Regional guide for **PHYTOSANITARY IMPORT/EXPORT INSPECTION and DECISION-MAKING**

Southern African Development Community

SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY

REGIONAL GUIDE FOR PHYTOSANITARY IMPORT/EXPORT INSPECTION AND DECISION-MAKING

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Published by the Southern African Development Community with technical support from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and financial support from the European Union.

2022

ISBN: 978-99968-958-8-3

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ACRONYMS

FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
IPPC	International Plant Protection Convention
ISPM	International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures
MS	Member States
NPPO	National Plant Protection Organization
RNQP	regulated non-quarantine pests
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary
STOSAR	Support towards Operationalization of the SADC Regional Agricultural Policy
UN	United Nations
WTO	World Trade Organization

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Dr Rose W. Njeru would like to acknowledge the support provided by Dr Elma Zanamwe, Regional Coordinator of the project “Support towards Operationalization of the SADC Regional Agricultural Policy (STOSAR)”, and Dr Zibusiso Sibanda, Plant Health Specialist for the STOSAR project. Thank you for being available, and for providing guidance and timely feedback. In addition, the support given by Dr Mathew Abang, Plant Production and Protection Officer in the FAO Subregional Office for Southern Africa, is appreciated. Further, the support of the SADC Secretariat during the execution of this consultancy is gratefully acknowledged.

This guideline is an output of the STOSAR project with the financial support of the European Union.

I. Purpose

This guide describes procedures to carry out phytosanitary inspection of plants, plant products and other regulated articles at ports of entry/exit and to make decisions on the same. It also provides directives on the handling of cases of imported consignments with significant non-compliance to phytosanitary import/export requirements. Further, the guide contains directives on notifications due to the non-compliance as well as the emergency action to be taken by the importing country and, in some instances, the transit countries. In addition, the guide highlights the importance of plant export certification and the phytosanitary import regulatory systems whose focus is to prevent the introduction of quarantine pests or limit the entry of regulated non-quarantine pests with traded plant commodities and other regulated articles. It also highlights the important role of selected International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPM) in preventing the introduction and spread of regulated pests.

The National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs) or agents under the Authority are responsible for inspecting consignments of plants, plant products and other regulated articles in international traffic to prevent the introduction and spread of pests. Further, the NPPOs, in collaboration with relevant regulatory agencies, take appropriate phytosanitary emergency action on the detection in an imported consignment of a regulated pest not listed as being associated with the commodity from the exporting country or an organism posing a potential phytosanitary threat. The official International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) contact point of an importing country is responsible for sending notifications to their counterpart in the exporting or re-exporting country and where a contact point has not been identified, to the NPPO or as specified in bilateral arrangements. Notification is undertaken for the purpose of international cooperation to prevent the introduction and/or spread of regulated pests.

The objective of the phytosanitary procedures is to verify consignment compliance with import and export regulations, in order to prevent the introduction and spread of harmful organisms in plants, plant products and regulated articles. The export certification system issues consignments with phytosanitary certificates, thus affirming compliance with the current phytosanitary requirements of the importing country. The compliance of imported consignments is also ascertained at ports of entry to prevent the introduction of quarantine pests or limit the entry of regulated non-quarantine pests (RNQP) with imported commodities and other regulated articles. In the case of non-compliance, the notification is intended to help the exporting country to investigate the possible cause of the non-compliance with a view to avoid recurrence.

Phytosanitary inspectors employ various approaches to detect regulated pests for which the phytosanitary risk has been determined to verify compliance with import and export regulations, and hence prevent the introduction and spread of regulated pests in plants, plant products and regulated articles.

The objective of this guide is to present measures to be implemented by phytosanitary inspectors in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region. This includes handling non-compliant consignments and communicating notifications. It also emphasizes the benefits of implementing selected International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs) in preventing the introduction and spread of key quarantine pests in the SADC region.

II. Regulatory frameworks within which the guide has been developed

Trade within the SADC region is guided by the SADC Protocol on Trade, which aims to increase intraregional trade, enhance economic development in Member States, and strengthen resource productivity and the creation of a free trade area. It is also pegged on the Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Annex to the SADC Protocol on Trade whose objectives are to: a) facilitate the protection of human, animal or plant life or health in the territory of the Member States, b) enhance the Member States' implementation of the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, c) enhance technical capacity to implement and monitor SPS measures including promoting greater use of international standards and other matters concerning SPS, and d) provide a regional forum for addressing SPS matters and for resolving trade-related SPS issues.

This regional guide complements the inspection procedures outlined in Article 11 and Annex B of the SPS Annex to the SADC Protocol on Trade. Further, the guide is developed within the SADC Regional Agricultural Policy Framework whose specific objectives are to: a) enhance sustainable agricultural production, productivity and competitiveness; b) improve regional and international trade and access to markets of agricultural products, c) improve private and public sector engagement and investment in the agricultural value-chains, and d) reduce social and economic vulnerability of the region's population in the context of food and nutrition security, climate change and the changing economic environment.

III. Scope

1. This guide covers phytosanitary procedures for consignments of plants, plant products and other regulated articles for implementation at ports of entry/exit of SADC Member States. It also provides directives on how to determine compliance to specified import phytosanitary requirements and ensure appropriate outcomes are realized.
2. Further, the guide contains directives on handling non-compliant consignments and notifying the exporting or re-exporting countries about the significant non-compliance of imported consignments to import phytosanitary requirements.
3. The guide only covers activities at ports of entry/exit.
    - For exports, it does not cover inspection in the growing season or at storage, testing, packaging, processing and phytosanitary treatment facilities.
    - It is also limited to reporting of pests detected only in imported consignments (ISPM 13) but not in general surveillance or specific surveys.
    - It does not cover requirements related to human or animal health, pesticide residues, radioactivity or quality.
4. The guide highlights the important role of implementing selected ISPMs in preventing the introduction and spread of pests in the SADC region.
5. The guide also points out the importance of establishing plant export certification and phytosanitary import regulatory systems.

