From Networks to Action:

How FAO Regional Forest Invasive Species Networks Contribute to the Detection, Monitoring and Control of *Agrilus Species*

EPPO–REUFIS–BFW Conference

"Safeguarding Forests in Europe: Emerging Risks of Agrilus Wood Borers (Buprestidae)"

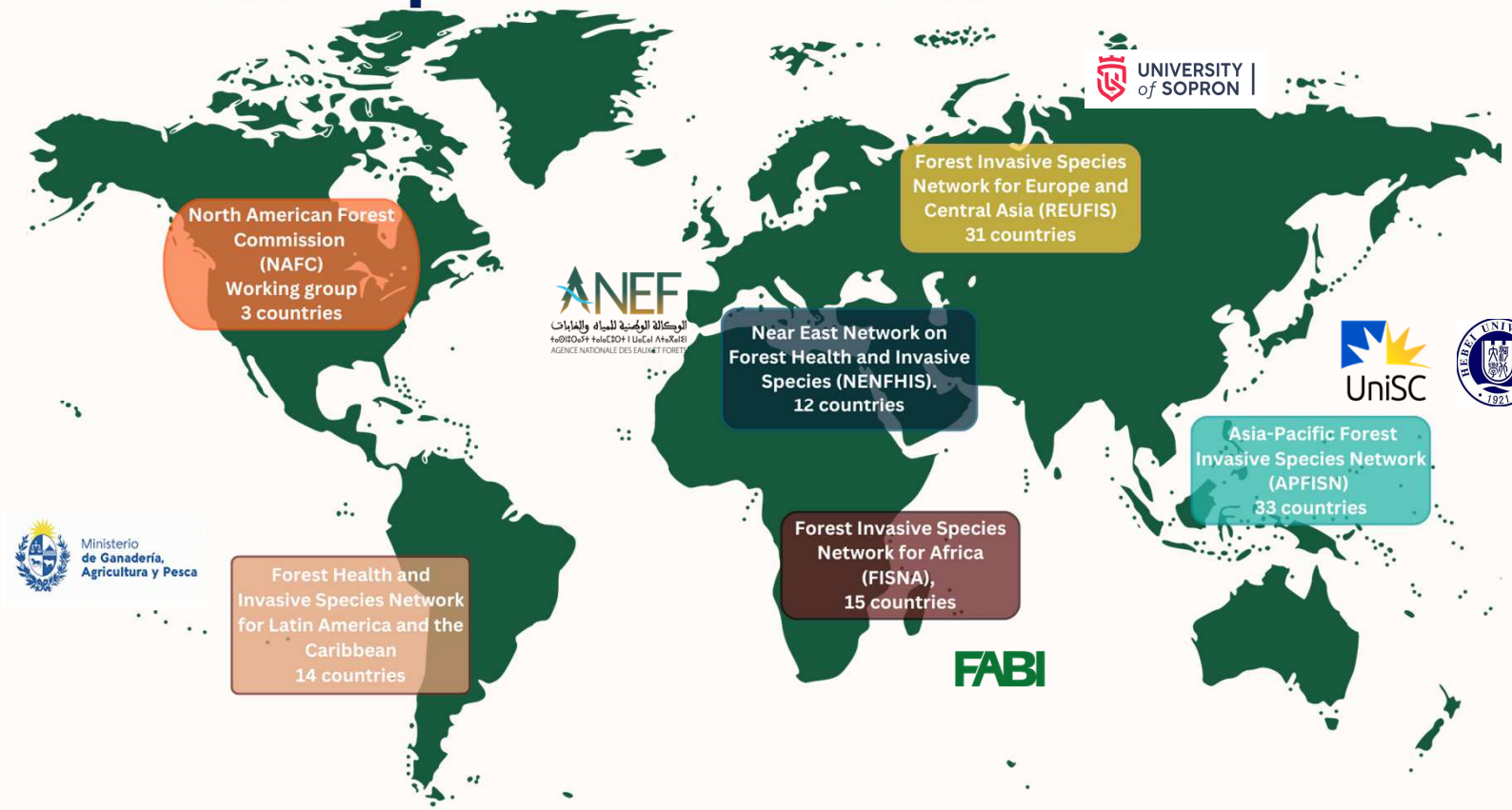
21–23 April, Vienna

Ferenc Lakatos, University of Sopron, REUFIS

Norbert Winkler-Ráthonyi, FAO REU Budapest

Shiroma Sathyapala, FAO HQ, Rome

FAO's Regional forest health and invasive species networks



- Facilitate the exchange of knowledge & information on forest health and invasive species;
- Mobilize resources (*specialists, diagnostics, surveillance*);
- Raise regional awareness (*D-Group, newsletters, etc.*);
- Deliver capacity building on forest health as well as forest pests and diseases management.

6 regiones and over 100 countries

REUFIS

Forest Invasive Species Network for Europe and Central Asia

Mission

Highlight the importance of using existing tools and structures and to exchange and share knowledge and information related to forest invasive species.

Objectives

Enable sharing of information and experiences, coordinate activities on forest invasive species.

Collaborate and cooperate with existing international and regional organizations, such as the FAO International Plant Convention (IPPC), the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization (EPPO).

Advocate compliance with phytosanitary regulations and provide policy advice on movement of forest invasive species.

Key themes

