



**COLEAD**

# PHYTOSANITARY GUIDE

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**Guide for the improvement  
of Official Control and  
Phytosanitary Certification  
Systems**

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## TERMINOLOGY

<b>Regulated article</b>	Any plant, plant product, storage place, packaging, conveyance, container, soil and any other organism, object or material capable of harbouring or spreading pests, deemed to require phytosanitary measures, particularly where international transportation is involved
<b>Compliance procedure</b>	Official procedure used to verify that a consignment complies with phytosanitary import requirements or phytosanitary measures related to transit
<b>Phytosanitary certificate</b>	An official paper document or its official electronic equivalent, consistent with the model certificates of the IPPC, attesting that a consignment meets phytosanitary import requirements
<b>Phytosanitary certification</b>	Use of phytosanitary procedures leading to the issue of a phytosanitary certificate
<b>Official Control</b>	The active enforcement of mandatory phytosanitary regulations and the application of mandatory phytosanitary procedures with the objective of eradication or containment of quarantine pests or for the management of regulated non-quarantine pests
<b>Phytosanitary measure</b>	Any legislation, regulation or official procedure having the purpose to prevent the introduction or spread of quarantine pests, or to limit the economic impact of regulated non-quarantine pests
<b>consignment</b>	A quantity of plants, plant products or other articles being moved from one country to another and covered, when required, by a single phytosanitary certificate (a consignment may be composed of one or more commodities or lots)
<b>Visual examination</b>	Examination using the unaided eye, lens, stereoscope or other optical microscope
<b>phytosanitary import requirements</b>	Specific phytosanitary measures established by an importing country concerning consignments moving into that country
<b>Inspector</b>	Person authorized by a national plant protection organization to discharge its functions
<b>Inspection</b>	Official visual examination of plants, plant products or other regulated articles to determine if pests are present or to determine compliance with phytosanitary regulations
<b>Lot</b>	A number of units of a single commodity, identifiable by its homogeneity of composition, origin etc., forming part of a consignment
<b>Commodity</b>	A type of plant, plant product, or other article being moved for trade or other purpose
<b>Phytosanitary measure</b>	Any legislation, regulation or official procedure having the purpose to prevent the introduction or spread of quarantine pests, or to limit the economic impact of regulated non-quarantine pests
<b>Pest</b>	Any species, strain or biotype of plant, animal or pathogenic agent injurious to plants or plant products

<b>Quarantine pest</b>	A pest of potential economic importance to the area endangered thereby and not yet present there, or present but not widely distributed and being officially controlled
<b>Regulated pest</b>	Quarantine pest or regulated non-quarantine pest
<b>Import permit</b>	Official document authorizing the importation of a commodity in accordance with specified phytosanitary import requirements
<b>Plant products</b>	Unmanufactured material of plant origin (including grain) and those manufactured products that, by their nature or that of their processing, may create a risk for the introduction and spread of pests
<b>Quarantine</b>	Official confinement of regulated articles, pests or beneficial organisms for inspection, testing, treatment, observation or research
<b>Phytosanitary regulation</b>	Official rule to prevent the introduction or spread of quarantine pests, or to limit the economic impact of regulated non-quarantine pests, including establishment of procedures for phytosanitary certification
<b>Integrity</b>	Composition of a consignment as described by its phytosanitary certificate or other officially acceptable document, maintained without loss, addition, or substitution

## ABBREVIATIONS

<b>ACP</b>	Africa-Caribbean-Pacific
<b>PRA</b>	Pest Risk Analysis
<b>EDF</b>	European Development Fund
<b>ECPM</b>	Expert Committee on Phytosanitary Measures
<b>CMP</b>	Commission on Phytosanitary Measures
<b>IPPC</b>	International Convention for the Protection of Plants
<b>COLEAD</b>	Committee Linking Entrepreneurship - Agriculture - Development
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
<b>ISPM</b>	International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures
<b>WTO</b>	World Trade Organization
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization
<b>NPPO</b>	National Plant Protection Organization
<b>RPPO</b>	Regional Plant Protection Organization
<b>R-SAT</b>	COLEAD SPS Rapid Assessment Tool
<b>SPS</b>	Sanitary and phytosanitary

## FOREWORD

The European Commission has entrusted COLEAD with the cooperation program “Fit For Market (FFM-SPS)”: Strengthening Sanitary and Phytosanitary Systems in the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Horticultural Sector. FFM-SPS is part of the Intra-ACP Indicative Program (2014-2020) for cooperation between the European Union and the ACP Group of States, with funding from the 11<sup>th</sup> EDF, in the focal area of medium- and long-term policy support to strengthen productive capacity, inspire innovation, and improve sustainability and competitiveness of the private sector.

The overall objective of the program is to reduce poverty, improve food security and safety, and ensure sustainable and inclusive growth by strengthening the agri-food export sector in ACP countries. The specific objective of the program is to enable smallholder farmers, farmer groups and organizations, and small and medium-sized enterprises to access international and domestic horticultural markets by complying with SPS issues and market requirements, within a sustainable framework.

Access to export markets for fruit and vegetables is conditioned by compliance with sanitary and phytosanitary standards and regulations, which are becoming more and more demanding.

In particular, the experience and interventions of COLEAD and requests for support from many ACP countries have highlighted the difficulties faced by National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs) in establishing and implementing official control procedures for plants and plant products imported or intended for export, in compliance with international standards for phytosanitary measures and IPPC requirements. The result is weak phytosanitary systems that are unable to effectively protect domestic agriculture and plant resources from pests and diseases.

COLEAD’s interventions to strengthen official control and phytosanitary certification systems aim to contribute to the protection of plant resources and to promote market access for the horticultural sectors of ACP countries.

This Guide has been developed within the overall framework of the specific objective assigned to COLEAD/FFM SPS to strengthen the capacity of competent authorities in ACP countries to support the fruit and vegetable sector in ensuring and applying SPS standards.

The Guide to Improving National Plant Health Official Control and phytosanitary certification systems is designed to provide a set of relevant information on how to improve the NPPOs capacity to meet their obligations for official controls of imported and exported consignments of plants, plant products and other regulated articles, in accordance with their obligations under the IPPC and the International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures.

## INTRODUCTION

The International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) provides a regulatory framework for trade in plants, plant products and other objects likely to be contaminated (packaging, etc.). The National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs) of the contracting parties are responsible under the convention for the enforcement of phytosanitary regulations in the trade of commodities both for import and export. “The objective of the IPPC is to “secure coordinated, effective action to prevent and to control the introduction and spread of pests of plants and plant products “ (FAO, 2002). In line with this objective, it provides, among other things, for the establishment of export certification and import control systems for plants and plant products.

COLEAD’s experience in supporting the improvement of SPS systems in ACP countries has highlighted the need to strengthen the capacity of NPPOs to implement an effective phytosanitary control system. Official control is an activity that consists in subjecting plants and plant products to mandatory control. It aims to prevent the introduction and spread of quarantine pests both inside and outside the country. Official control is therefore an essential component in plant protection. It must be carried out considering the phytosanitary regulations of each country while respecting the applicable international standards.

One of the major objectives of the COLEAD FFM/SPS program is to support NPPOs in ACP countries in setting up effective official control and phytosanitary certification systems. Indeed, the analysis of phytosanitary systems and in particular the results of evaluations carried out with the rapid assessment tool for SPS systems developed by COLEAD (R-SAT<sup>1</sup>) in pilot countries have confirmed the need to improve the operational capacities of NPPOs especially regarding the phytosanitary import regulatory system and phytosanitary certification of exports of plants and plant products, particularly those intended for export to the European Union (the main destination of horticultural products from many ACP countries) where the requirements of plant health legislation for third countries have been strengthened.

This Guide has been developed by COLEAD to provide support and information to NPPOs in ACP countries in establishing and implementing an effective official control and phytosanitary certification system that complies with IPPC requirements and international standards for phytosanitary measures.

Consistent with COLEAD R-SAT, the Guide considers the need to go beyond scientific, technical and financial considerations and include all the human and organizational factors that are often the cause of delays, bottlenecks, or even failures in a phytosanitary control system when not adequately addressed.

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1 R-SAT COLEAD 2021. COLEAD SPS Rapid Assessment Tool for strengthening national sanitary and phytosanitary systems in ACP countries

Building on existing best practices, the Guide describes the essential elements of official control and phytosanitary certification system and its development and/or review process to help strengthen the capacity of NPPOs to meet their national obligations under the IPPC and the implementation of the International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs).

According to the IPPC, contracting parties should impose only those phytosanitary measures that are technically justified and appropriate to the risks involved, that represent the least restrictive measures possible, and that minimize impediments to movement of plants and plant products.

The Guide for Improving Official Control and phytosanitary certification systems in ACP Countries is not a prescriptive document. It is based on the guidelines and requirements for official control programs as described in the IPPC and international standards for phytosanitary measures.

It aims to provide NPPOs and/or experts in charge of providing them with technical assistance, tools and resources that can serve as a basis for designing and implementing inspection and phytosanitary certification system that meets ISPM requirements and is adapted to their context.

Effective application of the Guide requires a good knowledge of ISPMs in general and of the phytosanitary regulations of the importing contracting party for consignments of plants, plant products and other regulated articles.

## HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

The Guide can be used as a practical guide for managers of NPPOs establishing official import control and export phytosanitary certification system. The contents of the Guide should not be considered as an additional standard, nor as an immutable model to be applied, but rather as guidance based on best practices and proven resource materials from a variety of sources, particularly from developing countries. The Guide aims to provide advice and recommendations that can be used by NPPOs as a basis for developing their own manuals of procedures adapted to national contexts. It describes in a systematic way the main elements of a national system for official control and certification of plants, plant products and other regulated articles.

It is divided into four (4) chapters.

The first chapter, “**General information on official control and certification**”, introduces the issues, principles and obligations regarding import control and phytosanitary certification of exports of plants, plant products and other regulated articles for a NPPO, regarding the IPPC and ISPM.

