



REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS
MINISTRY OF AGRO - INDUSTRY AND FOOD SECURITY
NATIONAL PLANT PROTECTION OFFICE



Phytosanitary Export Inspection and Certification Manual

August, 2018

The Phytosanitary Export Inspection and Certification Manual is approved by the National Plant Protection Office, for use at all locations within The Republic of Mauritius, where activities and processes pertaining to export certification are conducted.

Authorization Date

Effective Date

Created by

Approved by

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Acronyms

AD	Additional Declaration
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species
IPPC	International Plant protection Convention
ISPM	International Standard for Phytosanitary Measures
NPPO	National Plant Protection Office
PC	Phytosanitary Certificate
PIP	Plant Import Permit
SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary
TFA	Trade Facilitation Agreement
WTO	World Trade Organisation

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope

The Export Inspection and Certification Manual has been developed for use by the staff of National Plant Protection Office (NPPO) and other accredited (certified) personnel. Other interested parties may use the manual for reference.

The manual provides guidance and describes the standard operating procedure for national export inspection and phytosanitary certification process that comply with the International Plant protection Convention (IPPC), International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs), World Trade Organisation (WTO) on Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Measure Agreement, WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) as well as the national legislation.

1.2. Purpose

The purpose of the manual is to give guidelines and describe methods and procedures to be used by authorised personnel to ensure valid and credible phytosanitary inspection and certification for export of consignments of plants/ plant products and other regulated articles in meeting the phytosanitary requirements of importing country and thereby fulfilling the international obligations enshrined under the national legislation, IPPC, ISPMs, WTO SPS Agreement, WTO TFA and other relevant regional, international and bilateral treaties.

1.3. References

- Export Certification System, ISPM Publication No. 7, FAO, Rome
- Glossary of Phytosanitary Terms, ISPM Publication No.5, FAO, Rome
- Methodologies for Sampling Consignments, ISPM Publication No 31, FAO, Rome
- International Plant Protection Convention, 1997. FAO, Rome.

- Guidelines for Phytosanitary Certificates. ISPM Publication. 12, FAO, Rome.
- **Plant Protection Act**

1.4. Definitions

Definitions of phytosanitary terms used in this document can be found in ISPM 5 (Glossary of phytosanitary terms) at www.ippc.int.

2.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1. The National Plant Protection Office

- Maintain an updated information system for the phytosanitary requirements of the importing countries;
- Maintain an updated national pest list and geographic distribution;
- Ensure accuracy and traceability of the inspection system from production, processing to export;
- Certify re-exported plants or plant products that have been legally imported into Mauritius;
- Provide information and documentation on the national in- transit system to interested countries;
- Issue the Phytosanitary Certificate (PC) and Phytosanitary Certificate of Re-export;
- Maintain a system for record keeping and retrieval;
- Liaise with importing country and make available a contact point to report on cases of non-compliance and develop procedures to investigate for intercepted consignments;
- Audit and review of the export inspection and certification system, in- transit system and the associated phytosanitary risks;
- Disseminate information related to phytosanitary certification to exporters and provide them with necessary information to meet the importing country's requirements;

- Provide technical information for gaining market access and developing bilateral phytosanitary protocols, if necessary.
- Designate a senior level technical officer to head the Export Inspection and Phytosanitary Certification Team;
- Ensure that adequately trained and skilful personnel and resources are available.

2.2. Plant Health Inspector

Responsibilities of Plant Health Inspector include:

- Review phytosanitary requirements of the importing country;
- Inspect consignment of plant, plant products and other regulated articles that are planned for export and examine import permit when required;
- Certify the consignments that meet the requirements of the importing country. For prohibited articles, an export certificate should not be issued unless an import permit or special authorization from the Competent Authority of the importing country is presented;
- Advise exporters to ship plants and plant products within specific time limits. For most importing countries, the time limit is 14 days after inspection (**Table 1**)
- Monitor and verify the application of any quarantine treatment, when required;
- Ensure that the content of the shipment is conform with documents from relevant authorities;
- Keep communication with exporters as to the status of a shipment so that it is not loaded before inspection and certification are completed;
- Identify organisms found during inspection of consignments or send specimen and samples to **accredited** laboratories;
- Notify the exporter that loading can begin when the inspection is completed. When a consignment is not eligible for certification or fails inspection, the Inspector should provide the exporter with the information necessary to meet the importing country's requirements;

- Prepare paper or e-PC in, handwritten or type legibly, avoiding alterations, errors, or erasures;
- Send a copy of the PC to NPPO headquarters, with copy of Plant Import Permit and other relevant documents used for certifying each consignment;
- Production of operational guidelines/procedures/instructions to ensure that the importing country phytosanitary requirements are satisfied.

2.3. Responsibilities of the exporter (or Agent)

The responsibilities of the exporter or agent include but not limited to the following:

- Application for phytosanitary inspection and certification of each consignment that the exporter wants certified. The application must be in writing and received at least **1 - 3** days in advance of the shipping or loading dates to provide for inspection or any other activity required to meet the importing country requirements.
- Make the shipment available for inspection:
 - i. The plants or plant products must be accessible for easy verification and inspection of the material described on the application or certificate.
 - ii. Shipment should not be loaded before the inspection is conducted.
- Provide labour necessary to open and close packages for inspection;
- Providing adequate facilities to perform the inspection if done away from NPPO premises. Such facilities include supplies, equipment, and proper lighting required for an efficient inspection before certification;
- Provide all necessary documentation including PIP, bills of lading, manifests, shipping invoices, foreign phytosanitary certificates, and inspection certificates;
- Provide time limit for the countries of destination for the period between date of inspection or date of issuing and shipping date ;
- Ensure that official documents are translated into English, when presented to the inspector in a language other than English.;
- Provide for any required treatments, reconditioning, or other actions to meet the import requirements of the foreign country;

- Safeguard the certified consignment from infestation between the date the consignment was certified and the actual shipping date, and ensure that the certified consignment departs within the specified time limits of the importing country. See **Table 1** for examples;
- Comply with all the export and Customs control regulations of Mauritius.