The users of this guideline are plant health inspectors of NPPOs or authorized agents (acting on behalf of the NPPO) in the SADC region and operating at ports of entry/exit. It specifically targets inspectors and NPPO staff charged with issuing phytosanitary certificates.

IV. Regulatory authority

The responsibilities of the NPPO include but are not limited to:

- Construction, implementation and review of the export certification system (Export Regulatory System – ISPM 7);
- Implementation of the phytosanitary import regulatory system (Phytosanitary Import Regulatory System – ISPM 20);
- Implementation and revision of phytosanitary inspection procedures (Guidelines for Inspection – ISPM 23) as well as communicating notifications on non-compliance and emergency action (ISPM 13).

Phytosanitary procedures to determine compliance for import and export consignments presented at the points of entry and exit include documentation checks for the verification of consignment identity and integrity, visual inspection, technical testing and record keeping. In addition, measures need to be put in place at ports of entry and exit to ensure that consignments in transit are not imported; these may include verification of the integrity of the consignment, conditions for transportation and time spans permitted within transit.

V. Plant import and export regulatory systems

Phytosanitary export certification system

The IPPC requires its contracting parties to put in place an export certification system to produce valid and credible phytosanitary certificates. The NPPO is responsible for the construction, implementation and review of the export certification system. The basic elements of the phytosanitary certification process include:

- Ascertaining the relevant phytosanitary requirements of the importing country;
- Verifying that the consignment conforms to those requirements at the time of certification; and
- Issuing of a phytosanitary certificate characterized by the following:
    - contains sufficient information to clearly identify the consignment to which it relates;
    - does not carry other information of a non-phytosanitary nature; and
    - its validity is limited in duration (prior to export) as NPPO deems appropriate.

The purpose of an export certification system is to ascertain the relevant phytosanitary requirements of the importing country, verify that exported consignments conform to those requirements at the time of certification and produce valid and credible phytosanitary certificates. Certification by the system affirms compliance with the current phytosanitary requirements of the importing country. **Except for the issuance** of phytosanitary certificates, the NPPO may accredit private agent (non-governmental) personnel who have no financial interest in the outcome to carry out specified certification functions.

An effective certification system requires **sufficient resources** including personnel with appropriate expertise, information on the phytosanitary requirements of the importing country, adequate technical information concerning quarantine pests and (to the extent possible) non-quarantine pests for the importing countries, for documentation, record keeping, consignment tracking and good communication.

Phytosanitary import regulatory system

The issuing of phytosanitary regulations is the responsibility of a contracting party (Article IV.3[c] of the IPPC) but contracting parties may delegate the development or revision of phytosanitary regulations. The regulations (which should be in line with phytosanitary principles in ISPM 1) are implemented by NPPO officers or other accredited agents (acting on behalf of the NPPO and under its control) in close collaboration with other relevant national regulatory bodies. The objective of a phytosanitary import regulatory system is to prevent the introduction of quarantine pests or limit the entry of regulated non-quarantine pests with imported commodities and other regulated

articles. The phytosanitary import regulatory system should include provisions for import authorization as well as phytosanitary action to be taken in the case of non-compliance or for emergency action. The import regulatory system must verify that specified import phytosanitary measures have been implemented. These measures are implemented in:

- the exporting country, for example treatment, inspection or testing in the growing season, produced from plants of specified phytosanitary status;
- during shipment, for example fumigation; and
- at ports of entry and after entry.

Compliance procedures at ports consist of three basic elements:

- documentary checks;
- verification of consignment integrity; and
- phytosanitary inspection.

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

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

VI. Role of implementing selected ISPMs in preventing the introduction and spread of regulated plant pests in the SADC region

The NPPOs are responsible for implementing ISPMs in collaboration with key actors. The prime benefits of implementing selected ISPMs at ports of entry and exit in preventing the introduction and spread of regulated plant pests in the SADC region include the following:

The implementation of ISPM 7 (Export Regulatory System) ensures that NPPOs have a clear understanding of the relevant phytosanitary requirements of the importing country. These requirements guide the construction, implementation and review of the export certification system. Further, inspectors verify that a consignment conforms to import requirements at the time of certification and then issue a credible phytosanitary certificate. Certification by the system affirms compliance with the current phytosanitary requirements of the importing country and prevents the spread and introduction of pests with traded commodities. The inspection process is guided by the **implementation of ISPM 23** (Guidelines for inspection).

The implementation of ISPM 20 (Phytosanitary Import Regulatory System) is critical to prevent the introduction of quarantine pests or limit the entry of regulated non-quarantine pests with imported commodities and other regulated articles. The key benefits of implementing ISPM 20 include the following:

- Determining the compliance of imported consignments with phytosanitary regulations (by verifying that the specified import phytosanitary measures have been implemented in the exporting country, during shipment, at ports of entry and after entry.
- It is a safety net to determine if the stipulated phytosanitary measures are effective in preventing the introduction of quarantine pests and limiting the entry of RNQPs, or if the measures need to be revised.
- Aids early detection of potential quarantine pests or quarantine pests whose entry with the imported commodity was not predicted.
- Because the phytosanitary import regulatory system spells out import authorization as well as phytosanitary action to be taken in the case of non-compliance or emergency action, it guides their implementation.

