

**EUROPEAN AND MEDITERRANEAN PLANT PROTECTION ORGANIZATION**  
**ORGANISATION EUROPEENNE ET MEDITERRANEENNE**  
**POUR LA PROTECTION DES PLANTES**

**EPPO Study on the risk of imports of plants for planting**

In September 2009, the EPPO Council Colloquium considered whether the plant health systems that are in place in the EPPO region are able to deal with challenges of increasing trade and climate change. The outcome of the Colloquium was further discussed during the Working Party on Phytosanitary Regulations in 2010. There it was commented that new trade is an especially important challenge for plant health systems. In particular, it was concluded that past experiences with new trade (new origins, new commodities) of plants for planting and the associated risks require a thorough analysis. Pathway-analysis to address the risk of new commodities imported into EPPO countries may be required to manage the new risks properly and to take preventive action instead of reacting to incidents and outbreaks. The EPPO Council was in favour of allocating funds for such a study. This study should then focus on plants for planting and should identify trends relevant for the future. It will inform discussions on possible changes in the phytosanitary import policy in the EPPO region. This also coincides with suggestions made in the evaluation of the EU plant health regime and possible changes in this regime.

The EPPO Secretariat convened a small EWG on 14 and 15 December 2010, to focus the subject of the study and to formulate the terms of reference for it. It was realized that changes in the import policy in the EPPO region may be necessary to properly address risks from new trades. In the current plant health regimes in most EPPO countries new trades can develop without restrictions and are not properly assessed for the risk they pose to the EPPO region. Pathway-analyses are however not possible for all potential new trades and for all existing trades. Therefore, the study should give guidance in how a pre-screening process could be established to address risks of new trades adequately.

The EWG formulated the following objectives and tasks for the study:

**Objectives**

Provide a supporting document for EPPO member countries which currently operate an « open<sup>1</sup> » phytosanitary policy for all commodities, specifically to address new high risks caused by the importation of plants for planting (other than true seeds)<sup>2</sup>.

An expected output of the study is guidance for a pre-screening process to enable identification of commodities that require an assessment prior to import. This process should also be applied on a case study.

The study will focus on plants for planting and should:

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<sup>1</sup> « open » means that a commodity that is not specifically regulated can be imported.

<sup>2</sup> « Plants for planting » are plants intended to remain planted, to be planted or replanted.

1. Analyse examples of outbreaks to highlight the limitations of the current “open” system (i.e. PRA cannot predict unknown and/or undocumented risks). A list of possible examples is provided in Appendix 1. Consider examples where experience of import under the current regime has not resulted in phytosanitary problems. Consider how changes in trade or patterns of trade can influence occurrence of outbreaks. Investigate data that is readily available on trade of plants for planting to gain an overview of current trade.
2. Identify criteria linked to the (potential) risks, e.g. those that seem to be consistently associated with outbreaks related to imports of plant for planting
3. Develop a pre-screening process to be used by NPPOs to categorize plants for planting /origin risks (e.g. for new trade or a reevaluation of the current system), taking into account all criteria identified.
4. Testing the pre-screening process:
  - Test the pre-screening process for a specific origin (e.g. one Asian country) to produce a list of commodities differentiating them according to their risk.
  - Test the pre-screening process for a specific genus of plants for planting (e.g. *Acer* spp.) for multiple origins.
5. Give, based on the preliminary investigation on trade in point 1, consideration to the need and feasibility of undertaking a much more detailed analysis of import data.
6. Produce a list of commodities/origins differentiating them according to their risk.

It is expected that outcomes of points 1, 2, 3 will be available for the Working Party on Phytosanitary Regulations in June 2011. A presentation of the first results of the study will be made at the Panel on Phytosanitary Measures (2011-04-05/08).

## Appendix 1

Examples of possible outbreaks to be analysed and possible examples where experience of import under the current regime has not resulted in phytosanitary problems.

- Pest outbreaks to be analysed
  - *Paysandisia archon*
  - *Rhynchophorus ferrugineus*
  - *Anoplophora chinensis*
  - *Phytophthora ramorum*
  - *Dryocosmus kuriphulus*
  - *Aculops fuchsiae*
  - *Fusarium foetens*
  - *Pseudomonas syringae* pv. *actinidiae*
  - *Eichhornia crassipes*,
  - *Hydrocotyle ranunculoides*
  - *Diaphania perspectalis*
  
- Possible examples where experience of import under the current regime has not resulted in phytosanitary problems (EPPO Panels will be consulted, one relevant example already identified is Chrysanthemum cuttings).
  
- Identifications of pests on imported consignments such as nematodes in growing media attached to bonsais.