

National Standards on Phyto-Sanitary Measures

NSPM:

Requirements for the Establishment of Areas of Low Pest Prevalence

2014

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope

This standard describes the requirements and procedures for the establishment of ALPP for regulated pests in an area and, to facilitate export, for pests regulated by an importing country only. This includes the identification, verification, maintenance and use of those ALPPs.

NSPM preparation based on guidelines and recommendations developed within the framework of the IPPC and ISPM. This standard also adopted the principles, recommendations and format of ISPM to achieve international harmonization of phytosanitary measures with the aim to facilitate trade.

1.2 References

IPPC. 1997. International Plant Protection Convention. Rome, IPPC, FAO.

ISPM 4. 1995. Requirements for the establishment of pest free areas. Rome, IPPC, FAO.

ISPM 5. Glossary of phytosanitary terms. Rome, IPPC, FAO.

ISPM 6. 1997. Guidelines for surveillance. Rome, IPPC, FAO.

ISPM 8. 1998. Determination of pest status in an area. Rome, IPPC, FAO.

ISPM 9. 1998. Guidelines for pest eradication programmes. Rome, IPPC, FAO.

ISPM 10. 1999. Requirements for the establishment of pest free places of production and pest free production sites. Rome, IPPC, FAO.

ISPM 11. 2004. Pest risk analysis for quarantine pests including analysis of environmental risks and living modified organisms. Rome, IPPC, FAO.

ISPM 13. 2001. Guidelines for the notification of non-compliance and emergency action. Rome, IPPC, FAO.

ISPM 14. 2002. The use of integrated measures in a systems approach for pest risk management. Rome, IPPC, FAO.

ISPM 16. 2002. Regulated non-quarantine pests: concept and application. Rome, IPPC, FAO.

ISPM 17. 2002. Pest reporting. Rome, IPPC, FAO.

ISPM 20. 2004. Guidelines for a phytosanitary import regulatory system. Rome, IPPC, FAO.

ISPM 21. 2004. Pest risk analysis for regulated non-quarantine pests. Rome, IPPC, FAO.

ISPM 22.2005. Requirements for the establishment of areas of low pest prevalence. Rome, IPPC, FAO.

RSPM 20. 2011. Establishment, Maintenance and Verification of Areas of Low Pest Prevalence for Insects, NAPPO Regional Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (RSPM)

RSPM 19. 2003. Guidelines for Bilateral Workplans, NAPPO.

WTO. 1994. Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures. Geneva, World Trade Organization.

NSPM. 29. 2013. Recognition of pest free areas and areas of low pest prevalence, Ministry of Agriculture Development, Department of Agriculture, NPPO of Nepal.

NSPM. 2014. Requirements for the Establishment, Maintenance and Verification of Area of Low Pest Prevalence for Citrus Fruit Flies, Ministry of Agriculture Development, Department of Agriculture, NPPO of Nepal.

1.3 Definitions

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

1.4 Outline of Requirements

This standard provides requirements for establishment of ALPP. The standard outlines measures to reduce the risk of introduction and spread of the pest, criteria for monitoring, quarantine operations, and corrective action plans. The technical requirements necessary for suspension, termination, and reinstatement of the ALPP are included. A bilateral work plan may be required to elaborate on the issues described in this standard.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 General Considerations

2.1.1 Concept of areas of low pest prevalence

The concept of an area of low pest or disease prevalence is referenced in the Article 6 of the WTO SPS Agreement, in the context of risk management options for exporting agricultural commodities.

ISPM 5 defines an ALPP as, “An area, whether all of a country, part of a country, or all or parts of several countries, as identified by the competent authorities, in which a specific pest occurs at low levels and which is subject to effective surveillance, control or eradication measures.” As outlined in ISPM 22: 2005, an established and maintained ALPP may be used to facilitate domestic movement of commodities from areas where the target pest(s) is present, or for exports, and to reduce or limit pest spread in the area. Areas of low pest prevalence can be used to facilitate the movement of commodities from areas where the target pest(s) is present.

