

MAF BIOSECURITY NEW ZEALAND (PLANTS) STANDARD

Importation of Coco peat and Coir fibre Products.

Issued as an import health standard pursuant to Section 22 of the Biosecurity Act 1993

Biosecurity New Zealand
Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
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CONTENTS

Endorsement	2
Review.....	2
1. INTRODUCTION.....	3
1.1 SCOPE.....	3
1.2 EXCLUSIONS FROM THE SCOPE OF THIS STANDARD	3
1.3 REFERENCES	3
2. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS	4
2.1 GENERAL INFORMATION FOR COCO PEAT PRODUCTS (GROUP A)	4
2.2 GENERAL INFORMATION FOR COIR FIBRE PRODUCTS (GROUP B).....	4
2.3 TRANSPORT REQUIREMENTS	4
2.4 DOCUMENTATION	4
2.5 TREATMENT OPTIONS	4
3. COMMODITY SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS.....	5
3.1 ENTRY CONDITIONS FOR COCO PEAT PRODUCTS (GROUP A)	5
3.2 ENTRY CONDITIONS FOR COIR FIBRE PRODUCTS (GROUP B).....	10
4. REQUIREMENTS ON ARRIVAL AT THE BORDER.....	10
4.1 SAMPLING AND GROW OUT TEST FOR COCO PEAT PRODUCTS (GROUP A)	10
4.2 INSPECTION OF COIR FIBRE PRODUCTS (GROUP B).....	11
5. INTERCEPTIONS OF PESTS AND CONTAMINANTS	11
6. BIOSECURITY CLEARANCE.....	12
APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR COCO PEAT SUPPLIERS	12
APPENDIX 2: ABBREVIATIONS, ACRONYMS AND DEFINITIONS	13

Endorsement

The MAF Biosecurity New Zealand Standard: Importation of Coco peat and Coir fibre products is approved and issued in accordance with Section 22(1) of the Biosecurity Act 1993.

Chief Technical Officer, Plant Imports and Exports
Group

Date

The official contact point in New Zealand for overseas NPPO's is the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. All communication pertaining to this import health standard should be addressed to:

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Review

This MAF Biosecurity New Zealand import health standard is subject to ongoing review and amendment.

New Zealand import health standards are updated and published as necessary with the most recent version on the MAF Biosecurity New Zealand web site at:

<http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/ihs/search>

AMENDMENT RECORD

Amendments to this standard will be given a consecutive number and will be dated in the body of the table and in the footer. The amended section(s) will be included.

No:	Section(s):	Date:
1	Sections 3.1; 4; 4.1;5	13 March 09

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 SCOPE

This import health standard states the phytosanitary requirements for the importation of coir from all countries. The types of products are separated into two groupings:

Group A: Coco peat products (also known as Coir pith or Coir peat) for use as a growing medium in various grades and finished products for horticultural/agricultural use e.g. grow slabs, grow bags, bales, blocks, discs, pots, starter cubes and small blocks. Coco peat as used in this standard includes the products known as “chips” and “crush”, derived from the whole chopped and crushed husk pieces. Product may be compressed or non-compressed.

Group B: Coir fibre products made from large coir fibres for a variety of uses e.g. Mattress matting, basket liners, erosion and weed control matting, fibre blankets, domestic mats, brushes and fillers for industrial uses. Also includes clean coir twine or fibre rolls.

1.2 EXCLUSIONS FROM THE SCOPE OF THIS STANDARD

This standard does not cover the requirements for importation of the following plant commodity classes:

- Excavated peat is prescribed in the import health standard [BMG-STD-SOWTR: Soil, rock, gravel, sand, clay, peat and water from any country](#)
- Coco peat growing media associated with the importation of nursery stock will be assessed on a case by case basis. The entry conditions will be assessed and included on the permit to import nursery stock, issued in accordance with the import health standard [155.02.06: Importation of Nursery Stock](#).
- Mats and fibres derived from other plants.

1.3 REFERENCES

The following Acts, Regulations and MAF Biosecurity standards are referred to, or complement, the implementation of this import health standard:

- International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), FAO, Rome 1997
- International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures Publication 5; Glossary of Phytosanitary Terms, IPPC, 2007
- Biosecurity Act 1993
 - Biosecurity (Costs) Regulations 2006
- Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996

2. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

It is the responsibility of the importer to ensure compliance with this standard. Products not complying will be treated prior to biosecurity clearance (if a treatment is available) or may be reshipped or destroyed.