3.0 REQUIREMENTS

3.1 Legal Authority

The NPPO will have the legal mandate and administrative authority for control and issuance of phytosanitary certificates. The Export Inspection and Certification Unit will bear the legal power for its actions and implement safeguards against conflicts of interest and fraudulent use/issue of certificates. The Unit will also have the statutory power to prevent the export of consignments, which do not meet the phytosanitary requirements of the importing country and to take appropriate action in case of communication of nonconformities by the importing country and to fulfil the international obligations under the IPPC, WTO SPS and TF Agreements.

3.2 Resources and Infrastructure

A combination of the following tools and pieces of equipment may be required for an effective inspection process:

- ✚ Flash light;
- ✚ Magnifying glass;
- ✚ Vials;
- ✚ Alcohol at 70% concentration;
- ✚ Pill boxes for storing insect specimen;
- ✚ Regulatory stamp;
- ✚ Personal protective equipment (gloves, dust/winter coat, hat, face mask, safety boots);
- ✚ Inspection bag;
- ✚ Copy of the Plant Protection Act and Identity card;

- ✚ Pocket knife;
- ✚ Stickers/ labels;
- ✚ Stereoscope;
- ✚ Refrigerator;
- ✚ Pest data sheets;
- ✚ Global Positioning System;
- ✚ Probes & sieves;
- ✚ Inspection table (placed in well lighted area, shielded, well ventilated, free from clutter, white surface);
- ✚ Inspection form;
- ✚ Register;
- ✚ Computer with reliable internet connectivity, scanner & printer;
- ✚ Phone and digital camera;
- ✚ Forceps, pen brush & dissecting needles;
- ✚ Stationery;
- ✚ Petri dishes, cover slips;
- ✚ Sampling bags;
- ✚ Sample storage room;
- ✚ Access to plant protection laboratories.

4.0 GUIDELINES FOR INSPECTION AND EXPORT CERTIFICATION

4.1. Application for inspection

The exporter or his/her agent shall submit an application for export inspection sufficiently in advance or at least 1 - 3 days prior to the actual date of shipment of consignment. This can be done by phone, email, through the website or in person at any NPPO office (**Appendix 1**). However in the case of export of perishable commodities such as cut flowers, fresh fruits and vegetables, the above conditions may not apply. Also in the case of export of seed consignments, such applications are filed 8-10 days prior to actual date of shipment.

4.2 Decision-making process for certification

Prior to starting the process of conducting phytosanitary inspection and certification, the inspector needs to review the written application for inspection (Appendix 1).

The inspector needs to know the degree of processing of the product and also collect supporting documents such as phytosanitary certificate or equivalent for re-exported products, import permit, other local or national agency inspection certificate and laboratory test results if required.

Once all the necessary information and documents collected, the inspector should decide if he/she can inspect the commodity, if so, proceed to inspection.

4.2.1. Categorization of products

The plant and plant products may be categorized as follows:

a. Domestic Products are those plants and unprocessed or unmanufactured plant products grown or produced in the country. A PC, is authorized to certify that domestic plants and plant products conform with the phytosanitary regulations of the importing country.

b. Processed products are those plant products that went through industrial processing or manufacturing to the degree that they are unlikely to harbour organisms harmful to plants or plant products.

c. Prohibited products are those plants and unprocessed or unmanufactured plant products prohibited entry to the importing country or export from Mauritius. Prohibited products are not eligible for phytosanitary certification, unless an import permit or other special authorization is provided from the plant protection organization of the importing country and all conditions of the import permit are met (see 4.1) or export conditions are met.

d. Foreign Products are those plants and unprocessed or unmanufactured plant products that have officially and legally entered Mauritius but were grown or produced in another country. These products are eligible for Phytosanitary Certificate for Re-export.

The inspector may face two situations:

d.1 Handled and repacked within Mauritius:

d. 2 Safeguarded in Mauritius with no chance of pest infestation or re-infestation.

e. Protected plants are those plants protected by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). The Inspector needs to identify if the plant or plant product is listed under CITES before proceeding with inspection.

4.2.2. Import requirements

The NPPO keeps an updated database to retrieve the import requirements of other countries. This database should be easily accessible to the officials responsible for export certification.

Import requirements may be included in the official documents provided by the importing country (PIP or other special authorization). These requirements take precedence over the information provided by NPPO.

Most common import requirements are one or a combination of the following phytosanitary measures:

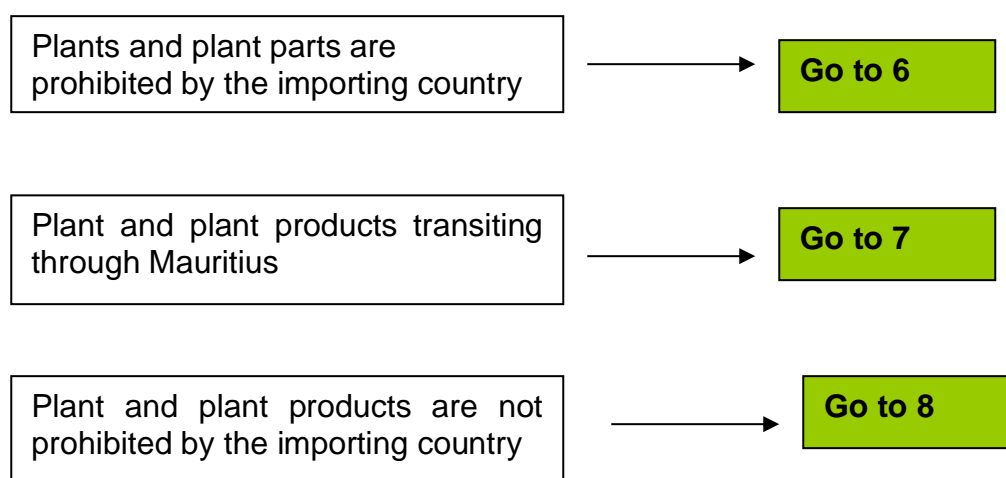
1. PIP;
2. Pest free area;
3. Inspection and certification during active growth;
4. Permitted entry during specific time of the year;
5. Visual inspection and certification of freedom from listed quarantine pests;
6. Permissible level of infestation/ infection of regulated non-quarantine pest;
7. Phytosanitary treatment before export; and
8. Additional declaration.

