



HARMONIZING QUARANTINE PEST LISTS FOR A ASEAN PEST DATABASE

Locations Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Vietnam

Dates 01/01/2023 - Ongoing

Summary

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member states face challenges in managing quarantine pest-related information due to fragmented data systems, inconsistent assessment methods and limited coordination among National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs). These gaps hinder timely responses to emerging pest threats and complicate regional efforts in evidence-based pest management. The Task Force on ASEAN Pest Database (TF-APD) has been established to create a regional platform for quarantine pest information. Through collaboration with ASEAN member states and the ASEAN Secretariat, TF-APD works to improve data sharing, strengthen pest risk analysis processes, and support more consistent and evidence-based approaches to pest management across the region. CABI serves as the Technical Secretariat for TF-APD facilitating coordination among national contact points, supporting harmonized pest risk analysis (PRA) approaches and promoting regional knowledge exchange on plant biosecurity.

The problem

The ASEAN region faces significant challenges in responding to pest risks due to inconsistent and fragmented quarantine pest data. NPPOs in ASEAN member states often use different data formats, assessment methods and reporting standards. This makes it difficult to share, compare and act on quarantine pest information at a regional level.

This fragmentation also affects the implementation of Pest Risk Analysis (PRA), a critical tool for identifying and prioritizing quarantine pests. Without harmonized PRA guidelines and standardized databases, countries may respond inconsistently to pest threats, increasing the risk of crop losses, trade disruptions and biodiversity impacts.

Limited coordination among NPPOs further hinders collaborative pest management strategies. While each country collects and maintains valuable quarantine pest data, the lack of a central regional platform reduces opportunities for knowledge exchange and early-warning responses to emerging threats.

The TF-APD was established to address these challenges by harmonizing quarantine pest information, promoting regionally apt pest risk analysis and improving cooperation among ASEAN member states. This initiative provides a structured framework for data sharing, ensures consistency in risk scoring and strengthens the ability of ASEAN member states to prevent and respond to pest outbreaks effectively.

What we are doing

The TF-APD is a regional initiative aimed at harmonizing quarantine pest information and strengthening pest risk analysis across ASEAN member states. CABI, through the PlantwisePlus Programme, serves as the Technical Secretariat.

As part of this role, CABI supports coordination among ASEAN national contact points and relevant regional institutions, facilitates technical discussions and promotes knowledge exchange on pest risk analysis and pest information management.

Key activities include:

- Monitoring and coordinating cooperative activities across ASEAN member states
- Facilitating communication among national contact points to ensure alignment on quarantine pest list harmonization and risk analysis guidelines
- Producing reports for the ASEAN Expert Working Group on the Harmonization of Phytosanitary Measures (EWG-PS)
- Harmonizing the ASEAN Pest List to standardize quarantine pest classifications and key definitions
- Reviewing PRA templates and guidelines and conducting risk analyses for prioritized pests

These activities enable ASEAN member states to respond collectively to pest threats, improve data-driven decision-making, and strengthen regional biosecurity frameworks. The TF-APD has created a sustainable mechanism for ongoing collaboration, helping member states adopt consistent, evidence-based pest management practices.

Results so far

TF-APD has made significant progress in strengthening regional coordination on pest management. One of the key achievements has been the harmonization of the ASEAN Pest List, which provides a standardized regional reference for quarantine pests across member states.

The task force has also supported the review and improvement of PRA templates and guidelines, helping ensure more consistent and transparent risk assessment processes across the region. In addition, coordination among ASEAN NPPOs has improved, enabling more effective communication, data sharing, and joint decision making on pest risks.

Through its role as Technical Secretariat, CABI has contributed to these outcomes by facilitating coordination among national contact points, supporting technical discussions on pest risk analysis, and assisting in the preparation of reports and recommendations for regional working groups.

These efforts have strengthened the foundation for regional collaboration on plant biosecurity. By enabling more consistent and evidence-based approaches to pest management, TF-APD helps ASEAN member states improve agricultural biosecurity, facilitate safe agricultural trade, and respond more effectively to transboundary pest threats

Looking ahead, TF-APD will continue working towards establishing a regional ASEAN pest database and supporting the implementation of harmonized pest risk analysis approaches. CABI will continue to support the task force by coordinating technical discussions, facilitating knowledge exchange among member states, and supporting capacity development to strengthen regional biosecurity and pest information systems.

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