The second chapter, “**Conceptual Framework for Assessing the Performance of Official Control and Phytosanitary certification system**,” presents a conceptual framework developed by COLEAD to provide NPPOs and the experts responsible for providing technical assistance, an integrated tool for systematically assessing the performance of official control and phytosanitary certification system against relevant international standards, when competent authorities are considering establishing a priority action plan to improve their official control system for imported or exported consignments of plants, plant products and other regulated articles.

The third chapter “**Basic elements for the operationalization of official control and phytosanitary certification system**” provides practical guidelines and recommendations that can be used as a basis by NPPOs and/or the experts in charge of technical assistance to develop their own manuals of procedures and instructions for plant protection controls and certification adapted to the national context.

This Guide cannot be used as a stand-alone resource. To apply it effectively, it is essential to be familiar with the IPPC and relevant ISPMs and to be aware of the requirements of the phytosanitary legislation of the trading partner countries.

Finally, **the** appendix contains **useful bibliographical references and resources** to consult, as well as **examples of forms and tools** that can be used as a basis for the development of a national system of phytosanitary controls and certification based on standard operating procedures that comply with current international standards.

In addition, the Guide describes the support that a NPPO may receive from COLEAD to maintain the required level of efficiency, effectiveness and functioning of its phytosanitary control and certification activities.

# 1. GENERAL INFORMATION ON OFFICIAL CONTROL AND CERTIFICATION

Today, modern methods of travel, trade, and communication have facilitated, a dramatic increase in the overall movement of people, commodities and in transportation.

Natural and national boundaries that were once effective barriers to the spread and introduction of unwanted organisms or materials are now under pressure from the colossal volumes of international trade. As a result, the international community has developed cooperative mechanisms to protect people, animals, and plants and the environment from pests, diseases, toxins, and other hazards that can be harmful if introduced or spread because of human activities.

Intergovernmental mechanisms have been established under the auspices of the WTO. They set the standards by which the health of people, animals and plants is protected from the harmful consequences of the international movement of people and commodities. In the plant sector, this is the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC).

In principle, the NPPO should implement all the responsibilities, obligations and rights set out in the IPPC (see Figure 1 below), although this may be difficult and the NPPO needs to set priorities. A priority for a NPPO's programs is the implementation of official control and phytosanitary certification system, particularly in ACP countries where the introduction or spread of import pests or the presence of regulated pests in export consignments can jeopardize national plant resources or cause economic and reputational losses in the event of interceptions of consignments due to the presence of quarantine pests.

The NPPOs are responsible under the IPPC for the enforcement of phytosanitary regulations in the trade of commodities both for import and export.

With a view to ensuring common and effective action to prevent the spread and introduction of pests of plants and plant products, and to promote appropriate measures for their control, the contracting parties undertake the legislative, technical, and regulatory measures specified in the IPPC.

Under the Convention, contracting parties should impose phytosanitary measures only if they are technically justified and appropriate to the risks involved, and are the least restrictive measures possible, minimizing interference with the international movement of persons, commodities, and means of transport.

The convention provides a regulatory framework for the trade in plants, plant products and other objects likely to be contaminated (packaging, etc.). It provides for the setting up of import control and export phytosanitary certification systems.

The contracting parties shall take into account, as appropriate, international standards and other relevant IPPC requirements or considerations when applying phytosanitary measures.

## Box 1 — Objectives of official control

Official control targets verification, by visual examination or by laboratory analysis, of the compliance with the phytosanitary regulations/requirements and in particular of the absence of quarantine pests on the plants and plant products. The objective of the official control is to prevent the introduction and or spread of pests to the local agricultural enterprises and to the environment.

The control enables to:

- i. check the respect of the administrative requirements, phytosanitary standards, particular requirements, within the framework of movements of plants, plant products and other objects;
- ii. monitor compliance with phytosanitary requirements for other locally regulated pests.

### 1.1. Provisions concerning official control of imports

Phytosanitary regulations must specify the phytosanitary measures to which imported consignments of plants, plant products and other regulated articles must comply. These phytosanitary measures may be general (applying to all types of commodities) or specific (applying to specified commodities of a given origin). Phytosanitary measures may be required before or after entry. Systems approaches may also be used where appropriate (see ISPM 14 - The Use of Integrated Measures in a Systems Approach for Pest Risk Management).

Plants, plant products and certain other objects are likely to be vectors of pests to plant production, such as certain insects, nematodes, fungi, bacteria, or viruses. The consequences of the introduction and spread of pests in new environments are sometimes disastrous, from an economic, ecological, or sanitary point of view.

The contracting parties have the sovereign power to regulate, in accordance with existing international agreements, the importation of plants, plant products and other regulated articles, to prevent the introduction and/or spread of regulated pests into their territories and, to this end, they may:

- prescribing and adopting phytosanitary measures concerning the importation of plants, plant products and other regulated articles, including inspection, prohibition of importation and treatment.
- prohibit the entry or detain and require the treatment, destruction, or removal from the country of the contracting party, of consignments of plants, plant products and other regulated articles that do not comply with the phytosanitary measures prescribed or adopted under paragraph (a) above.

- prohibit or restrict the entry into their territory of regulated pests.
- prohibit or restrict the entry into their territory of biological control agents and other organisms of phytosanitary importance deemed beneficial.

The contracting parties shall establish a control system that complies with international standards for phytosanitary measures and in particular with ISPM 20 on guidelines for a phytosanitary import regulatory system.

The objective of a phytosanitary import regulatory system is to prevent the introduction of quarantine pests (ISPM 11) or to limit the introduction of non-quarantine regulated pests with imported products (ISPM 21) and other regulated articles.

The phytosanitary system must be based both on phytosanitary import controls and on the surveillance of the territory. The latter is an essential tool for the early detection of pests, thus allowing the implementation of substantial means for a rapid pest control.

The import regulatory system is an essential component of the NPPO's ability to exclude pests. ISPM 20 describes the structure and operation of a phytosanitary import regulatory system and the rights, obligations and responsibilities that must be considered in establishing, operating, and reviewing the system.

All imported consignments of plants, plant products and other regulated articles may be inspected, sampled, and tested for the presence of pests or soil. These tasks shall be made by a person designated as an inspector in accordance with existing phytosanitary legislation.

Inspections of imported commodities include confirming compliance of a consignment with the phytosanitary import requirements for a particular plant product (e.g., application of a point-of-origin treatment prior to export), looking for evidence of regulated pests (e.g., sawdust and droppings, exit holes, discoloration, necrosis, etc.), detecting organisms for which the pest risk has not yet been assessed and taking samples for testing or verification.

To confirm compliance of imported products with phytosanitary requirements, the inspector may verify the presence and validity of the required documents, the application of point-of-origin treatment, the degree of processing, the absence of pests and contaminants (e.g. soil, leaves, etc.), the stage of development or variety requirements, the absence of unauthorized plants, plant products or other regulated articles, the packaging and consignment requirements, the origin of the consignment,, point of entry, destination and restricted areas for certain commodities, and compliance with an import permit that would describe ancillary import requirements, if applicable.

## Box 2 — Compliance procedures at import

There are three basic elements to compliance checking:

- documentary checks
- verification of consignment integrity
- phytosanitary inspection, testing, etc.

Verification of compliance for imported consignments and other regulated articles may be required:

- i. to determine their compliance with phytosanitary regulations
- ii. to check that phytosanitary measures are effective in preventing the introduction of quarantine pests and limiting the entry of RNQPs
- iii. to detect potential quarantine pests or quarantine pests whose entry with that commodity was not predicted.

## 1.2. Provisions for phytosanitary certification of exports

Export certification is an essential component and core activity of the NPPO. Article V of the IPPC establishes that contracting parties must exercise due diligence in the operation of an export phytosanitary certification system and ensure the accuracy of the additional information and declarations contained in the phytosanitary certificates.

The objective of this certification is to provide the guarantee that the consignments of plants, plant products and other regulated articles respect the phytosanitary requirements of the country of destination.

This certification is carried out in application of the International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures and in particular of the ISPM N°7 which provides guidelines on the requirements of a phytosanitary certification system and of the ISPM 12 which concerns the requirements and guidelines for the issuance of phytosanitary certificates for export and re-export.

The phytosanitary certificate is therefore an official and technical liaison document between two NPPOs attesting that a consignment meets phytosanitary import requirements.

For a plant or plant product, a phytosanitary certificate should not be issued when the legislation of the importing country does not stipulate it.

Under the IPPC:

- Each contracting party shall make the necessary arrangements for phytosanitary certification to ensure that consignments of plants, plant products and other regulated articles exported conform to the certification statement.
- each contracting party shall take the necessary steps to issue phytosanitary certificates in accordance with the following provisions:
  - Procedures for the inspection of consignments of plants, plant products and other regulated articles must be developed and implemented, with reference to ISPM 23. Inspection and other activities necessary for the issuance of phytosanitary certificates may only be carried out by the NPPO or persons under its direct authority.
  - Phytosanitary certificates, or their electronic version if accepted by the importing contracting party, shall be worded in accordance with the models reproduced in ISPM 12.
- Each contracting party undertakes not to require phytosanitary certificates to accompany consignments of plants, plant products or other regulated articles imported into its territory which do not conform to the models reproduced in the ISPM 12 in force. Any required additional declaration must be technically justified.

> **Issuance of the phytosanitary certificate in accordance with the regulatory requirements of the importing countries**

The Phytosanitary Certificate is the document attesting that the phytosanitary certification process has been undertaken, as described in the IPPC.

When required by the regulations of the importing country, plants, plant products and other objects intended for export must be accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate. This phytosanitary certificate is issued by the NPPO. The certificate model is unique. It is established in application of the international convention for the protection of plants, and it attests that a consignment meets phytosanitary import requirements.

The requirements of the countries are complex, evolving, and differ from one country to another. Knowledge of these requirements can be an important element for companies during the negotiation of their transaction (sales price in particular). Lack of knowledge on the requirements of certain countries can lead to significant additional costs. For some countries, it may be mandatory to obtain prior import authorization. In all cases, the specific requirements of the importing country in terms of phytosanitary controls take precedence over all other provisions.

Export inspection is used to ensure that the consignment meets, at the time of inspection, the phytosanitary import requirements specified by the importing country.