4.2.3 Inspection and certification procedures

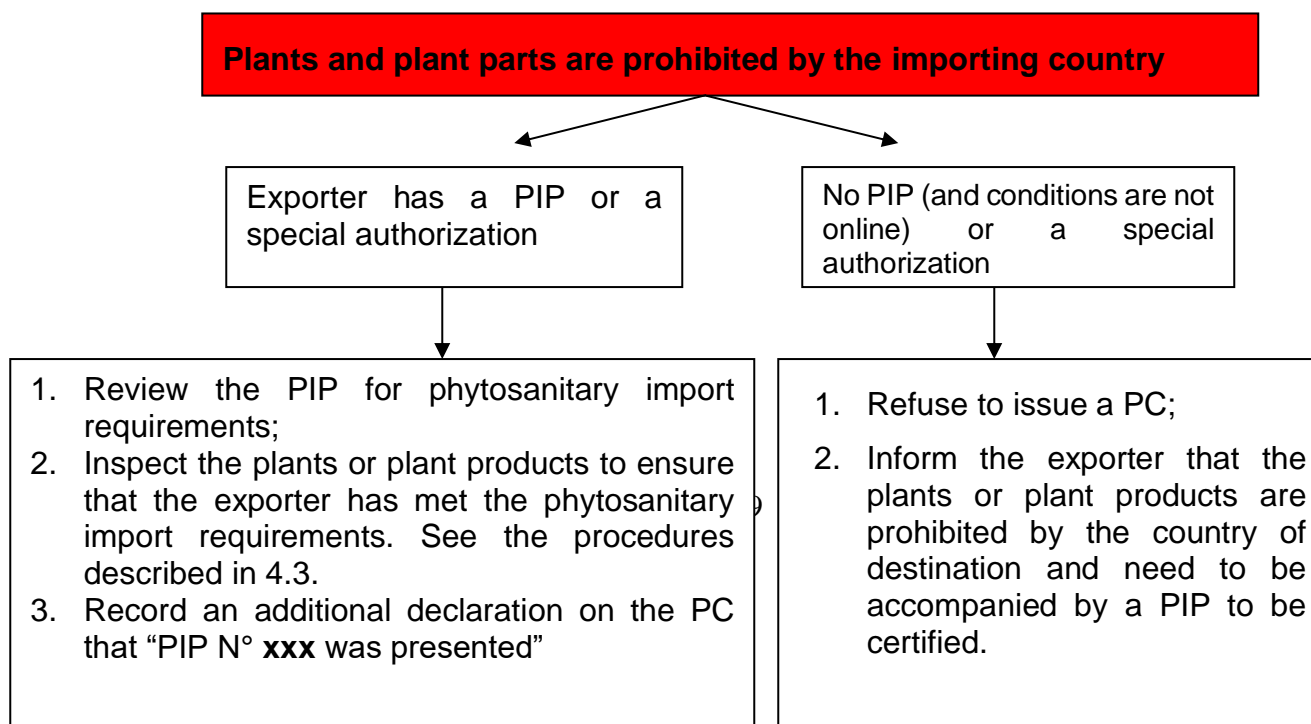
Inspection and certification involve four major steps:

- i. Document checking;
- ii. Phytosanitary visual inspection and testing;
- iii. Producing an Inspection report (**Appendix 2**);
- iv. Decision for issuance of PC.

