

REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY
AND WATER ECONOMY
PHYTOSANITARY DIRECTORATE

**STRATEGY
FOR
PHYTOSANITARY POLICY
FOR THE PERIOD 2015 – 2020**

- DRAFT VERSION -

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(FAO – IPPC and EPPO)

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II. ABBREVIATIONS

EU – European Union

WTO – World trade organization

MAFWE – Ministry for agriculture, forestry and water economy

PD – Phytosanitary Directorate

GDP – Gross domestic product

III. INTRODUCTION

The growth and the development of the agriculture crops and other plants present in nature are permanently endangered by harmful organisms (diseases, insects and weed) which use them as food, cause plant diseases or are transmitters of diseases.

Harmful organisms that attack plants usually do not represent direct threat for human and animal health. However, if present in large quantities they could have an impact on the yield reduction or decrease of quality of plant products, which can cause extensive economic damage, or in extreme cases may lead to extinction of some plant species.

Therefore, in order to prevent occurrence of diseases on plants and decrease of the plant products yield and in order to provide sufficient food of plant origin, it is necessary to carry out plant protection from harmful organisms.

In order to increase the yield of agriculture plants and to allow full expression of the genetic potential of the plant, it is necessary to provide appropriate agrotechnical measures; to this purpose the first priority is to apply appropriate fertilization and proper use of fertilizers, biostimulators and soil conditioners.

To have a regular and tailored agriculture development it is necessary to provide not only biosecurity of plants and plant species, but also proper care for the biodiversity of the plant agriculture varieties, which is very important also for the protection of the autochthonous varieties of agriculture plants. The fast development of science helped increase the number of varieties which are placed on the market by big selection companies. Therefore, it is necessary to increase control on the usage of new technologies both in agriculture plant production and production of plant protection products, fertilizers, biostimulators and soil conditioners.

Pursuing sustainable development in agriculture is the only way to guarantee enough food quantities and environmental safeguard, by applying the following:

- Application of the necessary phytosanitary measures agreed at EU level, and some of them at global level (Agreement on the application of sanitary and phytosanitary measures) that have an impact on the equitable international food trade;
- the international phytosanitary measures should be based on scientific results and should not have negative impact on the international trade;
- if the measures that are undertaken to eradicate and destroy harmful organisms on plants are not applied properly, they can have negative impact on the environment;
- it is necessary to take care for the safeguard and improvement of the natural resources, for all present and future generation, as well as for the improvement of the natural rural ecosystem and heritage.

This document shall set the ground for further development of competent authorities in the phytosanitary area and shall define their role in the phytosanitary area in the following five years. In the upcoming period, within the frame of the phytosanitary legal regulation of the European Union, all the participants of the competent authorities in charge of plant protection shall focus on finding suitable solutions and answers for an efficient implementation of the phytosanitary policies, measures and standards in order to create preconditions for:

- providing enough healthy and high-quality food within their competencies, which could lead to increase of the standard of living of the population;
- increase of awareness of the agriculture producers and all the other agents that have an impact on plant health protection, in order to safeguard the environment and to improve the standard of living of rural population.

This strategy shall be adopted on the basis of article 9-a paragraph 2 of the Law on plant health ("Official gazette of the Republic of Macedonia") nr..29/05, 81/08, 20/09, 57/10, 17/11, 48/11, 69/13 and 43/14. The strategy comprises the following areas:

- plant health,
- plant protection products,
- fertilizers, biostimulators and soil conditioners,
- seed and seedling material of agriculture and forest plants.

The strategy lays down the following strategic directions:

1. Establishment of priority activities in line with the modernization of the phytosanitary system in the Republic of Macedonia;
2. Enhancement of human resources;

3. Technical support;
4. Status and role of the competent authorities in charge of phytosanitary policy after the accession of the Republic of Macedonia in the European Union.

IV ASSESSMENT OF THE CURRENT SITUATION

IV.1 Importance and general conditions in the Macedonian agriculture sector

The total surface of the Republic of Macedonia is 25.713 km². The territory has strong relief diversity, with mainly hills, mountains, river valleys and lowlands which present good conditions for agriculture. The heights and the mountains occupy around 79 % of the surface, while the remaining part is represented by plains (19 %) and natural lakes (2%).

Agriculture together with hunting, forestry and fishing is the third most important economic sector in the country by share in the GDP, which amounted to 10,6 % in the total GDP in 2010, immediately after the services sector and the industry.

Agriculture represents main source of incomes for the rural population, followed by forestry, crafts and rural tourism, services sector and trade. Officially, the agriculture sector creates income and employment for approximately 19,25%¹ of the economically active population in the country (around three times more than the EU-27). However, most probably the actual share of the produced incomes exceeds these percentage considering the fact that 45% of the total population, 36% of the active working force and 44 % of poverty-stricken people live in rural areas.

Source: * 1DZS (State Institute for Statistics) (2009-2010), 2NBRM (National Bank of Republic of Macedonia) (2010)

Having in mind the economic importance of the agriculture sector in the country, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia has included agriculture as one of its economic priorities with further implementation of complementary and extensive policies aiming to provide considerable financial and other type of support to the sector in order to strengthen its competitiveness and to improve the standard of living in the rural areas, as well as to increase the level of food and feed safety.

Agriculture land² in the Republic of Macedonia amounted to 1.121.000 ha in 2010 which is 43,5% of the total surface of the country, which is a first increase of the agriculture surface after the negative trend of surface reduction from 2003 up to now.

The surface which is classified as forest land is approximately 1, 16 milion of hectares (45% of the total land surface) out of which 960 thousands ha are under forests (37, 3 %). 90 % of the total forest surface is in state ownership. Forests bring many benefits to society, but have also forest products and services. However, this potential can be exploited only in case of good forest structure. The actual disintegration of private properties and the insufficient size of the cadastal parcels place limits to forest potential.

¹ Considering also hunting, forestry and fishing. According to DZS, in 2010 the economically active population in the Republic of Macedonia equals 938.294 people, out of which 68% are employed and 32% are unemployed.