The implementation of ISPM 41 (International movement of used vehicles, machinery and equipment) minimizes the risk of introducing quarantine pests to agricultural, forested, wilderness or other areas through international movement of used vehicles, machinery and equipment, which are contaminated with soil, pests, plant debris or seeds. In general, there are risks associated with the international movement of used vehicles, machinery and equipment utilized in agriculture, forestry, horticulture, earth moving, surface mining, waste management and by the

military. Depending on their use, storage or transportation before export, used vehicles, machinery and equipment may have become contaminated with quarantine pests or regulated articles and when moved internationally as either a traded commodity or an operational relocation, they may carry soil, pests, plant debris or seeds.

The **implementation of ISPM 15**, whose focus is on the regulations of wood packaging materials for international trade, significantly reduces the risk of introduction and spread of most quarantine pests that may be associated with wood packaging material and may be a threat to orchards, forests, parks and biodiversity in general. Wood packaging material is often made from raw wood that may be infested with pests. Further, the packaging material is often reused, repaired or remanufactured, thus the true origin of any piece of wood packaging material is difficult to determine and its phytosanitary status cannot easily be ascertained. It is a potential pathway for the introduction and spread of quarantine pests. Wood packaging materials such as crates, boxes, packing cases, pallets, cable drums and spools/reels must be treated.

VII. Prerequisite requirements for effective implementation of phytosanitary procedures

For the effective implementation of phytosanitary procedures, the following are critical:

- NPPOs with sufficient human resources or access to personnel with expertise for the tasks to be executed.
- Adequate technical information on quarantine pests, and where possible, non-quarantine pests for the importing countries provided to inspectors and other staff involved in phytosanitary certification.
- Official current information on importing country phytosanitary requirements and import requirements of its trading partners maintained by NPPOs.
- Official current information on the phytosanitary import regulations/requirements of own country.
- Sufficient support for documentation including desks, filing chests, computers and software, printers, stationery and other supplies to aid the issuing of phytosanitary certificates; as well as storage and retrieval of records of all actions, results and decisions concerning import/export regulations.
- Information on the country's regulated pests including biology, host range, pathways, global distribution, detection and identification methods, as well as treatment methods for importing country inspectors.
- Equipment and supplies to support efficient communication within the exporting country including computers and software, printers, stationery, reliable internet services and telephone.
- Standard operating procedures for relevant aspects of the operation of the export certification and phytosanitary import regulatory system.
    - Neat and spacious inspection area to allow the inspectors to perform their duties optimally.
    - Inspectors to observe maximum care and avoid accidents especially when:
        - accessing port terminals and warehouses as heavy handling equipment are in use.
        - inspecting at inappropriate places in the absence of unloading bays.
        - there may be falling loads while inspecting containers or trucks.
        - there is a possibility of falling from trucks when climbing to inspect loosely packaged consignments.
        - there is a danger of inhaling toxic gas from containers containing fumigated articles.
        - using sharp tools for sampling and inspection.
        - opening containers, boxes and parcels, including courier parcels.
- Inspectors to clean and disinfect tools, material and hands after contact with the infected or infested plants, planting materials and plant products with a view to avoid the risk of contaminating other consignments after sampling and inspection.

- Inspectors to separate the items or articles already inspected and certified from the uninspected commodities to prevent cross-contamination.
- Designate a quarantine holding area (container, covering consignment with tarpaulin) for infested, contaminated or prohibited commodities to reduce the risk of harmful organisms spreading when sampling, handling, packaging or transporting samples.

VIII. Phytosanitary inspection procedures

Table 1: Tools and supplies for inspection

Table with a white, clean and smooth surface	Scissors	Pointed knives
Inspection kit, camel hair brush	Hand lens	Pencil and sharpener
A good lighting system	Marker pens (red and black colours)	Cellotape
Forceps, visors and microscopes	Stapler with pins	Sieves with differentiated mesh
Ruler torchlight with cells	Nose mask and eye cover	White paper; black paper sheet
Specimen vials	Inspectors' clothing and adapted shoes	Needle
Droppers	Notepads	Calculator
Pens	Poly bags/sample bags	Sweep nets
Alcohol (70 percent)	Tissue paper (box)	Plastic bags
Dustbins	Swab	Form of inspection report
White enamelled tray	Ice/ fridge/ freezer	Camera probes
Chest	Packets of hand gloves	Aprons; sampling probes; sample stickers; petri dishes; cover slips; slides; copy of Plant Pests Act and other relevant pieces of national legislation; identity card; national list of pests; commodity-specific phytosanitary import requirements; inspection report; interception forms

The inspection procedure is based on ISPM 23 and entails the following:

- Examination of documents associated with the consignment
- Verification of consignment identity and integrity and relevant marks in the associated packaging materials
- Visual examination for pests and other phytosanitary requirements (such as free from soil and debarking)
- Laboratory testing when the need arises

Initiation of the inspection

The consignment could arrive at ports of entry/exit through the passenger terminal or commercial/cargo terminal. To facilitate the smooth flow of commodities across ports of entry and through commercial terminals, the client (trader) should give the NPPO officer (officer in charge of import/export certification) or authorized inspector at least 48 hours' notice prior to the arrival of the consignment at the specified port of entry/exit. The NPPO officer in charge then assigns the request to a competent inspector for action. For consignments passing through passenger terminals, the traveller/client should visit the NPPO office (inland office) to have the consignment inspected and issued with a phytosanitary certificate prior to arriving at the port of entry/exit.

Step 1: Examination of documents associated with a consignment

- ✓ The phytosanitary inspector at the approved port of entry/exit examines the documents associated with the consignment to ensure they meet the technical requirements of the consignment.
- ✓ The documents are examined to ensure that they are: a) complete, b) consistent, c) accurate, d) valid and not fraudulent.
- ✓ Key documents that an inspector must review to verify the identity and integrity of the commodity include:
    - o phytosanitary certificate or phytosanitary certificate for re-export,
    - o import permit, treatment documents or certificates/report/fumigation report,
    - o certificate of origin,
    - o field inspection certificates or reports,
    - o producer or packing list with traceability codes,
    - o certification programme documents,
    - o laboratory reports,
    - o cargo manifest (including waybills and invoice).
- ✓ Details to be considered include:
    - o matching the consignment identity and brand,
    - o origin of the product and point of entry,
    - o importer/exporter clearly indicated and included in the NPPO database,
    - o mode of transport,
    - o number of containers/boxes and total quantity of the commodity.