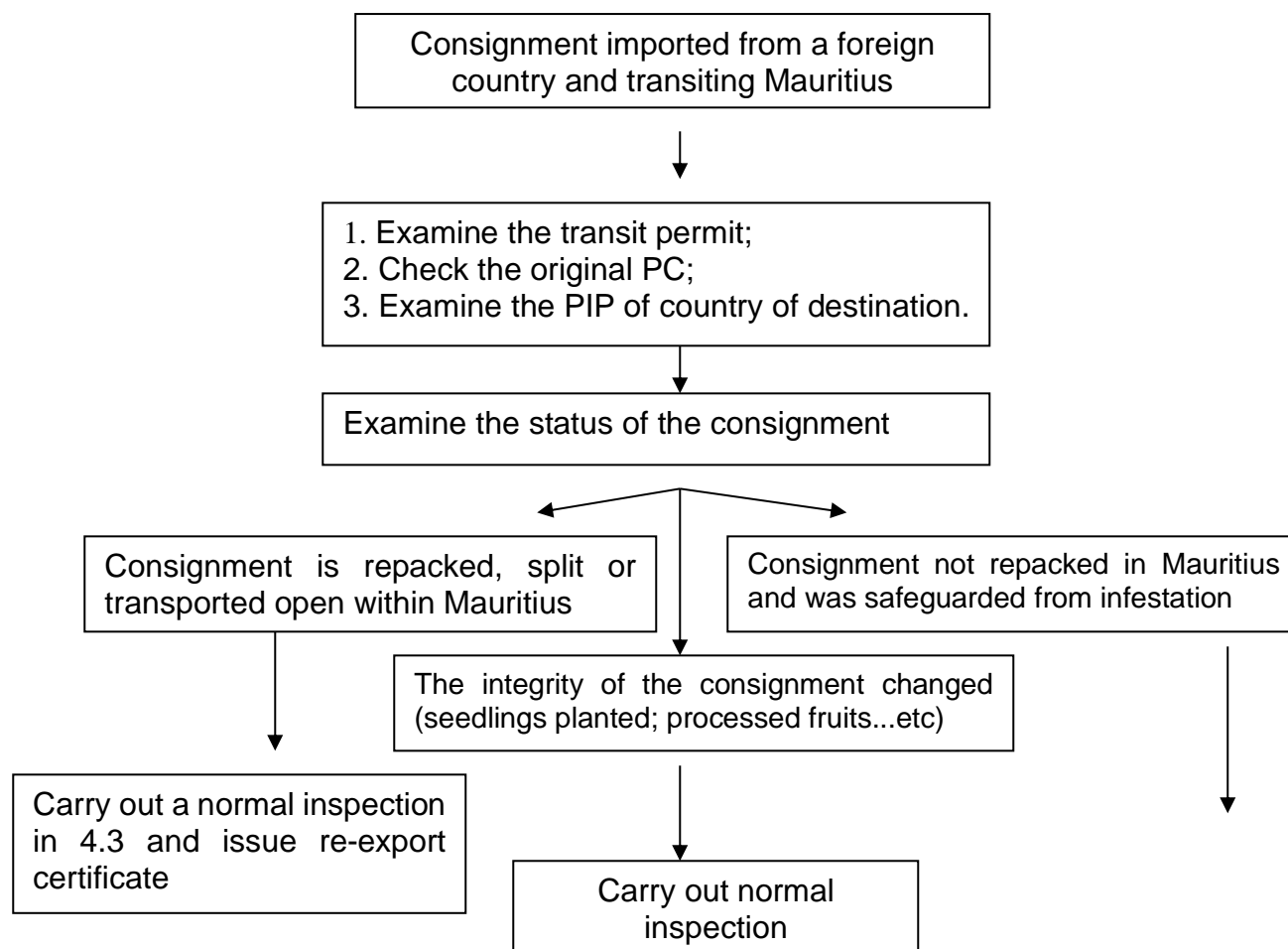
5.0 REGULATING PLANTS, PLANT PRODUCTS, AND OTHER REGULATED ARTICLES



6.0 REGULATING PROHIBITED PLANTS AND PLANT PRODUCTS



7.0 Regulating consignments of plant, plant products and other regulated articles in-transit



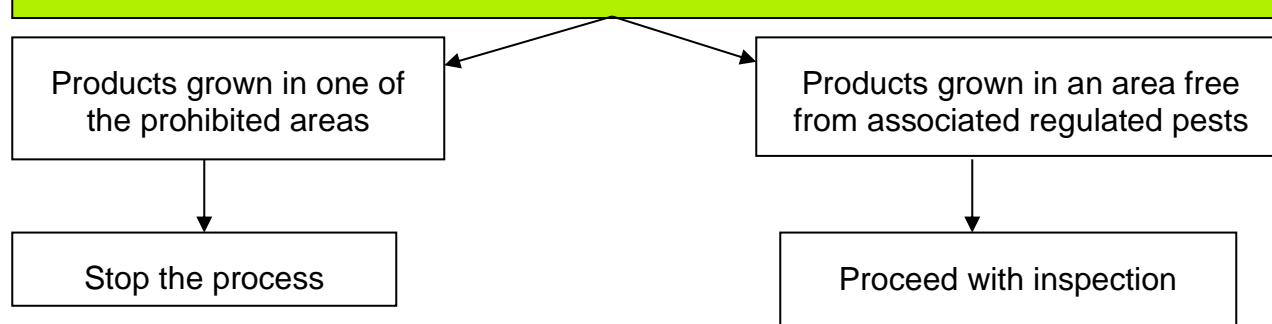
When the requirements are not stated on the PIP nor on the phytosanitary certificate of the exporting country, the products may be certified for export if they fulfill the in-transit requirements of Mauritius. An additional declaration may be placed on the PC of re-export to indicate that the consignment met the import requirements of Mauritius.

8.0 Regulating non-prohibited plants, plant products, and regulated articles

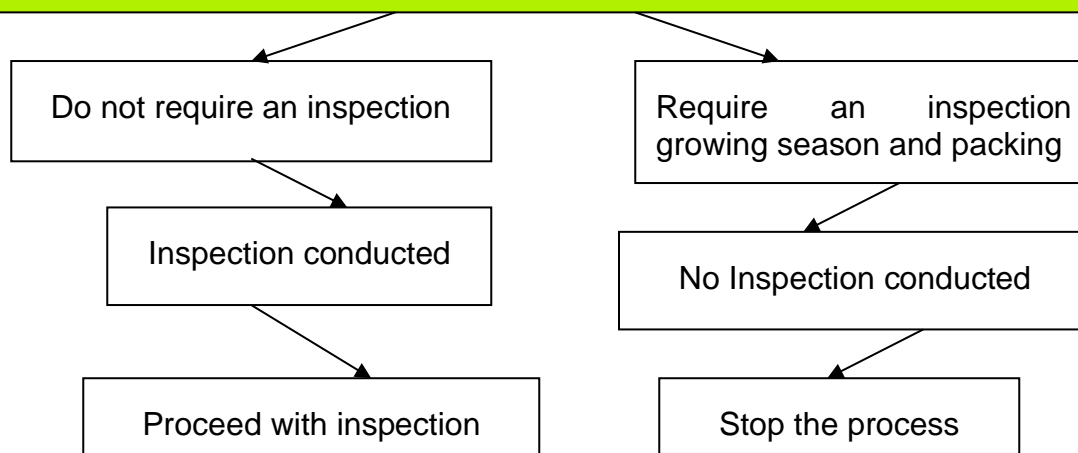
8.1: Guidelines for Documentary Inspection

If the plants, plant products or other regulated articles are not prohibited by the importing country, check for import requirements in the database and in the PIP. The following steps will guide you through regulating plants and plant products for most common requirements

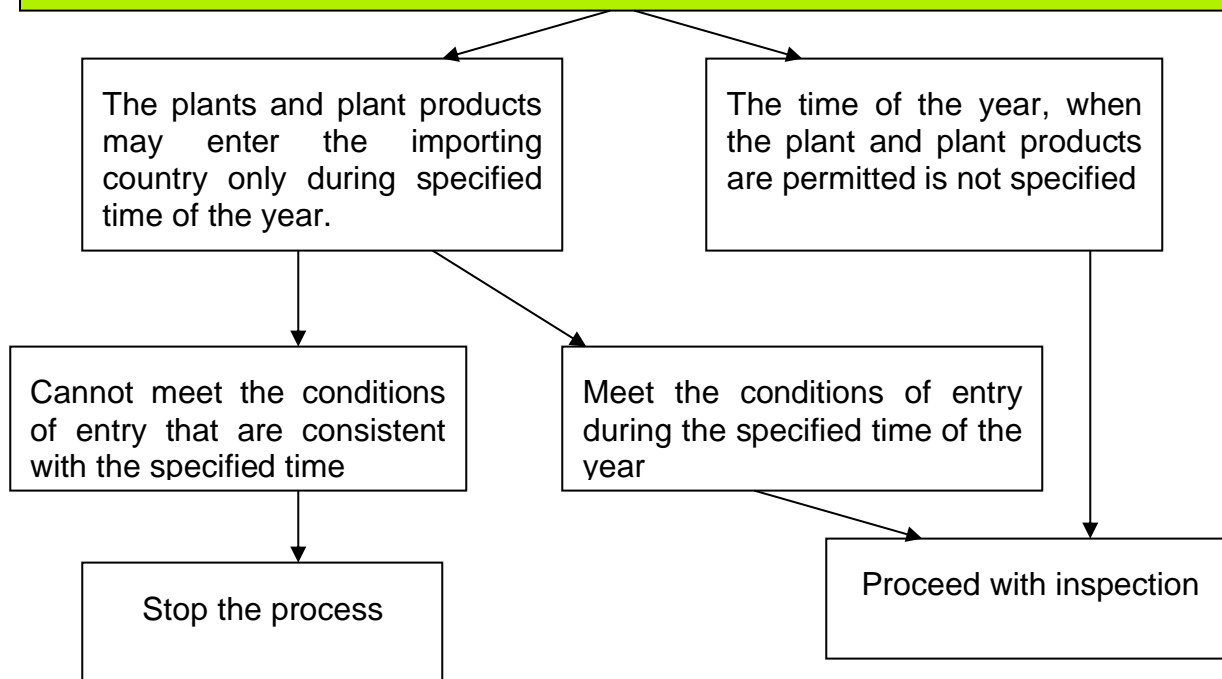
8.1.1. Regulating plant and plant product prohibited from specific areas that are infested with a specific pest