## > General guidelines for phytosanitary inspection

The National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs) are responsible for “the inspection of consignments of plants and plant products moving in international trade and, where necessary, the inspection of other regulated articles, to prevent the introduction and/or spread of pests.

The objective of the consignment inspection is to confirm compliance with import or export requirements for quarantine pests or regulated non-quarantine pests. Inspection is often used to verify the effectiveness of other phytosanitary measures previously taken.

The result of the inspection should enable the inspector to decide whether to accept, detain or reject the consignment, or whether further testing is necessary.

The decision to use inspection as a phytosanitary measure involves consideration of many factors, particularly the importing country’s phytosanitary import requirements and the target pests.

NPPOs may decide that samples should be taken from shipments during the inspection. The sampling methodology used should depend on the specific objectives of the inspection.

The inspection procedure may be associated with the collection of samples for laboratory analysis or pest identity verification.

Inspection is usually used as a risk management measure.

### **Box 3** — Importance of sampling in inspection practice

It is usually not feasible to inspect entire consignments, so phytosanitary inspection is performed mainly on samples obtained from a consignment. Guidance on sampling is given in ISPM 31 (Methodologies for sampling of consignments).

The use of inspection to detect the presence of pests in a consignment, or to determine or verify the impact of the pest, is based on the following assumptions: (i) the pests involved, or the signs or symptoms they cause, can be detected visually; and (ii) inspection is practically possible. It is noteworthy that there is always some probability of not detecting pests in a consignment through inspection alone. This is because inspection is usually based on sampling, which is not 100 percent effective in detecting a specified pest on the consignment or samples examined.

## 2. EVALUATION OF THE PERFORMANCE OF THE OFFICIAL CONTROL AND PHYTOSANITARY CERTIFICATION SYSTEM

For the purposes of the IPPC, contracting parties should establish and maintain an official control and phytosanitary certification attesting that plants, plant products and other regulated articles comply with the phytosanitary import requirements of the importing contracting parties and are free from regulated pests.

Such a system relies on a variety of elements, namely legal authority, administrative and operational responsibilities, resources and infrastructure, documentation, communication, and system review.

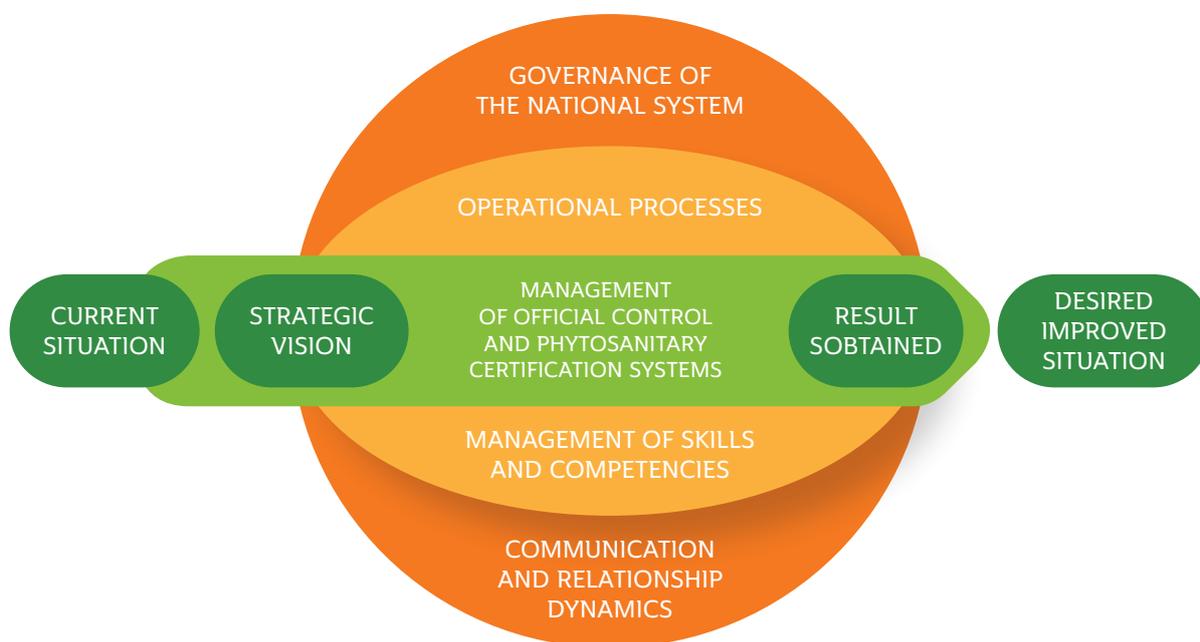
### 2.1. Operational framework for evaluating the performance of official control and phytosanitary certification system

To comply with the IPPC commitments and the requirements of international standards for phytosanitary measures, an operational framework for assessing the performance of the official control and phytosanitary certification system is proposed based on the COLEAD Rapid Assessment Tool for Sanitary and Phytosanitary Systems (COLEAD R-SAT).

Within this framework, the official control and phytosanitary certification system can be structured around four interactive pillars namely:

- The governance system of the official control and phytosanitary certification system
- Operational processes
- Management of skills and competences
- communication and relationship dynamics

**Figure 1** — Graphical representation of the 4 pillars of the official control and certification system



The organization and implementation of a national official control and phytosanitary certification system must consider the strategic vision underlying the national phytosanitary system.

The strategic vision of the phytosanitary system is a representation of the future desired by all national stakeholders. It reflects the transition from an unsatisfactory current situation to a desired future situation, linked to national policy and objectives that should be consistent with the vision of the IPPC strategic framework, namely “to protect the world’s plant resources from pests”.

### 2.1.1. Governance system of official control and phytosanitary certification system

The governance of the national system for import control and phytosanitary certification of exports refers to the legal, regulatory, and administrative framework for the import and export or re-export of plants, plant products and other regulated articles. Indeed, official control and certification are activities that must be carried out within a clearly established legal and regulatory framework and in accordance with the IPPC and the International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures.

At a minimum, the regulatory framework should define:

- legal powers for the NPPO.
- the directory of regulated articles.
- phytosanitary measures for import or export regulated articles.
- provisions for consignments in transit.
- measures concerning non-conformities and emergency actions.

The administration of the phytosanitary import and export regulatory system by the NPPO should ensure the effective and consistent application of phytosanitary legislation and regulations and compliance with international obligations. This may require operational coordination with other government departments or agencies concerned with imports or exports, such as customs.

Governance also includes monitoring of the efficiency of policy implementation, and to the allocation of appropriate human, material, and financial resources.

### 2.1.2. Operational processes

NPPO operational processes address the procedures for import and export inspection of consignments of plants, plant products and other regulated articles. Operational processes refer to the systems of structured and formalised activities, including the assignment of specific tasks and responsibilities, that must be carried out to:

- import and export inspection of consignments of plants, plant products and other regulated articles, in accordance with international standards for phytosanitary measures, in particular ISPM 23.
- Phytosanitary certification of exports, with reference to relevant international standards for phytosanitary measures, including ISPM 20 on “Guidelines for a phytosanitary import regulatory system” and the “Export Certification”-Guide to export certification for National Plant Protection Organizations<sup>2</sup> which addresses aspects of the implementation of ISPM 7 and 12 on “Phytosanitary certification system” and “ Phytosanitary certificates” respectively.

### 2.1.3. Management of skills and competencies

This refers to the organization of training and capacity building of the NPPO’s managers and agents and of the different actors who have roles and responsibilities in the implementation of the national phytosanitary control and phytosanitary certification system. It concerns the system of training, evaluation and regular review of personnel

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2 FAO and COLEAD. 2020. Export certification-Guide to export certification for national plant protection organizations. Rome

involved in official control and certification activities to ensure that their scientific and technical knowledge and skills are maintained, in relation to the context and evolution of international phytosanitary standards and requirements.

NPPO officials must ensure that inspectors in general meet at least the following requirements:

- have the technical qualifications and skills, particularly in the area of pest detection.
- be able to identify pests, plants and plant products and other regulated items.
- be able to implement the operating procedures, the technical instructions and to use the documentation provided (regulations, manuals, information sheets on pests).
- be to verify compliance with specified import or export requirements, to detect specified regulated organisms and to detect pests for which the pest risk has not yet been determined.

#### **2.1.4. Communication and relationship dynamics**

This dimension relates to the interactions necessary to ensure that the official control and phytosanitary certification system regularly adapts to the evolving needs of domestic and international stakeholders, inspires stakeholder confidence, and keeps them appropriately informed of their responsibilities. It also refers to the way in which internal relationships are structured within the NPPO (central administration, decentralized control services, border control post) and between the NPPO and other administrations involved in import or export, notably customs services, producers, and exporters. IT includes mechanisms for coordination with the different stakeholders to ensure that the different actors have the appropriate levels of awareness, knowledge, and phytosanitary information to collaborate appropriately in all aspects of the processes. Provisions should also be put in place by the NPPO to ensure official communication and to develop international cooperation, particularly with exporting or importing countries with which trade relations are maintained.

Thus, the NPPO must ensure that it has procedures for communication and information exchange that allow it to contact:

- internally with all staff on any issue relating to official controls.
- the various actors in the value chains concerned (importers, producers, exporters, other regulators, etc.).
- NPPOs of importing or exporting countries and the IPPC Secretariat.

## 2.2. Evaluation grid for the performance of official control and phytosanitary certification system

The assessment of official control and phytosanitary certification system is based on a grid established from the operational framework described above, in relation to the 4 pillars of the system (governance, operational processes, management of skills and competences and communication and relationship dynamics).