Low pest prevalence can be applied to large geographic areas, smaller places of production such as a block of contiguous orchards, and individual production sites. This is feasible provided that compliance with the established population threshold is achieved and maintained. Areas of low pest prevalence must be isolated by a natural barrier or protected with buffer zones where continuous effective phytosanitary actions can be applied. The requirements for establishing areas of low pest prevalence are set out as in ISPM No. 22, “Requirements for the establishment of areas of low pest prevalence.

The low prevalence concept can be applied as follows:

- An area temporarily subject to population suppression (to reach the threshold for low prevalence), whose final objective is eradication.
- A permanent low prevalence area acting as a buffer zone to protect a Pest Free Area (PFA).
- A place of production within a PFA that is under Emergency Action Plan.
- A production area (places of production or production sites) permanently under the low prevalence status where products are exported subject to additional control measures, e.g., systems approach.

A systems approach that includes an area of low pest prevalence can be used by exporting countries to certify that consignments of plants, plant products and other regulated articles produced in and/or moved from that area are free from the target pest(s) and meet the requirements of the importing country. The application of the concept of an area of low pest prevalence will depend on the biology of the pest, the characteristics of the place of production, the operational capabilities of the producer and responsibilities of the National Plant Protection Organization (NPPO).

2.1.2 Advantages in using areas of low pest prevalence

Advantages in using ALPPs include:

- for some pests, biological control methods that rely on low pest populations being present may reduce pesticide use
- facilitation of market access for products from areas that were previously excluded
- less restrictive movement controls including movement of commodities may be permitted from:
 - Movement of commodities from one ALPP to another ALPP.
 - Movement of commodities from an ALPP to a PFA.
 - Movement of commodities from an ALPP through a PFA.
 - Movement of commodities from an ALPP through an ALPP.

2. 1.3 Distinction between an area of low pest prevalence and a pest free area

The definition differentiates areas of pest low pest prevalence from pest free areas. They are distinguished from pest free areas as follows.

The main difference between an ALPP and a PFA is that the presence of the pest below a specified population level is accepted in an ALPP, whereas the pest is absent from the PFA. This means that, in some cases, a low population of the pest can be tolerated on the imported commodities, and phytosanitary measures can be employed from seeding to selling to manage the pests to a level acceptable to the importing country.

The choice of an ALPP or PFA as a risk management option will depend on the characteristics of the pests, distribution of the pests in the exporting country, and overall feasibility of the program. Both options can offer adequate protection. The main security of the PFA lies in the application of common phytosanitary measures to an area covering many places of production. The main security of the ALPP is that specific phytosanitary measures are applied more intensively.

3 REQUIREMENTS

3.1 General Requirements

3.1.1 Determination of an area of low pest prevalence

Prior to designating an area of low pest prevalence, the NPPO should ensure that the area meets the requirements of this standard and the relevant International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures. The establishment of an ALPP is a pest management

option used to maintain or reduce the pest population below a specified level in an area. It may be used to facilitate the movement of commodities out of areas where the pest is present, such as for domestic movement or for exports, and reduces or limits pest impact in the area.

Examples of where an ALPP may be established by an NPPO according to this standard are:

- an area of production where products are intended for export
- an area under an eradication or suppression programme
- an area acting as a buffer zone to protect a PFA
- as part of official control in relation to regulated non-quarantine pests (see ISPM No. 16: Regulated nonquarantinepests: concept and application)
- an area of production in an infested area of a country from which products are intended to be moved to another ALPP in that country.

3.1.2 Operational plans

In most cases an official operational plan is needed which specifies the required phytosanitary procedures that a country is applying. If it is intended to use a pest free area or area of low pest prevalence or pest free place of production or production site to facilitate trade with another country, such plan may have the form of a specific work plan as part of a bilateral arrangement between the NPPOs of both importing and exporting contracting parties (i.e., Plant Protection Directorate (NPPO) of Nepal or may be a general requirement of an importing country, which should be made available to it on request. It is recommended that the exporting country consults with the importing country in the early stages of the process in order to ensure that importing country requirements are met.