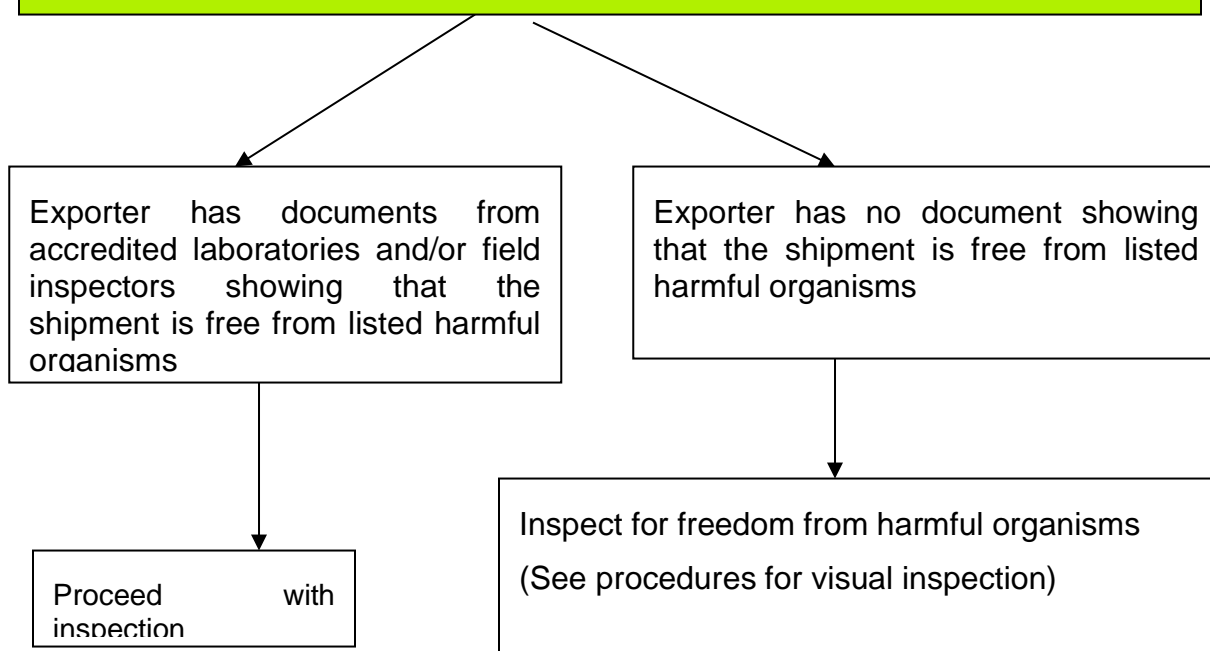
8.1.2 Regulating plants and plant products requiring an inspection during the growing season and packing