V. INSTITUTIONAL FRAME AND LEGISLATION

V.1. Institutional frame

In accordance to the Law on organization and work of the state administration authorities (“Official Gazete of the Republic of Macedonia” nr. 58/2000; 44/2002; 82/2008; 167/2010 and 51/2011), the phytosanitary policy is created and implemented by the following state administration authorities:

- 1. Phytosanitary Directorate** – responsible for the creation of the phytosanitary policy and the legislation frame in the field of plant health, registration, marketing and placement on the market of plant protection products and fertilizers, biostimulators and soil conditioners;
- 2. Directorate for seed and seedling material** – responsible for control, registration, marketing and placement on the market of seeds and seedling material for agriculture plants,, as well as protection of the seed and seedling material selection rights for agriculture plants;
- 3. State phytosanitary laboratory** – responsible for carrying out analysis of samples and tests for the identification, diagnosis and determination of harmful organisms, for the identification of the active ingredients in the plant protection products, for the identification of the plant protection products residues and for the identification of the seed and seeding material quality of agriculture plants;
- 4. State agriculture inspectorate** – responsible for carrying out inspection controls in the field of phytosanitary policy through the state phytosanity inspector and state agriculture inspector;
- 5. Forestry and hunting sector** – responsible for proposing and establishing legal frame in the field of plant health for forest plants, registration, marketing and placement on the market of forest and ornamental plants.

V.2. Legislation

According to the National programme for approximation to the acquis communautaire – NPAA the Phytosanitary area is part of chapter 12 Food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary policies. Phytosanitary policy is regulated by the following laws:

1. Law on plant health
2. Law on plant protection products
3. Law on the Law on quality and safety of fertilizers, biostimulators and soil conditioners
4. Law on seed and seedling material for agriculture plants
5. Law on selection rights
6. Law on genetically modified organisms
7. Law on food safety
8. Law on forest reproductive material
9. Law on forestry

The legal solutions do not cover completely the issues comprised in the phytosanitary policy. Indeed, even the covered issues are not complete, systemized and synchronized. Therefore it is necessary full revision of the laws and bylaws that cover this area.

VI. BIOSECURITY AND BIODIVERSITY

VI.1. Biosecurity

VI. PLANT HEALTH

INTRODUCTION

The Strategy on phytosanitary policy represents a basis for further development of competent authorities in charge of plant health and the definition of their role in the phytosanitary system in period 2015 to 2020.

The cultivated agriculture crops and other plants present in nature are under continuous threat of harmful organisms (weed, insects, phytophagous spiders, nematodes, rodents, fungus, viruses, bacteria and other prokaryotes) which are their competition, use them as feed, cause or transmit plant diseases.

Harmful organisms on plants usually do not create direct threat for human and animal health. However, if present in large quantities they can provoke decrease of yields and quality of plant products, may cause substantial economic damages, and in some cases, may lead to extinction of some plant species.

In order to prevent the risk of introduction and spread of harmful organisms and the occurrence of potential damages on agriculture crops and plants, and to increase the yield and quality of agriculture crops, it is necessary to apply continuous plant protection. Plants are considered as public good and

therefore are under special protection prescribed by the Law on plant health („Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia” nr. 29/2005, 81/2008, 20/2009, 57/2010, 17/2011,148/2011, 69/13 and 43/14).

Integration with information on the principal crops in Macedonia and on the phytosanitary activities (statistic data)

- **definition of the main crops and the areas involved and affected areas;**
- **average size of farms, also in relation to the different territories;**
- **presence and impact on the territory of organizational infrastructure and associative**
- **definition of the state and "phytosanitary" crop and its criticality**
- **analysis of the activities conducted in the field of plant health (s. certificates issued, number of interceptions, laboratory analyzes conducted etc.) to identify critical issues to be addressed and overcome in this Policy Plan**

1. EXISTING INSTITUTIONAL FRAME AND OVERVIEW OF THE CURRENT SITUATION

1. ESISTENTE STRUTTURA ISTITUZIONALE E SINTESI DELLA SITUAZIONE ATTUALE

1. 1. Role of the Phytosanitary Directorate – sector for plant protection

The Phytosanitary Directorate is the national competent authority for the implementation of the activities associated with plant health according to the Law on plant health. The Directorate is responsible for the coordination and exchange of information between state authorities and state bodies, as well as for the information and communication to the European Union and settling disputes in the first instance under administration proceedings for plant health issues. Moreover, it is responsible also for the implementation of international conventions, agreements and contracts in the area of plant health which have been ratified by the Republic of Macedonia.

1. 2. Establishment of commitments and tasks of the Phytosanitary Directorate – Sector for plant protection

Besides the commitments prescribed in the other provisions of the Law on plant health, the Phytosanitary Directorate is responsible also for the fulfillment of the following commitments and tasks:

- Cooperation during creation and implementation of the phytosanitary policy in the field of plant health;
- Drafting legal regulations and performing operational-administrative tasks in the field of plant health and control over their implementation;
- Monitoring, forecasting, identification and establishment of measures for protection from harmful organisms;
- Analysis and evaluation of the plant health status in order to define the appearance and spread of harmful organisms in the country and beyond national borders;
- Risk assessment in case of appearance of new harmful organisms, provision of technical instructions and measures;
- Preparation of technical data base for the identification of contaminated areas, areas under threat of attack, areas under special regulation and protected zones;
- Keeping registers, books and lists prescribed by the Law on plant health;
- Adoption of programmes on the precautionary measures against introduction and spread of harmful organisms, as well as keeping books for the implementation of the programmes;
- Implementation of measures for blocking, isolation and extinction of harmful organisms;
- Provision of phytosanitary measures;
- Expertise control over the task performance by responsible persons according to this law;
- Information about the appearance, sudden appearance and spread of harmful organisms in the country and beyond national borders;
- Preparation of reports, analysis, information and other material for competent bodies, authorities and international organizations by which the Republic of Macedonia is bound to draft reports in accordance with the regulations and based upon international agreements;
- Information for the exporting countries for blocked packages that do not comply to the phytosanitary requirements;

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- Cooperation for drafting international agreements and conventions stipulated by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia in the area of plant health and guarantee for their implementation;
- Management of public information and information to stakeholders for issues related to plant health and printing publications;
- Implementation of unified procedures in accordance with the regulations and the international standards;
- Maintaining information system in the field of plant health;
- Providing expertise and technical training for the employees of the Phytosanitary Directorate;
- Cooperation with other competent bodies, authorities and organizations both in the country and abroad in their field of work;
- Representing the Republic of Macedonia in international bodies, authorities and organizations in the field of plant health;
- Carrying out other tasks related to plant health in accordance with the law.

1. 3. Establishment of authorizations and measures of the State agriculture inspectorate – Sector for inspection control in the area of phytosanitary policy in the field of plant health

Phytosanitary inspectors, besides other general authorizations, shall implement the laws and bylaws in the field of plant health.