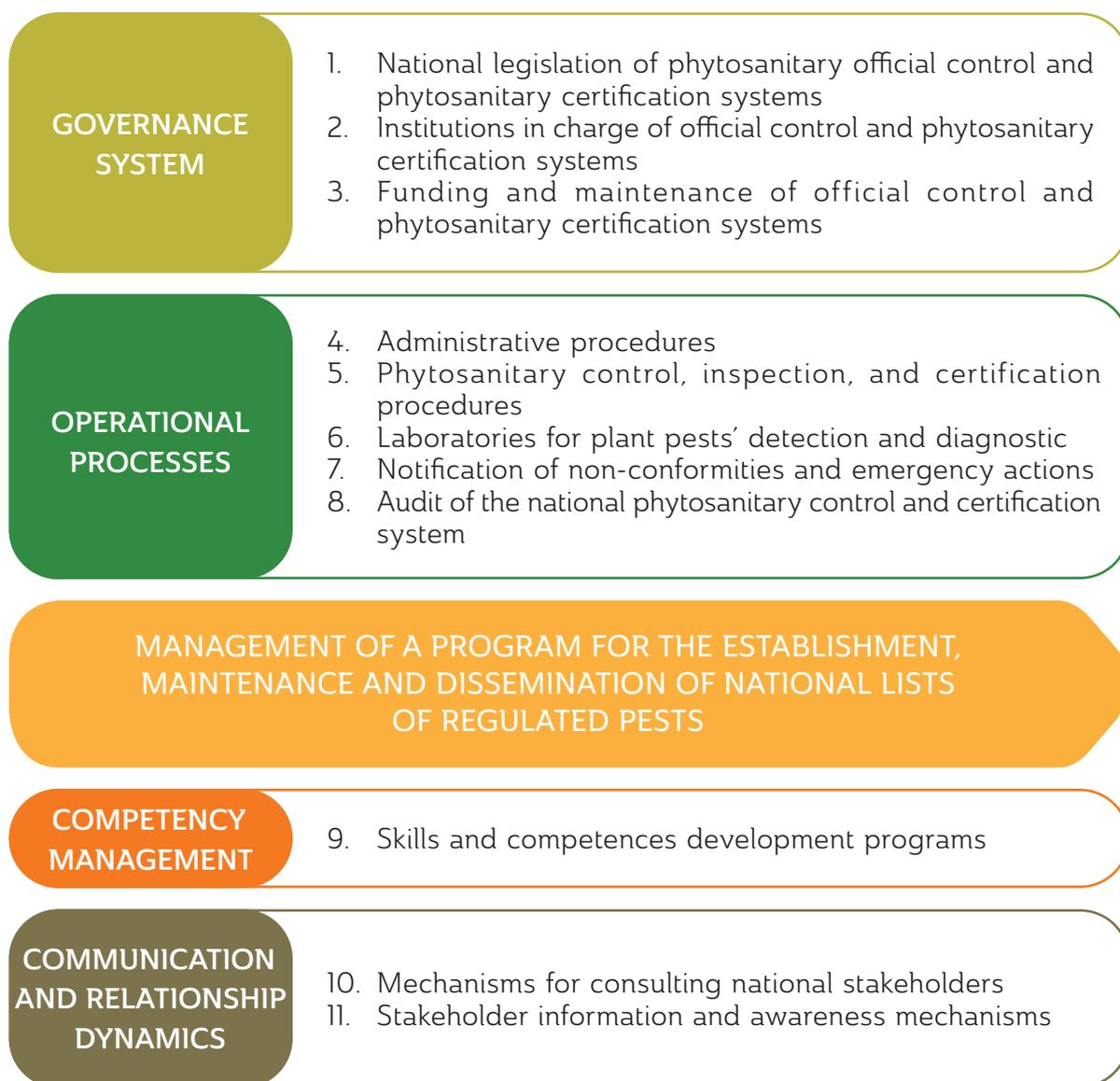
The evaluation grid is based on:

- i. control points associated to the pillars
- ii. compliance criteria associated to the control points
- iii. a rating scale to evaluate the performance of the national phytosanitary control and certification system.

### 2.2.1. Control points of official control and certification system

In accordance with the requirements of the IPPC and the International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures, 11 control points based on the 4 pillars have been defined for evaluating the performance of a national phytosanitary control and certification system

**Figure 2** — Graphic representation of the 11 control points of official control and certification system



## 2.2.2. Compliance criteria for official control and certification system

Compliance criteria are defined to assess the performance of official control and certification system, for each of the 11 control points related to the 4 pillars of the COLEAD analytical framework.

**Example 1** — Compliance criteria applied to the governance of official control and certification system

### 1. Legislative and regulatory framework governing the official control and certification system

- Does the national legislative and regulatory framework include sufficient provisions that give NPPO staff or other persons authorized by the NPPO the necessary authorization and mandates to implement official control and certification programs according to the procedures in force?
- Do the phytosanitary legislation and regulations specify the phytosanitary measures with which imported or exported consignments of plants, plant products and other regulated articles must comply?
- Do phytosanitary legislation and regulations take into account the evolution of international standards and other relevant IPPC requirements or considerations regarding phytosanitary measures for the control of imported or exported consignments of plants, plant products and other regulated articles?

### 2. Institutions in charge of official control and certification

- Are the roles and responsibilities of the NPPO and other government departments or agencies involved (e.g., Customs) in the import or export of plants, plant products and other regulated articles clearly defined?
- Are the roles and responsibilities of the NPPO and other government departments or agencies involved in the official control system implemented in accordance with established formal provisions?
- Are indicators defined to allow the evaluation of the performance of the activities carried out by the NPPO and the different stakeholders of the official control and certification system?

### 2.2.3. Rating scale for the performance of the official control and phytosanitary certification system

The evaluation of the performance of a national official control and phytosanitary certification system is based on a rating scale from 1 to 4.

**Box 4** — Rating scale for assessing the performance of official control and certification system

The scale from 1 to 4 allows to proceed to the classification of the performance levels of the different control points, regarding compliance criteria based on the requirements of the relevant International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures.

**The scale of 1 to 4** means that:

1. No activity is implemented
2. Activities are partially implemented or have been initiated
3. The activities are routinely undertaken but are not fully implemented
4. Activities are appropriately implemented on a sustainable basis (Comply with the requirements of the International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures)

The evaluation grid for the performance of official control and phytosanitary certification systems is attached (**Annex 1**). With this evaluation grid, the NPPOs and stakeholder can determine the level of performance of the official control and phytosanitary certification system for the various control points and associated compliance criteria, regarding the requirements of the International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures.

The results of this performance assessment allow the NPPO and stakeholders to define the current situation and agree on the desired levels of improvement for each control point and compliance criteria. On this basis, an action plan for the improvement of the official control and phytosanitary certification system can be established.

### 3. BASIC ELEMENTS OF THE OFFICIAL CONTROL AND PHYTOSANITARY CERTIFICATION SYSTEM

To establish a credible and effective official control and phytosanitary certification system, the NPPOs will have to:

- a. Establish and implement appropriate provisions for the organization of controls,
- b. Determine the operational procedures to be applied when carrying out official control, in relation to the international standards for relevant phytosanitary measures.

The guide does not intend to provide standards, but rather to identify key elements and provide advice for consideration in designing and implementing an effective official control and certification organization, management system and operational procedures.

#### 3.1. Establishment of the official controls and phytosanitary certification system

The organization of official controls aims to enable NPPOs to manager all the processes related to the planning and execution of controls, in accordance with international standards for phytosanitary measures.

Thus NPPOs must put in place a management system capable of guaranteeing:

- a clear definition of the roles and responsibilities of the different stakeholders in the official control process.
- the development and implementation of standard operating procedures based on the relevant ISPMs.
- the mobilization of resources and skills needed to implement standard operating procedures.
- that control activities are proportionate to the issues specific to each process and designed to reduce risks that may affect the achievement of NPPO objectives and the compliance with IPPC requirements and ISPMs.
- permanent monitoring of the official control and phytosanitary certification system as well as a regular review of its operation, in relation to the risks of non-conformities.

Under the World Trade Organization (WTO) Sanitary and Phytosanitary Agreement (SPS) and the IPPC, any official control and certification activities carried out by the NPPO of a contracting party for a consignment of plants, plant products or other regulated articles for import or export must be carried out within the shortest possible time, with due regard to their perishable nature.

To achieve this, the NPPO should implement a risk-based inspection and phytosanitary certification system. A risk-based approach to inspection and certification would help optimize national phytosanitary capacity, particularly in ACP countries where many NPPOs are under pressure to manage increasing volumes of imports and exports as they strive to improve their official control systems with limited human and budgetary resources.

The establishment of a national system of phytosanitary inspection and certification based on risk would allow the official control services to develop a more targeted use of their resources and control means, considering the prioritization of risks.

**Box 5** — Key elements of a risk-based phytosanitary inspection and certification system

Key elements of a risk-based national phytosanitary inspection and certification system include:

1. the implementation of a **system of identification and traceability of operators**.
2. the implementation of a **categorization approach for operators according to their risk profile**.
3. the **categorization of commodities according to the phytosanitary risk** they present according to ISPM 32.
4. the development and implementation of **phytosanitary inspection and certification procedures** for consignments

### 3.1.1. Implementation of an identification and traceability system for operators

The identification and traceability of operators (importers and exporters of plants, plant products and other regulated articles) is an essential prerequisite for the NPPO to organize, plan and implement a risk-based phytosanitary control and phytosanitary certification system.

For the organization and programming of official control and certification activities, the NPPO should keep and update a register of importers and exporters of plants, plant products and other regulated articles in the form of a nominative list. **To do this, regulations should be made to make it compulsory to register and identify all operators with the NPPO.**

All the administrative and technical information/documentation required to apply for registration by an operator must be defined and made public. The provided data and information is expected to inform the work of the NPPO, which will consist of

- defining the risk profile of operators, based on relevant criteria to be determined.
- defining the administrative and phytosanitary measures (as examples: requirement of import permit application, requirement of phytosanitary treatment or phytosanitary certificate,...) to be met in order to carry out the import or export of plants, plant products and other regulated articles under conditions that guarantee their compliance with the requirements for the control of phytosanitary risks.
- Establishing the official control and phytosanitary certification system based on the risk profiles of operators and the risk category of imported or exported plants, plant products and regulated articles.

Examples below provide guidance on relevant information that may be required at registration to ensure identification and traceability of importers and exporters.