8.1.3. Regulating plants or plant products for which the time of the year to enter the importing country is specified

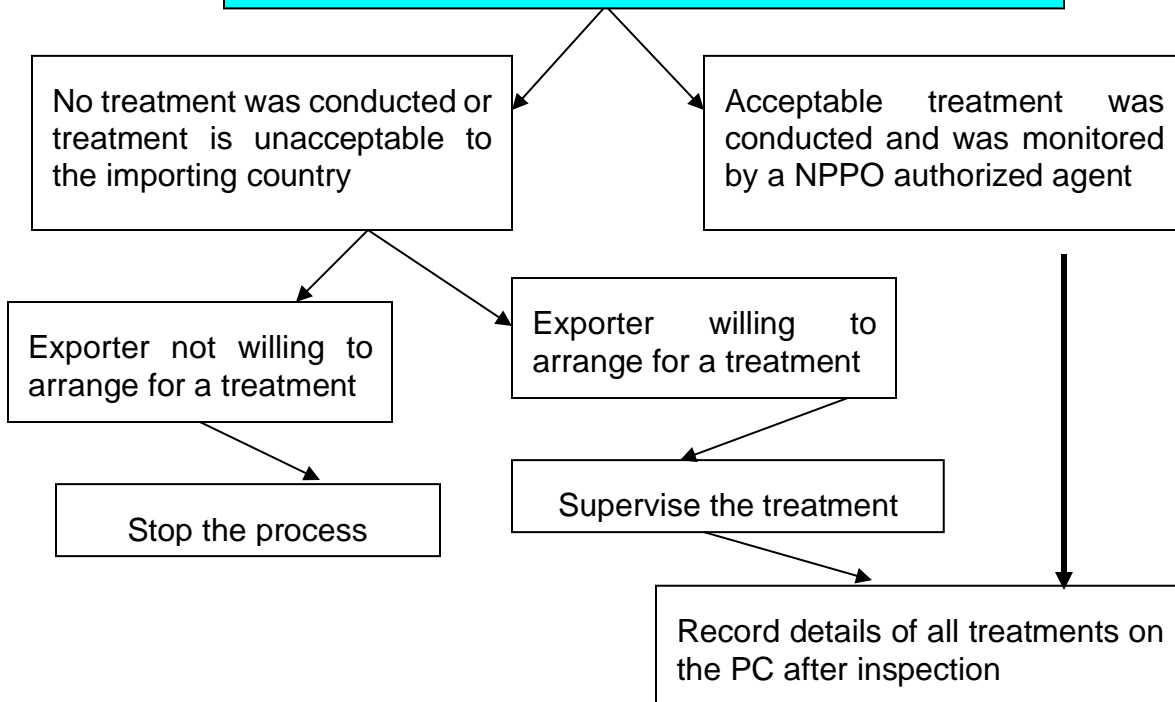


8.1.4 Regulating plants and plants products that need to conform to freedom from listed harmful organisms

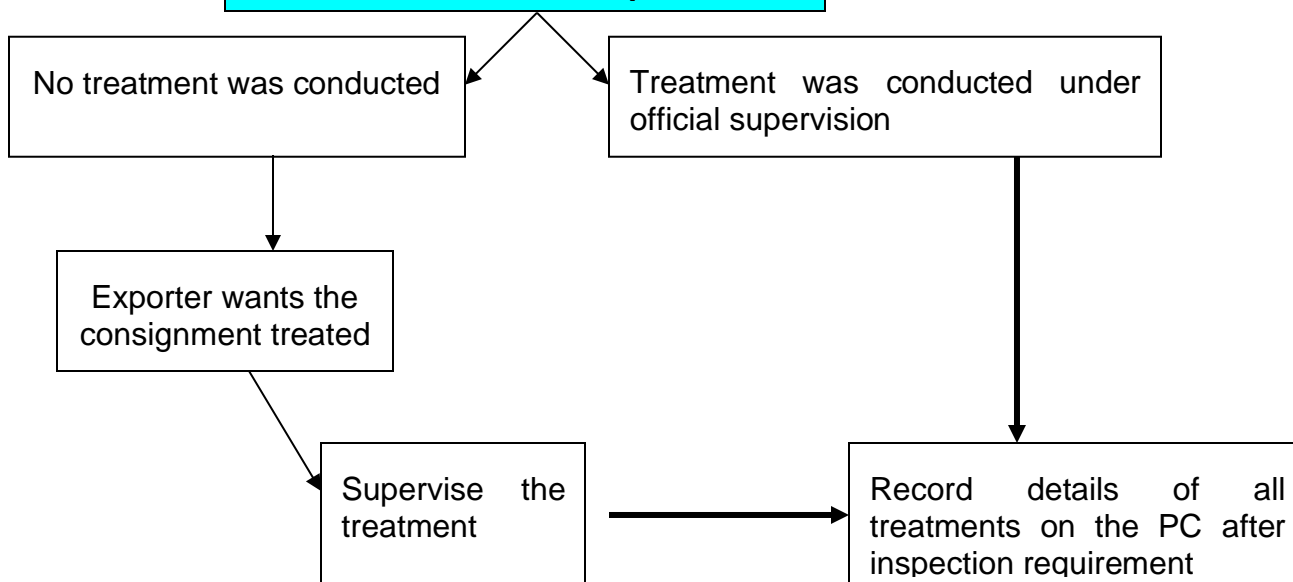


8.1.5 Regulating plants and plants products requiring a treatment

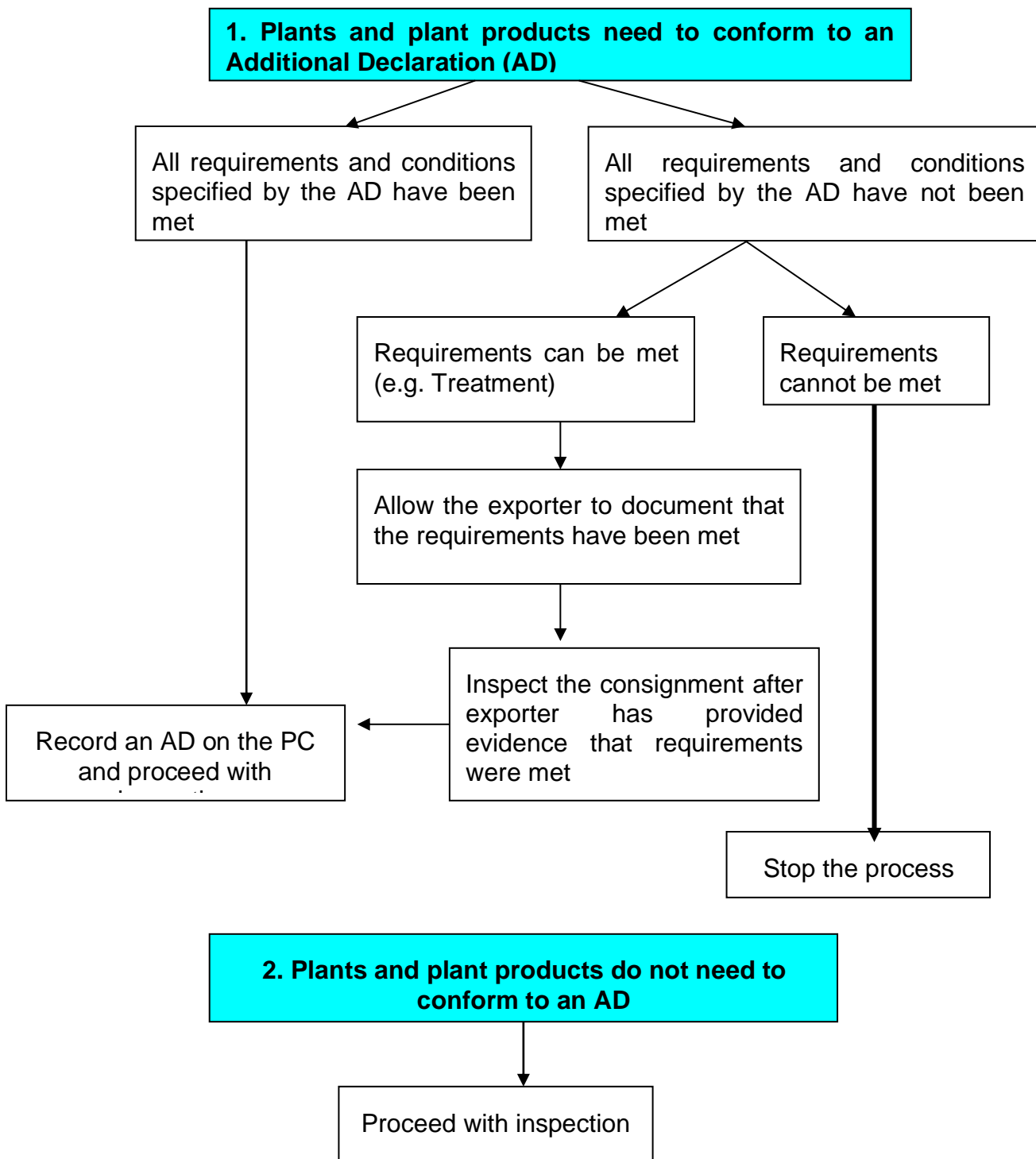
1. Treatment required



2. No Treatment required



8.1.6 Regulating plants and plants products requiring an additional declaration



8.2 Guidelines for physical inspection

Physical inspection and verification of plants, plant products and other regulated articles help determine whether the shipment meets the requirements of the importing country.

Arrangements for inspections are to be coordinated with the exporter or his/her agent in order to determine the location of consignment of the plants, plant products or other regulated articles, their loading time and hence, their availability for inspection.

8.2.1 Exporting date

Tentative exporting date need to be available so that the inspector can plan for physical inspection and laboratory analyses. For most countries, the maximum time limit between inspection and exporting dates is 14 days. When not known, the time limit is 30 days depending on the nature of the commodity. Exporting date may be interpreted as the day when the commodity physically leaves the country.

Table 1: Time limit between inspection date or PC issuance date and exporting

Country	Maximum time limit
Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, Vatican City State, Bangladesh, Canada, Hong Kong, Israel (vegetative propagative material), Morocco, New Zealand, Norway, or South Africa	14 calendar days
Australia	21 calendar days
Colombia	10 calendar days
Serbia and Montenegro	calendar days
Turkey	20 calendar days

8.2.2 Preparation for phytosanitary inspection

The Plant Health Inspector prepares for inspection by:

- Changing into appropriate personal protective gear;
- Checking the completeness of the inspection kit;
- Going through previous inspection records for that particular exporter;