The phytosanitary inspector is authorized to:

- Have access to plants, plant products and other objects and stuff in every hour and every place where the above mentioned are being moved, produced, processed, stored, sold or used in other ways, as well as in the places of the clients and during import, export, reexport and transit;
- Perform phytosanitary inspection on plants, plant products and other objects and stuff in every hour and every place where the above mentioned are being moved, produced, processed, stored, sold or used in other way, as well as in the places of the clients and during import, export, reexport and transit;
- Performs monitoring and tracing of harmful organisms, collects and keeps registers of the presence or absence of harmful organisms;
- Controls the phytosanitary documentation of legal and natural persons;
- Takes samples of plants, plant products and other objects or stuff without compensation for their value in order to perform laboratory analysis;
- Confirms whether producers, processors, exporters and distributors of the prescribed species and types of plant products are inserted in the register;
- Performs inspection control on the fulfillment of standards for the issuance of plant passports;
- Performs inspection control on the fulfillment of commitments of the persons in charge of plant health according to the Law on plant health;
- Performs inspection control on fulfillment of standards according to the Law on plant health by the public institutions, legal and natural persons which are authorized to provide public services;
- Performs inspection control over the fulfillment of tasks of the public services providers;
- Performs inspection control on the issuance of plant passports;
- Releases phytosanitary certificates for export and reexport;
- Performs inspection control on the registers and the prescribed books;
- Performs phytosanitary inspection on the import, the cultivation and the usage of organisms intended for biological plant protection;
- Performs inspection control on the import of plant protection products;
- Performs inspection control on the implementation of the measures according to the Law on plant health;
- Performs inspection control on the implementation of the provisions of the Law on plant health and
- Performs also other tasks related to plant health.

Besides the above mentioned authorizations, the state phytosanitary inspector may undertake also the following measures:

- To ban the import of harmful organisms defined in the lists prescribed by this law and other particular harmful organisms;
- To ban the import and the movement of plants, plant products and other objects and stuff that do not comply with the ruling conditions of this law;

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- To ban the cultivation of the prescribed plant species in the place of production for certain period of time;
- To order proper treatment of packages during import, export and movement of plants, plant products and other objects and stuff if there is evidence that the above are attacked by the prescribed harmful organisms;
- To order removal if part of the package is attached by harmful organisms or in case of risk of spread of harmful organisms;
- To block temporarily the consignment of the package to the importer, transporter or the persons who import or transport plants, plant products and other objects and stuff until phytosanitary inspection takes place or until the results of the analysis or official tests are known;
- To order elimination of the packages during import or movement of plants, plant products and other objects and stuff if there is risk of spread of harmful organisms or if the conditions of the Law on plant food are not fulfilled;
- To allow movement of plants, plant products and other objects and stuff (except for seeds and propagating material), in case of infestation with harmful organisms in areas where there is no risk of spread of harmful organisms or to the place of industrial processing under their control;
- To ban temporarily, completely or partially the activities of producers or processors, as well as the issuance of plant passports until there is prove of removal of harmful organisms;
- To ban the issuance of plant passports in case of non compliance to the standards of issuance of passports;
- To propose removal from the register to the Phytosanitary directorate if there are proves that the persons in charge for plant health do not fulfill the prescribed commitments;
- To propose to the Phytosanitary directorate, in case of repeteade offence, to withdraw the authorization of passport issuance;
- To propose withdrawal of licence or authorization in case of non compliance to the prescribed criteria;
- To ban import, cultivation and usage of organisms for biological protection of plants, in case of non fulfillment of the conditions prescribed by the Law on plant health;
- To ban import, internal trade and production of plant health products;
- To order implementation of measures for the correction of irregularities and lacks according to the Law on plant health, as well as the bylaws adopted on the bases of the above law, in a specific time frame;
- To order implementation of necessary precautionary measures and activities against introduction, appearance and spread of harmful organisms, for which they are authorized by law and other bylaws;
- To deliver mandatory sanction on the spot in the cases prescribed by this law;
- To start a procedure against infringement of the provisions of this law or to report crime and
- To order implementation also of other measures in accordance with the Law on plant health.
-

Generally, the proper enforcement of the abovementioned tasks by the Phytosanitary inspectors shall lead to an efficient implementation of the phytosanitary policy in the Republic of Macedonia.

1. 4. State phytosanitary laboratory and other authorized laboratories recognized as public service providers

For the purposes of carrying out specialized laboratory tests on plants, plant products and other objects and stuff in laboratory in order to diagnose and identify harmful organisms, biological tests, analysis of physical and chemical features of the plant protection products, analysis of active ingredients, analysis of seeds and propagating material was established a State Phytosanitary Laboratory under the Ministry of agriculture, forestry and water economy granted with status of bureau.

The State Phytosanitary Laboratory, besides the main activity in the area of plant health, performs also activities and collaborates with public service providers in accordance with the Law on plant health.

Besides the State Phytosanitary Laboratory, which shall perform laboratory identification and diagnosis of harmful organisms through application of accredited methods, if necessary shall be authorized also other laboratories which fulfill the criteria for public service provider as prescribed by the Law on plant health.

2. LEGISLATION FRAME OF THE PHYTOSANITARY DIRECTORATE IN THE AREA OF PLANT HEALTH

2.1. Legislation frame

The adopted Law on plant health is in accordance with the provisions of the European Council Directive 2000/29 EC, which among other prescribes that every member country is obliged to form or to designate a competent authority responsible for coordination and contacts related to plant health issues.

This law and the bylaws which comprise the other provisions of the European Union in the area of plant health sets institutional frame for:

- Establishment of competent authority for plant health protection as in the other EU member countries aiming to compliance with the phytosanitary measures in force in the international trade;
- Application of internationally recognized principles, standards, risk assessment and other scientifically based measures in the area of plant health protection;
- Mutual collaboration and exchange of information from the data base on plant protection;
- Removal of obstacles in the international trade with plants, plant products and other objects and stuff;
- Establishment of register of producers, processors, importers and distributors of plants, plant products and other objects and stuff and establishment of the plant passport system;
- Carrying out phytosanitary checks and issuance of passports for the plants that are being moved within the European Union;
- Carrying out phytosanitary monitoring over specific harmful organisms at plants;
- Marking the protected zones and
- Establishment and development of information system for the commitment of communication and book-keeping.

