

1. Why your country/state requires plant pest diagnostic capacity

- Support biosecurity requirements
- Support the farming community
- Self-reliance in taxonomy
- Lack of trained taxonomic expertise in pest diagnosis
- Adoption of new diagnostic techniques
- To safeguard against invasive species
- To mitigate the impact of endemic and exotic pests
- To validate our agricultural imports and exports are free from quarantine pests

2. Organizations & laboratories which have a role in plant pest diagnostics

- Agriculture Research Centre, Department of Agriculture Sarawak

3. Major strength & weaknesses in your country/state

i. Strength

- Basic laboratory facilities such as microscopes for morphological studies and equipment for conducting molecular work and biochemical tests are available

ii. Weaknesses

- No linkages or coordinated diagnostic networks between different institutions within the country
- No organized sharing of taxonomic or diagnostic expertise within the country
- Different capabilities of different laboratories or institutions
- No trained taxonomic expertise
- Lack of validated biological (insect, micro-organism & weed) collections
- Information on new and existing pests not easily available
- Insufficient capacity to address pest outbreaks or incursions
- No standard or harmonization of methods/protocols for pests diagnosis

4. Current or recent strategies, plans, initiatives or projects which are building on these strengths or dealing with weaknesses

- Development and compilation of plant health status information for future market access
- Development of new diagnostic methods/protocols and adaptation of technologies for diagnosis
- Sending entomologists, plant pathologists and weed scientists to courses conducted by international agencies (such as AUSAid, AANZFTA ECWP & etc.) when available
- Sending pest specimens to CABI, UK for identification
- Contact foreign scientists who the officers know personally through email

Note: Pests denote insect pests, pathogens & weeds