#### **Example 2** — Relevant information to the mandatory registration of importers

The information required for the registration of operators as importers with the NPPO could include

- import license or official registration document(s) in accordance with national regulations.
- a copy of the administrative document that allows the unique identification of the company and that attests to its registration with the competent authority(ies).
- copies of the identification documents of the person(s) in charge of the company.
- the list of plants and plant products to be imported.
- details of the physical location of the facilities where the imported plants, plant products or other regulated articles will be stored or handled

**An example of a mandatory registration application form for import is attached (Annex 2)**

**Note:** The list of regulated organisms must be available and, if necessary, the NPPO should define the list of plants, plant products and other regulated articles whose importation is prohibited<sup>3</sup>.

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3 See Guide to Improving the Processes for Establishing, Maintaining and Disseminating National Lists of Regulated Pests in ACP Countries, COLEAD -2022

### Example 3 — Relevant information to the mandatory registration of exporters

For export, the information required for the registration of exporters with the NPPO could include:

- a registration form to be completed.
- a copy of the administrative document that allows the unique identification of the company and that attests to its registration with the competent authority(ies).
- copies of the identification documents of the person(s) in charge of the company.
- details of the physical location of the farm(s), the plants and plant products to be exported, the production and export schedule, the countries of export destination.
- contracts signed with producers in case of supply from third party producers (if applicable).
- details of the physical location of the processing and packaging facilities.

**An example of a mandatory export registration application form is attached (Annex 3)**

#### 3.1.2. Approach to categorize operators according to their risk profile

The categorization of operators according to their risk profile is one part of the process of developing a risk-based phytosanitary inspection and phytosanitary certification system. There are no normative references for such a categorization. Each NPPO should establish an approach that is adapted to the national context and to the organization and operational situation of the actors in the value chain.

- **Development of a Grid for the categorization of operators according to their risk profile**

NPPOs should adopt a categorization approach, using appropriate control points and compliance criteria as the basis for developing a standardized assessment grid.

The evaluation grid includes:

- the list of control points
- the definition of compliance criteria
- the rating scales.

All these elements should be defined taking into account the specificities of the consignments to be imported or exported and the phytosanitary risks in relation to the phytosanitary situation at the national level and in the trading partner countries.

**Box 6** — Key questions for establishing an approach to categorizing operators according to their risk profile

- To establish an evaluation grid for the classification of operators according to their risk profile when identifying control points and defining compliance criteria, the NPPO should ask itself certain key questions and take into account factors such as
- the level of organization and structuring of the company.
- phytosanitary requirements to be met by consignments
- the categories of phytosanitary risk presented by the consignments.
- the quality of the workforce and of the equipment and facilities in relation to the phytosanitary measures to be implemented.
- the history of compliance with the operator, with reference to the history of the results of inspections carried out by the NPPO services.
- history of non-compliance of imported consignments according to the export countries.
- the history of non-compliance received from export countries NPPOs

■ **Rating scale for the categorization of operators according to their risk profile**

In addition to the assessment grid, a scoring scheme should be defined by the NPPO for prioritizing risk profiles.

In practical terms, the prioritization could involve 2 or 3 classes:

- 2 classes: (i) High risk and (ii) Low risk
- 3 classes: (i) High risk, (ii) Medium risk, (iii) Low risk.

An example of a 3-class scoring scheme is shown below (Example 4).

It is important to emphasize that any categorization system put in place is subject to adaptation to changing situations (e.g., increase or reduction in non-compliances by a control point, changes in interception notifications, etc.) and according to the feedback and continuous improvement objectives that the NPPO would like to promote in collaboration with the private sector.

It may be appropriate to make changes to any of the basic elements of the system, based on the information and data obtained from the application of the system, with respect to control points, compliance criteria, scoring for the different risk classes.

For example, an evaluation grid with control points and compliance criteria and a scale for determining the risk profile according to the evaluation score of companies exporting fresh mangoes to the European Union is attached (**Annex 4**).

Under EU plant health legislation, exports of fresh mangoes to the European Union must guarantee freedom from fruit flies (*Tephritidae*).

**Example 4** — Rating scale for the categorization of operators according to their risk profile

RISK PROFILE OF OPERATORS	EVALUATION SCORE
Low risk	At least 90% of the time
Medium risk	Between 65% and 89%.
High risk	< 65%

### 3.1.3. Categorization of plants and plant products according to the phytosanitary risks they present

The concept of categorizing plants and plant products according to the phytosanitary risk they present takes into account the possible processing of the product and, if this takes place, the method and degree of processing to which it has been subjected and the use to which it is put, and the possibilities of introducing and disseminating regulated pests in this way.

ISPM 32 provides criteria for NPPOs on how to categorize commodities according to the pest risk they present. This categorization should help identify whether further pest risk analysis is required and whether phytosanitary certification is necessary.

To facilitate categorization, exporting countries should, upon request, provide detailed information on the method or degree of processing (such as temperature or duration of exposure) to assist importing countries in determining the category in which the commodity should be classified.

**ISPM 32 classifies products into 4 categories** according to the phytosanitary risk they present:

**Category 1:** Commodities have been processed to the point where they do not remain capable of being infested with quarantine pests. Hence, no phytosanitary measures should be required, and such a commodity should not be deemed to require phytosanitary certification with respect to pests that may have been present in the commodity before the process.

**Category 2:** Commodities have been processed but remain capable of being infested with some quarantine pests. The intended use may be, for example, consumption or further processing. The NPPO of the importing country may determine that a PRA is necessary.

**Category 3:** Commodities have not been processed and the intended use is for a purpose other than propagation, for example, consumption or processing. PRA is necessary to identify the pest risks related to this pathway.

**Category 4:** Commodities have not been processed and the intended use is planting. PRA is necessary to identify the pest risks related to this pathway.

In practice, the NPPO should maintain a register of imported plants and plant products and formalize their categorization according to the phytosanitary risk they present, in accordance with the criteria described in ISPM 32.

Useful annexes are included in the ISPM 32 appendix. They provide examples of processes and commodities that meet the criteria for categorization into the various categories.

## 3.2. Operationalization of official controls and phytosanitary certification system

The responsibilities of a NPPO include “the inspection of consignments of plants and plant products moving in international traffic and, where appropriate, the inspection of other regulated articles, particularly with the object of preventing the introduction and/or spread of pests” (IPPC Article IV.2c).

To this end, the NPPOs must have operational procedures for carrying out inspection and decision-making in the import and export of plants, plant products and other regulated articles that circulate internationally. The objective of phytosanitary inspection is to verify compliance with phytosanitary regulations for import and export.

This Guide is not intended to provide standardized procedures for phytosanitary inspection or certification, but rather to provide practical guidance that builds on the requirements of international standards for phytosanitary measures and describes in a systematic way basic principles that can be used by NPPOs to develop their own procedure manuals adapted to national contexts.

### 3.2.1. General principles and basic requirements

To ensure the implementation of an effective, efficient, and ISPM-compliant phytosanitary inspection and phytosanitary certification system, the NPPO needs a management system that meets certain general principles and basic requirements, in terms of organization and management of human resources skills, operational and information procedures, and infrastructure and equipment.

The management system should also oversee operational programs and maintain quality control.

#### ■ General principles for the programming of official control activities

Rather than relying on prescriptive policies that routinely prescribe inspection, sampling, or laboratory diagnosis, a risk-based program of official controls and certification should be developed and implemented. Such an approach would allow for the implementation of a feasible control system for inspection services.

Such an approach is dynamic. It allows for the prioritization of risks to focus operational resources on the consignments and operators with the highest risk profiles.

Factors such as compliance, availability of resources in specific locations, seasonality of production or trade, level of supply and demand, results of monitoring of population dynamics or infestation levels can be used to enable NPPOs to better prioritize their activities.

The NPPO should set up an efficient system adapted to its specificities to guarantee data collection and to provide information and a coherent and integrated database to feed its work of developing and updating its phytosanitary inspection system in relation to the results of risk analysis.

**Useful tips:** Some basic elements to consider when developing a phytosanitary inspection and certification program based on a risk hierarchy

- Risk profiles of operators (importers or exporters)
- Commodity Risk Profiles
- Evolution of compliance rates according to the results of previous controls for each operator
- Evolution of compliance rates according to the results of previous controls for each commodity
- Evolution and nature of interception notifications from the competent authorities of the importing countries
- Results of monitoring infestation levels from target pests

#### ■ **Inspector Requirements**

The NPPO should ensure that it has a sufficient number of staff with the necessary skills and expertise to undertake its functions. This brings into focus the requirements for training and maintaining the knowledge and skills of inspectors.

It is important that inspectors have:

- authority to discharge their duties and accountability for their actions
- technical qualifications and competencies, especially in pest detection
- knowledge of, or access to capability in, identification of pests, plants and plant products and other regulated articles
- access to appropriate inspection facilities, tools, and equipment
- written guidelines (such as regulations, manuals, pest data sheets)

**Helpful Hints:** Documentation to be made available to inspectors

- Compendium of regulations that define the list of plants, products of plant origin and other regulated articles that must be subject to phytosanitary control
- Directory of importers with contact information and risk profiles
- Directory of exporters with their contact information and risk profiles
- Collection of national and international regulations, including countries of destination for national exports
- Directory of plants, plant products and other regulated articles (with scientific names) and phytosanitary requirements for import or export
- Where applicable, the list of plants, plant products and other regulated articles whose importation is prohibited
- Lists of regulated pests and fact sheets on major regulated pests related to imported or exported plants, plant products and other regulated items

#### ■ **Good Hygiene and Biosecurity Practices at inspection sites**

The application of Good Hygiene Practices and biosecurity measures at inspection sites is part of the basic requirements and general principles of a phytosanitary inspection and phytosanitary certification system.

The adoption of good general hygiene and disinfection practices can prevent the spread of pests and cross-contamination. The extent of the measures required depends on the nature of the product being inspected and the pests that may be associated with it.

In terms of personal hygiene, inspectors must be equipped with adequate personal protective equipment (gowns, aprons, gloves, masks, and appropriate footwear,...)

Adequate inspection facilities are essential to reduce the risk of spreading pests during sample collection, handling, packaging, and transportation, and to enable inspectors to separate previously inspected and certified items from others to prevent the exporter from smuggling uninspected goods and to prevent cross-contamination.

