Categorization of commodities according to their pest risk
ISPM 32

Categorization of commodities according to their pest risk

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CONTENTS

Adoption ......................................................................................................................... 4
INTRODUCTION .............................................................................................................. 4
Scope ................................................................................................................................. 4
References ......................................................................................................................... 4
Definitions ......................................................................................................................... 4
Outline of Requirements ............................................................................................... 4
BACKGROUND ............................................................................................................... 5

REQUIREMENTS .............................................................................................................. 6
1. Elements of Categorization of Commodities according to their Pest Risk ..................... 6
   1.1 Method and degree of processing before export ....................................................... 6
   1.2 Intended use of the commodity ............................................................................. 7
2. Commodity Categories .................................................................................................. 7

ANNEX 1: Methods of commercial processing with resultant commodities that do not remain capable of being infested with quarantine pests ................................................................................. 9

ANNEX 2: Methods of commercial processing with resultant commodities that remain capable of being infested with quarantine pests ........................................................................... 11

APPENDIX 1: Flow chart illustrating categorization of commodities according to their pest risk ............................................................................................................................... 13

APPENDIX 2: Examples of commodities within Category 1 ............................................. 14
Adoption
This standard was adopted by the Fourth Session of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures in March–April 2009.

INTRODUCTION

Scope
This standard provides criteria for national plant protection organizations (NPPOs) of importing countries on how to categorize commodities according to their pest risk when considering import requirements. This categorization should help in identifying whether further pest risk analysis is required and if phytosanitary certification is needed.

The first stage of categorization is based on whether the commodity has been processed and, if so, the method and degree of processing to which the commodity has been subjected before export. The second stage of categorization of commodities is based on their intended use after import.

Contaminating pests or storage pests that may become associated with the commodity after processing are not considered in this standard.

References
The present standard refers to International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs). ISPMs are available on the International Phytosanitary Portal (IPP) at https://www.ippc.int/core-activities/standards-setting/ispms.


Definitions
Definitions of phytosanitary terms used in the present standard can be found in ISPM 5 (Glossary of phytosanitary terms).

Outline of Requirements
The concept of categorization of commodities according to their pest risk takes into account whether the product has been processed, and if so, the method and degree of processing to which it has been subjected and the commodity’s intended use and the consequent potential for the introduction and spread of regulated pests.

This allows pest risks associated with specific commodities to be assigned to categories. The objective of such categorization is to provide importing countries with criteria to better identify the need for a pathway-initiated pest risk analysis (PRA) and to facilitate the decision-making process regarding the possible establishment of import requirements.

Four categories are identified, which group commodities according to their level of pest risk (two for processed commodities, two for unprocessed commodities). Lists of the methods of processing and the associated resultant commodities are provided.
BACKGROUND
As a result of the method of processing to which some commodities moving in international trade have been subjected, the probability of entry of pests has been removed and so should not be regulated (i.e. phytosanitary measures and phytosanitary certificates are not required). Other commodities, after processing, may still present a pest risk and so may be subject to appropriate phytosanitary measures.

Some intended uses of commodities (e.g. planting) result in a much higher probability of introducing pests than others (e.g. processing) (further information is contained in ISPM 11 (Pest risk analysis for quarantine pests), in relation to the probability of transfer to a suitable host).

The concept of categorization of commodities according to their pest risk firstly takes into account if the commodity is processed or not and if so, the effect of the method and degree of processing to which a commodity has been subjected. Secondly, it takes into account the intended use and consequent potential as a pathway for introduction of regulated pests.

The objective of this standard is to categorize commodities according to their pest risk to provide national plant protection organizations (NPPOs) of importing countries with criteria to identify more accurately whether there is a need for a pathway-initiated PRA and facilitate the decision-making process.

Article VI.1(b) of the IPPC states: “Contracting parties may require phytosanitary measures for quarantine pests and regulated non-quarantine pests, provided that such measures are … limited to what is necessary to protect plant health and/or safeguard the intended use ….” This standard is based on the concepts of intended use of a commodity and the method and degree of its processing, which are also addressed in other ISPMs as outlined below.

Method and degree of processing:
- ISPM 12 (Phytosanitary certificates). NPPOs of the importing countries should not require phytosanitary certificates for plant products that have been processed to the point where they have no potential for introducing regulated pests.
- ISPM 15 (Regulation of wood packaging material in international trade). Low risk articles are exempted from the requirements in the standard due to the method and degree of processing.
- ISPM 23 (Guidelines for inspection). Inspection may be used to verify the degree of processing.

