



SPECIFICATION 74

Field inspection

(Approved 2022, published 2022)

Title

Annex *Field inspection* (2021-018) to ISPM 23 (*Guidelines for inspection*).

Reason for the annex to the standard

Field inspection is a phytosanitary measure to inspect field crops, seed crops, mother plants and other plants in fields (including plants in open fields, in nurseries, under protected cultivation and in controlled environments). Field inspection is required by many importing countries as a phytosanitary import requirement, aimed at reducing, directly or indirectly, the pest risk associated with the international movement of plants. However, although some ISPMs (ISPM 10 (*Requirements for the establishment of pest free places of production and pest free production sites*), ISPM 12 (*Phytosanitary certificates*), ISPM 20 (*Guidelines for a phytosanitary import regulatory system*), ISPM 36 (*Integrated measures for plants for planting*) and ISPM 38 (*International movement of seeds*)) describe field inspection, they do not provide any guidance focusing specifically on field inspection, resulting in unharmonized implementation of field inspections by countries.

The lack of guidance on field inspection leads to some confusion about the objectives of field inspection and specific surveillance. Field inspection is a phytosanitary measure applied in an exporting country to detect regulated pests and visible signs or symptoms of regulated pests associated with host plants in an importing country. Specific surveillance, on the other hand, is an official process to determine the presence or absence of pests in an area (detection survey), to establish the boundaries of an area considered to be infested by or free from a pest (delimiting survey), or to verify the characteristics of a pest population in an area (monitoring survey). Although field inspection and specific surveillance, which are both phytosanitary actions, may be conducted using similar procedures and methods, the concept and objectives differ between the two.

For field inspection to be interpreted and applied appropriately by countries, it is therefore necessary to describe the concept and objectives of field inspection in the form of an annex to ISPM 23 (*Guidelines for inspection*).

Scope

The annex should apply to inspections in the field in relation to plants destined for international trade. It should provide the general and specific requirements for field inspection that will apply if a national plant protection organization (NPPO) uses field inspection as a stand-alone phytosanitary measure or as one component of a systems approach. The annex should define a standardized concept, objectives and process by which the NPPO in the exporting country may conduct field inspection and use it as the basis for phytosanitary certification.

Purpose

Field inspection can be an effective method to detect pests, or signs or symptoms of pests, in a field. Field inspection may be applied either as a stand-alone phytosanitary measure or as one component of a systems approach. In either case, field inspection can directly or indirectly reduce the pest risk posed by the international movement of plants and hence contribute to the safe international trade of plants.

The annex will complement ISPM 23 by providing specific information on field inspection to promote a common understanding of the concept, objectives and process of this type of inspection among countries. This will facilitate the harmonization of field inspection as a phytosanitary measure and help countries apply it appropriately.

National plant protection organizations may authorize other entities to conduct field inspections. The annex will provide the requirements for the responsibilities of NPPOs in such cases; for example, NPPOs should be ultimately responsible for approving the protocols and methods for every field inspection.

Tasks

The expert working group (EWG) should undertake the following tasks:

- (1) Consider the requirements relating to field inspection described in existing standards (e.g. ISPM 4 (*Requirements for the establishment of pest free areas*), ISPM 10, ISPM 12, ISPM 20, ISPM 36, ISPM 38, ISPM 45 (*Requirements for national plant protection organizations if authorizing entities to perform phytosanitary actions*)).
- (2) Review examples of phytosanitary import requirements and guidance for field inspection from different NPPOs.
- (3) Review guidance for visual examination of plants in the field developed by regional plant protection organizations and industry bodies.
- (4) Identify any requirements in ISPM 23 that can be applied to field inspection.
- (5) Describe the concept, objectives and process of field inspection in the phytosanitary context, especially the difference between the concept and objectives of field inspection and those of specific surveillance (e.g. detection surveys).
- (6) Consider the need, and suggest wording, for definitions of “field inspection” and “growing season inspection” if the latter term is needed in the annex,¹ and consider the necessity of replacing “growing season” with “growing period” as defined in ISPM 5 (*Glossary of phytosanitary terms*).
- (7) Describe the requirements specific to field inspection, including:
 - the circumstances under which a phytosanitary import requirement for field inspection may be technically justified;
 - situations where equivalent measures such as laboratory tests may be more efficient;
 - considerations for inspection methods according to the characteristics of pests and the best time and frequency for inspection;
 - the responsibilities of NPPOs;
 - the roles and expertise required for NPPOs or authorized entities to conduct field inspections; and
 - record-keeping and documentation related to field inspections.
- (8) Identify potential consequential changes to the text of ISPM 23.
- (9) Formulate a recommendation as to whether this annex would be more appropriate as a stand-alone ISPM or annexed to an ISPM other than ISPM 23.