The primary goals of the Law on plant health foresee:

- Plant and plant products protection against harmful organisms;
- Prevention against introduction and spread of harmful organisms and appropriate elimination through application of plant and plant products protection as well as of other objects and stuff;
- Identification and determination of harmful organisms;
- Creating conditions of optimal production of the cultivated plants and their trade;
- Environmental protection through detection of harmful organisms, introduction of biological protection measures for plant protection, integral protection and implementation of monitoring and prognosis;
- Providing guide and monitoring for plant health development and
- Providing proper education and information for citizens to increase public awareness on plant health.

On the basis of the Law on plant health ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" nr.29/2005, 81/2008, 20/2009, 57/2010, 17/2011,148/2011, 69/13 and 43/14) were adopted the following bylaws in the area of plant health:

- Law on amendment and modification of the Law on plant health ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" nr. 81/08);
- Law on amendment and modification of the Law on plant health ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" nr. 20/09);
- Law on amendment and modification of the Law on plant health ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" nr. 57/2010);
- Law on amendment and modification of the Law on plant health ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" nr. 17/11);
- Law on amendment and modification of the Law on plant health ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" nr. 148/11);
- Law on amendment and modification of the Law on plant health ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" nr. 69//13);
- Law on amendment and modification of the Law on plant health ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" nr. 43/14);
- Lists of harmful organisms, plants, plant products and other objects and stuff ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia nr. 65/10);

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- Terms of Rule on phytosanitary standards on wood packaging material ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" nr.104/05);
- Terms of Rule on the measures and modalities of implementation of the measures for elimination or removal of harmful organisms and measures and modalities for carrying out disinfection, disinsection and deratization ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" 131/10);
- Terms of Rule on the form, contents and modalities of keeping the Register of producers, processors, importers and distributors of plants, plant products and other objects and stuff ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" 131/10);
- Terms of Rule on small quantities of plants, plant products and other objects and stuff, including foodstuffs ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" 131/10);
- Terms of Rule for modalities of keeping register, modalities of carrying out inspection of plants' health, contents and modalities of communicating data on production, processing, trade with plants, plant products and other objects and stuff ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" 131/10);
- Terms of Rule on the modalities of carrying out phytosanitary inspection during import of packages from List V part B section 1 ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" 131/10);
- Terms of Rule on plant passports ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" 131/10);
- Terms of Rule on the specific criteria on establishing small producers and processors on local markets ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" 131/10);
- Terms of Rule on periods of time and modalities of carrying out phytosanitary inspection on plants, plant products and other objects and stuff included on the List V part A section 1 and List V part A section 2 ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" 131/10);
- Terms of Rule on the conditions for movement of packages of plants, plant products and other objects and stuff included on the List V part A section 2 ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" 131/10);
- Terms of Rule on the modalities and procedure for carrying out phytosanitary inspection on plants, plant products and other objects and stuff located at points of entrance in the Republic of Macedonia ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia " nr.111/10);

What is missing to adapt to the "acquis communautaire" ???

3. MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

This document shall provide ground for further development of the phytosanitary system and shall define its role in the phytosanitary area in the next five years. In the upcoming period within the legal regulation of the European Union in the phytosanitary area all the professionals involved in the competent authorities shall focus on finding appropriate solutions and answers for efficient implementation of the phytosanitary provisions, measures and standards in order to create preconditions for:

- Providing enough quantity of healthy and high quality food within their competencies which would lead to improvement of the standard of living and
- Raise awareness of agriculture producers but of all the other agents who have an impact on plant's health conditions in order to safeguard the environment and to improve the standard of living of population in rural areas.

The Phytosanitary Directorate foresees its goals in the phytosanitary policy through the accession in the European Union and through equal collaboration and decision – making for phytosanitary issues.

3.1. ESTABLISHMENT OF PRIORITY ACTIVITIES IN THE AREA OF PLANT HEALTH IN THE PERIOD PRIOR TO THE COMMUNICATION OF THE DATE OF STARTING ACCESSION NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION

In relationship with the issues to take action it will be analyze measure and regulatory changes and than

what are the structural and organization measures and adjustments to be implemented.

3.1 ISSUES TO TAKE ACTION

It is before very important to identify issues that need work to favortire a process of growth and regulatory compliance of the UE.

The issues to take action are:

- Control phytosanitary situation on the territory of the Republic of Macedonia
- Establishing plant passport system in the Republic of Macedonia
- Import and export control and certification

Strategic goal nr.. 1.1 Phytosanitary situation on the territory of the Republic of Macedonia

The control of the phytosanitary situation in the Macedonia territory is realized through the Phytosanitary monitoring of quarantine and economically harmful organisms. When it found new dangerous organism preparation it is required a pest risk analysis.

Strategic goal nr.. 1.1.1 Phytosanitary monitoring of quarantine and economically harmful organisms

Before it should structure the control of the territory of Macedonia in order to ensure the plant health status in relation to quarantine pathogens (as defined by EU legislation and the legislation in force of BC).

It is therefore necessary to Phytosanitary monitoring of quarantine and economically harmful organisms at agriculture crops on the territory of the Republic of Macedonia.

Phytosanitary monitoring of quarantine and economically harmful organisms at agriculture crops on the territory of the Republic of Macedonia

~~Strategic obiettivo nr2- Monitoraggio fitosanitario di quarantena e gli organismi nocivi alle colture economicamente agricoltura nel territorio della Repubblica di Macedonia:~~

The phytosanitary monitoring on agriculture crops was introduced on the territory of Republic of Macedonia in the second half of 2013 in accordance with the annual Programmes for phytosanitary

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policy that foreseen the number of agriculture visits and the number of samples taken for laboratory analysis.

The modality of performing health checks and the modality of taking samples for laboratory analysis during phytosanitary monitoring is prescribed in three Rulebooks as appropriate for the crop variety, and in particular for:

- Seed and mercantile potato;
- Fruit crops and grapewine;
- Vegetable crops (open air production and greenhouse);
- Tobacco and
- Vase flower and pot flower;

The Phytosanitary directorate as national competent authority for plant health, if necessary, in the following five years shall revise the contents of the above mentioned rulebooks and at the beginning of each year shall prepare and submit to the Government of the Republic of Macedonia an annual Programme for phytosanitary policy that foresees the number of health checks and the number of samples taken for laboratory analysis, including the financial means for their preparation.

~~To achieve more efficient implementation of phytosanitary monitoring, it is foreseen from 2015 to 2020 to carry out professional trainings for the stakeholders involved in the phytosanitary system (Phytosanitary directorate, State agriculture inspectorate and State phytosanitary laboratory). However, when carrying out the monitoring it is important to involve in the process as public service providers natural and legal persons with university degree in agriculture – major in phytomedicine, who will monitor the plant health condition directly on the spot and shall send the information to the internal phytosanitary inspectors.~~

The objective of these Programmes on phytosanitary policy is to block the introduction and spread of harmful organisms and to inform through actions of prevention and control about the consequences of harmful organisms.

