Report of the virtual meeting of the IPPC ePhyto Project Technical Committee & ePhyto Steering Group

9 November 2016

# Participants:

Christian Dellis (US), Maoyu Chen (CN), Peter Neimanis (AU, Chair), Shashank Rai (UNICC), Josiah Syanda (KE), and Shane Sela (IPPC Secretariat)

# Members unable to attend:

Nico Horn (NL), Mostafa Abdelaziz (EG), Walter Alessandrini (AR), Craig Fedchock, (IPPC Secretariat) and Kyu-Ock Yim (CPM Bureau)

# Introduction

Mr. Peter Neimanis who was selected by the members to Chair the Project Technical Committee (PTC) and the ePhyto Steering Group (ESG) during the last face to face meeting of the PTC/ESG in La Plata, Argentina welcomed members to the virtual meeting.

# Development of the requirements documents

Mr. Shanshank Rai noted that the hub requirements presentation provided in La Plata had been updated and circulated to members. Comments received on the presentation will be included in the final requirements document to be provided to the PTC/ESG in early December. He also noted that generic ePhyto national system (GeNS) requirements are being reworked based upon input from the PTC/ESG at the La Plata meeting. He pointed out that the presentation on the GeNS requirements was complete and that the final requirements document should also be completed by early December.

# Web Services Description Language (WSDL) for the operation of the ePhyto Solution

Mr. Rai reported that plant protection authorities from Netherlands had met with the United Nations International Computing Centre (UNICC) to review the proposal for the WSDL for the ePhyto system. He noted that the plant protection authorities were please by the ePhyto proposal and had agreed to withdraw their proposal for a defined WSDL for the UN/CEFACT schema for agriculture trade given that the ePhyto proposal was much simpler. UNICC agreed to circulate the WSDL by 15th November for review by the PTC/ESG.

# Commodity codes

Mr. Neimanis reminded members that Mr. Nico Horn had circulated a document outlining a path forward for addressing the commodity classes to be used in ePhyto. He indicated that members should review the document and provide comments to Mr. Horm by no later than 15th November.

Mr. Dellis noted that work was progressing in finalizing the simplified mapping structure for ePhyto. He indicated that most items of the certificate had been mapped but that some issues on the use measurements. Proposals that an “other” category could be used for measurements is not possible given that schema does not include an option for using text as an alternative to use of numbers for example.

# Ghana implementation assessment workshop

Messrs Sela and Syanda met with Ghanaian phytosanitary authorities and border agencies to review the ePhyto project plan and to develop a cooperative work plan for implementation outlining the steps leading to deployment of a generic ePhyto national system (GeNS). The group finalized Ghana’s analysis of their current certification processes which would allow them to fully analyse the business process changes that are needed to implement the ePhyto Solution. Ghana has already undertaken discussions with its information technology (IT) provider to identify some of the key infrastructure requirements for an IT system for tracking agricultural production in relation to phytosanitary certification. The infrastructure used in this system will also support the current deployment of the GeNS and potentially replace it in the future. The group also discussed how the team will undertake stakeholder engagement to ensure that clients and relevant agencies such as Ghana Revenue Authority - Customs Division are ready for the implementation the ePhyto system. Ghana has developed a Customs Single Window System referred to as Ghana Community Network (GCNet) which facilitates the movement of trade information between brokers and Customs. The workshop participants discussed with the GCNet provider the option of transferring certification information from GeNS to GCNet to facilitate exports.

# UNESCAP workshop on electronic certification for SPS

The United Nation’s Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (UNESCAP)’s hosted a workshop in Bangkok, Thailand from 1-3 November 2016. The Workshop was attended by eleven countries from the Asian region and national and international experts. The workshop focussed on disseminating information on the importance of paperless systems and sharing experiences in developing e-SPS systems including business process analysis, cost-benefit analysis and other requirements which support an effective implementation electronic certification. The countries worked on identifying the challenges and benefits in implementing systems like ePhyto and determined what activities are required to support a move to electronic data transfers in facilitating trade. Many countries indicated that they had begun development of national ePhyto systems but noted that the underlying challenge was the availability of financing to support development, implementation and in particular the long term sustainability of the system. Many had also engaged with senior governments and with international funding organizations to acquire funding to start the development of system.

# STDF project plan

The IPPC Secretariat reported that following the approval of the project document by the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF), the project agreement between the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the STDF was being reviewed by the FAO bureaucracy. It was expected that the review should only require a few weeks and that funding should occur shortly after signing of the agreement by FAO senior management which is expected in mid-November

# Action items

|  | **Action** | **Lead** | **Due Date** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1.
 | Completion of mapping related to phytosanitary certificate fields | C. Dellis/W. Alessandrini | 15 December |
|  | Finalize the standardization of commodity classes/ production conditions | N. Horn | 1 December |
|  | Finalize requirements documents for hub and generic system  | S. Rai | 2 December |
|  | Circulate draft description of WSDL  | S. Rai | 15 November  |
|  | Finalize project agreement between FAO and STDF  | S. Sela | 15 November |
|  | Feedback on HUB specs PowerPoint (v2.0)  | All | 1 December |