Intended use:
- ISPM 11. The intended use is considered when analysing the probabilities of transfer of pests to a suitable host and of their spread after establishment.
- ISPM 16 (Regulated non-quarantine pests: concept and application). Risk of economically unacceptable impact varies with different pests, commodities and intended use.
- ISPM 21 (Pest risk analysis for regulated non-quarantine pests). Uses the concept of intended use extensively.

Method and degree of processing together with intended use:
- ISPM 12. Different phytosanitary requirements may apply to the different intended end uses or degree of processing as indicated on the phytosanitary certificate.
- ISPM 20 (Guidelines for a phytosanitary import regulatory system). A commodity may be classified by its degree of processing and/or its intended use.
- ISPM 23. The commodity type and intended use are taken into account to decide the use of inspection as a phytosanitary measure.
REQUIREMENTS

The use of the categories by NPPOs in determining any phytosanitary regulations should take into account, in particular, the principles of technical justification, pest risk analysis, managed risk, minimal impact, harmonization and sovereignty.

When the import requirements for a commodity need to be determined, the importing country may categorize the commodity according to its pest risk. Such categorization may be used to distinguish between groups of commodities for which further analysis is required from those that do not have the potential to introduce and spread regulated pests. In order to categorize the commodity, the following should be considered:

- method and degree of processing
- intended use of the commodity.

Having evaluated the method and degree of processing taking into account the intended use, the NPPO of the importing country makes a decision on the import requirements for the commodity.

This standard does not apply to cases of deviation from intended use after import (e.g. grain for milling used as seed for sowing).

1. Elements of Categorization of Commodities according to their Pest Risk

To identify a commodity’s associated pest risk, the method and degree of processing to which a commodity has been subjected should be considered. The method and degree of processing, by itself, could significantly change the nature of the commodity, so that it does not remain capable of being infested with pests. Such a commodity should not be required by an NPPO of an importing country to be accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate\(^1\).

However, if, after processing, a commodity may remain capable of being infested with pests, the intended use should then be considered.

1.1 Method and degree of processing before export

The primary objective of the processes addressed in this standard is to modify a commodity for other than phytosanitary purposes, but processing may also have an effect on any associated pest, and hence affect the potential of the commodity to be infested with quarantine pests.

In order to categorize a given commodity, NPPOs of the importing countries may require information on the method of processing undertaken from NPPOs of exporting countries. In some cases it is also necessary to know the degree of processing (e.g. temperature and heating duration) that affects the physical or chemical properties of the commodity.

Based on the method and degree of processing, commodities can be broadly divided into three types as follows:

- processed to the point where the commodity does not remain capable of being infested with quarantine pests
- processed to a point where the commodity remains capable of being infested with quarantine pests
- not processed.

\(^1\) The presence of contaminating pests, as defined in ISPM 5 (Glossary of phytosanitary terms), or infestation by other pests that may become associated with the commodity after processing (e.g. storage pests) is not considered in the pest risk categorization process outlined in this standard. However, it is important to note that the methods of processing described in this standard will, in most cases, render the commodity free of pests at the time of processing, but that some such commodities may have the capacity to become subsequently contaminated or infested. Common contaminating pests may be detected during inspection.
Categorization of commodities according to their pest risk

If an assessment of the method and degree of processing concludes that a commodity does not remain capable of being infested with quarantine pests, there is no need to consider intended use and the commodity should not be regulated. However, if an assessment of the method and degree of processing concludes that a commodity remains capable of being infested with quarantine pests, the intended use should then be considered.

For non-processed commodities the intended use should always be considered.

1.2 Intended use of the commodity

Intended use is defined as the declared purpose for which plants, plant products or other articles are imported, produced or used (ISPM 5). The intended use of a commodity may be for:
- planting
- consumption and other uses (e.g. crafts, decorative products, cut flowers)
- processing.

The intended use may affect a commodity’s pest risk, as some intended uses may allow for the establishment or spread of regulated pests. Some intended uses of the commodity (e.g. planting) are associated with a higher probability of a regulated pest establishing than others (e.g. processing). This may result in the application of different phytosanitary measures for a commodity based on its intended use (e.g. soybean seed for sowing and soybean grain for human consumption). Any phytosanitary measures applied should be proportional to the pest risk identified.