Step 2: Verification of consignment identity, integrity and relevant marks in the associated materials such as pallets

The verification of consignment identity and integrity is to determine whether the consignment is accurately described in the accompanying documents, and it requires physical examination. Where the consignment is light (mainly at land

borders and airport passenger terminals), the client presents it to the inspector at the inspection desk for verification. In other cases, the inspector visits the approved storage facilities, inspection bay or yard or boards the vessel (ship/boat/plane/truck) for the following:

a. Verify the identity and integrity of the commodity to ensure it is accurately described by accompanying documents.
b. Do a physical check of the consignment to verify the identity of the type of plant or plant product or species is in accordance with the phytosanitary certificate presented or to be issued.
c. Conduct an integrity check to verify if the consignment, quantity and status are as declared in the phytosanitary certificate presented or to be issued.
d. Conduct a check to verify if seals, safety conditions, marks in wooden pallets (as described in ISPM 15) and other aspects of the shipment that may be of phytosanitary concern are in place.

After all the documentary checks, the officer proceeds to do a visual examination of the consignment or lot. After the inspector has carried out the identity check, the results dictate the next action.

Step 3: Consignment sampling and phytosanitary inspection

Phytosanitary inspection

The objective of the phytosanitary inspection is to confirm compliance of the consignment with import or export requirements pertaining to quarantine pests or regulated non-quarantine pests and to verify the effectiveness of phytosanitary measures applied to the commodity at a previous time.

- For exports: the inspector is to ensure the commodity meets the phytosanitary requirements of the importing country before issuing a phytosanitary certificate or a release note if the phytosanitary certificate was issued from the inland office.
- For imports: the inspector is to ensure the consignment meets the phytosanitary requirement of your/own country.

Because the inspection of an entire consignment is often not feasible, the phytosanitary inspection is carried out on a representative sample of lots or consignments covered by the same phytosanitary certificate.

Phytosanitary control shall determine whether, on the basis of a complete examination of one or more representative samples, including packaging and, where applicable, transport vehicles, the consignment, and/or associated wooden packaging material meet the requirements. Its focus is to:

- conduct a visual inspection of plants, plant products or regulated articles in order to investigate the possible presence of harmful organisms;

- verify the compliance of plants, plant products and regulated articles with the requirements of the phytosanitary regulation controllable by simple visual examination (such as dormancy and the absence of flowers, fruits and leaves);
- Do visual inspection to verify compliance with regulations or permit requirements such as treatment, degree of processing, freedom from contaminants and absence of unauthorized pests or plant products.

Sampling and sampling methods

The sampling method should be consistent with ISPM 31 (Requirements for sampling and sampling methods) and entails the following:

a) Identification of the lot and sample unit

A lot is a number of units of a single commodity and shipment identified by its homogeneity of composition such as:

- grower
- origin
- packaging facility
- species
- variety
- degree of maturity
- exporter
- area of production
- regulated pests
- type of treatment
- origin

Determination of sample unit: Sampling first involves the identification of the appropriate unit for sampling, for example:

- a fruit
- stem
- bunch
- unit of weight
- bag or carton

Where a consignment consists of several lots, the inspection to determine compliance may consist of several separate visual examinations and sampling each lot separately.

b) Sampling plan

- Sampling of a consignment is the random selection of a representative of the whole consignment or lot in a particular bill of lading.
- Samples to inspect should be sufficiently representative of the overall lot.
- Where the consignment consists of more than one lot, the inspection will consist of several visual examinations.
- Where multiple commodities are covered in a single consignment, each commodity is considered separately.
- In the case where a lot is contaminated, it is rejected, and the remaining lots are vigorously inspected.
- If there is no information about the part of the consignment that has a higher probability to harbour pests, statistical methodology is used.

Sampling is influenced by the perceived risk level associated with a commodity. The general risk categories of commodities are summarized in Table 2 and are based on guidelines in ISPM 31. The inspector should identify the risk category of the commodity to be inspected.

Table 2. Plant commodities categorized according to their pest risk*

Category	Description of commodity
Category 1: No risk	Fully processed plant materials that, in most situations, should not be regulated
Category 2: Low risk	Plant materials that have undergone some processing, but remain capable of being infested by pests
Category 3: Moderate risk	Unprocessed plant materials that may be consumed or processed further (fruits, vegetables, cut flowers)
Category 4: High risk	Unprocessed plant materials intended for planting (plants, seeds)
*Source: Methodologies for sampling of consignments (ISPM 31)	

c) Size of sample to inspect

The sample size is the number of units selected from the lot or consignment that will be inspected or tested. Guidance for determining the sample size is provided in ISPM 31 and for the visual inspection of fruits, vegetables and cut flowers this is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Sample size for visual inspection of fruits, vegetables and cut flowers (at 1% contamination detectable level and 95% confidence level)*

Number of units in lot	Equal to or less than 200	Equal to or less	Equal to or less than 1 000	Equal to or less than 5 000	Equal to or less	Equal to or less than 10 000	Equal to or less than 20 000

		than 500			**than 7 000**		
Sample size	All	225	258	290	292	294	296
*Source: Methodologies for sampling of consignments (ISPM 31)							

The calculation of the sample size for the visual inspection of plants for planting, excluding seed, using guidelines in ISPM 31 is presented in table 4. Calculations are based on 0.5% contamination detectable level with 99% confidence level and figures indicate the minimum sample size.