Forest health challenges in REU region

Major forest invasive species (FIS):

- Plants (e.g. tree of heaven)
- Pathogens & other microorganisms (e.g. chestnut blight)
- Invertebrates (e.g. emerald ash borer)
- Vertebrates (e.g. golden jackal)

Annual meetings and regular trainings

Minsk (BY), 2016: Preparatory meeting

Budapest (HU), 2017: Training on bark and ambrosia beetle identification

Zdanovicy (BY), 2018: Training on forest pathogens in Europe

Bursa (TR), 2019: Invasive pest and pathogens on nut trees

Webinar, 2020: Protecting oak trees for future generations in Europe and Central Asia

Webinar, 2021: Contingency plans and early warning systems – how can they help protect forest

Sopron (HU), 2022: Monitoring of native and introduced saproxylic insects for effective prevention and management

Sopron (HU), 2023: Digital solution for better forest health monitoring in Europe and Central Asia

Skopje (NM), 2024: The role of invasive species in urban forest planning

Ljubljana (SI), 2025: Combating invasive plants in forests and cities in the REU region

Why *Agrilus* demands regional action

Agrilus wood borers threaten both forests and urban forests and trees. The response challenge is not only biological - it is operational: detection must happen early, monitoring must be reliable, and decisions must be coordinated across jurisdictions.

100+ countries

FAO regional forest invasive species networks

5 regions

surveillance, learning and joint action

1

Early detection

Reduce the lag between first presence and first report.

