



SPECIFICATION 80

Revision of ISPM 23 (*Guidelines for inspection*)

(Approved 2026, published 2026)

Title

Revision of ISPM 23 (*Guidelines for inspection*) (2023-014).

Reason for the revision of the standard

ISPM 23 (*Guidelines for inspection*) covers the inspection of consignments and was adopted by the Seventh Session of the Interim Commission on Phytosanitary Measures in April 2005. Since its adoption, many contracting parties have used ISPM 23 for “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” (Article IV.2(c) of the IPPC).

Since the adoption of ISPM 23, the definitions of “inspection” and other relevant terms (i.e. “compliance procedure (for a consignment)”, “identity (of a consignment)”, “integrity (of a consignment)”) in ISPM 5 (*Glossary of phytosanitary terms*) have been modified or added. The definition of “inspection” in ISPM 5, revised in 2024, refers specifically to a visual examination. However, ISPM 23 uses “inspection” in a broader sense, also encompassing actions such as the examination of documents and verification of identity and integrity of the consignment. These actions are currently included under “compliance procedure (for a consignment)” rather than “inspection” in ISPM 5:

- The revised definition of “inspection” in ISPM 5, adopted in 2024, is “official visual examination of plants, plant products or other regulated articles to determine if pests are present or to verify conformity with phytosanitary requirements”. Many other ISPMs refer to ISPM 23 but use the term “inspection” in the sense of this definition.
- The revised definition of the ISPM 5 term “compliance procedure (for a consignment)”, adopted in 2023, is “official process of document checks, verification of consignment integrity, inspection or testing to verify if a consignment complies with phytosanitary import requirements or phytosanitary requirements related to transit”.

Therefore, there is an inconsistency regarding the meaning of “inspection” between the requirements of ISPM 23 and the updated definitions in ISPM 5.

In addition to addressing the above inconsistencies, ISPM 23 needs to be revised to clarify the requirements for inspection procedures. This includes the authorization, responsibilities and scope of third parties conducting inspection on behalf of national plant protection organizations. The revision also needs to accommodate modern methods and technologies.

Scope

The revised ISPM 23 should be consistent with the definitions of relevant terms in ISPM 5. It should describe the clarified inspection procedure and elements of other compliance procedures, such as

document checks and consignment integrity checks, and specify the necessary procedural requirements, including those that contribute to phytosanitary security.

Purpose

The purpose of the revision is to update and clarify the requirements in ISPM 23 and ensure that the standard is consistent with the updated definitions in ISPM 5 and other related ISPMs.

Tasks

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

- (1) Revise the title of ISPM 23 and ensure that all aspects of inspection of a consignment and elements of other compliance procedures are addressed.
- (2) Clarify the requirements for inspection procedures and associated processes (e.g. sampling), accommodating the latest methods and technologies as well as options for developing a risk-based approach to inspections.
- (3) Revise the text of ISPM 23 to ensure that it is aligned with the provisions of ISPM 45 (*Requirements for national plant protection organizations if authorizing entities to perform phytosanitary actions*).
- (4) Review the text of ISPM 23 to identify which sections, or parts thereof, if any, could be moved to implementation material and advise whether any updates to these sections (or parts) would be required. Advise whether any terms would benefit from a definition being included in ISPM 5.
- (5) Consider how the revised standard might affect biodiversity and the environment and explain any potential impacts clearly in the draft standard.
- (6) Review all references to ISPM 23 in other ISPMs, and all references to other ISPMs in the revised ISPM 23. If necessary, propose updates to ensure consistency and relevance.
- (7) Consider how the revised standard will be applied by contracting parties. Identify any potential or technical challenges and suggest solutions to the Standards Committee.

Provision of resources

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

Collaborator

To be determined.

Steward

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

Expertise

Members should have collective knowledge of, and experience in, inspection of consignments, pest risk management, data analytics and digital technologies, and related compliance procedures from practical and regulatory perspectives.

Participants

Five to seven members.

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

Bibliography

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

References

- IPPC Secretariat.** 1997. *International Plant Protection Convention*. IPPC Secretariat. Rome, FAO. <https://www.ippc.int/en/about/convention-text/>
- ISPM 5.** *Glossary of phytosanitary terms*. IPPC Secretariat. Rome, FAO. <https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/622/>
- ISPM 45.** 2021. *Requirements for national plant protection organizations if authorizing entities to perform phytosanitary actions*. IPPC Secretariat. Rome, FAO. <https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/89734/>

Further reading

- IPPC Secretariat.** 2018. *Report of the 32nd meeting of the Standards Committee, 19–23 November 2018*. IPPC Secretariat. Rome, FAO. <https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/86854/>
- IPPC Secretariat.** 2023. *Report of the meeting of the Technical Panel for the Glossary, 28 November–2 December 2022*. IPPC Secretariat. Rome, FAO. <https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/92027/>
- IPPC Secretariat.** 2024. *Explanatory document on ISPM 5 (Glossary of phytosanitary terms)*. IPPC Secretariat. Rome, FAO. 57 pp. <https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/87049>
- IPPC Secretariat.** 2025. *Report of the meeting of the Standards Committee, 12–16 May 2025*. IPPC Secretariat. Rome, FAO. <https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/94779/>
- ISPM 7.** 2016. *Phytosanitary certification system*. IPPC Secretariat. Rome, FAO. Adopted 2011. <https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/613/>
- ISPM 20.** 2023. *Guidelines for a phytosanitary import regulatory system*. IPPC Secretariat. Rome, FAO. <https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/602/>
- ISPM 45.** 2021. *Requirements for national plant protection organizations if authorizing entities to perform phytosanitary actions*. IPPC Secretariat. Rome, FAO. <https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/89734/>

Discussion papers

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

Publication history

This is not an official part of the specification

2024-04 CPM-18 added topic *Revision of ISPM 23 (Guidelines for inspection)* (2023-014), priority 2.

2025-05 Standards Committee (SC) revised and approved for consultation.

2025-07 Consultation.

2026-05 SC revised and approved the specification.

Specification 80. 2026. *Revision of ISPM 23 (Guidelines for inspection)*. IPPC Secretariat. Rome, FAO.

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