The plan should include:

- Title of plan
- Objective/purpose of plan
- Description of Management structure
- Role & Responsibilities of Growers/Exporters
- Description of area in which ALP (proposed to be established)
- Resource Requirements (human/equipment& materials/finance resources)
- Targeted pest (s)
- Targeted commodities/host plant species

- Training requirements/Quality management
- Survey methodologies
 - Delimitation survey
 - Detection survey
- Phytosanitary measures to maintain pest freedom
- Checks to verify pest freedom is maintained
 - Monitoring survey Work plan
- Documentation and record keeping

3.2 Specific Requirements

3.2.1 Establishment of an ALPP

Exporting countries may be able to establish official areas of low pest prevalence. They may then be able to negotiate agreements with importing countries to allow export of regulated commodities from those areas, which may help them gain, maintain or improve market access.

A specified low pest level should be determined taking into consideration the overall operational and economic feasibility of establishing a programme to meet or maintain this level, and the objective for which an ALPP is to be established. Parameters used to determine the level of prevalence are defined by the NPPO of exporting country.

Prior to designating an ALPP, the NPPO should ensure that the area meets the requirements of this standard and the relevant International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures, in particular ISPM 22: Requirements for the establishment of areas of low pest prevalence (2005). For the establishment of an ALPP the main elements include: Determination of the specified low pest prevalence level, delimitation, documentation and verification, surveillance activities prior to establishment.

Low pest prevalence can occur naturally or be established through the development and application of phytosanitary measures aimed at controlling the pests.

The key elements to consider in determining the feasibility of establishing an area of low pest prevalence include:

- The biology of the target pest(s).
- Available technology and technical expertise required to establish and maintain an ALPP.
- Geographic, operational, and economic factors.

- Legislation and regulations required for the NPPO to carry on all activities necessary to establish and maintain the ALPP.
- Cooperation from growers.
- Community acceptance through public information and education programs.

3.2.1.1 Determination of specified pest levels

Specified levels for the relevant pests should be established by the NPPO, with sufficient precision to allow assessment of whether surveillance data and protocols are adequate to determine that pest prevalence is below these levels in proposed area.

3.2.1.2 Geographic description

NPPO should describe the proposed ALPP with supporting maps demonstrating the boundaries of the area roads, places of production, location of host plants in proximity to commercial production areas, and isolation of the area by a natural barrier (**Annex 1**). In the absence of an isolating natural barrier, describe, with supporting maps and documentation, the buffer zone adjacent to the ALPP. In cases where the biology of the target fruit fly species is such that it is likely to disperse from an infested area into a protected area, it may be necessary to define a buffer zone with a low fruit fly prevalence (see ISPM 26:2006).

3.2.1.3 Documentation and verification

All procedures used in the establishment and maintenance of an ALPP should be adequately documented. The procedures should be reviewed and updated regularly. Any corrective measures implemented to refine or re-establish a ALPP should also be documented. The NPPO of exporting country should verify and document that all procedures are implemented. The elements of this process should include:

- documented procedures to be followed (i.e. procedural manual)
- implemented procedures and record keeping of these procedures
- audit of procedures
- developed and implemented corrective actions.

3.2.2 Phytosanitary procedures

Once established, the ALPP should be maintained by the continuation of the measures used for its establishment and the necessary documentation and verification procedures. In most cases an official operational plan which specifies the required phytosanitary procedures is needed. If there is a change in the status of the ALPP, a corrective action plan should be initiated.

3.2.2.1 Surveillance activities

The products of pest surveillance provide the basis for pest listing, identification of pest status, pest categorization and the conduct of pest risk analyses. Surveillance protocols (e.g., trapping) in the ALPP are dependent upon the biology of the target pest(s) and the assessed level of risk of entry for the target pest(s) and other quarantine pests ((**Annex 1**).The implication is that NPPO should be in a position to validate declarations of the absence or limited distribution of quarantine pests.Surveillance of the relevant pest should be conducted according to appropriate protocols (ISPM 6:1997). Additional phytosanitary procedures may be required to establish and maintain an ALPP.