2.1 GENERAL INFORMATION FOR COCO PEAT PRODUCTS (GROUP A)

- Coco peat must be kept clean and free of seeds, pests, soil, animal material and any other contamination.
- No imported coco peat is to be produced from the traditional method of retting husks in open troughs or ponds.
- Washing or rinsing of coco peat, chips or crush must be carried out with bore water, not pond or dam water.
- Coco peat drying areas must be buffered underneath from contact with soil.
- A plant free buffer zone of 3 metres must be maintained around the coco peat drying areas unless concrete walls are built on the perimeter of concrete pads.

2.2 GENERAL INFORMATION FOR COIR FIBRE PRODUCTS (GROUP B)

- Coir fibre products must be kept clean and free of seeds, pests, soil, animal material and any other contamination.

2.3 TRANSPORT REQUIREMENTS

All consignments must be packed and shipped in a manner to prevent contamination by regulated pests.

2.4 DOCUMENTATION

All documentation will be inspected to ensure compliance with the requirements of this import health standard and any additional requirements specified on an import permit. Documentation must be in the English language, and can be bilingual.

It is the importer's responsibility to ensure that any documentation presented is made in accordance with the requirements of this import health standard and is clearly legible. Failure to do so may result in delays in obtaining authorised movement and/or biosecurity clearance, or the rejection of consignments.

2.5 TREATMENT OPTIONS

Any treatment completed prior to shipment must comply with the requirements of this import health standard. All treatments will be carried out at the importer's risk and expense. MAFBNZ accepts one or more of the following treatment options:

Treatment with ethylene oxide

One of the following rates must be used:

Under initial minimum vacuum of 50 kilopascals at 1500g/m³ for 4 hours at 50°C; or 1500g/m³ for 24 hours at 21°C.

Ethylene oxide treatment must be given within 21 days of arrival.

Heat treatment with low humidity heat

The following rate must be used: 85°C core temperature for 15 continuous hours with 40% relative humidity.

Autoclaving

The following rate must be used: 120°C for 30 minutes at 100KPa.

Other rates of steam, other fumigants or other treatments that can be proven to devitalise seeds will be given consideration on application.

Note: Any treatment should be given before insertion of a product into grow slabs/grow bags if the treatment will not permeate the bags.

3. COMMODITY SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

3.1 ENTRY CONDITIONS FOR COCO PEAT PRODUCTS (GROUP A)

Options for Entry Conditions

Five options are provided for entry conditions:

- A) Approved quality production process with grow out test in the exporting country
- B) Import into a glasshouse transitional facility in New Zealand from an approved quality production process
- C) Import with recognised treatment in the country of origin
- D) Import with heat treatment on arrival in New Zealand
- E) Approved quality production process with grow out test on arrival in New Zealand

OPTION A: Approved quality production process with grow out test in the exporting country

Under this option, a consignment must be sampled in the source country for a grow out test and may be dispatched ahead of the grow out test result and held on arrival.

(i) Documentation

Phytosanitary certificate: a completed phytosanitary certificate issued by the NPPO of the exporting country must accompany all products exported to New Zealand.

Import permit: an import permit is required.

Applicants must provide information describing the quality processes used in manufacture and full supplier's details as prescribed in Appendix 1. MAFBNZ reserves the right to decline an application. Production facilities may be audited when required by MAFBNZ at the importer's cost.

To apply for a permit, complete the form "Application to Import Plant Products" available on the website:

<http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/forms/imports-plant-products>

(ii) Phytosanitary requirements

Before a phytosanitary certificate is issued, the NPPO of the exporting country must be satisfied that the following activities required by MAF have been undertaken.

The consignment has been

1. - inspected in accordance with appropriate official procedures and found to be free of any visually detectable soil, seeds, contaminant animal or plant material and other extraneous matter.

AND

2. - randomly sampled and tested by a grow-out test showing freedom from viable seeds based on a sample size of 1%.

(iii) Additional declarations to the phytosanitary certificate

If satisfied that the phytosanitary requirements have been undertaken, the exporting country NPPO must confirm this by providing the following additional declarations to the phytosanitary certificate:

"The coco peat consignment has been:

1. - inspected in accordance with appropriate official procedures and found to be free of visually detectable soil, seeds, regulated pests, contaminant animal or plant material and other extraneous matter.