Lighting should be sufficient to detect small pests that may be present on the product. It may be necessary to use supplemental lighting such as flashlights or directional work lamps.

**Useful Tips:** Some hygiene and biosecurity rules to implement to prevent or reduce the possibility of spreading pests

- To ensure, in conjunction with company managers for inspections carried out on production, packaging or handling sites and with port and airport authorities where import or export controls are carried out, that inspectors have access to a clean and sufficiently spacious inspection area to enable them to carry out their tasks freely and safely.
- Establish an inspection area that facilitates containment of plant material, keep doors closed where possible to reduce the potential movement of plant pests, restrict personnel entry to the inspection area as much as possible, treat all plant material as if it were infected or infested.
- Use good housekeeping practices to keep the inspection site clean and ensure that infected or infested materials are contained and disposed of properly.

#### ■ **Supplies and equipment**

NPPOs should ensure that inspectors have appropriate tools and materials to perform their duties.

A non-exhaustive list of supplies and equipment is provided below.

To avoid the risk of contamination of equipment during inspection and sampling by cleaning and disinfecting all equipment and hands in contact with infected or infested plants or products.

### Example 5 — Inspector’s Supplies and Equipment List

Inspection table with a clean and smooth white surface	Pens or pencils
Inspection kit	Markers
Bristle brush	Polystyrene bag
A good lighting system	Needle
Knife, pruning shears, scissors	Calculator
Hand lens	Tissue (box)
Microscopes (various)	White enamelled tray
Ruler	Garbage cans
Cellular flashlight	Sweepers
Stapler with refills	Plastic bags
Specimen bottles	70% alcohol
Adhesive tape	Swab
Differentiated mesh screens	Cooler
White paper /Black paper sheet	Camera
Notepads	Probes
Computer with Internet	

### 3.2.2. General inspection procedures

Technical requirements for inspection must be designed to ensure technical soundness while considering operational feasibility.

Phytosanitary procedures or inspection requirements for determining compliance of plants and plant products and other regulated articles at points of entry or exit are of several kinds and include:

- examination of documents associated with a consignment verification of consignment identity and integrity
- visual examination for pests and other phytosanitary requirements

It is important that inspection procedures are applied systematically and consistently and that inspection techniques are regularly updated to reflect new information and recent technical advances.

**Examination of documents associated with a consignment** Import and export documents are reviewed for completeness, consistency, accuracy, validity, and non-fraud (ISPM 12 (Phytosanitary Certificates)).

For a good organization of controls and to facilitate the flow of processing of commodities, the operator must notify the competent services of the NPPO the arrival or the shipping date of commodities subject to inspection. To do this, a minimum time limit should be set in a transparent manner and made known to operators.

In all cases, the importer or exporter must be registered with the NPPO.

**Example 6** — Documents that can be associated with imported or exported consignments

- phytosanitary certificate or phytosanitary certificate for re-export
- manifest (including bills of lading, invoice)
- import permit
- treatment documents or certificates, marks (such as provided for in ISPM 15 (Regulation of wood packaging material in international trade)) or other indicators of treatment
- certificate of origin
- field inspection certificates or reports
- producer or packing records
- certification programme documents (e.g., seed potato certification programmes, pest free area documentation)
- inspection reports
- commercial invoices
- laboratory reports

■ **Verification of consignment identity and integrity**

This is the process of determining whether the quantities and types of plant products found in the consignment match those described in the accompanying documents.

The inspector goes to the place of storage or delivery of the containers or on board the vessels to make the recognition of the products described in the documentary list.

These are:

- ensure that the consignment is accurately described by its documents.
- perform an identity check to verify whether the type of plant or plant product or species is in accordance with the phytosanitary certificate received or to be issued

perform an integrity check to verify if the consignment is clearly identifiable and the quantity and status is as declared in the phytosanitary certificate received or to be issued

This may require a physical examination of the consignment to confirm the identity and integrity, including checking for seals, safety conditions and other relevant physical aspects of the shipment that may be of phytosanitary concern

Post-inspection actions based on the results will depend on the extent and nature of the problem encountered.

**Useful tips:** Some useful precautionary measures to apply

- Check seals, safety conditions and other relevant physical aspects of the shipment that may have phytosanitary significance
- Check if the lot(s) and quantities are as declared in the phytosanitary certificate received or to be issued
- Prior to any action with the parties who provided the documents, review the issues with the import or export documents, if any.

#### ■ **Inspection for compliance with phytosanitary regulations**

Aspects related to visual examination include its use to detect the presence of pests and to verify compliance with phytosanitary regulations.

The purpose of the visual inspection is (i) at export, to verify that the consignment complies with the phytosanitary requirements of the importing country before issuing a phytosanitary certificate if required and (ii) at import, to ensure that the consignment meets the phytosanitary requirements of the country.

Inspection procedures may include the collection of samples for laboratory testing and/or the identification of pests intercepted during inspection.

Sampling is not systematic. The inspector will assess the appropriateness of their implementation.

The ability to detect in a consistent manner the presence of a regulated pest with the desired confidence level requires practical and statistical considerations, such as the probability of detecting the pest, the number of units making up the lot, the desired confidence level, and the sample size (i.e., the intensity of inspection) (see ISPM 31 (Methodologies for sampling of consignments))

A sample is taken from consignments or lots to determine if a pest is present, or if it exceeds the specified tolerance level.

The sampling method adopted should be based on transparent technical and operational criteria and should be consistently applied (see also ISPM 20) while taking into account operational constraints that will affect the practical aspects of sampling.

**Helpful hints:** provisions for establishing a sampling plan

- The samples to be inspected must be sufficiently representative of the entire lot
- The lot must be clearly defined on the basis of relevant and identifiable criteria
- When the consignment includes more than one lot, the inspection will include several visual examinations
- When multiple commodities are covered in a single consignment, each commodity is considered separately
- Define the location of the sample in relation to the objectives of the control and the phytosanitary risk
- If a lot is contaminated, it is rejected, and the other lots are rigorously inspected
- If there is no information on which part of the consignment has the highest probability of harboring pests, the statistical methodology is used, with reference to ISPM 31.
- **If necessary, seek support from COLEAD for technical assistance in the process of establishing the sampling procedure.**

### 3.2.3. Documentation and decisions after the phytosanitary inspection

The NPPO shall ensure that all personnel have appropriate information, in particular:

- guidance documents, procedures, or work instructions, as appropriate, for the conduct of inspections according to the nature of the consignments and their origin or destination, and the decisions to be made and actions to be taken based on the results of the inspection
- procedures and instructions for reporting inspection results
- official documentation to be prepared after the inspections

**Helpful Hints:** Documentation to be made available to inspectors

- Tables of phytosanitary requirements of third countries (make sure they are updated)
- Checklists - Inspection and phytosanitary certification of different commodities
- Sampling plans for the inspection of different commodities
- Inspection Report Forms
- Models of phytosanitary certificates

**Example 7** — Instructions to be applied based on the results of inspections of imported consignments

INSPECTION RESULTS	DECISIONS TO BE IMPLEMENTED
All import requirements met <b>And</b> No quarantine organisms found	Freeing the commodities
All documents are checked and present <b>And.</b> Quarantine organisms found	Refuse entry of the commodities. <b>And</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Return the commodities, if possible, to the country of origin</li> <li>b. b. If reshipment is not possible, arrange for destruction.</li> <li>c. Write an intercept notification</li> </ol>
False documents are found during the inspection	Refuse the commodities <b>Or</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To hold the commodities,</li> <li>■ Verify the origin with the exporting country</li> <li>■ Inspect the merchandise and if no quarantine organisms found</li> <li>■ Authorize the entry if valid documents are produced and penalize the importer according to the legislation of the country.</li> </ul>
Absence of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Import permits</li> <li>■ Phytosanitary certificate</li> <li>■ Treatment certificate</li> </ul>	Refuse entry <b>And</b> Penalize the importer in accordance with the country's legislation

Phytosanitary certificate not signed by the competent authority	<p>Refuse the commodities</p> <p><b>Or</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To hold the commodities,</li> <li>■ Verify the origin with the exporting country</li> <li>■ Inspect the merchandise and if no quarantine organisms found</li> <li>■ Authorize entry if valid sanitary certificate is produced and penalize the importer according to the legislation of the country</li> </ul>
Content and conflicting statements on a shipment	<p>Refuse entry</p> <p><b>Or</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To hold the commodities</li> <li>■ Verify the actual designations of the entire merchandise and its origin with the exporting country</li> <li>■ Inspect the merchandise and if no quarantine organisms found</li> <li>■ Authorize entry if valid documents are produced and penalize the importer according to the legislation.</li> </ul>
All documents checked. <b>And</b> Regulated non-quarantine organisms found	<p>Hold, process at importer's expense. <b>And</b></p> <p>Freeing the commodities</p> <p>Write an interception notification</p>

- **Data recording, collection and management**

- system of records to be made and instructions for data collection and management

**Example 8** — Instructions to be applied based on the results of export inspections

RESULTS OF THE PHYTOSANITARY INSPECTION	FINAL DECISION
<p><b>Exporter registered</b> with the NPPO</p> <p><b>Importing country requirements met:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Additional declaration</li> <li>■ Import permits</li> <li>■ Bill of lading</li> <li>■ Treatment certificate</li> <li>■ Roadmap</li> <li>■ Invoices</li> <li>■ Traceability codes</li> </ul> <p><b>Inspection performed,</b> And <b>No pests found</b></p>	<p><b>Establish the Phytosanitary Certificate</b></p>
<p>Importing country <b>requirements NOT</b> met</p>	<p><b>Reject the consignment</b></p>
<p>Importing country <b>requirements met</b> And <b>Pest found</b> after inspection</p>	<p><b>Rejeter l’envoi</b></p>
<p><b>Content and conflicting statements</b> on a consignment</p>	<p><b>Reject the consignment</b> And Penalize the exporter according to the legislation of the country</p>
<p>No declaration form No Treatment Certificate No Roadmap No traceability code</p>	<p><b>Reject the consignment</b> And Penalize the exporter according to the legislation of the country</p>

■ **Phytosanitary certificates**

The inspection of an export consignment may result in the issuance of a Phytosanitary Certificate. In such cases, the Phytosanitary Certificate must be issued in accordance with ISPM 12, including Appendix 1.