There are two major types of surveillance systems:

- general surveillance
- specific surveys.

General surveillance is a process whereby information on particular pests which are of concern for an area is gathered from many sources, wherever it is available and provided for use by the NPPO. Specific surveys are procedures by which NPPOs obtain information on pests of concern on specific sites in an area over a defined period of time.

The status of the relevant pest situation in the area, and when appropriate of the buffer zone, should be determined by surveillance (as described in ISPM No. 6: Guidelines for surveillance) during appropriate periods of time and at a level of sensitivity that will detect the specified pest at the specified level with an appropriate level of confidence. Surveillance should be conducted according to protocols for the specified pest(s) or surveys should be conducted under protocols specific for the target pest(s). These protocols should include how to measure if the specified pest level has been maintained, e.g. type of trap, number of traps per hectare, acceptable number of pest individuals per trap per day or week, number of samples per hectare that need to be tested or inspected, part of the plant to be tested or inspected, etc. Surveillance data should be collected and documented to demonstrate that the populations of the specified pests do not exceed the specified pest levels in any areas of the proposed ALPP.

The NPPO should establish a quality control program for the survey to verify and document that all protocols are met(Annex 1).. The key elements of the quality control program would include:

- Validation of detection techniques.

- Visual inspection.
- Host sampling.
- Verification of trap and lure efficacy.
- Regular reviews of survey documentation.
- Audits of trap placement and servicing.

3.2.2.2 Reducing pest levels and maintaining low prevalence

Suppression of pest populations may involve the use of more than one control option. Since the target species are permanently present in the area, preventive and/or sustainable control measures to maintain pest populations at or below the specified level of low pest prevalence are necessary. In the proposed ALPP, phytosanitary procedures should be documented and applied to meet pest(s) levels in cultivated hosts, uncultivated hosts, or habitats in particular in the case where the pest is a plant. Phytosanitary procedures should be relevant to the biology and behavior of the specified pests. Examples of procedures used to meet a specified pest level are: removing alternative and/or alternate hosts; applying pesticides; releasing biological control agents; using high density trapping techniques to capture the pest. When establishing an ALPP, control activities should be recorded for a sufficient number of years, depending on the biology, reproductive potential and host range of the specified pest(s)

3.2.2.3 Reducing the risk of entry of specified pest(s)

Import regulations may be required to prevent entry of specified pest(s) within the importing country. However such measures should respect the principle of non-discrimination. In cases where an ALPP is established for a regulated pest, phytosanitary measures may be required to reduce the risk of entry of the specified pests into the ALPP (ISPM No. 20: Guidelines for a phytosanitary import regulatory system). Phytosanitary measures may include:

- regulation of the pathways and of the articles that require control to maintain the ALPP. All pathways into and out of the ALPP should be identified. This may include the designation of points of entry, and requirements for documentation, treatment, inspection or sampling before or at entry into the area.
- verification of documents
- confirmation of the application and effectiveness of required treatments
- documentation of any other phytosanitary procedures

3.2.3 Corrective action plan

The objective of corrective actions is to ensure that the suppression of the target. Pest population is below the specified level for low pest prevalence as soon as possible. A corrective action plan for the ALPP should be applied by the NPPO if the specified low pest prevalence level is exceeded. The corrective actions should be initiated within 48 hours of confirmation that the threshold level has been exceeded in the ALPP or detection of target pest(s) during inspection of host products. The importing country should be notified immediately upon initiation of the corrective actions. Failure of the NPPO to take appropriate corrective actions will result in termination of the ALPP status. **Annex 2** provides guidance on the steps or elements required when a corrective action plan is implemented.

3.2.4 Verification of an area of low pest prevalence

The NPPO of the country where the ALPP is established should verify that the requirements to maintain the ALPP continue to be met. In addition to the surveillance activities, control measures, and movement controls detailed in this standard, field inspections and sampling of host commodities in the ALPP should be carried out. ALPP status may be verified by a stated number or frequency of inspections as delineated in the bilateral work plan. The absence of target pests on host commodities moved out of the ALPP can also contribute to verification that the ALPP is being maintained. The NPPO of the importing country may have additional requirements as specified in ISPM 22: 2005.