In this way the countries that maintain trade relations with the Republic of Macedonia shall have a guarantee that there is no presence of harmful organisms in the Republic of Macedonia, and if so, the country's trade partners will have a guarantee that all the necessary phytosanitary measures prescribed by the EU Regulations were undertaken.

~~To achieve more efficient implementation of phytosanitary monitoring, it is foreseen from 2015 to 2020 to carry out professional trainings for the stakeholders involved in the phytosanitary system (Phytosanitary directorate, State agriculture inspectorate and State phytosanitary laboratory). However, when carrying out the monitoring it is important to involve in the process as public service providers natural and legal persons with university degree in agriculture – major in phytomedicine, who will monitor the plant health condition directly on the spot and shall send the information to the internal phytosanitary inspectors.~~

~~In order to optimize the control of the territory it is necessary that the Phytosanitary Directorate, according to the Inspectorate and with the Laboratory, defines a monitoring plan in which they defined the list of hardships that have to be monitored, the monitoring mode, the timing with which it will have to carry out the checks and their timing. This plan should also be defined schedule to be used by inspectors to produce periodic summaries of the monitoring carried out and the results obtained.~~

~~In order to facilitate the correct interpretation of the activity is proposed to be carried out following the thesauru~~

Surveillance	An official process which collects and records data on pest occurrence or absence by survey, monitoring or other procedures [CEPM, 1996]
Survey	An official procedure conducted over a defined period of time to determine the characteristics of a pest population or to determine which species occur in an area [FAO, 1990; revised CEPM, 1996]
Monitoring	An official ongoing process to verify phytosanitary situations [CEPM, 1996]
Vigilance	Control procedures and inspections of the territory, on material in import and or export

Based on the results that will keep out from monitoring the Phytosanitary Directorate shall produce an annual report on the state of plant health of the Republic of Macedonia. The report could be consider setting underreported.

Code	Adversity	Characteristics
A	New adversity very dangerous	Adversity recently introduced, representing an emergency. Monitoring and control have not yet been planned.
B	COMMON	Present for a long time, very dangerous and which still require investment for monitoring and control
C	POTENTIALLY PRESENT	Potentially very dangerous in the future, now moderately on Macedonian territory
D	POTENTIALLY NOT PRESENT	Potentially very dangerous in the future, currently not present in Macedonia, but for which investigations are required to be reported to the EU
E	Now no relevance for Macedonia	No relevance for Macedonia, but it is necessary control in import
F		No relevance for Macedonia, in few case present in import, but if they come it is necessary to control the field
G		All adversity included in Annex I of the LGS 214/2005

Strategic goal nr. 6 1.1.2 Preparation of risk analysis in case of hazard of appearance and spread of new harmful organisms

Risk analysis is a process of systematic collection of relevant data and information and their processing with previously established processing methodologies aiming to plan, organize and manage the risk of appearance and spread of harmful organisms.

With the realization of the programs for phytosanitary monitoring, as starting from 2013, shall be provided enough data for carrying out risk analysis on harmful organisms which comprise of risk assessment, communication and management.

It is foreseen that the realization of this strategic goal should start in 2018, as soon as there will be conditions for its implementation, that is preparation of the necessary legislation for risk analysis for harmful organisms, set up of information system on plant health, trainings for the administrative staff that shall be involved in the realization of the above, as well as enough data received through the phytosanitary monitoring of agriculture crops. In this way shall be created good conditions for free export of agriculture produce from Macedonia on foreign markets.

Strategic goal nr. 4 1.2: Establishing plant passport system in the Republic of Macedonia

In 1993, the European Union set up the Single Market; this meant that borders among the Member States were abolished and started the free circulation of persons, capitals and goods.

Among the goods, plants and plant products, which are worldwide regulated, to avoid the introduction/spread of harmful organisms, could not stop at the borders anymore, so the only possibility to guarantee the health status was a preliminary inspection during the producing cycle. No Phytosanitary Certificates (PC) were used to state the freedom from quarantine pests anymore, but another document called Plant Passport (PP) was agreed. So a new plant health regime was established.

Plant passports should be used both in internal market and for export and state the freedom only from quarantine pests. It is a document to trace back the producer and the eventual problems in order to try to mitigate them for the future, not to trace forward.

So not only the foreign clients are protected against quarantine pests, but also the domestic farmers have the guarantee to plant crops with healthy material.

Plant passport from one side facilitates the commercial exchanges among States from the other makes the producers more responsible, co-operating with Plant Protection Service and involving them in guaranteeing the quality/health of supplied material.

In Macedonia, the plant passport regime is well defined in a specific "Book of Rule" (Nr.17-63/12 - 30 August 2010 - Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" nr.131/10), in force from the first of January 2012, but is not started yet, but several activities that can facilitate a prompt development of the system are present.

In the first half of 2016 the Phytosanitary directorate, in agreement with the Inspectorate shall prepare an action plane and implement a pilot scheme in 2016 and 2017. At the end of that sperimental period it will be possible establish the plant passport system.

~~With the adoption of "Rulebook on plant passports" with the implementation of internal phytosanitary inspection, as well as with the implementation of phytosanitary monitoring of agriculture crops were conditions for the set up the plant passport system.~~

~~In the same time, the Phytosanitary directorate from 2016 shall issue authorizations to persons who meet the conditions for passport issuance in accordance with the Law on plant health and shall keep record both in written and electronic form as "Register of persons who issue plant passports".~~

Strategic goal nr. 1.3: Import and export control and certification

It is necessary increase the certification in import and export. Very important the optimization of the process and the informatization of the activity.

It is also very important to increase the professionality of the inspectors.

Another elements very important is to increase the relationship with PD and GL.

So the Inspectorate must give information to the PD on:

- Interception in imports (in 48 hours);
- Interception in exports (in 48 hours);
- Number Export Certificate with destination country and class of commodity every three months;
- Number Import Certificate with destination country and class of commodity every three months.

Respect the GL it is very important to increase the choise of the material to analyze.

Strategic goal nr. 2: Measures and regulatory changes

In order to ensure the realization of the measures previously mentioned it is necessary adjustment and the consolidation of the regulatory framework.

