Overview to Plant Passport system for wood, wood products and bark

Introduction

The adoption of timber plant passporting will demonstrate that the forest industry is committed to the highest standards of biosecurity. Furthermore, the use of plant passports by the forestry sector will improve awareness of biosecurity threats posed by quarantine pests such as the conifer bark beetle '*Ips typographus'*, an outbreak of which is currently undergoing eradication in southern England.

The new Plant Health Regulation (EU) 2016/2031 (PHR) requires the use of plant passports for the movement of all conifers and *Castanea* species (including sweet chestnut) with bark, and *Platanus* species (e.g. plane) with or without bark. These species, and other species imported from non EU countries, are collectively referred to as "Plant Health forestry regulated material".

For these species, a plant passport will be required at each stage of the transport chain where whole or chipped roundwood (including brash) is moved from the harvesting site and/or site of aggregation, to the processor. A plant passport will also be required for the movement of isolated bark from a wood processor to a bark processor, for Christmas trees over 3 metres tall and for cut conifer foliage taken from trees over 3 metres tall.

The existing system for managing the exports of conifer wood with bark from the pest-free area in the west of Scotland to Northern Ireland and Ireland will continue, with the necessary changes to comply with the PHR.

Benefits

1. The UK has taken a leading role in what have been productive negotiations in the EU Commission. This has culminated in a comprehensive text for the new Plant Health Regulation (PHR) that will strengthen biosecurity across the key elements of the UK's plant health regime.

2. The UK Government and Devolved Administrations support the overall aims of the PHR, and its implementation will ensure strengthened biosecurity through a risk based approach that does not place unnecessary burdens on industry.

3. Introducing plant passports for movement of the wood products outlined above will enable the UK to retain Protected Zone status for conifer bark beetles and other known and emerging pests. This will help to both ensure that the UK protects its commercial and conservation interests in forests and woodlands, and to continue to export plant passported material to other EU protected zones.

4. If the UK leaves the EU on October 31st 2019 without a deal, we intend to adopt the principles of these laws but will review the final legislation before deciding which detailed measures it is in the UK's interest to implement.

5. Furthermore, it is easier to plan to implement a plant passport system now, whilst there is some time to do so, and then if necessary roll back from implementing, rather than leave everything to the last minute.

In establishing the new regulations it was recognised that registered operators would need time to adapt existing systems to meet the new requirements, and the format of plant passports was identified as a key area of concern. As such, the development of EU tertiary legislation setting out the details of the new format was made a priority, and it was confirmed that any plant passport issued before 14 December 2019 in the existing format will remain valid until 14 December 2023.

Negotiations are on-going to develop detailed legislation for other aspects of the plant passport requirements. Alongside the required printed plant passport format, the trial use of electronic plant passports will be an option for professional operators.

Defra is working with delivery bodies, the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) and Forestry Commission, along with trade associations, to ensure the sector is prepared for issuing plant passports.

Definitions

Table 1 identifies the roles and responsibilities involved in the management of plant passports. The Forestry Commission is directly responsible for managing Plant Health forestry regulated material in England, as well as having delegated responsibility for managing this material for the Devolved Administrations of Wales and Scotland.

Table 1 Roles & responsibilities

PHR Article 2 Definitions	**Forestry context**	**Explanation**
Competent authority (CA)	Forestry Commission (delegated by Scottish Government & Welsh Government) & DAERA in Northern Ireland	The Forestry Commission and DAERA will manage the approval and auditing of bodies who issue plant passports for the movement of Plant Health forestry regulated material. Each CA will maintain a register of registered authorised operators.
Registered Authorised Professional Operator (RAPO)	A business with the necessary authority to issue plant passports for the movement of certain wood, wood products and bark	Examples of RAPOs may include; processors (i.e. an operator processing wood, wood products and bark, e.g. sawmills panel board manufacturers, bark processors), management companies, merchants and timber contractors. Forest owners will not normally issue passports unless they are responsible for the movement of timber.