AND

2. - randomly sampled and tested by a grow-out test showing freedom from viable seeds based on a sample size of 1%."

Grow out test result: If the consignment is dispatched ahead of the grow out test result it must be held in a transitional facility until either

- i) a phytosanitary certificate is received with both additional declarations or
- ii) a phytosanitary certificate is received without clause 2 of the additional declarations, and a government-issued laboratory test result stating the original phytosanitary certificate number.

If visually detectable pests are found, the certifying NPPO must establish their regulatory status prior to issuing the certificate. This information is available in MAF's Biosecurity Organisms Register for Imported Commodities: <http://www.maf.govt.nz/biosecurity/pests-diseases/registers-lists/boric/>

If a visually detectable pest is not listed in this register, the certifying NPPO must contact MAF (official contact point listed above) to establish the regulatory status of the pest.

If seeds are found during visual inspection, the consignment must be rejected for export to New Zealand, unless treated as in Section 2.5.

OPTION B: Import into a glasshouse transitional facility in New Zealand

Under this option growers may apply to MAFBNZ to become registered transitional facilities for using coco peat grow slabs and grow bags. The coco peat will remain under MAFBNZ control until it has been in use for 9 months.

(i) Documentation

Phytosanitary certificate: a completed phytosanitary certificate issued by the NPPO of the exporting country must accompany all products exported to New Zealand.

Import permit: an import permit is required.

Applicants must provide information describing the quality processes used in manufacture and full supplier's details as prescribed in Appendix 1. MAFBNZ reserves the right to decline an application. Production facilities may be audited when required by MAFBNZ at the importer's cost.

To apply for a permit, complete the form "Application to Import Plant Products" available on the website:

<http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/forms/imports-plant-products>

(ii) Phytosanitary requirements

Before a phytosanitary certificate is issued, the NPPO of the exporting country must be satisfied that the following activities required by MAF have been undertaken.

The consignment has been

- inspected in accordance with appropriate official procedures and found to be free of any visually detectable soil, seeds, contaminant animal or plant material and other extraneous matter.

(iii) Additional declarations to the phytosanitary certificate

If satisfied that the phytosanitary requirements have been undertaken, the exporting country NPPO must confirm this by providing the following additional declarations to the phytosanitary certificate:

"The coco peat consignment has been:

- inspected in accordance with appropriate official procedures and found to be free of any visually detectable soil, seeds, regulated pests, contaminant animal or plant material and other extraneous matter.

If visually detectable pests are found, the certifying NPPO must establish their regulatory status prior to issuing the certificate. This information is available in MAF's "Biosecurity Organisms Register for Imported Commodities": <http://www.maf.govt.nz/biosecurity/pests-diseases/registers-lists/boric/>

If a visually detectable pest is not listed in this register, the certifying NPPO must contact MAF (official contact point listed at the beginning of this IHS) to establish the regulatory status of the pest.

If seeds are found during visual inspection, the consignment must be rejected for export to New Zealand, unless treated as in Section 2.5.

OPTION C: Import with recognised treatment in the country of origin

The options for treatment are dependent on their availability in the country of origin. Consignments must be held securely post treatment to prevent re-contamination. Approved treatments are outlined in Section 2.5.

(i) Documentation

Phytosanitary certificate: a completed phytosanitary certificate issued by the NPPO of the exporting country must accompany all finished products exported to New Zealand which are treated prior to shipment.

AND (for products sterilised by heat during manufacture for which the NPPO does not offer additional declarations)

Manufacturer's certificate: a completed manufacturer's certificate must accompany all products stating the core temperature reached and time held, in accordance with the permit.

Import permit: Not required for products exported to New Zealand with the treatment recorded on the phytosanitary certificate.

A permit is required for products which are sterilised by heat during manufacture accompanied by a manufacturer's certificate and phytosanitary certificate with no treatment details.

(ii) Phytosanitary requirements

Before a phytosanitary certificate is issued, the NPPO of the exporting country must be satisfied that the following activities required by MAF have been undertaken.

The consignment has been treated by an approved treatment outlined in section 2.5 and been held securely post treatment to prevent re-contamination.