If the paper version is used, the inspector should ensure that the Phytosanitary Certificate is completed legibly, printed, typed, stamped or handwritten.

Since 2011, the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CMP, IPPC) has been promoting the development of electronic certification. An ePhyto (ePhyto is the abbreviation for “electronic phytosanitary certificate”). is the electronic version (in XML format) of a phytosanitary certificate. An ePhyto includes all the information contained in a paper phytosanitary certificate.

ePhytos can be exchanged electronically between countries, and their data can be printed on paper.

### **Helpful Hints: Using the Generic ePhyto National System (GeNS)**

The Generic ePhyto National System (GeNS) is a centralized system to facilitate the creation of ePhytos.

It is a web-based multi-tenant system developed for countries that do not have their own system to produce ePhytos.

For more information, contact the IPPC Secretariat ([ippc@fao.org](mailto:ippc@fao.org)) or the ePhyto team directly ([ippc-ephyto@fao.org](mailto:ippc-ephyto@fao.org)).

<https://www.ephytoexchange.org/landing/gens/index.html>

Tables of phytosanitary requirements of third countries (make sure they are updated)

- Checklists - Inspection and phytosanitary certification of different goods
- Sampling plans for the inspection of different goods
- Inspection Report Forms
- Models of phytosanitary certificates

### ■ **Additional declaration**

The additional declarations required are mentioned in the phytosanitary legislation of the country of destination, the import authorization, bilateral agreements between the country of production and the country of destination. They may only include information related to the specific import requirements set by the country of destination.

The additional declarations must be completed in a thorough manner.

## Box 8 — Additional declaration requirements on phytosanitary certificates

Where a country of destination offers more than one option for a particular pest, the applicable option should be indicated on the additional declaration.

Under current plant health legislation, a Phytosanitary Certificate is required for all fruits and vegetables (with five exceptions: pineapple, coconut, durian, banana, date). For a number of fruits and vegetables (e.g., mango, capsicum,...), an additional declaration must be completed on the Phytosanitary Certificate, which includes the full wording of the relevant specific requirement corresponding to the risk management option applied for the specified regulated pest.

In order to avoid notifications of documentary interceptions that may be prejudicial to private operators, particular attention must be paid to the correct completion of the additional declaration

**In this regard, guidelines accessible to all have been developed by COLEAD**

## Phytosanitary control as applied to travellers' luggage

**Example 9** — Example of an additional declaration for the certification of mangoes for export to the European Union under option d) corresponding to the application of a systemic approach

If exporting countries use option (d) related to a systems approach, a dossier must first be submitted to the European Commission. Once this application has been accepted by the Commission, exports can take place, but it is essential to include the following words in the phytosanitary certificate:

- in the **box/section Treatment of the phytosanitary certificate**, write: "Systemic approach"
- in the **additional declaration**: "The consignment complies with option (d) of Annex VII, point 61 of the implementing Regulation (EU 2019/2072): the fruits have been subjected to an effective systemic approach to ensure freedom from the Tephritidae referred to in Annex II, Part A, Table 3, point 77, to which these fruits are known to be susceptible, and the use of a systemic approach is indicated on the Phytosanitary Certificate and has been communicated in advance and in writing to the Commission by the national plant protection organisation of the country".

## 4. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND USEFUL RESOURCES

### COLEAD Publications

- R-SAT. COLEAD SPS Rapid Assessment Tool for Strengthening National Sanitary and Phytosanitary Systems in ACP Countries. User's Guide. June 2021.
- Guide to Phytosanitary Inspection and Decision Making for West African Economic Community (ECOWAS) States, 2021

**Some international standards for phytosanitary measures useful to consult. The list is available at the following address: <https://www.ippc.int/fr/core-activities/standards-setting/ispms> (last access May 10, 2022)**

- Export Certification Guide for National Plant Protection Organizations, FAO and COLEAD, 2020, Rome
- ISPM 1. [Phytosanitary principles for the protection of plants and the application of phytosanitary measures in international trade](#). Rome, IPPC, FAO (adopted 2006, published 2006)
- ISPM 6: Surveillance. Rome, IPPC, FAO (adopted 2018, published 2018).
- ISPM 7: Phytosanitary certification system. Rome, IPPC, FAO (adopted 2011, published 2016).
- ISPM 8: Determination of pest status in an area. Rome, IPPC, FAO (adopted 2021, published 2021).
- ISPM 10: Requirements for the establishment of pest free places of production and pest free production sites. Rome, IPPC, FAO (adopted 1999, published 2016).
- ISPM 12: Phytosanitary certificates. Rome, IPPC, FAO (adopted 2022, published 2022)
- ISPM 13: Guidelines for notification of non-compliance and emergency action. Rome, IPPC, FAO (adopted 2001, published 2021).
- ISPM 14: The use of integrated measures in a systems approach for pest risk management. Rome, IPPC, FAO (adopted 2002, published 2019).
- ISPM 19: Guidelines on lists of regulated pests. Rome, IPPC, FAO (adopted 2003, published 2016)
- ISPM 20: Guidelines for a phytosanitary import regulatory system, IPPC, FAO (adopted 2017, published 2019).
- ISPM 23: Guidelines for inspection. Rome, IPPC, FAO (adopted 2005, published 2019).
- ISPM 31: Methods of sampling shipments. Rome, IPPC, FAO (adopted in 2008, published 2016).
- ISPM 32: Categorization of commodities according to their pest risk. Rome, IPPC, FAO (adopted in 2009, published 2016).

## 5. ANNEXES

### 5.1. Annex 1 – Evaluation grid for the performance of the official control and phytosanitary certification system

GOVERNANCE OF THE OFFICIAL CONTROL AND CERTIFICATION SYSTEM					
CONTROL POINTS AND RESPECTIVE CRITERIA		NOTATION			
		1 <sup>4</sup>	2 <sup>5</sup>	3 <sup>6</sup>	4 <sup>7</sup>
<b>1. Legislative and regulatory framework governing the OFFICIAL control and phytosanitary certification system</b>					
1.1.	Does the national legislative and regulatory framework include sufficient provisions that provide NPPO staff and persons authorized by the NPPO (if applicable) with the necessary authorization and mandates to implement phytosanitary control and certification programs according to the procedures in force?				
1.2.	Do the phytosanitary legislation and regulations specify the phytosanitary requirements with which imported or exported plants and plant products must comply?				
1.3.	Do national phytosanitary legislation and regulations take into account the evolution of international standards for phytosanitary measures and other relevant IPPC requirements or considerations related to phytosanitary control and certification of imported or exported plants and plant products?				
<b>2. Institutions in charge of official control and certification</b>					
2.1.	Are the roles and responsibilities of the NPPO clearly defined to ensure the effective implementation of the official control and phytosanitary certification system for imported or exported plants, plant products and regulated articles?				
2.2.	Are the necessary institutional and administrative arrangements with other government services or agencies (such as customs) defined and effectively implemented to enable NPPO staff to implement their phytosanitary control and certification program?				
2.3.	Are indicators defined and measured to allow the evaluation of the performance of the national phytosanitary control and phytosanitary certification system?				

4 No activity is implemented

5 Activities are partially implemented or have been initiated

6 The activities are routinely undertaken but are not fully implemented

7 Activities are appropriately implemented on a sustainable basis (Comply with the requirements of the International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures)

## GOVERNANCE OF THE OFFICIAL CONTROL AND CERTIFICATION SYSTEM

CONTROL POINTS AND RESPECTIVE CRITERIA		NOTATION			
		1 <sup>4</sup>	2 <sup>5</sup>	3 <sup>6</sup>	4 <sup>7</sup>
<b>3. 3. Financing of the official control and phytosanitary certification system</b>					
3.1.	Are the provisions for the financing mechanism of the official control and certification system clearly defined and transparent, including the allocation from the administration's budget and possible contributions from the private sector?				
3.2.	Are the financial and material resources (material, equipment, logistics, etc.) mobilized to ensure the effective implementation of the national program of phytosanitary control and certification of imported or exported plants and plant products and regulated articles?				
3.3.	Is the system for mobilizing financial and material resources for the implementation of the phytosanitary control and certification program sustainable?				

OPERATIONAL PROCESSES					
CONTROL POINTS AND RESPECTIVE CRITERIA		NOTATION			
		1 <sup>8</sup>	2 <sup>9</sup>	3 <sup>10</sup>	4 <sup>11</sup>
<b>4. administrative and operational procedures</b>					
4.1.	Has an administrative and operational framework for conducting pest risk analysis (PRA) in order to respond effectively to the need for data and information necessary for the development of risk-based pest control and certification plans been defined and effectively implemented?				
4.2.	Are administrative and operational procedures to ensure the registration and identification of actors in the import and export chain of plants, plant products and regulated articles established and effectively implemented?				
4.3.	Are administrative and operational procedures for categorizing importers and exporters of plants, plant products and regulated articles according to their risk profiles defined and effectively implemented?				
<b>5. Phytosanitary control and certification procedures</b>					
5.1.	Are imported or exported plants, plant products and other regulated articles categorized according to the phytosanitary risks they present to serve as a basis for the elaboration of procedures and instructions for phytosanitary controls and certification?				
5.2.	Are standard operating procedures and work instructions consistent with international standards for relevant phytosanitary measures (including sampling) developed for the phytosanitary control and certification of imported or exported plants, plant products and regulated articles?				
5.3.	Does the NPPO have adequate infrastructure, equipment, and materials (including means of travel if necessary) to implement the standard operating procedures and work instructions for phytosanitary control of imported or exported plants, plant products and regulated articles?				
5.4.	Are the operating procedures and work instructions for official control and certification of imported or exported plants, plant products and regulated articles implemented appropriately?				