2. Commodity Categories

NPPOs may categorize a commodity by taking into account if it has been processed or not, the method and degree of processing and where appropriate the intended use.

Each commodity category is described below, along with guidance on the need for phytosanitary measures.

The analytical process outlined in this ISPM is illustrated in the flow chart of Appendix 1.

**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. Annex 1 provides examples of processes and the resultant commodities that can meet the criteria for Category 1. Furthermore, Appendix 2 provides some illustrative examples of commodities meeting the criteria for Category 1.

**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. Annex 2 provides examples of processes and the resultant commodities that can meet the criteria for Category 2.

Although commodities in Category 2 have been processed, the processing method may not completely eliminate all quarantine pests. If it is determined that the method and degree of processing do not eliminate the pest risk of quarantine pests, consideration should then be given to the intended use of the commodity in order to evaluate the probability of establishment and spread of the quarantine pests. In this case, a PRA may be needed to determine this.

To facilitate the categorization, exporting countries should, on request, provide detailed information on method or degree of processing (such as temperature, exposure time, size of particles) in order to assist importing countries in determining to which category the commodity should be assigned.
In cases where the evaluation of the effect of the method and degree of processing has determined that the processed commodity presents no pest risk and therefore should not be subject to phytosanitary measures, the commodity should be reclassified into Category 1.

**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.

Examples of commodities in this category include some fresh fruits and vegetables for consumption and cut flowers.

Because commodities in Categories 2 and 3 have the potential to introduce and spread quarantine pests, determining phytosanitary measures may be required based on the result of a PRA. The phytosanitary measures determined through a PRA may differ depending on the intended use of the commodity (e.g. consumption or processing).

**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.

Examples of commodities in this category include propagative material (e.g. cuttings, seeds, seed potatoes, plants in vitro, micropropagative plant material and other plants to be planted).

Because commodities in this Category 4 are not processed and their intended use is for propagation or planting, their potential to introduce or spread regulated pests is higher than that for other intended uses.
This annex is a prescriptive part of the standard.

