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# IFQRG Position Statement on Bark and ISPM No. 15

The International Forestry Quarantine Research Group (IFQRG) reviewed scientific and inspection data regarding pests and their relationship with bark on ISPM No. 15 treated wood. The following is a summary of the conclusions developed by IFQRG at the 3rd annual meeting in Rome, IT. Additional supporting information to the question below is being developed by IFQRG and will be posted on IFQRG website as soon as it is available.

## What is the evidence that the removal of bark increases the phytosanitary security of ISPM-15 marked wood packaging?

Experiments conducted in 2004 and 2005 were designed to ensure that the treated wood used in the experiments would be exposed to pest attack. Material used in the research was freshly cut, green wood. These experiments clearly demonstrate that wood with individual pieces of bark as little as 25 $cm^2$ and treated under ISPM-15 requirements could be infested by pests that are of phytosanitary concern. Many of these same pests were not found to infest wood that had all bark removed.

Information collected by Australia indicated that 0.5% of ISPM-15 marked material inspected at the point of entry was infested by organisms of phytosanitary concern. This analysis suggested that material with 10 $cm^2$ or more bark had a higher level of infestation than material with small or no amounts of bark. The European Union and Canada have also reported similar levels of interceptions to Australia on marked wood. Due to uncertainty in this information of whether or not infestation occurred post treatment, a causal relationship cannot be determined between the presence of bark and infestation of ISPM-15 compliant material.

Additional research and inspection data, using harmonised approaches, would enable estimation of the likelihood of ISPM-15 marked material in use being infested by pests of phytosanitary concern. For example, additional research or inspections could investigate: the significance of presence and size of bark; the significance of moisture content; the effect of different categories of wood packaging with bark; the influence of heat treatment on the attractiveness of wood with bark; etc. on the likelihood of pest infestation.