Table 4: Sample size for inspection of plants for planting in a homogenous lot (excluding seed) (at 0.5% contamination detectable level and 99% confidence level)*

Number of units in lot	**Equal to or less than 200**	**Equal to or less than 500**	**Equal to or less than 1 000**	**Equal to or less than 5 000**	**Equal to or less than 7 000**	**Equal to or less than 10 000**	**Equal to or less than 14 000**
Sample size	All	483	745	1 200	1 250	1 290	1 310
*Source: Methodologies for sampling of consignments (ISPM 31)							

- When a lot is contained in multiple containers (such as bags, parcels and boxes), the inspection must be carried out on a sample taken from a minimum of 5 "containers".
- Similarly, for large batches (transported in several containers), the inspection will be carried out on one third of the containers.
- The inspector will randomly select the containers to be inspected. The sample to be inspected will then be extracted from two containers taken from each selected container, insofar as the accumulation of containers taken and inspected remains greater than or equal to 5.

Step 4: Physical examination of samples

Random sampling of the consignment is done for examination purposes. Samples are examined using appropriate inspection tools such as a hand lens, knife, torchlight and probes in the case of grains for detection of any presence of insect pests and/or diseases. The inspector will look for signs or symptoms such as insect damage.

Sample collection

Testing is not always a component of inspection. The collection of samples for further laboratory testing may be required for the following: identification of a visually detected pest, confirmation of a visually identified pest, checking

for latent infections, audit or monitoring, as well as for reference purposes, particularly in cases of non-compliance and verification of the declared product. Laboratory-based inspection should follow technically approved procedures.

Step 5: Progress with specific focus on inspection of export consignments

1. The inspector is to verify that the commodity meets the phytosanitary requirements of the importing country.
2. The inspector is required to produce an inspection report, with the statement of conformity or non-conformity signed by the inspector, the date of inspection specified and should state if a sample was taken.
3. If the inspector's report confirms non-conformity, then:
    - the commodities are rejected, and a phytosanitary certificate is not issued.
    - the verdict of the inspection is communicated to other inspectors to avoid the consignment being presented to another inspector for inspection.
4. If the inspector's report confirms conformity, then the inspector proceeds to complete and issue a phytosanitary certificate (dated with appropriate validity and signed) to the exporter. When issuing a phytosanitary certificate, the officer should ensure:
    - it contains sufficient information to clearly identify the consignment to which it relates.
    - it does not carry other information of a non-phytosanitary nature.
    - its validity is limited in duration (prior to export) as the NPPO deems appropriate.
5. The inspector is to ensure that other specified phytosanitary measures are fulfilled, such as the following:
    - When required by the country of destination, that a report confirming inspection or testing in the growing season prior to export is attached.
    - When required by the country of destination, that a report confirming plants are produced from plants of specified phytosanitary status, such as grown from virus-tested plants or under specified conditions, is attached.
    - When a treatment is required by the country of destination, that a certificate of treatment or fumigation is attached.

Documentation and records

The inspection and certification files will consist of documents needed to ensure the traceability of all steps performed during the inspection process. These documents include:

- application for a phytosanitary certificate
- inspection report with the statement of compliance or non-compliance
- copy of sampling sheets

- copy of the import permit
- laboratory analysis reports
- certificates of treatment
- Other relevant documentation

The NPPO should store and maintain:

- documents, samples and specimens
- records of all laboratory reports
- copies of phytosanitary certificates issued

Inspection records for consignments for which phytosanitary certificates are not issued, should also be kept. The NPPO should be able to retrieve all records when required. The use of secure electronic storage and retrieval is recommended. The records are kept for the following reasons:

- reference purposes
- traceability
- aid in inspection review when needed

Step 5a: Inspection results and outcomes for exports

Possible scenarios of inspection results and outcomes for export consignments are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5: Inspection results and outcomes for export consignments

Commodity presented at port of exit for export	Inspection results for consignments destined for export	Inspection outcome for consignments destined for export
Scenario 1	Exporter registered with NPPO. All importing country requirements met. Import permit, treatment and/or testing certificates, field inspection certificate and invoices all provided, additional declaration confirming; verified as produced from plants of specified phytosanitary status, verified as produced under specified conditions, etc.	Issue client with phytosanitary certificate valid for a specified period, which is signed and dated.

	Inspection done and no pest detected in the consignment.	
Scenario 2	Some of the importing country's requirements not met.	Reject the consignment and do not issue phytosanitary certificate.
Scenario 3	A pest is detected during inspection.	Reject the consignment, OR where possible, treat at the exporter's cost and then issue client with phytosanitary certificate.
Scenario 4	Contradiction of content and declaration of the consignment.	If possible, hold consignment until exporter provides correct documents; OR if not possible, penalize exporter based on country law/exporter to review documents.
Scenario 5	Missing documents: declaration form, treatment certificate, waybill and traceability codes, among others, are absent.	Reject consignment.

Step 6: Progress with specific focus on inspection of imported consignments

For imports: the inspector is to ensure the consignment meets the phytosanitary requirement of the importing country. Decisions taken after inspection should be based on ISPM 20, and depending on the results of the inspection, an inspection report is issued; with the statement of conformity or nonconformity signed by the inspector, date of inspection specified and stating if sample was taken. The report should include one or more of the following:

1. Authorize the immediate release of the consignment to the importer **for compliant commodities**, OR
2. **For-non-compliant consignments** it may include the following actions:
    - Hold, treat and release the consignment, or
    - Reject the consignment, or
    - Reship to the country of origin at the expense of the importer or destroy the consignment at the expense of the importer, or
    - Quarantine the consignment.

Action for non-compliant consignments is covered in step 8.

