN UNION. EUROPEAN COMMISSION DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY, 26 May 2015, http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/act_getPDF.cfm?PDF_ID=11764

6. Criteria for justification and prioritization of proposed topics

6.1. Core criteria

Core Criteria	Information provided by Submitter
1. Contribution to the purpose of the IPPC as described in article I.1	The proposed ISPM is to develop pest mitigation measures against the pest which are hibernate in the crop which cannot be detect visual inspection and laboratory testing. The proposed procedure is to fulfil the elimination of the hibernate pests which cannot be visually detected in the plant materials of perishable commodities. Most of the NPPOs are responsible for field regulatory activities, registration and certification program for various crops. The purpose of these programs are to mitigate pest and other problems that cannot

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	be effectively manage where standard regulatory programs of visual inspection and laboratory testing. Under this situation the pest mitigation strategies should be employed at the point of origin or at the crop establishment and verified at the point of arrival of the shipment. In this process a system of pest control including pest monitoring, pest exclusion, inspection and treatment should be in placed under the supervision of qualified team of officers. The certification and authorization is made subject to compliance with requirements such as maintain a growing season and post -harvest pest control program approved and monitored by the NPPO and meet all the pest freedom standards outline by the importing country. It includes post packing and pre-shipment checks of finished products and finally shipping only plant materials named in the agreement. The proposed ISPM will be contributed to prevent the spread and introduction of pests of plants and plant products and supply a quality plants and plant products.
2. Linkage to IPPC SOs and Organizational results demonstrated	The field certification process includes good agricultural practices (GAP) and pest mitigation techniques to achieve pest free product of the perishable commodities. In this process all the possible good agricultural practices will enhance the good quality pest free products. It will help for the production of healthy food products for the human consumption. The production process under field certification is examined by the NPPO authorities responsible for pest free product as well as quality product for consumption and it will minimize the usage of agrochemicals which are harmful to environment and biodiversity of the country. At present, the global demand is for pesticide residue free product. Implementation of this certification process will facilitate the movement of quality products and it also prevent the introduction of harmful pests through perishable agricultural commodities
3. Feasibility of implementation at the global level	The responsibility of a NPPO is to facilitate the international movement of pest free, healthy plants and plants products between countries. Production of pest free plants and plant products cannot be achieved only through physical inspection at exit points of exporting country and laboratory testing. Therefore, the chain of production from field to pack house should be monitored and certified by exporting country NPPO. With this objective most of the countries have been adopted their own field certification process for the exportation of plants and plant products to other countries. Each country consists with Department of Agriculture for the research and development activities related to agriculture and extension related activities. It ensures that NPPO in relevant country has the strength on technical capacity to implement the internationally accepted guidelines for field certification. This proposed ISPM will streamline the field certification process adopted by exporting countries and enhance the traceability of the process which can be easily adopted by them. Further, this standard as export field certification can be implemented effectively in other NPPOs in order to ensure pest free status of fresh fruits and vegetables. NPPO Sri Lanka has the capacity to share knowledge and experience with other NPPO's in export field certification.
4. Clear identification of the problems that need to be resolved through the development of the standard or implementation resource	Fresh fruits and vegetables are high-risk commodities and which is perishable in nature. It is important to ensure the pest free condition by adopting various measures to prevent the infection of pests throughout the value chain. Further, Visual identification of the pest in fresh fruits and vegetables are extremely difficult, since majority of the pests are internally feeding pests. Therefore, the presence of pest cannot simply be identified only with the inspection of outside appearance. On the other hand some countries requests freedom of various virus and bacteria, which can be prevented only by adopting strategies at various cropping stages. Further, many countries requires freedom of pests which can only be assured through taking relevant measures throughout cultivation process with the support of careful field auditing by the NPPO.
5. Availability of, or possibility to collect, information in support of the proposed standard or implementation resource	Export certified filed programmes will be supported by an extensive field auditing process and which includes the application for the programme to exportation of the fresh fruits and vegetables. Department of Agriculture introduced Sri Lanka Good Agricultural Practices, since 2012 and successfully implementing the progamme to ensure the pest free condition of the fresh fruits and vegetables produced in Sri Lanka to meet the requirement of the importing countries. The complete process is well-documented with the support of field level to senior management level officers. Department of Agriculture, Sri Lanka has published different types of guidelines and growers manual for providing technical information regarding the filed level agriculture practices for export oriented farmers. Further, export certification process has been clearly defined by the Standards Operating Procedure (SOP).

6.2.Supporting criteria

Supporting Criteria	Information provided by Submitter
Practical	No available regional standards of field certification standards for exported fresh fruits and vegetables. However, countries follow their own standards in field certification process and which may lead to inconsistency in maintaining standards by the importing countries. Therefore, introducing a common standard will provide more and equal opportunities to other countries as well in exporting of fresh fruits and vegetables. Sri Lanka implements the export field certification of fresh fruits and vegetables for EU countries successfully. But, the number of crops included is limited and there is a great potential.
Economic	1. No harmful effect to the local flora and fauna. 2. Sri Lanka has shown a significant increase in agricultural exports through implementing the field certification process for fruits and vegetable export to various countries including EU which contribute considerable amount to the foreign earnings in Agriculture sector. This could be accelerated through adapting as a regulation or a phytosanitory standard.
Environmental	The package of practices for export field is designed to minimize the environmental impact as this complies with the Sri Lanka Good Agricultural Practices. Therefore, the system will not harm environment and biodiversity. No adverse effect on environment through export field certification since package of practices adopted in the SL-GAP ensures the minimal use of agrochemical when there is an unavoidable condition arises only.
Strategic	1. NPPO, Sri Lanka practices the EU export field certification for limited number of crops and expected to expand the number crops in future. Further, NPPO Sri Lanka willing work collaboratively to achieve the common goal of export certification of agriculture fields with other NPPOs. 2. The suitable frequency of discussion for this issue is twice a year. This may provide enough time space to rectify the issues at field level. 3. Almost all the developing countries will be benefited from the proposed standards by producing and exporting fresh fruits and vegetables to developed countries. 4. This standard may cover all the developing countries those who are producing fresh fruits and vegetables for international market. This will address majority of hibernated, quarantined and regulated pests including insects pests, mites, bacteria, phytoplasma, virus and viroids etc. There is limit for commodities since it could be adopted any agricultural commodities. 5. The proposed standard is a system approach to minimize pest incidences whereas Sri Lanka Good Agricultural Practices is function as a complementary approach to this. 6. The proposed conceptual standards more emphasizes the field inspection and auditing of agricultural fields. Quarantine and regulated pests are the important concern in this process and the export fields will be certified accordingly. 7. The preveilling COVID-19 global pandemic situation emphasizes urgent need of the export earnings through agriculture in Sri Lanka. Further, Sri Lanka has shown a significant increase in agricultural exports during this global issue pest free trade facilitation. Therefore, policy makers given priority in developing standards in agricultural exports.

7. Financial/in-kind resources

Commitment for financial/in-kind resources to support the development of the proposed standards or implementation resource	The present export field certification is made possible with a very limited resources. But, it should be further strengthen in order provide full coverage of all potential fresh fruits and vegetable since there is global demand for these commodities. The development process of the proposed standard requires significant number of technical meetings, awareness programme and technical trainings. Further, it requires the support of technical experts (local & foreign) as consultants to develop these standards.