3.2.5 Maintenance of an area of low pest prevalence

ALPP is maintained by the continued application of phytosanitary procedures directed at the target pest(s). The status of the area is confirmed by monitoring surveys in the low prevalence area and buffer zone during specific periods of time and at a level of sensitivity that will detect target pests, if present.

Once an ALPP is established, NPPO of Nepal should maintain the established documentation and verification procedures, and continue following phytosanitary procedures and movement controls and keeping records. Records should be retained for at least the two previous years or as long as necessary to support the programme. If the ALPP is being used for export purposes, records should be made available to the importing country upon request. In addition, established procedures should be routinely audited, at least once a year.

3.2.6 Control Measures

- Apply control measures to maintain the target pest(s) populations below threshold levels in commercial, non-commercial, or wild hosts in the proposed ALPP. The control measures should be relevant to the biology and life cycle of the target pest(s).
- Document control measures used to maintain the target pest(s) populations below threshold levels in commercial, non-commercial, or wild hosts in the proposed ALPP.
- The NPPO should maintain a monitoring program to assure that the control measures are properly applied. (See Annex 1).

3.2.7 Movement controls

Effective phytosanitary measures are required to prevent the entry of regulated non-quarantine pest(s) above tolerances established by the NPPO and to prevent the introduction of quarantine pests known to attack hosts present in the ALPP. The key elements may include, among others:

- Identification of the pathways and regulated articles that require control to maintain the ALPP
- Establishment of an inspection program for regulated articles moving into the ALPP.
- Maintenance of sampling records, identification of intercepted specimens, verification of documents, confirmation that required treatments occurred, and documentation of any other phytosanitary procedures. (See Annex 1).

3.2.8 Change in the status of an area of low pest prevalence

The detection of the target pest(s) that exceeds the threshold level within the ALPP should result in the implementation of the corrective actions as specified in Section 3.2.3 of this standard and immediate notification of importing countries. The main cause for a change in the status of the ALPP is confirmation of a reproducing population of the target pest(s) above the threshold level in the ALPP. This should result in immediate suspension of the ALPP status. ALPP status may be terminated if appropriate corrective actions are not taken in response to the detection of a target pest(s) above the threshold level. The NPPO should take appropriate corrective actions to delimit, contain, control and / or eradicate target pest(s) or other quarantine pests detected in the ALPP according to the bilateral work plan. A population level higher than the accepted threshold should result in increased levels of phytosanitary actions. Suspension of ALPP status will remain in effect until it is demonstrated that populations are below the specified threshold. If the threshold level of the target pest(s) is exceeded

in a limited area that can be identified and isolated, then the ALPP may be redefined to exclude that area. Relevant importing NPPOs should be notified without undue delay of changes in the ALPP status (further information on pest reporting requirements are provided in ISPM 17: 2002).

3.2.9 Emergency Action Plan

The NPPO should have a documented plan of emergency actions to be implemented if the target pest(s) exceeds the threshold level in the ALPP. The emergency action plan should include the delimiting survey, commodity sampling, increased regulatory, and control measures. The emergency actions should be initiated within 48 hours of confirmation that the threshold level has been exceeded in the ALPP or detection of target pest(s) during inspection of host products. The importing country should be notified immediately upon initiation of the emergency action plan. Failure to implement emergency actions will result in termination of ALPP status. (See Annex 1).

3.2.10 Suspension, termination and reinstatement

3.2.10.1 Suspension and termination

The status of the ALPP will change when an outbreak of the target pest occurs or procedures are found to be faulty. There are many types of non-compliance including: detection of quarantine pests, presence of regulated non-quarantine pests above specified tolerances, misapplication of required phytosanitary measures, inadequate or missing documentation, and failure to comply with any specific components of the work plan.