2

Effective monitoring

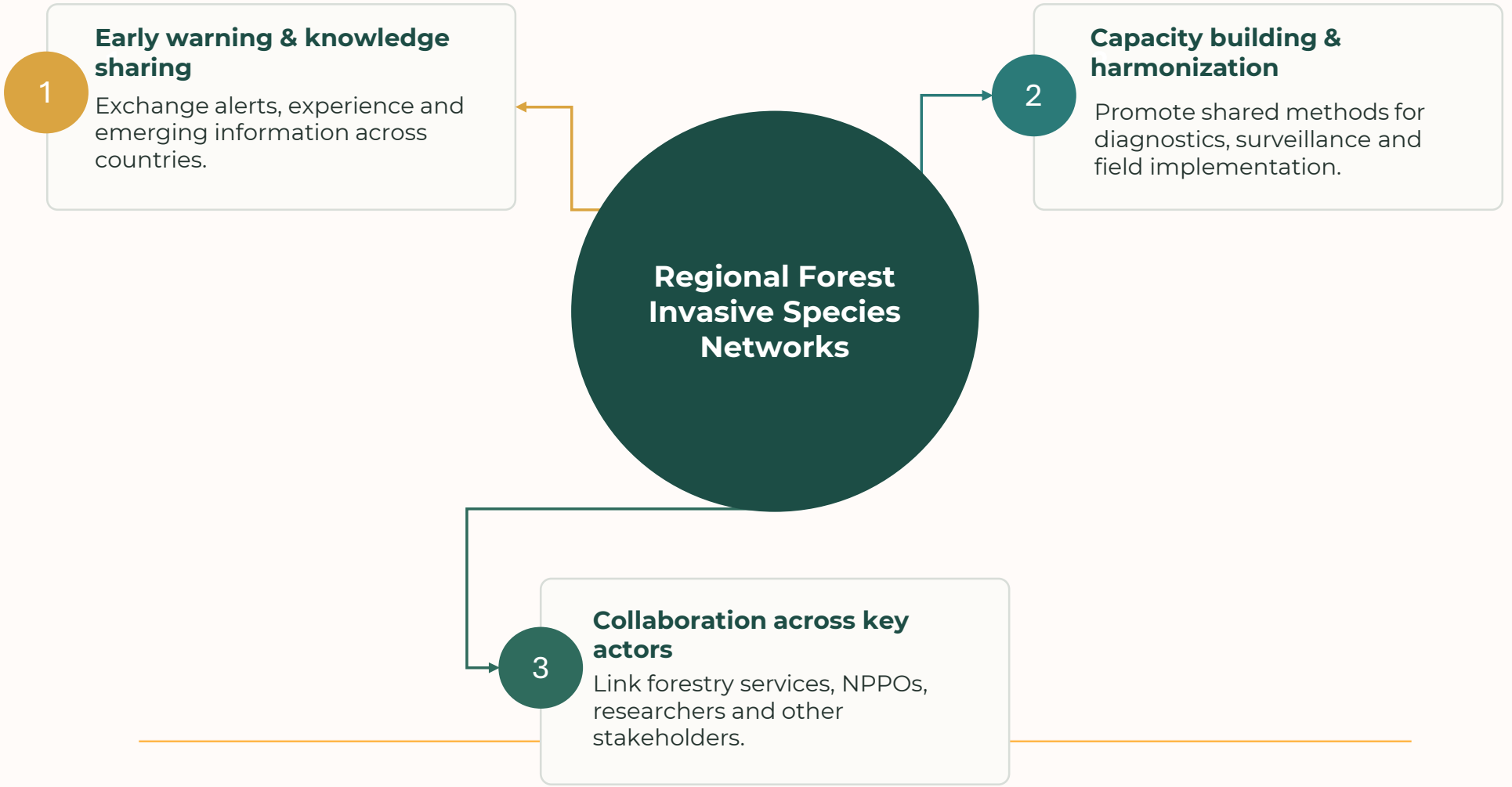
Standardize methods so signals are comparable and credible.

3

Cross-border coordination

Align forestry, plant protection and research actors.