Table 2 identifies the Plant Health forestry regulated material that requires a plant passport when moved within GB and to other EU recognised Protected Zones. Implementation of the regulation will initially be targeted according to biosecurity risk, prioritising the highest volumes in trade and the likelihood of infested material being present. Plant passports for the movement of sawdust, chipped wood (co-products) and slab-wood (de-barked or non-de-barked) and wood packaging material are considered to be a lower priority than round wood and isolated bark.

Table 2 Plant Health forestry regulated material where a plant passport is required

Type of wood, wood product and bark	**Transport (road, rail and sea) where a plant passport is required**
Round wood in the whole, e.g. whole trees, small wood and saw logs	Any stage of the transport chain where whole or chipped round wood is moved from the site of felling to the processor. All movement of isolated bark from a processor to a bark processor. Movement of controlled Christmas/decorative trees and foliage and brash.
Wood chips processed from brash or round wood on harvesting sites or other sites where aggregation takes place	
Transport of isolated bark	
Christmas trees/other decorative trees & cut foliage (sourced from trees over 3 metres in height) of species Abies, Picea, Pinus and Pseudotsuga, with or without roots	
Brash, ie cut branches, discarded stem wood, tree tops and dead & live trees.	
Isolated bark, created by processing operations such as de-barking	Means bark which has been removed or become detached from a living, felled or fallen tree or from any part of such tree.

Layout of a plant passport

Examples of plant passports are shown below for the movement of conifer wood, wood products, isolated bark and controlled Christmas trees/cut foliage and brash within GB, and use the ZP (Protected Zone) pest codes for the conifer bark beetles of *Ips amitinus* c7, *Ips duplicatus* c9, and *Ips typographus* c11.

Figure 1 Plant Passport incorporated into a delivery advice note for moving Plant Health forestry regulated material within GB

Woodlands Management Ltd, Goodtown, Oldshire

DELIVERY ADVICE NOTE

Forest Name	Sustainable Forest	Certification Status	FSC 100%	Delivery Advice Note Number	**123456**
WM Contract No.	5350032	Certificate Number	AA-COC-0000000	PIN Supplier Ref:	
Customer Name & Delivery Site	**ABC Sawmills, Wuden**			Supplier Contract No.	Sustainable Forest Cpt 1
				Customr Ref .	
		Stock location:		Weighbridge ticket No.	12345
Haulier	Wonder Wood	Vehicle Reg	AA00 WUD	Contractor	Contract Harvesting Ltd
Species	SS	Product	green logs	specification	4.8 x 16
Collection date	10/06/2019	Delivery Date	10/06/2019	Delivery Time	3.40 pm
Gross	43.62	Tare	17.10	Nett	26.52
		Received by		A N Other	

1 **Plant Passport-PZ** 2

ZP- c7, c9, c11 3

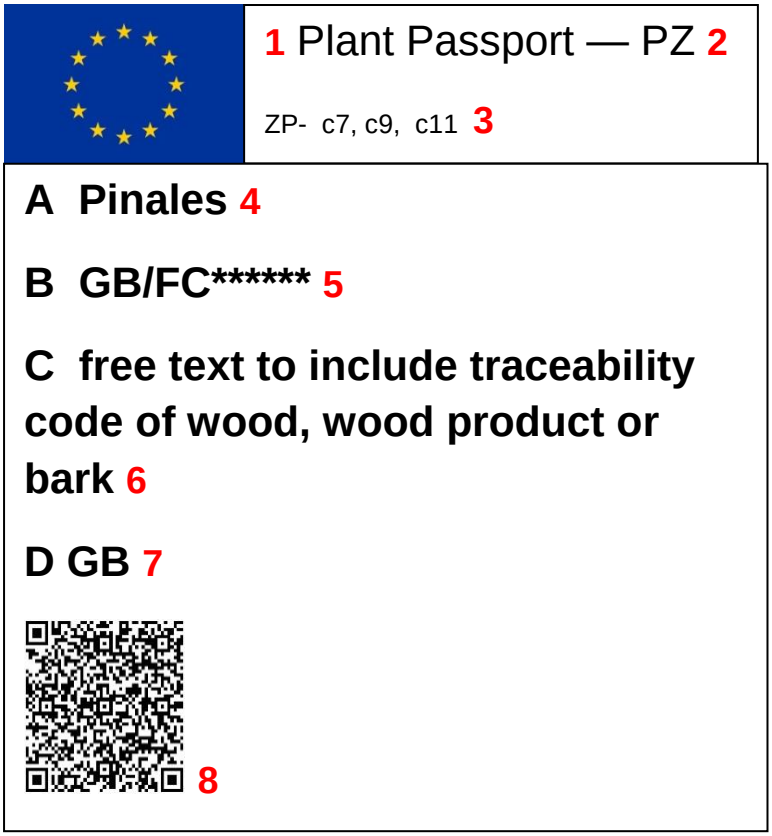
A : Pinales 4 **B: GB/FC******5** **C: 123456** 6 **D: GB** 7