¹ The terms “field inspection” and “growing season inspection” were removed from ISPM 5 in 1999 (IPPC Secretariat, 2022).

Consider implementation of the annex by contracting parties and identify potential operational and technical implementation issues. Provide information and possible recommendations on these issues to the Standards Committee.

Provision of resources

Funding for the meeting may be provided from sources other than the regular programme of the IPPC (FAO). As recommended by ICPM-2 (1999), whenever possible, those participating in standard setting activities voluntarily fund their travel and subsistence to attend meetings. Participants may request financial assistance, with the understanding that resources are limited and the priority for financial assistance is given to developing country participants. Please refer to the *Criteria used for prioritizing participants to receive travel assistance to attend meetings organized by the IPPC Secretariat* posted on the International Phytosanitary Portal (IPP) (see www.ippc.int/en/core-activities).

Collaborator

To be determined.

Steward

Please refer to the *List of topics for IPPC standards* posted on the IPP (see www.ippc.int/core-activities/standards-setting/list-topics-ippc-standards).

Expertise

Participants should have collective knowledge and experience in field inspection of plants, pest risk assessment and pest risk management.

Participants

Six to eight experts.

In addition, a member of the Implementation and Capacity Development Committee (IC) should be invited to attend. This may be as either an invited expert or an IC representative.

References

The IPPC, relevant ISPMs and other national, regional and international standards and agreements as may be applicable to the tasks, and discussion papers submitted in relation to this work.

IPPC Secretariat. 1997. *International Plant Protection Convention*. Rome, IPPC Secretariat, FAO. www.ippc.int/en/core-activities/governance/convention-text

IPPC Secretariat. 2022. *Explanatory document on ISPM 5 (Glossary of phytosanitary terms)*. Rome, IPPC Secretariat, FAO. www.ippc.int/en/publications/87049

ISPM 4. 2017. *Requirements for the establishment of pest free areas*. Rome, IPPC Secretariat, FAO. Adopted 1995. www.ippc.int/en/publications/614

ISPM 5. *Glossary of phytosanitary terms*. Rome, IPPC Secretariat, FAO. www.ippc.int/en/publications/622

ISPM 6. 2018. *Surveillance*. Rome, IPPC Secretariat, FAO. www.ippc.int/en/publications/615

ISPM 10. 2016. *Requirements for the establishment of pest free places of production and pest free production sites*. Rome, IPPC Secretariat, FAO. Adopted 1999. www.ippc.int/en/publications/610

ISPM 12. 2022. *Phytosanitary certificates*. Rome, IPPC Secretariat, FAO. www.ippc.int/en/publications/609

ISPM 20. 2019. *Guidelines for a phytosanitary import regulatory system*. Rome, IPPC Secretariat, FAO. Adopted 2017. www.ippc.int/en/publications/602

ISPM 23. 2019. *Guidelines for inspection*. Rome, IPPC Secretariat, FAO. Adopted 2005. www.ippc.int/en/publications/598

ISPM 36. 2019. *Integrated measures for plants for planting*. Rome, IPPC Secretariat, FAO. Adopted 2012. www.ippc.int/en/publications/636

ISPM 38. 2021. *International movement of seeds*. Rome, IPPC Secretariat, FAO. Adopted 2017. www.ippc.int/en/publications/84340

ISPM 45. 2021. *Requirements for national plant protection organizations if authorizing entities to perform phytosanitary actions*. Rome, IPPC Secretariat, FAO. www.ippc.int/en/publications/89734

Discussion papers

Participants and interested parties are encouraged to submit discussion papers to the IPPC Secretariat (ippc@fao.org) for consideration by the EWG.

Publication history

This is not an official part of the specification

2022-04 CPM-16 added topic *Field inspection (including growing season inspection)* (Annex to ISPM 23 (Guidelines for inspection)), priority 2.

2022-04 Standards Committee (SC) revised and approved for consultation.

2022-07 Consultation.

2022-10 Steward revised the draft specification.

2022-11 SC revised and approved the specification.

Specification 74. 2022. *Field inspection*. Rome, IPPC Secretariat, FAO.

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