OR (for products sterilised by heat during manufacture for which the NPPO does not offer additional declarations):

The consignment has been inspected in accordance with appropriate official procedures and found to be free of any visually detectable soil, seeds, regulated pests, contaminant animal or plant material and other extraneous matter.

(iii) Additional declarations to the phytosanitary certificate

If satisfied that the phytosanitary requirements have been undertaken, the exporting country NPPO must confirm this by recording the treatment and rate in the "Disinfestation and/or Disinfection Treatment" section of the phytosanitary certificate or stating the procedure as an additional declaration.

OR (for products sterilised by heat during manufacture for which the NPPO does not offer additional declarations):

If satisfied that the phytosanitary requirements have been undertaken, the exporting country NPPO must confirm this by providing the following additional declarations to the phytosanitary certificate:

"The coco peat consignment has been:

- inspected in accordance with appropriate official procedures and found to be free of any visually detectable soil, seeds, regulated pests, contaminant animal or plant material and other extraneous matter.

If visually detectable pests are found, the certifying NPPO must establish their regulatory status prior to issuing the certificate. This information is available in MAF's "Biosecurity Organisms Register for Imported Commodities": <http://www.maf.govt.nz/biosecurity/pests-diseases/registers-lists/boric/>

If a visually detectable pest is not listed in this register, the certifying NPPO must contact MAF (official contact point listed at the beginning of this IHS) to establish the regulatory status of the pest.

If seeds are found during visual inspection, the consignment must be rejected for export to New Zealand, unless treated as in Section 2.5.

OPTION D: Import with heat treatment on arrival in New Zealand

The consignment will be directed for heat treatment at a MAF-approved treatment facility.

(i) Documentation

Phytosanitary certificate: Not required.

Import permit: Not required.

OPTION E: Approved quality production process with grow out test on arrival in New Zealand

(i) Documentation

Phytosanitary certificate: a completed phytosanitary certificate issued by the NPPO of the exporting country must accompany all products exported to New Zealand.

Import permit: an import permit is required.

Applicants must provide information describing the quality processes used in manufacture and full supplier's details as prescribed in Appendix 1. MAFBNZ reserves the right to decline an application. Production facilities may be audited when required by MAFBNZ at the importer's cost.

To apply for a permit, complete the form "Application to Import Plant Products" available on the website:

<http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/forms/imports-plant-products>

(ii) Phytosanitary requirements

Before a phytosanitary certificate is issued, the NPPO of the exporting country must be satisfied that the following activities required by MAF have been undertaken.

The consignment has been

- inspected in accordance with appropriate official procedures and found to be free of any visually detectable soil, seeds, contaminant animal or plant material and other extraneous matter.

(iii) Additional declarations to the phytosanitary certificate

If satisfied that the phytosanitary requirements have been undertaken, the exporting country NPPO must confirm this by providing the following additional declarations to the phytosanitary certificate:

"The coco peat consignment has been:

- inspected in accordance with appropriate official procedures and found to be free of any visually detectable soil, seeds, regulated pests, contaminant animal or plant material and other extraneous matter."

If visually detectable pests are found, the certifying NPPO must establish their regulatory status prior to issuing the certificate. This information is available in MAF's Biosecurity Organisms Register for Imported Commodities: <http://www.maf.govt.nz/biosecurity/pests-diseases/registers-lists/boric/>

If a visually detectable pest is not listed in this register, the certifying NPPO must contact MAF (official contact point listed above) to establish the regulatory status of the pest.

If seeds are found during visual inspection, the consignment must be rejected for export to New Zealand, unless treated as in Section 2.5.

Please refer to Section 4.1 for requirements relating to the grow out test on arrival in New Zealand.

3.2 ENTRY CONDITIONS FOR COIR FIBRE PRODUCTS (GROUP B)

(i) Documentation

Phytosanitary certificate: Not required unless a treatment has been given. Any treatment completed prior to shipment must comply with Section 2.5.

Import permit: Not required.

(ii) Phytosanitary requirements

Exporters must ensure that consignments are free of pests and extraneous matter.

4. REQUIREMENTS ON ARRIVAL AT THE BORDER

All consignments of Coco peat and Coir fibre products which can not be given a biosecurity clearance under the chosen option, must be stored in a transitional facility until such time as they sampled for a grow out test, directed to a glasshouse facility, treated, reshipped or destroyed.

