
5. The way forward

Forest pests are a global problem and consequently it is necessary to look beyond national borders to develop effective solutions. Despite many improvements in phytosanitary protection, introductions of new forest pests continue because of the increase in volume of international trade and speed of transport. Climate change also appears to be increasing the probability of new pest establishment as well as providing conditions that allow some species to become more serious pests in their native range. Foresters and scientists must increase their efforts to work together with national plant protection organizations (NPPOs) to take the actions necessary to prevent pest introduction and spread.

Fortunately, information sharing between people working in forestry and plant health regulators is already helping prevent, detect and eradicate new pest outbreaks. Continued expansion of this networking, and the use of technologies such as the Internet can assist in addressing the challenge of global pest control.

Good forest management practices, such as those described in this guide, can help reduce pest outbreaks and prevent pests from moving around the globe via forest commodities. Integrated pest management begins with planning what to grow and where to grow it. Careful surveillance, the management of forest stands throughout the growing cycle, and good practices during harvest and transport operations can bring quality, low pest-risk products to the international marketplace. Understanding and meeting the phytosanitary requirements of importing countries is necessary and helps enhance the safe movement of forest commodities and reduce overall costs with minimal impacts on international trade.

A number of important international standards for phytosanitary measures (ISPMs) provide guidance that is helpful in reducing forest pest movement in international trade. New ISPMs related to the trade of forest commodities continue to be developed in response to international needs. Currently, standards on wood commodities and forest tree seed are being drafted by the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) Technical Panel on Forest Quarantine (TPFQ) and participation of foresters, particularly during the country consultation stage, in the development of these standards is essential.

As new ISPMs are developed, people working in forestry can provide valuable input with their special knowledge and expertise that will help build practical guidelines. In this way, by working together, forest sector personnel, including industry, and NPPOs can promote trade opportunities and help prevent the introduction and spread of forest pests.

