

Memorandum of Understanding:

Promoting Integrated Pest Management in Europe

Preamble

Whether they are animals, plants or insects, pests can and do have a harmful impact on humans and the environment. Even if a wide variety of pests have always co-existed with mankind, sound evidence today suggests that urban areas are increasingly exposed to them and to pest-related diseases.

The ongoing evolution of climate change and unplanned urbanisation both contribute to the proliferation of pests and exacerbate the severity of their impact on public health, biodiversity, food and feed supply and even the citizen's perceptions of hygiene and security. On the other hand, we cannot wait for climate action measures to have their effect, for example, before addressing the unacceptable threat from pests and pest-borne diseases.

With the aim of achieving a better and more sustainable future for all, the United Nations has identified seventeen Sustainable Development Goals for 2030 (the SDGs). Professional pest management can provide no "silver bullet" for achieving all of these goals. Yet it has an essential role to play in ensuring public health and the welfare of EU citizens in the context of some of these objectives, while minimising the impact on the environment and enhancing the competitiveness of the EU economy.

In particular, pest management contributes to the goals of better health and well-being (**SDG 3**), sustainable cities (**SDG 11**) and climate change mitigation (**SDG 13**). An essential prerequisite to fulfilling this vital mission is to ensure the effective and efficient professionalization of the pest control industry around the world. With this initiative the industry in Europe is already showing the way and aims to go further.

Professional management of pests requires a thorough understanding of the pests themselves, their different behaviours and environments, especially when they are likely to cause harm to human and animal health. In addition, in-house pest management departments in organisations as well as pest management companies and their technicians need to be fully familiar with the range of techniques and products used in preventive and control practices.

Ultimately, a professional pest manager's intervention is intended to be sustainable – that is to say, minimizes risks to human health, to beneficial and non-target organisms, and to the environment. Conversely, in-house pest managers and providers of pest management services who act without the necessary knowledge, qualifications or training can produce unintended harm.

An intervention by a non-expert, can adversely affect the health and safety of both the workforce engaged in delivering that service and of the people that have sought out those services to protect their homes, businesses or neighbourhoods. Inappropriate measures or interventions carried out in the wrong way can seriously damage the environment. This, of course, harms the professional credibility of the entire pest management sector.

An approach based on the principles and practices of Integrated Pest Management and full respect of all applicable regulation is the best guarantee of an effective and professional outcome.

Integrated Pest Management

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is an approach established by the UN Food & Agriculture Organisation based on scientific research and is an ecosystem-based strategy that focuses on long-term prevention of pests or their damage through focusing mainly on techniques around habitat manipulation and modification of the cultural practices that can lead to pest proliferation.

Pesticides are used only after monitoring indicates that they are needed and according to established guidelines. Treatments are made with the goal of controlling only the target organism. Pest control materials are selected and applied in a manner that minimizes risks to human health, to beneficial and non-target organisms, and to the environment.

The Understanding

Therefore, we, as representatives of the European pest management sector and of the wide range of users of pest management services, understand and recognise the value of professional and sustainable pest management practices based on the principles and practices of Integrated Pest Management. We will take steps to ensure that this professionalism is expanded and enhanced in Europe. Such action is all the more important because it is a prerequisite for many organisations in fulfilling their social and extended producer responsibility both to their customers and to the citizens of Europe.

In this context, we are grateful to the EU Committee of the Regions for its support in promoting a Memorandum of Understanding between providers and users of professional pest management services and products in Europe. In October 2018, Mr. Mikel Irujo Amezaga, representative of the government of the Autonomous Region of Navarra to the Committee of the Regions, stated:

“We will look at ways to coordinate this soft law initiative in the agenda of the Committee of the Regions under the Urban Agenda and Healthy Cities initiatives, where regions and local communities should collaborate with professional pest management service providers to protect citizens in the urban environment.”

