



DRAFT ANNEX TO ISPM 20: Use of specific import authorizations (2008-006)

Status box

This is not an official part of the standard and it will be modified by the IPPC Secretariat after adoption.	
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This annex is a prescriptive part of the standard.

ANNEX 2: Use of specific import authorizations

The national plant protection organizations (NPPOs) of importing countries may choose to use specific import authorizations (SIAs) as referred to in section 4.2.2 of this standard when official consent for import is necessary; when import would otherwise be prohibited for phytosanitary reasons; or when phytosanitary import requirements for the particular purpose, articles or situations have not yet been established. Even when using SIAs as part of their phytosanitary import regulatory system, NPPOs are still required to make their phytosanitary import requirements available as described in section 5.1.9.2 of this standard and in Article VII.2(b) of the IPPC.

This annex describes situations where the use of SIAs may be required by an NPPO, the information that should be included on SIAs, and the respective responsibilities of the parties involved. Specific import authorizations are generally applied on a case-by-case basis and tailored to each specific import situation. They may be issued for individual consignments or a series of consignments of a particular origin. Although it is noted that some countries include non-phytosanitary requirements in their SIAs, this annex addresses only phytosanitary requirements. This annex does not cover information on general import authorizations, which can be found in section 4.2.2 of this standard, or transit authorization, which can be found in section 4.3 of this standard.

1. Types of specific import authorizations

Specific import authorizations may be provided in the form of import permits, licences or other types of written authorization as determined by the NPPO of the importing country, and may be in either paper or electronic format.

2. Elements of specific import authorizations

When SIAs are used, they should be issued by the NPPO of the importing country to importers.

2.1 Information requirements

The following information is the minimum information that should be included in SIAs:

- name of the issuing NPPO, contact information for verification purposes, and name of the importing country; identification code or SIA number; importer's information (e.g. name and address of importer);
- date of issuance;
- description of the consignment covered by the SIA;
- country of origin and country of export or re-export;
- intended use of the commodity or commodities that make up the consignment;
- phytosanitary import requirements (where these have been established); and
- period of validity.

Other information may also be included in SIAs, such as:

- quantity of the commodity in the consignment (number of units that make up the consignment, or its weight or volume);
- whether the authorization is for an individual consignment or a series of consignments;
- means of conveyance;
- point of entry;
- name and signature of the authorized issuing officer;
- official seal, stamp or mark identifying the issuing NPPO;
- exporter's information (e.g. name and address of exporter);
- location to which the consignment is to be directed (e.g. post-entry quarantine facility, processing facility); and
- treatment provider.

2.2 Language

The NPPOs of importing countries may choose the language or languages in which their SIAs are issued but are encouraged to also use one of the official languages of FAO, preferably English.

3. Uses of specific import authorizations

The following are examples of purposes, articles and situations related to import where use of SIAs may be appropriate:

- research and scientific purposes;
- exhibition purposes;
- educational purposes;
- religious or cultural purposes (e.g. religious festivals, ancestral customs);
- articles for which the NPPO of the importing country requires the ability to trace and manage over a period of time after entry (e.g. articles subject to post-entry quarantine or processing);
- emergency or exceptional situations;
- biological control agents and other beneficial organisms;
- situations where general import authorizations have not been developed or it is not possible to develop them; and
- articles that are not routinely imported.

The list above is not intended to be exhaustive and countries are not required to use SIAs for the examples provided.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 The NPPO of the importing country

The responsibilities of the NPPO of the importing country should include the following elements:

- publishing (e.g. on the NPPO website) information on the regulated articles and intended uses for which an SIA is required;
- having a process in place for assessing and identifying the information that will be needed for SIAs;
- having a process in place for amending, suspending or revoking SIAs, including a process to communicate with relevant parties when this occurs;
- publishing the process by which an importer can apply for an SIA and the application form that the importer needs to complete;
- stating the language or languages used in SIAs;
- communicating all requirements to the importer;
- clearly specifying phytosanitary import requirements in SIAs (where these have been established);
- issuing an SIA without undue delay once the information and assurances required by the NPPO have been provided by the importer;
- providing the NPPOs of exporting countries, on request, with information to verify the authenticity of SIAs and provide clarification as needed; and
- monitoring trade and compliance with SIAs and considering the transfer of SIAs to general import authorizations where appropriate.

4.2 Importers

The responsibilities of importers, as determined by the NPPO of the importing country, should include:

- obtaining an SIA before import in situations where it is required;
- complying with the requirements of the SIA;
- if required, providing the SIA to the exporter;
- if required, notifying the NPPO of the importing country of the timing of the import or other information; and
- when necessary, providing a translation of the SIA in a language that the NPPO of the exporting country can understand.

4.3 Exporters

When required by the NPPO of the exporting country, exporters should provide:

- a legible SIA to the NPPO of the exporting country;
- a translation of the SIA in a language specified by the NPPO of the exporting country; and
- evidence of compliance with the requirements of the SIA that are relevant to the exporter.

4.4 The NPPO of the exporting country

The NPPO of the exporting country:

- may obtain an SIA directly from the NPPO of the importing country or require the exporter to obtain the SIA and present it to them;
- may verify the SIA with the NPPO of the importing country; and
- should ensure that the consignment complies with the phytosanitary import requirements included in the SIA.