8 No activity is implemented

9 Activities are partially implemented or have been initiated

10 The activities are routinely undertaken but are not fully implemented

11 Activities are appropriately implemented on a sustainable basis (Comply with the requirements of the International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures)

## OPERATIONAL PROCESSES

CONTROL POINTS AND RESPECTIVE CRITERIA		NOTATION			
		1 <sup>8</sup>	2 <sup>9</sup>	3 <sup>10</sup>	4 <sup>11</sup>
5.5.	Have corrective actions in accordance with the relevant ISPMs been clearly defined according to the non-conformities in the controls and are they regularly and transparently implemented?				
5.6.	Is an appropriate registration, documentation and record-keeping system defined and implemented to ensure the collection, storage, and traceability of control results for imported or exported consignments?				
<b>6. Laboratories of analysis and phytosanitary diagnosis</b>					
6.1.	Are reference laboratories capable of carrying out phytosanitary detection and diagnostic work in relation to the needs of implementing control activities for imported or exported plants, plant products and regulated articles identified and officially recognized as such?				
6.2.	Do the laboratories have the appropriate infrastructure, facilities, equipment, and human resources, and do they follow internationally accepted protocols to perform the necessary work?				
6.3.	Do the laboratories involved in the national phytosanitary control and certification system benefit from an appropriate and sustainable financing system to enable them to carry out their work in compliance with the requirements of competence and efficiency?				
<b>7. Notifications of non-conformities and emergency actions</b>					
7.1.	Are standard operating procedures and work instructions that comply with ISPM requirements established and implemented to ensure notification of non-conformities and emergency actions when necessary?				
7.2.	Are the standard operating procedures for managing notifications of non-compliance and emergency actions consistent with international standards for relevant phytosanitary measures?				
7.3.	Is an effective system for disseminating, tracking, and processing notifications of non-compliance and emergency actions regarding imported or exported consignments of plants, plant products and regulated articles established and effectively implemented?				

OPERATIONAL PROCESSES					
CONTROL POINTS AND RESPECTIVE CRITERIA		NOTATION			
		1 <sup>8</sup>	2 <sup>9</sup>	3 <sup>10</sup>	4 <sup>11</sup>
<b>8. Audit of official control and phytosanitary certification system</b>					
8.1.	Does the NPPO have an audit program in place for the official control system for imported and exported plants, plant products and regulated articles that meets the requirements of independence and transparency?				
8.2.	Is the audit program implemented and does it cover all activities related to control programs for imported and exported consignments of plants, plant products and other regulated articles?				
8.3.	Are procedures for the implementation of corrective actions to improve the effectiveness of control programs for imported or exported consignments of plants, plant products and regulated articles defined and implemented				

MANAGEMENT OF SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES					
CONTROL POINT AND RESPECTIVE CRITERIA		NOTATION			
		1 <sup>12</sup>	2 <sup>13</sup>	3 <sup>14</sup>	4 <sup>15</sup>
<b>9. Programs for developing competencies</b>					
1.1.	Are there national programs for training and continuing development of NPPO managers and staff and other stakeholders in the procedures and working instructions, national and international legislation and regulations, and international standards on phytosanitary measures relevant to the operation of the official control of imported or exported consignments of plants, plant products and regulated articles?				
1.2.	Do NPPO staff and the various stakeholders in the official control system for imported and exported consignments of plants, plant products and regulated articles have sufficient training and skills to carry out activities related to their respective roles and responsibilities?				
1.3.	Is there an appropriate funding system in place to ensure ongoing training and capacity building for NPPO staff and other stakeholders in the national system for controlling imported and exported consignments of plants, plant products and regulated articles?				

12 No activity is implemented

13 Activities are partially implemented or have been initiated

14 The activities are routinely undertaken but are not fully implemented

15 Activities are appropriately implemented on a sustainable basis (Comply with the requirements of the International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures)

## COMMUNICATION AND RELATIONSHIP DYNAMICS

CONTROL POINTS AND RESPECTIVE CRITERIA		COTATION			
		1	2	3	4
<b>10. Consultation and information mechanisms for stakeholders in official control and phytosanitary certification system</b>					
10.1.	<p>Is there a formalized mechanism to guide consultations and dialogue between the NPPO and national stakeholders in the national system of control and certification of imported or exported consignments of plants, plant products and regulated articles?</p> <p>Is there a mechanism for information and interaction between the NPPO and stakeholders to promote compliance of imported consignments and phytosanitary certification of exports?</p>				
10.2.	<p>Are the processes for setting priorities and implementing the official control and certification program and their financing based on the results of the dialogue between the NPPO and the different stakeholders of the phytosanitary system?</p>				
10.3.	<p>Is a system for reporting, sharing and disseminating information and data from the official control and certification program to the various national public and private stakeholders formalized and effectively implemented?</p>				
<b>11. Cooperation and interaction with national and international stakeholders on the national system for preparing and maintaining lists of regulated pests</b>					
11.1.	<p>Does the NPPO participate in regional and international events and activities to keep abreast of regulatory developments and standardization activities related to plant protection?</p>				
11.2.	<p>Does the NPPO implement initiatives to establish and develop international cooperation with NPPOs, particularly from trading partner countries?</p>				
11.3.	<p>Does the NPPO participate on a regular and permanent basis in the work and activities of the IPPC and other regional bodies related to plant protection and pest risk management?</p>				

## 5.2. Appendix 2 – Example of a mandatory registration form for the importation of plants and plant products

1. **Company name** .....
2. **Trade register number** (attach copy): .....
3. **Legal representative**
  - 3.1. **First and last name:** .....
  - 3.2. **National identity card or passport number** (attach a copy)  
.....
4. **Mailing address**  
.....  
.....
5. **Location of the company**
  - 5.1. **City** .....
  - 5.2. **Address** .....
  - 5.3. **Phone number** .....
  - 5.4. **E-mail address** .....
7. **details of commodities to be imported** .....

N°	COMMODITY DESCRIPTION	ORIGIN

**The applicant**

---

**Reserved for the NPPO**

Received onle ..... / ..... / .....

NPPO decision .....

.....

Date ..... / ..... / .....

Director

Signature/Stamp .....

### 5.3. Appendix 3 – Example of an application form for mandatory export registration

Check the corresponding box:

New registration

Update

#### 1. IDENTIFICATION OF THE EXPORTER (natural or legal person)

Name

Certificate of registration of the company/ (attach photocopy)

Head office

Region

Phone number

Cell phone number

E-mail address

#### 2. LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE

First and last name

Function

Mailing address

Phone number

Identification number  
(attach photocopy)

Cell phone number

E-mail address

### 3. RESPONSIBLE OR MANAGER\*\*

\*\* To be completed if the Legal Representative is not managing the company

First name	<input type="text"/>
Name	<input type="text"/>
Title	<input type="text"/>
Mobile Phone Number	<input type="text"/>

### 4. ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT

(a) Production	<input type="checkbox"/>			
(b) Export	<input type="checkbox"/>	Europe	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other

### 5. PRODUCTION SITES

PLANTATIONS	LOCATION	AREA (HA)

### 6. PROJECTED EXPORT SCHEDULE

EXPORT STARTUP	COUNTRY OF DESTINATION

### 7. PACKAGING SITES

PACKHOUSE STATIONS	LOCATION

8. I declare on my honour that all the information provided is true and sincere.

Name of the applicant

Signature

Stamp

*Administration section*

---

Received on ..... / ..... / .....

NPPO decision .....

Unique registration number:

Date ..... / ..... / .....

Director

Signature/Stamp .....

## 5.4. Appendix 4 – Exporter categorization evaluation form

Name of the exporter: .....

Registration number: .....

Associated packhouse: .....

Date: ..... / ..... / 20 ..... Start time: ..... End time: .....

N°	CONTROL POINTS	POINTS ALLOCATED	SCORES	CREDENTIALS
<b>1. DOCUMENTARY CONTROL / EXPORTER-PRODUCER</b>				
1	Existence of the list of associated producers	10		
2	Existence of contracts with producers	10		
3	Existence of orchard/farm monitoring registers	1		
4	Availability and qualification of the person in charge of orchard/farm monitoring (production manager)	1		
5	Availability of evidence of training/ awareness of associated growers in good pest management practices	1		
6	Availability of evidence of training/ awareness of harvesting personnel in good harvesting practices	1		
7	Availability of records to track maintenance, treatment, and harvesting activities	1		
<b>Subtotal 1</b>		<b>25</b>		
<b>2. CONTROL OF THE ORCHARDS/FARMS</b>				
8	Respect of good maintenance practices (pruning, weeding of orchards/farm, )	5		
9	Respect for good sanitation practices (collection of fallen fruit/product followed by bagging or burying)	25		
<b>Subtotal 2</b>		<b>30</b>		

<b>3. DOCUMENTARY CONTROL IN THE PACKAGING STATION</b>				
10	Availability of a list of technical personnel (sorter)	6		
11	Availability of evidence of training of technical staff in the identification of infested/infected product	8		
12	Availability of a quality manager for internal controls	1		
<b>Subtotal 3</b>		<b>15</b>		
<b>4. CONTROL OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND PACKHOUSE FACILITIES</b>				
13	Layout of the different workstations (reception, storage, washing, sorting, packaging, etc.)	5		
14	General workplace lighting	5		
15	Lighting of the sorting and packaging line	5		
16	Availability of work tables (smooth and cleanable surface)	5		
<b>Subtotal 4</b>		<b>25</b>		
<b>5. HISTORY OF PEST INTERCEPTION NOTIFICATIONS</b>				
17	0 notification Year N -1	5		
<b>Subtotal 5</b>		<b>5</b>		
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>100</b>		

### Summary of evaluation results

<b>CRITERIA</b>	<b>RATING</b>
1. Documentary control / Exporter-Producer	/25
2. Control of the orchards/farm	/25
3. Documentary control in the packaging station	/30
4. Control of infrastructure and packhouse facilities	/15
5. History of pest interception notifications	/5
<b>Total</b>	<b>/100</b>

### Risk categorization of the exporter

*(Tick the mention according to the total mark obtained)*

CATEGORIES	MENTION	OBSERVATIONS
Low risk (above 80)		
Medium risk (55 to 80)		
High risk (Below 55)		

### Evaluation Team

FULL NAME	FUNCTION	SIGNATURE



FEBRUARY 2023



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