Options A, B and C:

Inspection of the consignment is not required.

Option D:

On arrival any consignments awaiting results of the grow out test are to be held at a transitional facility until such time as biosecurity clearance is given. Inspection of the consignment is not required.

Option E:

Sampling of the consignment is required as under section 4.1.

4.1 SAMPLING AND GROW OUT TEST FOR COCO PEAT PRODUCTS (GROUP A)

For every consignment under Option E, samples will be randomly taken by a MAFBNZ inspector, and sub-samples sent for a grow out test in accordance with a MAFBNZ procedure (compressed samples will be destructively broken down). Consignments will be randomly sampled at rates in accordance with the following table:

Grow out Test Sample Size (per container or part container)

Number of items per lot type	Bales	Blocks (30 x30 x15cm), Slabs (1 metre) and Uncompressed Bags	Half slabs	Smaller items e.g. Starter blocks, gerbera discs
1-50	1	2	2	4
51-100	1	3	4	8
101-200	2	4	6	16
210-350	3	6	12	24
351-500	3	8	16	24
501-750	3	8	20	32
750-1200	3	10	20	32
Over 1200	3	10	20	40
Over 4000	4	12	24	40
Over 10000	4	15	30	60

All consignments awaiting results of the grow out test are to be held at a transitional facility until such time as biosecurity clearance is given. All costs associated with the grow out test are to occur at the importer's expense.

4.2 INSPECTION OF COIR FIBRE PRODUCTS (GROUP B)

4.2.1 Processed products heated during manufacture

The following processed products involving high heating are exempt audit inspections on arrival:

Manufactured by Toyo Cushion Lanka (PVT) Ltd, Sri Lanka: Coir rubberized moulded basket liners and rubberized sheets for mattress making.

4.2.2 Processed products not heated during manufacture

Inspection audits will be required on a regular basis at the importer's expense for these products. The remainder of the consignment is not to be held during the audit process.

MAFBNZ will sample one in every ten consignments of like coir fibre product per lot, per importer, on a regional port basis.

5. INTERCEPTIONS OF PESTS AND CONTAMINANTS

If more than 2 seeds are indicated from a grow out test, the importer is to be given the options of heat treatment of the consignment, in accordance with the standard: [BNZ-STD-TREAT Approved Biosecurity Treatments for Risk Goods Directed for Treatment](#), or steam treatment by arrangement with MAFBNZ, reshipment or destruction.

If there are more than 2 seedling interceptions or post border reports of exotic weeds from a particular importer or supplier in a 12 month period, all permits related to the importer or supplier will be revoked.

If live organisms other than seeds are detected during sampling, the importer is to be given the option of pest identification, treatment, reshipment or destruction. If the organism is regulated, the product may be treated, reshipped or destroyed as directed by the MAFBNZ inspector. The product may be given biosecurity clearance if the pest identified is classified as non-regulated.

If other contaminants are detected during sampling, the MAFBNZ inspector will determine the action to be taken. Any treatments given will be in accordance with the standard: [BNZ-STD-TREAT Approved Biosecurity Treatments for Risk Goods Directed for Treatment](#). All treatments will be carried out at the importer's risk and expense.

6. BIOSECURITY CLEARANCE

If the MAFBNZ inspector is satisfied that the entry conditions have been met, biosecurity clearance of the consignment will be provided.

All consignments not complying with the specifications detailed in this import health standard must be stored in a transitional facility until biosecurity clearance can be provided, or until the consignment is inspected, treated, reshipped or destroyed.

APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR COCO PEAT SUPPLIERS

Responses to this questionnaire are to accompany an application to import Coco Peat Products (as defined in section 1.1). Please attach any relevant information to your responses. Please complete those questions which are applicable to the products you intend to import. All information supplied to MAFBNZ will be handled confidentially.

1. What is the brand or trade name of the products?
2. What is the method of storage for husk pieces in supplying copra factories?
3. What is the method of transport and storage from supplying copra factories (e.g. in clean bags)?
4. How frequently are coconut husk pieces delivered from supplying copra factories to your processing factories or your fibre mill suppliers?
5. Do you have a factory that processes husk pieces to the finished product and which is specifically used for growing media products?
6. Do you buy coco peat from the wholesale market, including material used in these products? If so, is it handled in the same processing premises as materials destined for New Zealand?