The documents in the inspection file are similar to those used for export consignments. The NPPO should properly store and maintain documents, samples and specimens as outlined for exports. Records must be stored for the following reasons:

- Tracing back to the consignment/lot when the need arises,

- To facilitate the review of inspection results when needed,
- For decision-making to intensify and increase the frequency of inspections in cases of repeated non-compliance of consignments or lots from the non-compliance source.

Step 6a: Inspection results and outcomes for imports

Possible scenarios of inspection results and outcomes for imported consignments are summarized in Table 6.

Table 6: Inspection results and outcomes for imported consignments

Commodity presented at port of entry for importation	Inspection results for imported consignments	Inspection outcomes for imported consignments
Scenario 1	Documents are complete, consistent, accurate and valid and no quarantine and/or regulated pests detected.	Release imported consignment.
Scenario 2	Documents are complete, consistent, accurate and valid but quarantine pests detected.	a. Reject imported consignment and b. Reship consignment to exporting country at the exporter's expense, or c. If reshipping is not possible, destroy the consignment at the expense of the importer. d. Notify the NPPO of the exporting country of the non-compliance.
Scenario 3	Documents are unclear or have questionable alterations or appear fraudulent.	a. Deny entry, OR b. Hold the consignment and confirm the authenticity of the documents with the exporting country NPPO, and • If valid documents are availed, inspect consignment and if no quarantine pests are detected, release the consignment. • If valid documents are NOT availed, take action in

		accordance with the national law.
Scenario 4	Absence of: - Import permit, - Phytosanitary certificate, and - Treatment certificate.	Deny entry and take action in accordance with the national law.
Scenario 5	All other documents valid but phytosanitary certificate not signed by NPPO.	a. Deny entry, OR b. Hold the consignment and verify with exporting country NPPO, and • if valid documents are availed, inspect consignment and if no quarantine pests are detected, release the consignment AND c. Notify the NPPO of the exporting country of the non-compliance.
Scenario 6	Conflicting statistics such as number of boxes, quantities and statements on a consignment.	a. Deny entry, OR b. Hold the consignment and verify statistics with exporting country NPPO, and • if accurate statistics are availed, inspect consignment and if no quarantine pests are detected, release the consignment AND c. Notify the NPPO of the exporting country of the non-compliance.
Scenario 7	All documents are correct BUT non-quarantine regulated pests are found.	a. Hold consignment, treat at the expense of the importer and release the consignment, OR b. If treatment is not available, reship to the country of origin or destroy at the cost of the importer. c. Notify the NPPO of the exporting country of the non-compliance.

Step 7: Progress with specific focus on inspection of regulated articles

For imports: the inspector is to ensure the consignment meets the phytosanitary requirements of their own country, which are guided by relevant ISPM (such as ISPM 15, which outlines *regulations of wood packaging material for international trade* and ISPM 41 for guidelines on *international movement of used vehicles, machinery and equipment*). Decisions taken after inspection should be based on relevant ISPM 20 and based on the results of the inspection, an inspection report is issued, with the statement of conformity or nonconformity signed by the inspector, date of inspection specified and stating if any specimens were taken for identification. The report should include one or more of the following:

1. Authorize the immediate release of the consignment to the importer **for compliant commodities**, OR
2. **For-non-compliant consignments** it may include the following actions:
    - Hold, clean and/or treat and release the consignment, or
    - Reject the consignment, or
    - Reship to the country of origin at the expense of the importer, or
    - Destroy the consignment at the expense of the importer.

Action for non-compliant consignments is covered in section IX, beginning on page 32.

The inspection and certification files will consist of documents needed to ensure the traceability of all steps performed during the inspection process. These documents include:

- Application for a phytosanitary certificate
- Inspection report with the statement of compliance or non-compliance
- Copy of import permit
- Cleaning declaration
- Certificates of treatment
- Authorization and audit report
- Copy of specimen sampling sheet (if applicable)
- Other relevant documentation

The NPPO should store and maintain documents, samples, specimens and records of all laboratory reports and should be able to retrieve all records when required. The use of secure electronic storage and retrieval is recommended.

Step 7a: Inspection results and outcomes for imports of regulated articles

Possible scenarios of inspection results and outcomes for imported consignments are summarized in Table 7.

Table 7: Inspection results and outcomes for imports of regulated articles

Commodity presented at port of entry for importation	**Inspection results for imported consignments**	**Inspection outcomes for imported consignments**
Scenario 1a: Used vehicles, machinery and equipment such as: *Agricultural, forestry and horticultural* used vehicles, machinery and equipment. *Waste management* used vehicles, machinery and equipment. Used *military* machinery and equipment.	a. Documents are complete, consistent, accurate and valid, AND b. The articles are clean, treated and there is no evidence of contamination with soil, pests, plant debris or seeds.	Release imported consignment.
Scenario 1b: Wooden products such as crates containing wooden carvings.	a. Documents are complete, consistent, accurate and valid, AND b. The articles are treated, the mark is clearly visible on the crates and in line with ISPM 15 guidelines.	Release imported consignment.
Scenario 2a: Used vehicles, machinery and equipment.	Documents are complete, consistent, accurate and valid, but the articles are contaminated with soil, pests, plant debris and seeds.	a) Hold consignment, clean and treat at the expense of the importer and release the consignment, OR b) If treatment is not available, reship to country of origin or destroy at the cost of the importer. Notify the NPPO of the exporting country of the non-compliance.
Scenario 2b: Wooden products such as crates containing wooden carvings.	Documents are complete, consistent, accurate and valid, but not treated in line with ISPM 15.	a) Hold consignment, treat at the expense of the importer and release the consignment, OR b) If treatment is not available, reship to country of origin or destroy at the cost of the importer.