Strategic goal nr. 3: 2.1 Harmonization of the national legislation through the transposition of the relevant EU Regulations

In the period 2015-2018 shall continue the harmonization of the national legislation through the transposition of the relevant EU Regulations in laws and bylaws in the area of plant health.

During 2010 година, the Phytosanitary directorate has started an intensive implementation of the EU legislation in the area of plant health and many bylaws as defined in point 2.1 of this Strategy were adopted.

Meanwhile, during 2011, 2012 and 2013 in accordance with the foreseen schedule of NPAA were adopted and published in total 25 Decisions for the implementation of the international phytosanitary standards - ISPM.

The Phytosanitary directorate as National organization for plant health protection of the Republic of Macedonia, which is member of the IPPC (International convention for plant protection) and EPPO (Euro – Mediterranean organization for plant protection) is planning by the end of 2016 to completely prepare and publish all the 36 international standards for phytosanitary measures. In the first half of 2018 it is foreseen to complete the process of implementation of the EU legislation in the part of plant health.

Only with complete and correct implementation in practice of all the published laws and bylaws shall be guaranteed efficient functioning of the competent authorities for plant health.

Strategic goal nr.9: 2.2 Establishment and maintenance of phytosanitary collaboration at international level based on signed international agreements and conventions between the Republic of Macedonia and other states

The Phytosanitary Directorate besides the above competencies and activities in the period 2015-2020 shall be included in the preparation and implementation of international agreements and conventions that are stipulated by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia.

In this way shall be simplified the international trade of agriculture products and shall be provided protection from introduction and spread of harmful organisms and shall be blocked the damages that they cause.

Having in mind the experiences with the previously signed agreements on phytosanitary collaboration with many countries in the regions, it shall be reached full liberalization of the agriculture products trade.

Republic of Macedonia as member in International institutions (EPPO, IPPC, CEFTA and EFSA) also in the upcoming period 2015-2020 shall continue with the improvement of the international collaboration and shall participate actively in the above organizations.

- Strategic goal: 3 Structural and organization measures and adjustments to be implemented

Strategic goal nr.4: 3.1 Keeping and updating Registers in the area of plant health;

Within its regular activities the Phytosanitary directorate keeps two registers according to the Law on plant health in the area of plant health:

- Register of producers, processors, importers and distributors of plants, plant products and other objects and stuff and
- Register of legal persons who perform thermal treatment and labeling of the wood packaging material that is being used in the international trade.

The main goal by the end of 2016 shall be to complete the registration of most of the operators (producers, processors, importers and distributors) of plants, plant products and other objects and stuff included on the List V part A and List V part B according to the Lists of harmful organisms, plants and plant products (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia nr. 65/10).

The main activities in the period 2015-2017 shall be directed toward upgrading and increase of the number of registered operators in the Register of producers, processors, importers and distributors of plants, plant products and other objects and stuff. This activity is a precondition for the State Agriculture Inspectorate, State Phytosanitary Laboratory and the public services providers to implement efficiently phytosanitary monitoring at agriculture cultivations.

Furthermore, shall contribute to the enhancement of the phytosanitary system also persons in charge for plant health and registered in the appropriate register through keeping record and carrying out controls on plant health.

Up to this moment (in electronic and written version) were inserted in the Register approximately 450 operators who meet the criteria for registration. The Register was opened and started functioning at the beginning of 2011.

Having in mind that there are many legal and natural persons that should be inserted in the above register, the registration procedure takes place continuously in accordance with the seasonal activities of producers, processors, importers and distributors.

Besides the above mentioned register, in accordance with the International phytosanitary standard ISPM nr.15, the Phytosanitary Directorate is keeping Register of legal persons who perform thermal treatment and labeling of wood packaging material used in international trade. Up to this moment in the register were inserted 35 subjects with tendency of increase of number. The registration of new subjects that meet criteria shall continue also in the upcoming five year period 2015 – 2020. In this way shall be directly stimulated the export of plants and plant products which can only be exported if packed in wood material, sterilized according to the international phytosanitary measure (ISPM) nr.15.

Strategic goal nr.: 3.2 Strengthening of the capacities of diagnostic activities

It is very important increase the activities of the GL. Necessary to verify the potential of the Laboratory and optimize operation by providing the necessary resources for the equipment and the material consumption. Analysis should improve relations with the Inspectorate in order to agree on the terms and timing of sampling.

Besides the Inspectorate, the GL applicants must provide information on its work to the PD:

- Number of samples and analyzes performed for Internal Control (passport, monitoring emergency quarantine pest, IPM service etc.) with indication on crops and results (From Laboratory to Directorate and Inspectorate); every three month.
- Number of samples and analyzes performed (every tree months) for import certification with indication on crops, results and country (From Laboratory to Directorate and Inspectorate);
- Number of samples and analyzes performed for export certification with indication on crops and results (every three month) .

Strategic goal nr.40:3.3 Establishment and maintenance of information system in the area of plant health

The Phytosanitary directorate is in phase of preparation of the secondary legislation related to the information system which, in accordance with the NPAA programme, shall adopt the following rulebooks:

- Rulebook on the modalities of keeping records, registers and data base related to the information system and
- Rulebook on the modalities of connection of the data of the Phytosanitary directorated with the other data bases and modalities of collecting data from other data bases;
- In this way shall be created conditions dor the establishment of Informaiton system on plant health which shall contribute to update the data base and the applications necessary for further enlargement of the phyto register, the plant passport system and the establishment of efficient phytosanitary control. The final objective of this system is to start working by no later that middle of 2017 through the implementation of intranet and internet communication for the exchange of data and documents of all the actors involved in issues related with plant health.

The implementation of this system shold aim at educating users and should continue on in accordance with the standards, that is the level of knowledge and development and implementation of system testing.

As conclusion of the aforementioned in the upcoming period shall be put efforts to establish (installment of hardware and software) of information system in the Phytosanitary directorate for collection of data, which shall allow more efficient performance of the administrative works and access to different information of the phytosanitary area.

In this way, the information system of the phytosanitary directorate set condition for a moder “e-administration”.

Strategic goal nr.5: 3.4 Strengthening of the administration capacities of competent authorities through organization of trainings for the employees and realization of new employments

Considering the importance of the phytosanitary system and the necessity of its successful functioning, it is necessary to carry out continuous strengthening of the administration capacities of competent authorities (Phytosanitary directorate, State agriculture inspectorate and State phytosanitary laboratory) in the period 2015 - 2020.