If the criteria for an outbreak are met, this should result in the implementation of the corrective action plan as specified in this standard and immediate notification of trading partners (see ISPM No. 17: Pest reporting). The whole or part of the ALPP may be suspended or terminated. Where a suspension is put in place, the criteria for lifting the suspension should be made clear. If the control measures are not effective and the pest becomes established within an area of the ALPP, the pest free status of the area should terminate. Trading partners should be informed of any change in ALPP status as soon as possible. Other circumstances, such as inadequate movement controls or the detection of the target pest upon imported products, may also result in suspension of the FF-PFA.

3.2.10.2 Reinstatement of the status of an ALPP

An investigation should be initiated to determine the cause of the ALPP failure that led to implementation of the corrective actions. The goal is to prevent recurrence by

application of corrective actions and additional safeguards. Implementation of required phytosanitary procedures that achieve verifiable suppression of the target pest(s) population below the specified threshold is the basis for reinstatement of the ALPP status.

Reinstatement may take place when:

- following an outbreak, reinstatement criteria agreed to between trading partners have been met; and
- following identification of non-compliance in implementing agreed procedures and appropriate corrective actions have been implemented to address the non-compliance to the satisfaction of the trading partners.

3.2.11 Capacity and responsibilities of the NPPO

The NPPO must have the necessary legal authority, administrative infrastructure, qualified personnel, and material resources to comply with the provisions of this standard.

When consignments do not meet phytosanitary import requirements they are considered to be non-compliant. The NPPO of the importing country should notify the NPPO of the exporting country about the non-compliance. The exporting country's NPPO should then follow up with the exporter to ensure that consignments are not rejected in the future. The NPPO should define the particular requirements which a producer must meet in order that its declaration gives the required assurance of ALPP. The NPPO is responsible for the surveys, inspections and other systems that verify ALPP. The NPPO should check the phytosanitary import requirements and/or bilaterally establish conditions to ensure that compliance can be achieved.

NPPOs are responsible for designation, maintenance and surveillance of ALPPs within their territories (Article IV.(2)e of the IPPC). To establish ALPPs and before asking for this, NPPOs should take into account the appropriate ISPMs, RSPMs and NSPMs that provide technical guidance.

3.2.12 Documentation

Documentation supporting ALPP status (at all phases: establishment, maintenance, verification and reinstatement) should be made immediately available to the importing country upon request.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Elements required for establishment of the ALPP

The following is a list of elements to be evaluated in order to determine if an ALPP meets the conditions of this standard:

1. Geographic description of the proposed ALPP

- maps
- places of production
- natural barriers
- buffer zone
- size
- location of regulatory control checkpoints

2. Survey protocols for establishment and maintenance of ALPP

- target pest
- survey time period
- reporting of survey results
- trapping
 - trap type
 - bait or lure type
 - density of traps
 - trap servicing intervals
 - visual survey
 - host or commodity sampling
 - survey intervals

3. Quality control protocols for surveillance

- validation of surveillance activities
- trapping
- visual survey
- verification of lure efficacy
- placement and recovery of marked target pests
- regular reviews of survey documentation
- audits of trap placement and servicing
- confirmation of identifier competency

4. Control measures

- appropriate to target pest(s) and hosts
- chemical
- biocontrol agents
- agronomic practices
- documentation of measures employed
- monitoring program for application of control measures

5. Movement controls

- identification of pathways
- establishment of inspection program
- sampling rates and records
- identification of intercepted specimens
- verification of documents
- confirmation that required treatments occurred
- documentation of any other phytosanitary procedures

6. Emergency Action Plan

- grounds for plan implementation
- delimiting survey
- mitigation measures
- failure analysis
- corrective actions

Annex 2: Guidelines on corrective action plan

Annex 2 provides guidance on the steps or elements required when a corrective action plan is implemented, this is:

- declaration of loss of status
- legal framework under which the corrective action plan can be applied
- time scales for the initial response and follow-up activities
- delimiting survey (trapping and fruit sampling), and application of the suppression actions
- identification capability
- availability of sufficient operational resources
- effective communication within the NPPO and with the NPPO(s) of the relevant importing country(s), including provision of contact details of all parties involved a detailed map and definition of the suspension area