

Commodity Standards: what are they? how would they work? what are the gaps?

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ISPMs: What are they?

- ISPM: International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures.
- Definition: An international standard adopted by the Conference of FAO, the Interim Commission on Phytosanitary Measures or the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures, established under the IPPC.
- Convention's Preamble point 4:
 - *The contracting parties] desiring to provide a framework for the development and application of harmonized phytosanitary measures and the elaboration of international standards to that effect;...*
- Convention's Article II:
 - *“harmonized phytosanitary measures” are “phytosanitary measures established by contracting parties based on international standards”.*
- Article X of the Convention specific to Standards.

Status of ISPMs

- ISPMs - exclusive IPPC documents adopted by CPM.
- Contracting parties agree on:
 - specific requirements for their interacting.
 - the objective of preventing the international spread of pests.
 - allowing for the safe international trade of plants and plant products.
- IPPC Article X (4): *Contracting parties should take into account, as appropriate, international standards when undertaking activities related to this Convention.*
- Convention legally binding; ISPMs not immediately binding.
- Contracting parties have the moral obligation to implement them.
 - Article I (2): *Each contracting party shall assume responsibility, without prejudice to obligations assumed under other international agreements, for the fulfillment within its territories of all requirements under this Convention.*

WTO-SPS and ISPMs

- SPS agreement recognizes ISPMs as exclusive instruments of harmonization for plant health.
- Phytosanitary measures applied by WTO-SPS members based on ISPMs.
- SPS Agreement allows countries to set their own measures to protect economy or environment from the entry, establishment or spread of pests.
- SPS Agreement also states that plant health measures shall be science-based and not used for trade protection.

ISPMs and Harmonization

- Purpose of ISPM: description of requirements that can be transformed or directly implemented by importing countries into phytosanitary measures.
- ISPM support global harmonization of, for example:
 - specific measures for particular pathways and pests.
 - phytosanitary import regulatory systems.
 - export certification systems.
 - surveillance procedures.
 - PRA methodologies.
- Bilateral agreements increasingly being built upon ISPM concepts and terminology.

Types of ISPMs

- Principles: related to the rights and obligations of contracting parties to the IPPC.
- ISPMs mostly based on Operational Principles
 - ISPM 24 based on basic principle: equivalence of phytosanitary measures.
- Operational principles: related to the establishment, implementation and monitoring of phytosanitary measures, and to the administration of official phytosanitary systems.
- Types:
 - Concept standards: Pest risk analysis; surveillance; phytosanitary certification
 - Pest, commodity or pathway - specific standards: Pest free areas for fruit flies; plants for planting; wood; seed; used vehicles, machinery and equipment.

Why focus on commodity standards?

- During CPM-10 (2015), the adoption of draft ISPM on *International movement of wood* received a formal objection.
- The objection stated draft ISPM:
 - inconsistent with existing ISPMs - had no requirements.
 - should rather be an information document.
- The objection:
 - raised a question on the concept of a standard.
 - pointed towards considering drafting criteria for the formulation of commodity standards.
 - requested reviewing guidelines on the formatting and content of commodity specific ISPMs.
- CPM decided a working group should be convened to discuss the concept of a commodity standard and enable development of commodity standards.

CODEX and Commodity Standards

- Codex Alimentarius Commission adopts standards.
- Standard development by General Subject Committee and Commodity Committee.
- General Subject Committee: Horizontal in nature.
- Commodity Committee: Vertical - deals with a specific type of food class or group (e.g. fresh fruits and vegetables, dairy and dairy products, fish and fish products).
- Development of more general/overarching standards, which focus on common characteristics of groups of commodities.
- Commodity specific annexes added to address specific requirements related to a particular commodity within a general standard.
 - asparagus in the *Standard for Certain Canned Vegetables*.

Commodity standards: Benefits

- Harmonization could avoid complex commodity-based import requirements and unnecessary impedance of international trade.
- Increasing need for international standards to prevent introduction and spread of pests.
 - Limited resources to conduct PRA, inspection, monitoring surveillance etc.
- Harmonization of procedures (e.g. inspection, sampling, testing).
- Identification of specific risk factors for PRA.
- Globally agreed requirements could assist developing countries.

Commodity ISPMs: Recent developments in IPPC

Examples of recently adopted commodity or commodity group ISPMs:

- *ISPM 33 - Pest free potato (*Solanum spp*) micropropagative material and minitubers for international trade*, adopted in 2010
- *ISPM 36 - Integrated measures for plants for planting*, adopted in 2012
- *ISPM 38 - International movement of seeds*, adopted in 2017
- *ISPM 39 - International movement of wood*, adopted in 2017
- **Commodity standards in the drafting or planning stages: International movement of cut flowers, wooden handicrafts and grains.**

Examples of Regional Commodity Standards

- The North American Plant Protection Organization (NAPPO) Regional Standard for Phytosanitary Measures (RSPM) No. 3 on Movement of Potatoes into a NAPPO Member Country.
- NAPPO RSPM No. 35 on Guidelines for the Movement of Stone and Pome Fruit Trees and Grapevines into a NAPPO Member Country.

Not all commodities are unique in their phytosanitary risk and therefore need a specific IPSM to globally harmonize regulations to prevent the international spread of pests.

For example, wood is not unique in its pathway for regulated pests, however wooden handicrafts are, due to components potentially being from multiple sources and the commodity losing its phytosanitary identity.

In another example, seeds are a unique pathway as seeds can be produced in one country and then stored, blended, mixed or multiplied in other countries before arriving in the country of final destination. This leads to difficulty in establishing the place/s of origin and phytosanitary status of the commodity and the appropriate phytosanitary measures.

Commodity standards: Challenges

- Diversity of commodities and groups of commodities and development of associated requirements.
- High costs associated with development of standards.
- Difficulty to prioritize commodities for which contracting parties have a common interest.
- Difficulties in: getting technical data; agreeing on list of pests, and phytosanitary measures applicable to commodities and on their efficacy.
- Regardless of risk, contracting parties imposing measures identified in the standard for commodities that were previously permitted unrestricted entry.
- Limited number of adopted phytosanitary treatments and difficulties in developing more.

Purpose of commodity standards

- Specific problem related to trade of a commodity had been identified.
- Increasing compliance with phytosanitary import requirements.
- Greater industry engagement and facilitating safe trade taking into account specific business practices.
- Identifying unique characteristics of the commodity or group of commodities where harmonization would facilitate safe trade.
- Minimum requirements considered to be suitable for global use (as for instance in ISPM 15).
- Identifying pest risk factors specific to the commodity or group of commodities.
- Where appropriate, harmonizing systems, procedures or operations relating to a commodity or a group of commodities.
- Providing phytosanitary measures specific to the commodity or groups of commodities and associated pests.
- Other???

Commodity standards: Content

- Requirements: Commodity versus group of commodities.
- Elements specific to the production and trade of the commodity or group of commodities which may affect the pest risks.
- Inclusion of official procedures and industry processes or activities.
- Pest risk factors specific to the commodity or group of commodities.
- Easy to implement requirements.
- List of pests or groups of pests associated with the pathway, maybe focus on most important pests.
- Guidance on pest risks associated with different intended uses and on phytosanitary measures that are proportional to the pest risks associated with the intended uses.
- Other???

Commodity standards: Next steps?

- Are commodity or commodity group standards a priority?
- What do you expect from a commodity or commodity group standard?
- How can contracting parties contribute and facilitate the development of commodity standards?
- What are the other options to address the need for guidance to facilitate the trade of commodity or commodity groups?

Thank you!

Questions/Comments