How FAO networks contribute



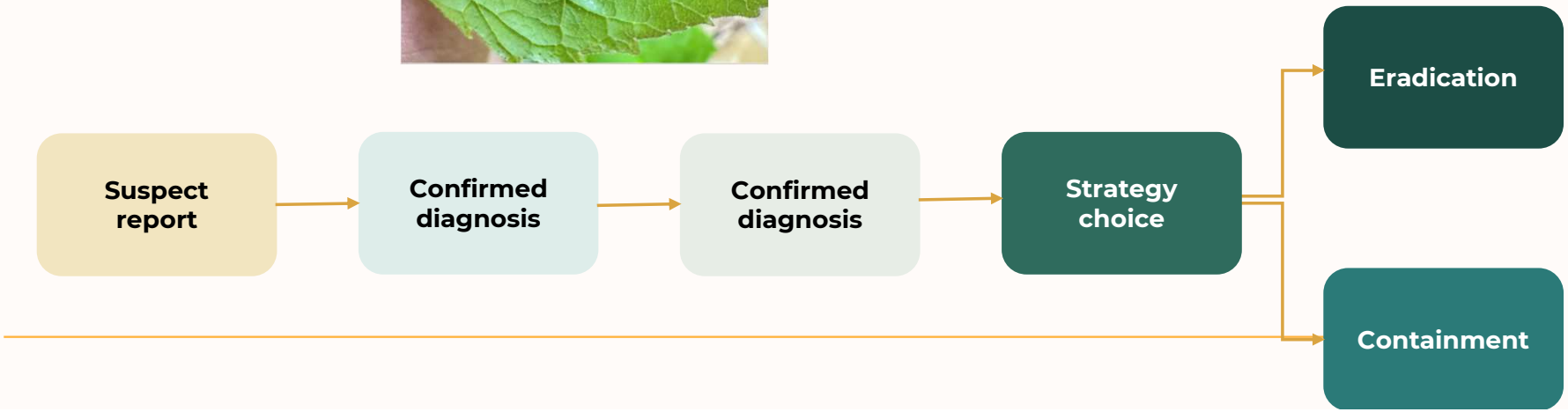
Contingency planning

Preparedness elements

- Activation triggers.
- Command and communication structures.
- Diagnostics.
- Deilimiting surveys.
- Stakeholder engagement.
- Resource allocation.

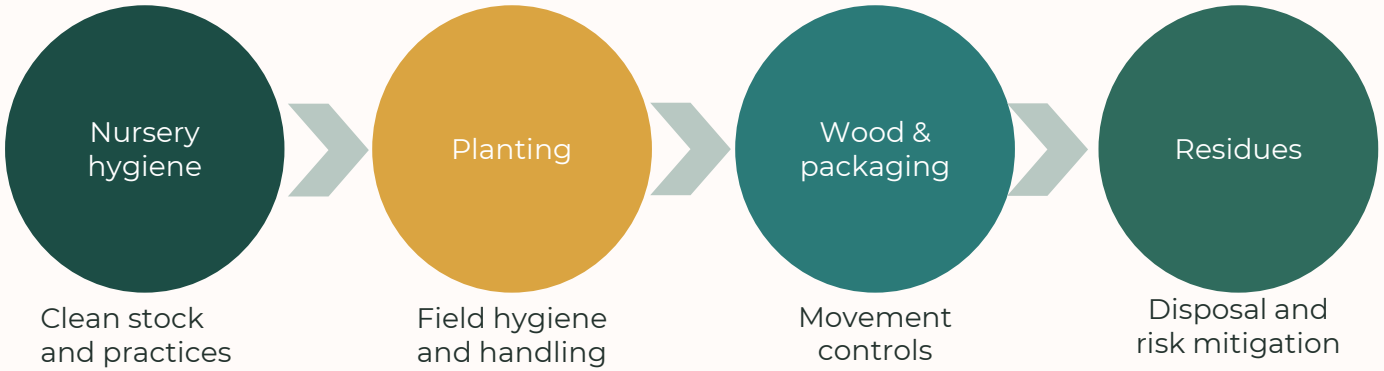
Operational value

The guidelines make the response sequence explicit: who acts, when escalation occurs, how diagnosis is confirmed and how a strategy choice is reached.

