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Safe provision of food and other humanitarian aid to prevent the introduction of plant pests during an emergency situation

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Publication history

This is not an official part of the CPM recommendation

2019-03 Topic proposed by Pacific Plant Protection Organisation for inclusion in the IPPC work programme for a standard.

2019-04 CPM-14 added the topic to the IPPC work programme for a CPM recommendation.

2019-05 Adjusted following CPM-14.

2019-07 Consultation.

2019-11 IPPC Secretariat and submitting country addressed comments from consultation.

2019-12 CPM Bureau reviewed and recommended for additional round of consultation.

2020-07 Second consultation.

2020-12 Submitting country addressed comments from consultation. Reviewed by IPPC Secretariat.

2020-12 CPM Bureau reviewed and recommended for adoption.

2021-03 CPM-15 adopted the CPM recommendation on *Safe provision of food and other humanitarian aid to prevent the introduction of plant pests during an emergency situation* (R-09).

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BACKGROUND

The provision of food and other humanitarian aid assists regions or countries that are at risk of food and economic insecurity as a result of conflict, crop failures, and natural disasters including storms, earthquakes, tsunami and volcanic eruptions. Assistance can be urgent and short-term, or ongoing over the long term. The driver for this recommendation is the provision of urgent, disaster-relief assistance, but the principles of phytosanitary preparedness and response apply equally to the provision of ongoing aid.

There has been a significant increase in severe weather events, which may be attributed to climate change, as well as human-induced and natural disasters that have precipitated the urgent need for food, water and machinery to prevent or mitigate humanitarian crises. For example, Tonga has experienced three category-four cyclones and one category-five since 2010, while the Pacific region as a whole is increasingly experiencing damaging storms and storm surges. These events are not limited to lower and lower-middle income countries or the Pacific region and have occurred in all regions of the world. In Africa, for example, various countries suffer political instabilities, drought and seasonal pest outbreaks.

In providing aid, donors should be aware that the provision of aid supplies, unless appropriately prepared to meet the phytosanitary import requirements of the recipient country, can in itself cause long-term damage. There are several examples of long-term impacts on the economy, environment and communities from pests introduced with aid, long after the country has recovered from the emergency situation. Donors should consider this when preparing aid. National plant protection organizations (NPPOs) are impacted by these emergency situations, but are still bound by their role to effectively manage the risk posed by pests associated with relief supplies imported in the aftermath of such disasters. For example, crops and grain provided as food aid may be infested with quarantine pests and should therefore meet the phytosanitary import requirements of the recipient country.

It can be challenging to manage pest risk effectively during an emergency situation. Other government authorities (not the NPPO) may demand that relief supplies are cleared without phytosanitary inspection and provided to those in need. However, under normal circumstances, risk-based clearance processes would be initiated and any pest risk posed would require a treatment to address it or the consignment would otherwise be re-exported or destroyed. Mixed consignments in shipping or air containers, which include a range of goods and pose various pest risks, can experience delays in clearance and release as they need to be fully unpacked to be inspected. Damaged infrastructure may impede the application of treatments to mitigate the pest risks identified, and normal procedures to manage the pest risk associated with diversion from intended use may be similarly impacted. Re-export may not be an option either, leaving the NPPO to deal with the unmanaged pest risk.

National plant protection organizations acknowledge and appreciate the aid from other countries and international organizations. However, to help minimize any unintended phytosanitary consequences of such aid, this Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) recommendation provides clear guidance on the effective management of pest risk associated with commonly provided food and other humanitarian aid.

ADDRESSED TO

Contracting parties, government agencies and non-governmental organizations involved in humanitarian aid activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Commission notes that countries receiving food and other humanitarian aid may be exposed to the entry of pests that, unless managed appropriately, may become established in their territory and have an impact on the economy, environment and communities long after recovery from the emergency situation. Commonly provided aid includes food (fresh, dried and processed plants and plant products), water, building materials, planting materials (seeds and other plants for planting), support personnel

(e.g. volunteers), vehicles, machinery and equipment. Food and other humanitarian aid should comply with the phytosanitary import requirements of the recipient country.

While natural disasters cannot be foreseen, the Commission *encourages* both potential importing (recipient) and exporting (donor) contracting parties and regional plant protection organizations (as relevant) to:

- (a) *develop* and *maintain* an emergency response plan and *undertake* preparedness activities to reduce the risk of introduction of regulated pests with food and other humanitarian aid in the event of an emergency or disaster;
- (b) *identify* and *engage* with relevant stakeholders (e.g. aid agencies, exporters, importers, regulators) to raise awareness of the pest risk associated with food and other aid materials that are provided to help countries respond and recover after a natural disaster or other emergency, and the need to manage this pest risk effectively;
- (c) *use* the guidance available in adopted International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs) (e.g. ISPM 32 (*Categorization of commodities according to their pest risk*)) and other available material;
- (d) *partner* with relevant stakeholders (e.g. aid and donor agencies) to better plan for the effective operation of their programmes to reduce pest risk, including standardizing supply and distribution operations for multiple countries to increase the efficiency of border clearance processes and potentially reduce regulatory burden;
- (e) *encourage* pre-dispatch treatment, treatment during transit or pre-clearance of food and other humanitarian aid by NPPOs of donor countries, to expedite clearance in the receiving country;
- (f) *establish* mechanisms for providing information to potential donors, aid agencies, importers and exporters to reduce the movement of goods posing a pest risk during emergency situations;
- (g) *encourage* NPPOs of exporting countries, if their domestic legislative framework allows, to urge their foreign food aid agencies to ensure that humanitarian aid materials meet the phytosanitary requirements of the recipient country.

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CPM recommendations and ISPMs are available on the International Phytosanitary Portal (IPP) at <https://www.ippc.int/en/core-activities/governance/cpm/cpm-recommendations-1/cpm-recommendations/> and <https://www.ippc.int/en/core-activities/standards-setting/ispms/>, respectively.

RECOMMENDATION(S) SUPERSEDED BY THE ABOVE

None.

IPPC

The International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) is an international plant health agreement that aims to protect global plant resources and facilitate safe trade.

The IPPC vision is that all countries have the capacity to implement harmonized measures to prevent pest introductions and spread, and minimize the impacts of pests on food security, trade, economic growth, and the environment.

Organization

- ◆ There are over 180 IPPC contracting parties.
- ◆ Each contracting party has a national plant protection organization (NPPO) and an Official IPPC contact point.
- ◆ 10 regional plant protection organizations (RPPOs) have been established to coordinate NPPOs in various regions of the world.
- ◆ IPPC liaises with relevant international organizations to help build regional and national capacities.
- ◆ The Secretariat is provided by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

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