Plant passport 8

Original to be returned to the above address

Deliveries are made on the terms outlined in the Woodlands Management Ltd CONDITIONS OF TIMBER SALE

Figure 2 Plant Passport not incorporated into a delivery advice note for moving Plant Health forestry regulated material within GB



In Figures 1 and 2, the elements of the plant passport are annotated by red numerals with an explanation below;

1. The EU flag which may be printed in colour, or in black and white, either with white stars on a black background or vice versa.
2. The words 'Plant Passport — PZ' in English.
3. Scientific name(s) of protected zone quarantine pest(s) or, alternatively, the codes used for those pests.
4. The botanical name(s) of the plant(s) species or taxon(s) concerned. For all conifers the Order Pinales can be used and for sweet chestnut *Castanea* must be used and for plane, *Platanus* must be used.
5. The two-letter code for the Member State in which the professional operator issuing the plant passport is registered. The code for the UK (including Northern Ireland) is GB. The alphabetical, numerical or alphanumerical national registration number of the professional operator concerned.
6. The traceability code (delivery advice note numbers can be used) of the plant, plant product or the other object concerned.
7. The two-letter code of the Member State of origin, ie GB is used for UK.
8. As an example but not necessary at present, a QR code is shown which can support the trial of electronic passports which are not permitted at present. QR codes can also be used to supplement the traceability code.

This link can be used to view the new Plant Health Regulation (EU) 2017/2313 which describes the layout of plant passports.

RAPOs managing the movement of conifer wood, wood products, isolated bark and controlled Christmas trees/cut foliage and brash to Northern Ireland and Ireland must also include these additional ZP pest codes for conifer bark beetles; *Dendroctonus micans* c3, *Ips cembrae* c8 and *Ips sexdentatus* c10.

The movement of wood, wood products and isolated bark of sweet chestnut and plane species will require these species to be identified on the plant passport under Section A and the following pest descriptions to be used *Cryphonectria parasitica* b2 (for chestnut blight) and *Ceratocystis platani* b1 (for canker stain of plane). If these ZP codes change, an update will be issued.

The elements of the plant passport shall be arranged within a rectangular or square shape, and shall be legible without the use of a visual aid. The elements shall be contained within a border line, or otherwise clearly separated from any written or pictorial matter, so as to be easily visible and clearly distinguishable. The plant passport must follow the distinct format (with no additional information added) described for a plant passport and be shown on any material suitable for printing the plant passport. Using this approach, the plant passport could be incorporated onto delivery advice notes.

Annual Inspections

The competent authority must complete annual inspections of RAPOs issuing plant passports to ensure they are complying with the Plant Health Regulation. This inspection frequency may be reduced to once every two years, where a Pest Risk Management Plan approved by the competent authority has been in place for two years. The Forestry Commission are investigating inspection models, including using contract inspectors which could be aligned with other inspections, such as those for chain of custody, to reduce the burden on industry.

11th October 2019