- Reviewing technical information on regulated pests and other import requirements.

8.2.3 Consignment documentary check

- i. Check documents accompanying the consignment (invoices, PIP, packing lists, field inspection reports, packing records when presented) to ensure that they are:
 - Complete;
 - Accurate;
 - Valid and genuine.
- ii. Plants for planting must be accompanied by a valid field inspection report.
- iii. If documents do not meet any of the above, inform the exporter to verify and/ or rectify before proceeding with inspection.
- iv. Where documents are no valid and genuine, stop the inspection process.

Inspections should **not** begin until the plants, plant products or other regulated articles in a consignment are all together, clearly marked, and labelled.

8.2.4 Inspection process at the site

Step 1: Compare shipment to the documents provided by exporter

This is achieved by comparing the quantity of plants and plant products, type of plants and plant products, distinguishing marks and numbers.

a. If the plants or plant products are the same as listed on supporting documents, then proceed with inspection.

b. If the plants or plant products are different from the documents provided and the exporter corrects the discrepancies, then proceed with inspection. If the exporter does not correct the discrepancies, then refuse to issue a PC.

Step 2: Determine the sample size to inspect

Representative samples from a consignment of plants or plant products must be drawn by an inspector or other designated personnel. Officially drawn samples must be large enough to represent and accurately reflect the conditions of the entire consignment.

The minimum inspection level for fruits and vegetables is a percent of the consignment as approved by the NPPO. Within the sample of the consignment, the inspection level for plant should be 100 percent or as close to 100 percent as possible.

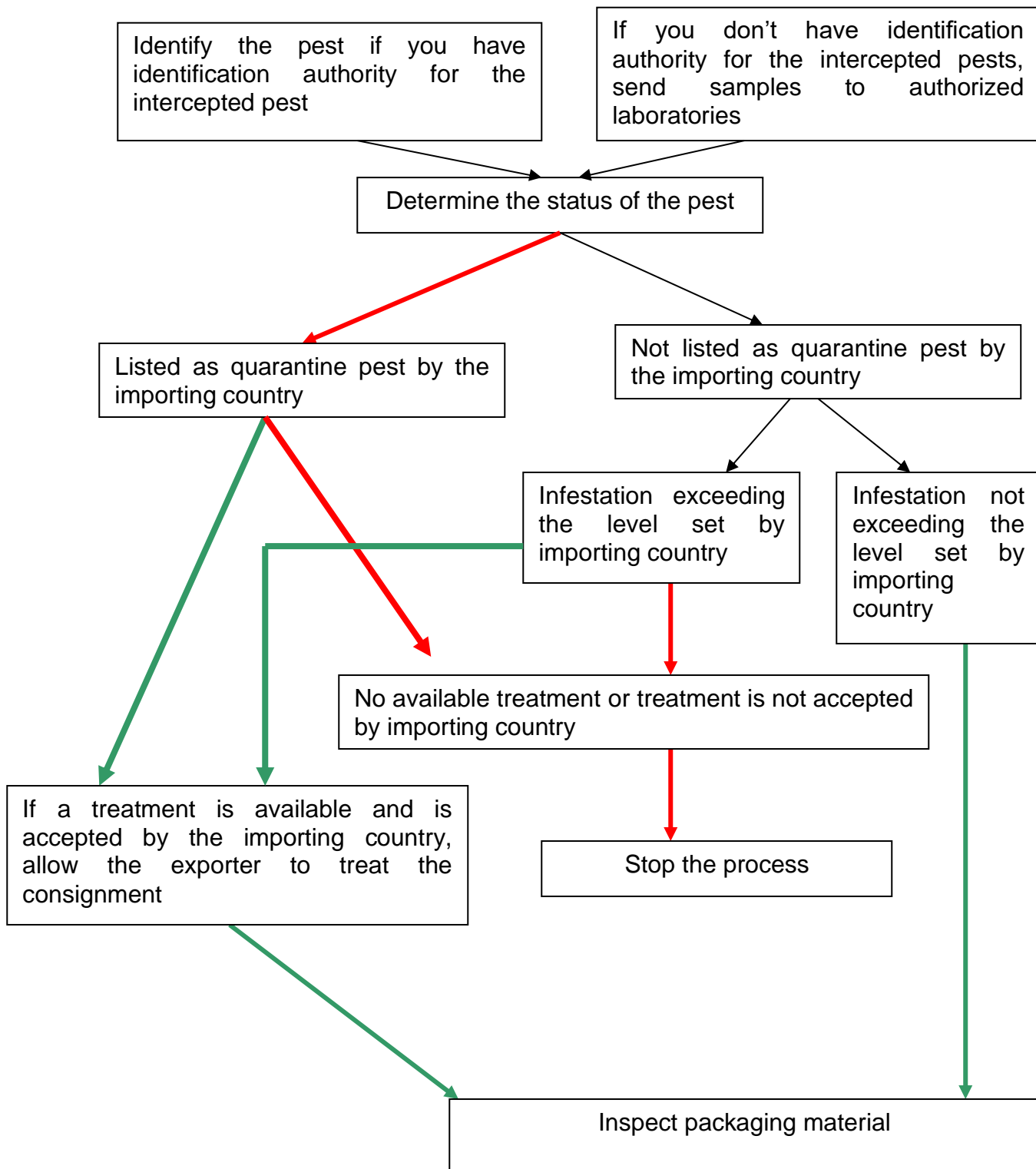
Commodities exported in bulk, such as grains will require appropriate sampling techniques to a level determined by the NPPO based on ISPM 31.