This shall be accomplished with a regular organization and participation at local and international trainings in the area of plant health in consideration of the specific character of this scientific field, the continuous changes of scientific accomplishments and amendments of the EU legislation in the area of plant health. In the period 2015-2020 the Phytosanitary directorate shall dedicate maximum attention to the usage of the funds enlarged by the EU through its instruments -TAIEX, DG SANCO, IPA 2012 etc.

Nevertheless, the National organization for plant health should allow training of the current administrative staff, agriculture producers and publicly authorized agents in the phytosanitary area. For the preparation of the legislation should be called the experts from the institutions of the Republic of Macedonia. It should also be used the experience of the most important agriculture producers.

It is necessary to carry out new employments and to accept new competent staff, in order to achieve the necessary level of implementation of all the adopted laws and bylaws.

In these terms, the Sector for plant protection of the Phytosanitary directorate needs at least 4 new employments in the period 2015-2017 which must have an appropriate degree (university degree in agriculture – major in phytomedicine or plant production).

The same strategic line shall be applied also to the other competent authorities (SPL and SAI) which, in accordance with their needs shall define the number of necessary employments within their institutions.

Strategic goal nr.3.5 : Authorization for public service providers in the area of plant health

In the period 2015-2018 if it is necessary to perform activities in the area of plant health, the Phytosanitary directorate shall issue public call for public service providers that shall take care for the implementation of the activities foreseen in the Law on plant health. It shall be considered very important if experts with university degree in agriculture – phytomedicine are authorized as public service providers. In this way shall be improved the expertise and the efficiency of the performance in the plant health area:

- monitoring and surveillance of the harmful organisms development which are usually present at plants and plant products, as well as forecast and establishment of optimum time frames and protection measures;
- intervention in case of sudden appearance of quarantine harmful organisms at plants, calamities and epiphytes of harmful organisms;
- providing meteorological, biological and other data for monitoring and forecast on the appearance of harmful organisms;
- laboratory determination and diagnosis of harmful organisms;
- educational information for the owners and other persons involved in the implementation of the activities related to plant health;
- issuance of plant passports;
- implementation of scientific, research and development activities;
- carrying out disinsection, disinfection and deratization for plant health and
- continuous data flow from public service providers to the Phytosanitary directorate.

Strategic goal nr.3.6: Synergies with University

On the next five years it is critical to increase the synergies and integrations with universities which is fundamental point of reference for all scientific problems. To grow the plant health system Macedonian must develop and strengthen a thickness ranging scientific developed in collaboration with the University world. In particular, they should finish formalize collaborative relationships with regard to:

- **Training to update constant staff of the Inspectorate;**
- **Support in the preparation of procedures and technical support for the implementation of phytosanitary activities;**

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- Training of new staff;
- Support Directorate in the preparation of pest risk analysis
- Permanent update of the laboratory staff; help with the design of new testing procedures; consulting for the recognition of new adversity;
- Implementation of research programs over adversity of plants and transfer of knowledge.

For this you need to be drawn up a collaboration that includes the detail of the initiatives that will realize

Strategic goal nr.3.7: ~~Work of the expertise~~ **Institution of the “Council on plant health”**

Among the regular activities for the period 2015 – 2020 shall be held sessions of the experts that are involved in the Expertise council on plant health. The objective of these sessions is to assist the improvement of the phytosanitary policy in the Republic of Macedonia through expert opinions and suggestions. The work of the Expertise council is regulated with Rulebook on the profile and number of members and the method of work of the Expertise council on plant health („Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia” nr.102/12), where are prescribe the method and the modalities of its work.

The Expertise council shall give opinions on undertaking measures in the area of plant health which should be in accordance with the recent technical and scientific accomplishments.

The sessions of the Expertise council shall be carried out each year at certain period of time and at least two times a year. The activities shall be organized on the basis of the Work plan that shall be adopted at the first session.

The role of this Committee is essential to foster and develop the integration of all the structures involved in plant health activities.

At the same time, the Committee should be put in a position to carefully consider all aspects of plant health in order to identify problems and to propose remedial actions.

For this reason it is necessary to be prepared and made available to the Committee detailed information on the phytosanitary situation and all facilities must operate to produce appropriate information materials:

- Annual report on the phytosanitary situation of the country (from strategic goals VI.3.1.1);
- Number of monitored point and result for Specifically pest (from strategic goals VI.3.1.1.1);
- Communication of the international agreements (from strategic goals VI.3.1.1.1);
- Regulatory changes (from strategic goal VI.3.1.2.2.)
- Reporting of potential new organisms reported in other countries and Pest Risk Analysis prepared by BC - (from strategic goals VI.3.1.1.2);
- Interception in imports (from strategic goals VI.3.1.1.1)
- Interception in exports (from strategic goals VI. 3.1.1.3)
- Number Export Certificate with destination country and class of commodity (from strategic goals VI. 3.1.1.3)
- Number Import Certificate with destination country and class of commodity (from strategic goals VI. 3.1.1.3);
- Number of samples and analyzes performed for Internal Control (passport, monitoring emergency quarantine pest, IPM service etc.) With indication on crops and results (From Laboratory to Directorate and Inspectorate) (from strategic goals VI.3.1.3.2);
- Number of samples and analyzes performed (every tree months) for import certification with indication on crops, results and country (From Laboratory to Directorate and Inspectorate) (from strategic goal VI.3.1.3.2);
- Number of samples and analyzes performed for export certification with indication on crops and results (from strategic goals VI.3.1.3.2);
- A sintetic analysis of all other elements considered in the strategic goals of this document.

The Committee is composed of two organization:

Steering: It is established by rule book by the Minister of Agriculture and consists of the directors of: the Phytosanitary Directorate, Directorate for seed and seedling material, GL, Forest, and State agriculture inspectorate;The Chair Person of the Committee is the Director of PD and also the secretary of the Committee is from PD. that receive from the other directions all the information previously mentioned, essential for the proper functioning of the Board.

The functions of the Steering Committee are:

- Examining the functioning of the plant health sector on Macedonian territory on the basis of the report cited in the paragraph of this paragraph: "ANNUAL REPORT ON THE PHYTOSANITARY SITUATION IN MACEDONIA"
- Assess inefficiencies
- Discuss the solutions to be adopted

The PD prepares a periodic report to make available to the Government, taking into account the proposals and additions that are received by the Advisory Committee: “ANNUAL REPORT ON PROGRESS OF IMPLEMENTATION THE PHYTOSANITARY STRATEGY IN MACEDONIA”.