		Notify the NPPO of the exporting country of the non-compliance.
Scenario 3	Documents are unclear or have questionable alterations or appear fraudulent.	a) Deny entry, OR b) Hold the consignment and confirm the authenticity of the documents with the NPPO of the exporting country, and • if valid documents are availed, inspect consignment and if no contaminants are detected, release the consignment. • If valid documents are NOT availed, take action in accordance with the national law.
Scenario 4	Absence of: - Import permit, - Phytosanitary certificate, and - Treatment certificate.	Deny entry and take action in accordance with the national law.
Scenario 5	All other documents valid but phytosanitary certificate not signed by NPPO.	a) Deny entry, OR b) Hold the consignment and verify with exporting country NPPO and • if valid documents are availed, inspect consignment and • if no contaminants are detected, release the consignment AND c. Notify the NPPO of the exporting country of the non-compliance.
Scenario 6	Conflicting statistics such as quantities/units and statements on a consignment.	a) Deny entry, OR b) Hold the consignment and verify statistics with exporting country NPPO and • if accurate statistics are availed, inspect consignment

		and • if no contaminants are detected, release the consignment AND c) Notify the NPPO of the exporting country of the non-compliance.

IX: Notification for non-compliance and emergency action

Provisions of the IPPC Article VII.2(f) state, “Importing contracting parties shall, as soon as possible, inform the exporting contracting party concerned or, where appropriate, the re-exporting contracting party concerned, of significant instances of non-compliance with phytosanitary certification.--------” Article VII.6 states that contracting parties may take “appropriate emergency action on the detection of a pest posing a potential threat to its territories or the report of such a detection. ------ The action taken shall be immediately reported to contracting parties concerned, the secretary, and any regional plant protection organization of which the contracting party is a member.”

Step 1. Cases of significant non-compliance

Countries may agree bilaterally on what instances of non-compliance to phytosanitary import regulations are considered significant for notification purposes. In the absence of such agreements, the inspectors in the importing country shall specify the nature of non-compliance and may include the following to be significant:

1. Failure to comply with documentary requirements including:
    - absence of phytosanitary certificates,
    - uncertified alterations or erasures to phytosanitary certificates,
    - serious deficiencies in information on phytosanitary certificates,
    - fraudulent phytosanitary certificates.
2. Failure to comply with specified phytosanitary import requirements including:
    - detection of regulated pests,
    - prohibited consignments,
    - prohibited articles (such as soil) in consignments,
    - evidence of failure of specified treatments,
    - repeated instances of prohibited articles in small, non-commercial quantities carried by passengers or sent by mail.
3. The detection in an imported consignment of:
    - a regulated pest not listed as being associated with the commodity from the exporting country,
    - an organism that poses a potential phytosanitary threat.

In case of scenario 3, emergency action is taken.

Step 2. Phytosanitary and emergency actions for non-compliant consignments

Phytosanitary actions

The NPPO may take phytosanitary and emergency actions in accordance with provisions of IPPC Article VII.6, which states that contracting parties may take "appropriate emergency action on the detection of a pest posing a potential threat to its territories or the report of such a detection".

The NPPO of the importing country may take appropriate phytosanitary actions on an imported consignment or other regulated article that does not comply with phytosanitary regulations and is initially refused entry. The actions are in accordance with national regulations. Depending on the commodity or regulated article, the measures may include:

- treatment and/or cleaning,
- sorting or reconditioning,
- disinfection of regulated articles (including equipment, premises, means of transportation),
- direction to a particular end use such as processing,
- reshipment or destruction (such as incineration).

Emergency actions

Emergency actions are taken on the detection in an imported consignment of:

- a regulated pest not listed as being associated with the commodity from the exporting country,
- an organism posing a potential phytosanitary threat.

Step 3. Pest identification

When harmful organisms are detected, they shall be collected and sent to the plant health laboratory for further examination and identification. The identification process should follow technically approved procedures including published peer reviewed methodologies for the specific organisms (viruses, bacteria, fungi, nematodes and weeds, among others). For microorganisms, it could entail serology or molecular-based techniques which generate results within a short period. This information is essential for notifications.

Step 4: Notifications

The IPPC contact point of the importing country should notify significant instances of non-compliance of a consignment with phytosanitary import requirements and emergency action taken due to non-compliance. Notification

should be sent to the IPPC contact point of the exporting country or, where necessary, to the re-export country. The following should be notified:

- Exporting country in case of imported consignments and consignments in transit,
- Re-exporting country in case of re-export consignment.

The purpose of the notifications is for the NPPO of the exporting country to investigate the cause of non-compliance to phytosanitary import regulations with a view to avoid recurrence.

Step 5: Documentation and communication

- Notifications should be provided promptly once non-compliance or the need for emergency action has been confirmed and phytosanitary actions taken. Where there is a significant delay in confirming the reason for the notification (e.g. identification of an organism), a preliminary notification may be provided.
- The language(s) used for notification and supporting information will be the language(s) preferred by the notifying country except where bilaterally agreed otherwise. Where information is requested through contact points, information should be supplied in one of the FAO languages.
- Electronic mode of notification is recommended.
- The importing country should keep notification documents, supporting information and associated records for at least one year after the date of notification. Information to include in the notification is provided in Table 8.