7. How many suppliers of dried coco peat supply your production process?
8. Please describe the area where the coconut husks are delivered on your premises or on the premises of each of your suppliers of dried coco peat.
9. Is there a plant-free buffer zone where husks are delivered and where the coco peat is dried for each supplier or premises? If so, please provide details, including how frequently these zones are monitored.
10. Is there any rinsing with water of plant material in the production process? If so, what is the source of water used (e.g. bore water, nearby stream)?
11. Are any of the production or processing sites susceptible to flooding?
12. What are the measures taken to keep all storage areas free of contamination (including arthropods and rodents)?
13. At what points in the production system are samples taken to inspect for contamination?
14. How frequently do you take samples and undertake grow-out tests for seed contamination? Please give details of the methods undertaken for the grow-out tests (e.g. sample size, length of grow-out period).
15. Do you maintain records of grow-out tests? If so, where do you hold these records?
16. Will the products receive heat treatment or ethylene oxide fumigation before export? If so, please give full details of the intended treatment.
17. Are there any live organisms added to any of the products? If so, please provide the names of these organisms.
18. What is the method of storage of dried coco peat before compressing and packaging?
19. Do you have any quality system audited by a third party (e.g. RHP, ISO accreditation)? If so, please provide details about this quality system.
20. Do you source any of your products from another company? If so, please state which products and the name of the company who produces them.
21. Do you export the products produced from your premises to countries other than New Zealand? If so, please state which countries.

APPENDIX 2: ABBREVIATIONS, ACRONYMS AND DEFINITIONS

Additional declaration

A statement that is required by an importing country to be entered on a phytosanitary certificate and which provides specific additional information on a consignment in relation to the regulated pests [IPPC].

Biosecurity clearance

Clearance under section 26 of the Biosecurity Act 1993 for the entry of goods into New Zealand.

Certificate

An official document which attests to the phytosanitary status of any consignment affected by phytosanitary regulations [FAO, 1990].

Consignment

Unaccompanied goods being moved from one country to another and covered by an airway bill/bill of lading or consignment note.

Contamination

Unwanted presence in a commodity, storage place, conveyance or container, of any material (including a regulated organism) that may pose a biosecurity risk.

MAF

Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

MAF Biosecurity New Zealand (MAFBNZ)

The division of MAF charged with leadership of the New Zealand biosecurity system.

MAFBNZ Inspector

A person appointed under section 103 of the Biosecurity Act 1993 for the purposes of administering and enforcing the provisions of the Biosecurity Act.

National plant protection organization (NPPO)

Official service established by the government to discharge the functions specified by the IPPC [FAO, 1990]. **Note: MAF is the NPPO of New Zealand.**

Permit to Import

Official document authorising importation of a commodity in accordance with specified phytosanitary requirements. This may be a requirement of an Import Health Standard pursuant to section 22(2) of the Biosecurity Act 1993, and it may also include certain conditions which must be met in order for the commodity to receive biosecurity clearance.

Pest

Any species, strain or biotype of plant, animal or pathogenic agent injurious to plants or plant products [FAO, 1990; revised FAO, 1995; IPPC, 1997].

Phytosanitary certificate

A certificate patterned after the model certificates of the IPPC [FAO, 1990]. A certificate issued by the exporting country NPPO, in accordance with the requirements of the IPPC, which verifies that the requirements of the relevant import health standard have been met.

Plant products

Unmanufactured material of plant origin (including grain) and those manufactured plant products that, by their nature or that of their processing, may create a risk for the spread of pests. [FAO, 1990; revised IPPC, 1997].

Standard

Document established by consensus and approved by a recognized body, that provides, for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines or characteristics for activities or their results, aimed at the achievement of the optimum degree of order in a given context [FAO, 1995; ISO/IEC GUIDE 2:1991 definition].

Transitional facility

A place approved and part of a port declared, in accordance with section 39 of the Biosecurity Act 1993 for the purpose of inspection, storage, treatment, quarantine, holding or destruction of uncleared goods.

Treatment

Official procedure for the killing, inactivation or removal of pests, or for rendering pests infertile or for devitalisation [FAO, 1990, revised FAO, 1995; ISPM No 15, 2002; ISPM No 18, 2003; ICPM 2005].