**ANNEX 1: Methods of commercial processing with resultant commodities that do not remain capable of being infested with quarantine pests**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMMERCIAL PROCESS</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>EXAMPLE OF RESULTANT COMMODITY</th>
<th>ADDITIONAL INFORMATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carbonization</td>
<td>Anoxic combustion of an organic material to charcoal</td>
<td>Charcoal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking (boiling, heating, microwaving, including rice parboiling)</td>
<td>Preparing food items for consumption by heating, primarily transforming the physical structure of items</td>
<td>Cooked items</td>
<td>Frequently involves chemically transforming a food, thus changing its flavour, texture, appearance, or nutritional properties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyeing</td>
<td>Colouring of textile fibres and other materials by which the colour becomes an integral part of the fibre or material under the influence of pH and temperature changes plus interaction with chemical products</td>
<td>Dyed vegetable fibres and textiles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraction</td>
<td>Physical or chemical process to obtain specific components from plant-based raw materials, usually through mass-transfer operations</td>
<td>Oils, alcohol, essences, sugar</td>
<td>Normally done under high temperature conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fermentation</td>
<td>Anaerobic or anoxic process changing food/plant material chemically, often involving micro-organisms (bacteria, moulds or yeasts) and e.g., converting sugars to alcohol or organic acids</td>
<td>Wines, liquors, beer and other alcoholic beverages, fermented vegetables</td>
<td>May be combined with pasteurization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malting</td>
<td>A series of actions allowing the germination of cereal seeds to develop enzymatic activity to digest starchy materials into sugars and cessation of enzymatic activity by heating</td>
<td>Malted barley</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-method processing</td>
<td>A combination of multiple types of processing such as heating, high pressure</td>
<td>Plywood, particle board, wafer board</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pasteurization</td>
<td>Thermal processing in order to kill undesirable or harmful micro-organisms</td>
<td>Pasteurized juices, alcoholic beverages (beer, wine)</td>
<td>Often combined with fermentation and followed by refrigeration (at 4 °C) and proper packaging and handling. Process time and temperature depends on type of product.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMMERCIAL PROCESS</td>
<td>DESCRIPTION</td>
<td>EXAMPLE OF RESULTANT COMMODITY</td>
<td>ADDITIONAL INFORMATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preservation in liquid</td>
<td>Process of preserving plant material in a suitable liquid medium (e.g. in syrup, brine, oil, vinegar or alcohol) of a particular pH, salinity, anaerobic or osmotic state</td>
<td>Preserved fruits, vegetables, nuts, tubers, bulbs</td>
<td>Proper conditions of pH, salinity, etc. must be maintained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pureeing (including blending)</td>
<td>Making homogenized and spreadable fruit and/or vegetable tissues, e.g. by high-speed mixing, screening through a sieve or using a blender</td>
<td>Pureed items (fruits, vegetables)</td>
<td>Normally combined with pulping of fruits or vegetables and methods to preserve the puree (e.g. pasteurization and packing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roasting</td>
<td>Process of drying and browning foods by exposure to dry heat</td>
<td>Roasted peanuts, coffee and nuts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sterilization</td>
<td>Process of applying heat (vapours, dry heat or boiling water), irradiation or chemical treatments in order to destroy microorganisms</td>
<td>Sterilized substrates, juices</td>
<td>Sterilization may not change the condition of the commodity in an evident way, but eliminates microorganisms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sterilization (industrial)</td>
<td>Thermal processing of foods that leads to shelf-stable products in containers by destruction of all pathogenic, toxin-forming and spoilage organisms</td>
<td>Canned vegetables, soups; UHT (ultra-high temperature) juices</td>
<td>Process time and Temperature for canned products depends on type of product, treatment and geometry of container. Aseptic processing and packaging involves industrial sterilization of a flowing product and then packaging in sterile environment and package.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar infusing</td>
<td>Action of coating and infusing fruits with sugar</td>
<td>Crystallized fruit, fruit infused with sugar, nuts coated with sugar</td>
<td>Usually combined with pulping, boiling, drying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenderizing</td>
<td>Process to rehydrate dried or dehydrated items by the application of steam under pressure or submerging in hot water</td>
<td>Tenderized fruits</td>
<td>Usually applied to a dried commodity. Can be combined with sugar infusing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ANNEX 2: Methods of commercial processing with resultant commodities that remain capable of being infested with quarantine pests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMMERCIAL PROCESS</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>EXAMPLE OF RESULTANT COMMODITY</th>
<th>ADDITIONAL INFORMATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chipping (of wood)</td>
<td>Wood reduced to small pieces</td>
<td>Chipped wood</td>
<td>The probability of infestation is related to the species of wood, the presence of bark, and the size of the chips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chopping</td>
<td>To cut into pieces</td>
<td>Chopped fruit, nuts, grains, vegetables</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crushing</td>
<td>Breaking plant material into pieces by application of mechanical force</td>
<td>Herbs, nuts</td>
<td>Usually applied to dried products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drying/dehydration (of fruits and vegetables)</td>
<td>Removal of moisture for preservation, or to decrease weight or volume</td>