We, the signatories, call on the European Commission, the European Parliament, the EU Member States and all other stakeholders to acknowledge formally the key role of professional pest management in helping secure hygiene, public health and consumer safety across Europe and the need to ensure that steps are taken to address fraudulent activities that put the safety and well-being of citizens at risk.

Purpose of the Memorandum

All signatories to this Memorandum of Understanding support and endorse the commitments and minimum requirements that are the key characteristics of professional pest management, as a way to curb the harmful activities of unqualified service providers or improvised pest management programmes.

Pest management should be performed by trained technicians in accordance with the principles and practices of Integrated Pest Management.

The signatories call for official recognition by the EU institutions and the EU Member States of the key role of professional pest management in:

- Protecting the health and safety of citizens;
- Promoting a safe and healthy environment for all;

- Helping businesses and public facilities ensure high standards of hygiene;
- Helping ensure the protection of biodiversity and endangered species; and,
- Preserving the credibility of the overall pest management sector as an enabler of safe and sustainable living.

The pest management sector in Europe and its customers have therefore identified a number of key commitments that will be respected by professional pest managers as they go about their vital work.

Commitments

1. Professional pest management companies and in-house pest management departments in organisations must comply fully with all applicable laws where they operate and at least with the *CEN standard EN 16636* (ideally audited following the *CEPA Certified® protocols*).
2. Pest management technicians must demonstrate that they fulfil the necessary requirements to address pest-related issues. Thus, they should:
 - a. **Understand** the relevant biology, the behaviour of different pests and the need for careful management of any kind of infestation;
 - b. **Be abreast** of all relevant methods for the management of existing and future pest challenges;
 - c. **Be trained** in the sustainable and sensible use of biocides where these are required;
 - d. **Be aware** of the broader health and safety prerequisites of their activities alongside the use of biocides.
3. Pest management interventions delivered by pest management companies and in-house pest management departments and their technicians must be tailored to the needs and specificities of the different private and public operators that rely on these services and address their particular hygiene and sanitary requirements.
4. Trained technicians must apply the Integrated Pest Management approach and **follow the pest management hierarchy** – that is to say, **careful diagnosis** first; **exclusion** second; **restriction** third; followed by **destruction**, committing to use chemical or non-chemical means of destruction only after all other techniques have been explored.
5. Professional pest management companies and in-house pest management departments must be subject to **certification** by an **independent certifying body**.
6. Professional pest management companies and in-house pest management departments must be subject to **auditing** by independent, qualified certifying bodies on a regular basis, as per the *CEN standard EN 16636* (ideally following the *CEPA Certified® protocols*).
7. Users of pest management services in Europe **commit to work, wherever and whenever possible, with professional pest management companies only**, (preferentially CEPA Certified® companies) as the best way to protect homes, businesses and neighbourhoods from the dangers of infestation and thereby to help ensure the safety and well-being of citizens and/or of employees; to promote high standards of public health and safety; and to preserve the environment and biodiversity.
8. Organizations representing users of pest management services in Europe **commit to advocate to their members/networks the use of professional pest management companies only** (preferentially CEPA Certified® companies) as the best way to protect homes, businesses and neighbourhoods from the dangers of infestation and thereby to help ensure the safety and well-being of citizens and/or of employees; to promote high standards of public health and safety; and to preserve the environment and biodiversity.

To be completed by Signatories to the Memorandum of Understanding

IMPORTANT: Organisations/Persons wishing to commit to the “**Memorandum of Understanding**” should take the following steps:

- > fill in the information below
- > sign and date at the bottom of this page
- > initial pages 1, 2 and 3 of the Memorandum of Understanding for acceptance
- > send the signed/dated original by post or delivery service to CEPA at the address below

Ellen Moyse
CEPA #TheGoodPestManager
Rue du Trône 61, 1050 Ixelles Brussels, Belgium.

Organisation:.....

Address:.....

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Name of Authorised Representative:

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Position/Title:.....

Signature:

Date of signature:.....