Advisory: is set up, within two years of the entry into operation of the Board, with rule book by the Minister of Agriculture and is composed not only by the members of the Board, representatives of the University, the Associzioni Agricultural producers, representatives of Nurserymen. The ADVISOR Committee is headed and coordinated by Direttore Plant Protection Service; The secretary of the Committee is of the Directorato Phytosanitary Service. the functions of the Advisory Committee are:

- Examining the functioning of the plant health sector on Macedonian territory (Annual report on the phytosanitary situation in Macedonia);
- Collect critical point that stakeholders wish to advance and prepare comments on the report (Annual report on the phytosanitary situation in Macedonia).

3.2. STRENGTHENING OF THE ORGANIZATION OF COMPETENT AUTHORITIES AND HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

The tasks of the competent authorities for plant protection are defined through the laws adopted in the phytosanitary area.

Most of the national services for plant protection in the other countries are organized in a similar way considering the fact that the activities in this area are tightly connected to international trade and commerce with plant and plant products. A reason for that is also the necessity to respect the provisions of the multilateral agreements, such as the International conventions for plant protection. Upon these basis were accepted and approved the EU phytosanitary laws, the Council Directive 2000/29/EC on protective measures against the introduction into the Community of organisms harmful to plants or plant products against their spread within the Community and the Council Directive 91/414/EC concerning the placing of plant protection products on the market. These provisions prescribe clearly the commitment for the Member States to form National organization for plant protection (NPPO), whose main objective would be to establish an efficient phytosanitary system and fast exchange of information between the national organizations and the competent authorities of the EU commission. In this way is guaranteed safe and healthy food for the population on the common EU market.

The phytosanitary system in the Republic of Macedonia is composed by:

1. The Phytosanitary Directorate:

The Phytosanitary Directorate is composed of three sectors:

- sector for plant protection
- sector for agrochemistry
- sector for phytosanitary control and management

2. Directorate for seed and seedling material

- Unit for GEN data base
- Unit for control and post-control of the seed sowings and plantations
- Unit for recognition, approval and protection of agriculture crops varieties

3. State Agriculture Inspectorate:

Within the state agriculture inspectorate is located the sector for phytosanitary inspection which is composed of two units

- Unit for performing inspection border control
- Unit for performing internal inspection controls

4. State phytosanitary laboratory:

The State Phytosanitary Laboratory is composed of

- Diagnostic Unit
- Seed and seedling material Unit
- Chemical analysis Unit

Ministry for agriculture, forestry and water economy

- Unit for administrative and technical support

5. Public service providers;

6. Registered producers, processors, importers and distributors;

3.3. TECHNICAL SUPPORT

By signing the Stabilization and Association Agreement the Republic of Macedonia was obliged to align the national phytosanitary legislation with the EU legislation and to enhance the institutional and administrative capacities in order to have fulfilled the necessary requirements and to be capable of implementing the phytosanitary provisions at the moment of entrance in the EU. Considering the existing restricted human resources, as technical support (consultance assistance for the preparation of provisions and relevant procedures, organization of workshops and trainings).

Thanks to the notable financial and technical support which by now was provided by the EU, or in other words, thanks to the enormous efforts and attention put into the implementation of the projects for the phytosanitary sector and the sector for phytosanitary inspection of the State agriculture inspectorate. It is expected that further financial support shall be provided by the EU also in future for the building and development of the competent authorities for plant protection. Moreover, up to now were invested, and it is also planned to continue investing financial means from the Republic of Macedonia budget, all of which should have as a result the increase of the level of knowledge of the employees and improvement of the necessary infrastructure at such level that could allow efficient performance of the prescribed activities.

According to the EU conditions, by entering the EU, the Macedonian borders where the phytosanitary inspection is present should comply to the minimum required criteria regarding objects and working equipment listed in the Annex of the Directive 98/22/EC of the EU Council. The phytosanitary checks during import of plants, plant products and other objects and stuff are performed by the phytosanitary inspectors at 11 (eleven) border checkpoints:

1. Skopje (railway station Tovarna (Cargo), Post Office)
2. Airport – Alexander the Great
3. Blace (Kosovo)
4. Kjafasan (Albania)
5. Medjtitlija (Greece)
6. Bogorodica (Greece)
7. Novo selo (Bulgaria)
8. Delchevo (Bulgaria)
9. Deve Bair (Bulgaria)
10. Tabanovce (Serbia)
11. Blato (Albania) – at the moment it is not functioning

By the entrance of the Republic of Macedonia in the EU shall be significantly reduced the number of border checkpoints and by this also the number of checks to be performed by the phytosanitary inspection during import. Considering the increased inspection responsibilities which are already being implemented within the country (phytosanitary inspection checks on the place of production, plant passports, separate surveillance, monitoring checks etc.), it is necessary to redirect and efficiently use them for carrying out inspection activities within the country. As a result, it should be provided additional working space for the phytosanitary inspectors who shall be transferred from the border checkpoints to the internal part of the country. Besides solving the above priorities in the period 2015-2017 it is necessary to continue solving also other issues related to lack of working spaces for the employees and the competent authorities for plant protection.

3.4. STATUS AND ROLE OF THE COMPETENT AUTHORITIES FOR PLANT PROTECTION AFTER THE ENTRANCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

During the preparation of this Strategy, the Republic of Macedonia has a status of candidate country for EU membership. The commitments of the competent authorities for plant protection are part of all the activities for approximation to the standards which are mandatory for all the member – states up to now and were presented on various occasions to the competent EU institutions. Having this on mind, as well as the current conditions of the competent authorities of plant protection, it is appropriate in the first half of 2018 to expect the completion of the approximation of the remaining foreseen phytosanitary provisions as of Chapter 12. In the meanwhile shall continue also their implementation, as described in the previous points of this Strategy.

4. CONCLUSION

It is necessary for all the relevant agents indicated in this document and above all the human resources at the MAFWE, as well as the scientific staff of the authorized institutions to complete all the previously stated commitments until the entrance of the Republic of Macedonia in the European Union. In this way shall be made possible to dedicate themselves to new and additional commitments for participation in the work of the competent bodies of the European Commission, as well as the commitments of informing the European Commission on the occasions of exchange of information with the EU member states. In order to fulfil this, besides the on time and professional completion of the commitments of the human resources it is necessary to fulfil all the technical pre-conditions necessary for a timely, quality and efficient completion of the foreseen plans and commitments referred to an establishment of the necessary information infrastructure, upgrade and equipment of the phytosanitary border checkpoints, as well as providing appropriate space and necessary equipment.