<td>Dehydrated fruit, vegetables</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painting (including lacquering, varnishing)</td>
<td>To coat with paint</td>
<td>Painted wood and canes, fibres</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peeling and shelling</td>
<td>Removal of the outer or epidermal tissues or pods</td>
<td>Peeled fruits, vegetables, grains, nuts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polishing (of grain and beans)</td>
<td>To make smooth and shiny by rubbing or chemical action removing the outer layers from grains</td>
<td>Polished rice and cocoa beans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-harvest handling (of fruits and vegetables)</td>
<td>Operations such as grading, sorting, washing or brushing, and/or waxing fruits and vegetables</td>
<td>Graded, sorted, washed, or brushed and/or waxed fruit and vegetables</td>
<td>Usually carried out in packing houses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Annex 2 contd.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMMERCIAL PROCESS</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>EXAMPLE OF RESULTANT COMMODITY</th>
<th>ADDITIONAL INFORMATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quick freezing</td>
<td>Cooling quickly, ensuring that the temperature range of maximum ice crystallization is passed as quickly as possible to preserve the quality of fruits and vegetables</td>
<td>Frozen fruits and vegetables</td>
<td>Recommended international code of practice for the processing and handling of quick frozen foods, 1976 CAC/RCP 8-1976 (Rev 3, 2008), Codex Alimentarius, FAO, Rome, states that “food which has been subjected to a quick freezing process, and maintained at –18 °C or colder at all points in the cold chain, subject to permitted temperature tolerance.” Quick freezing of fruits and vegetables kills insects in particular. Frozen fruits and vegetables are prepared for direct consumption and will decay quickly after thawing. Therefore the pest risks associated with such products is considered very low.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 It is recommended that countries do not regulate frozen fruits and vegetables.
APPENDIX 1: Flow chart illustrating categorization of commodities according to their pest risk
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extracts</th>
<th>Fibres</th>
<th>Foodstuffs ready for consumption</th>
<th>Fruits and vegetables</th>
<th>Grains and oilseed products</th>
<th>Liquids</th>
<th>Sugars</th>
<th>Wood products</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Extracts (e.g. vanilla)</td>
<td>- Cardboard</td>
<td>- Cacao powder</td>
<td>- Baby cereal</td>
<td>- Alcohols</td>
<td>- Charcoal</td>
<td>- Brewer's yeast</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Fruit pectin</td>
<td>- Cellulose cotton piece goods</td>
<td>- Cakes and biscuits</td>
<td>- Bakery mixes</td>
<td>- Coconut water (packed)</td>
<td>- Ice lolly sticks</td>
<td>- Brewer's malt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Guar bean derivative</td>
<td>- Cotton cloth</td>
<td>- Catsup (ketchup)</td>
<td>- Bread products</td>
<td>- Corn starch glucose</td>
<td>- Laminated beams</td>
<td>- Coffee (roasted)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Hop extract</td>
<td>- Cotton lint</td>
<td>- Chocolate</td>
<td>- Breakfast cereals</td>
<td>- Corn syrup</td>
<td>- Dextrine</td>
<td>- Dietary formula</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Hydrolyzed vegetable protein</td>
<td>- Paper</td>
<td>- Condiments</td>
<td>- Bulgur wheat (parboiled, dried and ground)</td>
<td>- Dextrose</td>
<td>- Dextrose</td>
<td>- Enzymes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Margarine</td>
<td>- Plant fibre and threads</td>
<td>- Dessert powder</td>
<td>- Cassava products ( tapioca, fermented and/or fried for food)</td>
<td>- Dextrose hydrate</td>
<td>- Fructose</td>
<td>- Gum turpentine</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Mineral plant extracts</td>
<td>- Plant fibre for industrial production</td>
<td>- Food colouring</td>
<td>- Cooked cereal</td>
<td>- Granulated (sugar)</td>
<td>- Glucose</td>
<td>- Humate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Soybean lecithin</td>
<td>- Semi-processed plant fibres and related materials (e.g. sisal, flax, jute, sugarcane, bamboo, juncus, vimen, raphia)</td>
<td>- Food seasoning</td>
<td>- Corn chip pellets</td>
<td>- Maltose</td>
<td>- Maple sugar</td>
<td>- Rubber (crepe, gums)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Starch (potato, wheat, maize, cassava)</td>
<td>- Nut butter</td>
<td>- Food supplements</td>
<td>- Flour and industrial products made of cereal or oilseeds (and leguminous derivatives) for food and feed</td>
<td>- Maple syrup</td>
<td>- Molasses</td>
<td>- Scents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Yeast extract</td>
<td>- Paste (e.g. cocoa, quince, peanut butter)</td>
<td>- French fries (frozen)</td>
<td>- Mashed potatoes (dried)</td>
<td>- Sucrose</td>
<td>- Sugar</td>
<td>- Shellac</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Pie filling</td>
<td>- Frozen food</td>
<td>- Oils</td>
<td>- Sweetener</td>
<td>- Syrup</td>
<td>- Tea</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Relish</td>
<td>- Fruit sauces</td>
<td>- Soft drinks</td>
<td>- Syrup</td>
<td>- Treacle</td>
<td>- Vitamins</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Salad dressing</td>
<td>- Jelly (jam, marmalade)</td>
<td>- Vinegar</td>
<td>- Wood turpentine</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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IPPC

The International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) is an international plant health agreement that aims to protect cultivated and wild plants by preventing the introduction and spread of pests. International travel and trade are greater than ever before. As people and commodities move around the world, organisms that present risks to plants travel with them.

Organization

◆ There are over 180 contracting parties to the IPPC.
◆ Each contracting party has a national plant protection organization (NPPO) and an Official IPPC contact point.
◆ Nine regional plant protection organizations (RPPOs) work to facilitate the implementation of the IPPC in countries.
◆ 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).

International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC)

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