Table 8. Information to be included in notifications

Reference number (could be number of phytosanitary certificates associated with consignment)	
Date notification is sent	
Identity of NPPO of importing country	
Identity of NPPO of exporting country	
Identity of consignment by the phytosanitary certificate number or references to other documentation Name of commodity and scientific name (at least plant genus) for plants or plant products	
Identity of consignee	

Identity of consignor	
Specific information on the nature of the non-compliance (phytosanitary import requirements to which non-compliance applies): - In the case of a pest, give identity - If the entire consignment is affected or only part of it - In the case of documentation, specify	
Specify phytosanitary actions taken and identify the parts of the consignment affected by the actions	
Authentication marks showing notifications are valid through stamp, seal, a letterhead or authorized signature	
Date of first action on the consignment	

X. Collaboration with other border regulatory agencies

The inspection of plants, plant products and regulated articles requires collaboration between plant health inspectors and other relevant border regulatory agencies. The key regulatory agencies involved in the handling of agricultural commodities at the SADC regional ports of entry/exit include those collecting revenue and those involved in the enforcement of technical standards, SPS measures, import and export restrictions and prohibitions. Additional regulatory agencies also handle the commodities either at ports of entry or post entry. They include the pesticide regulatory bodies, wildlife and parks/conservation authorities, national seed certification authorities, local authorities, and trade and marketing departments. For efficient service delivery the agencies should:

- Harmonize working days, hours and procedures in the case of the key national regulatory agencies. In addition, for one-stop border posts, harmonization should be done by agencies of the two Member States sharing the post.
- Ensure timely sharing of information and data to facilitate fast decision making, enhance fast release and clearance of consignments and minimize congestion at the ports of entry/exit.
- Actively participate in the multi-agency national border management forums.
- Conduct joint operations such as inspections where the key relevant agencies are involved.
- Facilitate phytosanitary action in cases of non-compliance such as holding, treatment, destruction or reshipment of consignments which do not comply to import requirements.

XI. Glossary

The glossary is based on ISPM 5.

Consignment: A quantity of plants, plant products and/or other articles being moved from one country to another and covered, when required, by a single phytosanitary certificate.

Compliance: Official procedure used to verify that a consignment complies with stated phytosanitary requirements.

Import requirements: Specific phytosanitary measures established by an importing country concerning consignments moving into that country.

Integrity checks: Composition of a consignment as described by its phytosanitary certificate or other officially acceptable document, maintained without loss, addition or substitution.

Inspector: Person authorized by a National Plant Protection Organization to discharge its functions.

Lot: A number of units of a single commodity, identifiable by its homogeneity of composition, origin, etc. and forming part of a consignment.

Mark: An official stamp or brand, internationally recognized, applied to a regulated article to attest its phytosanitary status (ISPM No. 15).

Phytosanitary certificate: Certificate patterned after the model certificates of the IPPC.

Phytosanitary certificate of re-export: A document that is used to certify foreign-origin plants or plant products for re-export to a third country.

Phytosanitary import requirements: Specific phytosanitary measures established by an importing country concerning consignments moving into that country.

Phytosanitary procedure: Any official method for implementing phytosanitary measures including the performance of inspections, tests, surveillance or treatments in connection with regulated pests.

Regulated article: 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.

Regulated pest: A quarantine pest or a regulated non-quarantine pest.

Regulated non-quarantine pests: A non-quarantine pest whose presence in plants for planting affects the intended use of those plants with an economically unacceptable impact and which is therefore regulated within the territory of the importing contracting party.

Quarantine pest treatment: Official procedure for the killing, inactivation or removal of pests, or for rendering pests infertile or for devitalization.

Visual examination: The physical examination of plants, plant products or other regulated articles using the unaided eye, lens, stereoscope or microscope to detect pests or contaminants without testing or processing.

Plants: Seeds in the botanical sense of the term, other than seeds not intended for planting; fruits in the botanical sense of the term; vegetables – tubers, corms, bulbs, rhizomes, roots, rootstocks (shoots, stems, stolons); branches with or without foliage; cut trees with foliage; leaves; foliage – plant tissue cultures including cell cultures, germplasm, meristems, chimeric clones, micro propagative material, live pollen and spores, the buds, the cuttings, the woods of graft, the grafts, the scions.

Plant products: Non-manufactured products of plant origin as well as manufactured products which, given their nature or that of their processing, may constitute a risk of dissemination of quarantine pests.

(Other) **Regulated articles:** All objects or materials, other than plants or plant products, that can carry or spread pests, including soil or growing media, machinery and vehicles utilized for agriculture or forestry, imported from third countries.

XII. Easy access resources

1. http://www.sadc.int/files/4613/5292/8370/Protocol_on_Trade1996.pdf
2. http://www.sadc.int/files/2114/1520/0828/SPS_Annex_to_the_SADC_Protocol_on_Trade
3. International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures can be accessed at http://www.ippc.int
    - **a.** Export Regulatory System (ISPM 7)
    - **b.** Guidelines for the notification of non-compliance and emergency action (ISPM 13)
    - **c.** Regulation of wood packaging material for international trade (ISPM 15)
    - **d.** Phytosanitary Import Regulatory System (ISPM 20)
    - **e.** Guidelines for Inspection (ISPM 23)
    - **f.** Methodologies for sampling of consignments (ISPM 31)
    - **g.** International movement of used vehicles, machinery and equipment (ISPM 41)
4. Southern African Development Community draft guidelines for coordinated border management, August 2011.
5. Southern African Development Community Regional Agricultural Policy, 7 June 2013.
6. WTO, 1994. WTO Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures. World Trade Organization, Geneva, Switzerland.

FAO EDF 11 Project GCP/SFS/004/EC

Agricultural information & market access for all

Project Objective

The overall objective of this action is to accelerate progress towards implementation of SADC regional integration, which focuses on: i. enhancing information on agricultural production, sustainability and competitiveness for evidence-based decision-making; and, ii. improving access to markets through implementation of plant and animal pest and disease control strategies at the regional level.

Beneficiaries

Member States of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), namely: Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

STO SAR Support towards the operationalization of the SADC Regional Agricultural Policy Project

Funded by the European Union

ISBN 978-99968-958-8-3

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www.fao.org/in-action/stosar