Step 3: Inspect the consignment for regulated pests

Inspect the plants or plant products for general pests, for pests usually associated with that host, and for pests specifically listed in the NPPO database or on the PIP.

If the consignment is free from regulated pests, inspect the packaging material and proceed with verification of phytosanitary import requirements. If the consignment is infested, inform the exporter of possible delays due to identification and analyses and go to **step 4**.

Step 4: Take regulatory action for infested consignment



Step 5: Record Inspection Results

The inspector must record all results of the inspection and any necessary information about the consignment to support decisions to certify the plants or plant products. Inspection results must be recorded on the form for general inspection report (**Appendix 2**).

Step 6: Prepare a phytosanitary certificate

After recording the inspection results and deciding to issue a PC, then proceed to preparing the PC (See how to fill a PC).

8.3 Issuing phytosanitary certificate for export

Phytosanitary Certificates and Phytosanitary Certificates for re-export shall include only and exclusively information related to phytosanitary matters. One PC should be filled for each consignment inspected.

The Phytosanitary Certificate

The PC should be in original print or e-Phyto, with a serial number given by the National Plant Protection Organisation of the exporting country. If the original is not available, copies need to be stamped and signed by the National Plant Protection Organisation in the exporting country;

There should be no errata on the PC or if there are any changes or corrected errors, they should be signed and dated by the authorized inspector;

All the information on the PC should be the same as these on the accompanying documents (import permit, trading documents...)

The treatments and additional declarations should be compliant with the import requirements;

The time period between the date when the certificate was issued and shipment of consignment should not exceed the number of days required by the importing country (**Table 1**)

8.3.1 Filling a Phytosanitary Certificate

Inspectors should never authenticate a PC issued by another office. In addition, Inspectors must never authenticate an AD on a PC that refers to food additives, aflatoxins or other mycotoxins, freedom from animal diseases and statements about animal health concerns, grade and/or quality, varietal characteristics or other unofficial requests from buyers and sellers, levels of radioactivity, nuclear radiation, pesticide or other chemical residues, or any other requested statement that is not of a phytosanitary nature, such as economic permits, quantity or quality restrictions, or methods of packaging.

Corrections and errors are not allowed in the following critical blocks:

Name of produce and quantity and weight declared;

Botanical name of plants;

Number and description of packages;

Distinguishing marks;

Additional declaration.

8.3.2 Accountability

Only officials authorized by NPPO can change or correct information on plant export certificates. Unauthorized changes are in violation of the law and may be prosecuted under Mauritian **Plant Protection Act** and other applicable laws.

Violations or those that have the appearance of an attempt to deceive or commit fraud should be automatically referred to the Headquarters of the NPPO for further action and to determine if the fraud should be **forwarded to Law enforcement agencies**.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Application Form for Inspection



REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS

MINISTRY OF AGRO INDUSTRY AND FOOD SECURITY

To: Principal Research & Development Officer
National Plant Protection Office, **Réduit**

Tel./Fax: **+230 464-4874**

E-mail: moa-pathology@mail.gov.mu

Application for inspection and certification of plants and plant products

1. Name and address of exporter		2. Destination/Country	
3. Place where consignment will be made available for inspection		4. Export date	
		5. Export Inspection date	
6. Description of consignment to be certified			
A. Identity of the commodity			
6.1. Botanical name			
6.2. Common name			
6.3. End use (ex. grains vs seeds)			
6.4. Quantity (Kg, number)			
6.4. Number of packages			
6.5. Location where the plants were grown			
6.6. Degree of processing			
7. Plant Import permit		8. Means of conveyance	9. Port of entry (if transit)
B. Packaging material			
C. Others:			
10. Signature		11. Date	

Appendix 2: Phytosanitary inspection report



REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS

MINISTRY OF AGRO INDUSTRY AND FOOD SECURITY

Report on phytosanitary inspection for certification

1. Form N°		2. Date	3. Location
4. Name and address of exporter			
5. Description of the commodity	5.1. Name		
	5.2. Source of the shipment (Country of Origin / within Mauritius)		
	5.3. Quantity (Kg, number)		
	5.4. Number of packages		
	5.5; End use (Seeds..)		
	5.6. Degree of processing		
6. Description of the phytosanitary status of the commodity	Insects found		% infested
	Pathogens found?		% infected
	Weed seeds found?		% contamination
7. Laboratory analysis	7.1. Samples collected		
	7.2. Type of analysis conducted		
	7.3 Date the results were received		
	7.4. Name of analyst		

8. Decision made	Certification	Deny of export	Destruction	Treatment	Other
9. Other comments / Recommendations					
10. Name of inspector		11. Name of exporter			
Signature		Signature			