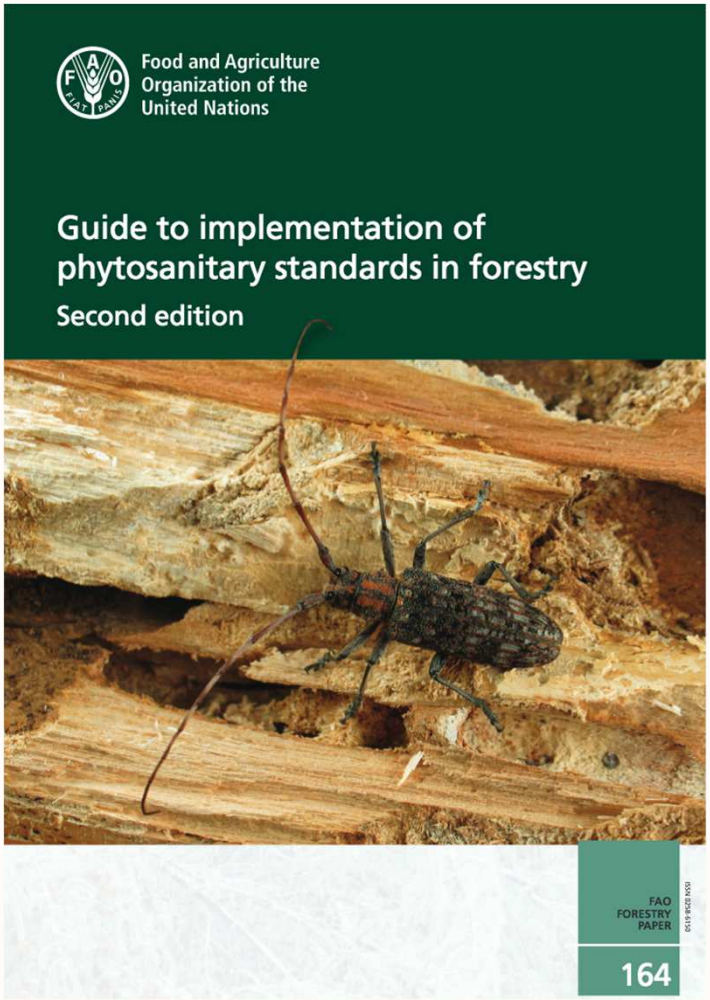


Phytosanitary standards

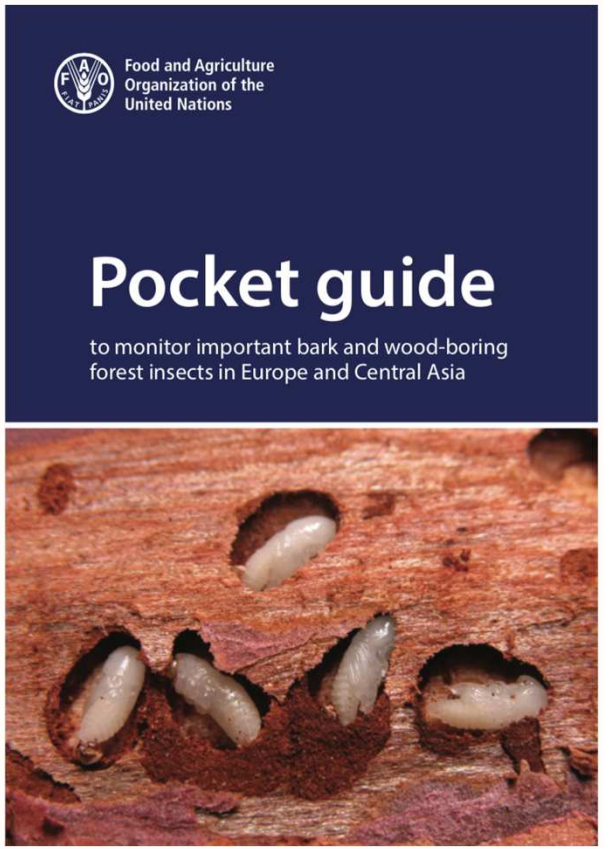
The guide emphasizes practical risk reduction: systems approaches, hygiene in nurseries and planting operations, and measures for wood, wood packaging and tree residues.



Effect for Agrilus: lower probability that pathways in forestry operations move infested material and amplify spread.



Pocket guide for monitoring



What the guide provides

Practical monitoring protocols for important bark and wood boring forest insects, with field-ready methods that inspectors and practitioners can use consistently.

Users
Forest managers | Inspectors | Trained volunteers

Observe → **Monitor** → **Compare** → **Escalate**

Look for field signs and suspect trees

Apply standard protocols and records

Use harmonized methods across teams

Feed reliable detections into response

Why it matters for Agrilus: early detection is only useful when field observations are consistent enough to trigger confident action.

Other supporting products

From network to field to decision

Reduced time-to-detection

Networks improve warning, methods and field readiness.

Reduced time-to-action

Contingency logic and phytosanitary measures clarify the response.

Key takeaways

- ***Agrilus* management needs regional coordination and technical capacities.**
- FAO supports member countries by coordinating technical support and collaboration among forestry, plant protection and research actors, as well as producing knowledge products.
- Three practical tools: Phytosanitary standards, Contingency planning, and Standardized monitoring - create a scalable pathway from:

Preparedness → **Action**

Thank you!