

ePhyto Project Advisory Committee Meeting
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
Rome, Italy
Meeting #3
16 July 2018

Participants

Members

Barbara Cooper (Chair)
Bill Gain (World Bank)
Ann Backhouse (OIE)
Diana Tellechea (OIE)
Tojo Kusuma (WCO)
Aji Bhaskara (ASEAN)
Peter Neimanis (ESG
Chair)
Alexander J. Moret (on
behalf of Benno Slot)

Observers

Simon Padilla (STDF)

IPPC Secretariat

Jingyuan Xia
Craig Fedchock
Shane Sela
Laura Vicaria

Opening of the Meeting:

The meeting was opened by the Secretary to the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) Mr. Jingyuan Xia and the Chair of the ePhyto Project Advisory Committee (PAC) Ms. Barbara Cooper who welcomed participants to Rome. Following introductions by participants, Secretary Xia reviewed the accomplishments in moving the ePhyto Solution forward that had occurred during the first half of 2018. He also noted the success of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM), and various initiatives in standard setting and implementation of standards. Dr. Xia also thanked the group for its contribution and dedication towards the ePhyto project. The chair also acknowledged the work of the IPPC ePhyto Steering Group (ESG), in partnership with the United Nations International Computing Center (UNICC), in progressing the ePhyto Solution to the point it is currently at.

Selection of the Rapporteur

Craig Fedchock agreed to act as rapporteur

Agenda Adoption

The agenda was adopted with agreement to discuss a potential 4th Symposium on ePhyto, noting Secretary Xia's opening. In addition, it was noted that the European Commission presentation should be struck from the agenda as they were unable to attend.

ePhyto Progress

The Secretariat provided a presentation on the developments during 2018. Key points included:

- the mapping and message structure being resolved,
- the development of the GeNS including a demonstration of the system
- the outcome of the Hub pilot and resolution of issues raised by countries participating in the pilot.

Additional discussion concerned the use of the Hub for certificates other than phytosanitary certificates. The Chair noted that Australia had proposed exchanging food certificates through the hub as an opportunity to test the utility of the hub more broadly. The PAC noted that such trials should be encouraged and included in forward planning. The use of the UNCEFACT schema was discussed noting the progress made by the Steering Committee with the mapping of the ISPM12 to the Schema.

It was agreed that the PAC should aim to focus on the following areas;

- Mapping challenges (specific to the schema – resolve any uncertainties)
- Security of the message (digital signature, EC context and non-repudiation)
- Implementation/harmonization (partnerships, who will this be with and what will the objectives be)
- How do we remove paper (go Paperless- making this a long run Objective from the start)

It was suggested that the PAC can play an important role in prioritizing these objectives, however for that there needs to be a clarity around the role and future work of the PAC.

The GeNS:

The GeNS was presented, noting that it is intended to be a simple mechanism for developing countries, but that any country may use it. The system is based upon a number of exporters to NPPOs and within government work flows which were demonstrated. The pilot project for GeNS was discussed, noting the pilot countries, the business process engineering developments and latest events.

The project timeline was outlined. Pilot countries will be working with developers commencing in early August, followed by the pilot which is expected in the third quarter of 2018. The pilot is expected to be complete in early 2019 and will be followed by opening participation to all countries.

IAG Case Study:

The Secretariat reported that the Industry Advisory Group (IAG) had proposed to conduct an analysis of the impacts to trade from implementing the ePhyto hub. The objective of the study is to document some of the improvements in trade flow related to moving to electronic certification exchange, as well as highlighting any negative impacts that need to be addressed. The Secretariat noted that although the IAG had expected to commence the studies during the pilot there were no significant results thus far, since the majority of countries participating on the hub had not commenced exchanges of certificates for shipments in trade. However, it was noted that the IAG would be meeting later in the week to discuss this issue and go forward with the studies. When considering the benefits of implementation, PAC members noted that the benefit of minimizing fraud; increasing confidence in the system and the process and changes to compliance levels and reporting of non-compliance.

Advocacy:

The advocacy and communications strategy was presented, noting that the Secretariat is focused on two aspects: increasing implementation and advocacy to sustain operation. A brief presentation was given on the currently considered approaches and directions for the advocacy strategy, simultaneously linking to the communications strategy which will aid the latter objectives. An essential part towards developing an advocacy strategy is identifying the different roles and partnership that should be included. The PAC agreed there is a role for the PAC group and these need to be clearly defined and linked to the outlined objectives. Multiple recommendations were given such as donor visibility. The advocacy strategy will be a component of a 5 year strategic plan being developed by the Secretariat to transition the Solution from a project to a stabilized operating program.

Business Model

The Secretariat presented the recent outcomes of the ePhyto Business model, which recommended on a 5 year donor-based funding model. The Secretariat explained the process that was undertaken to develop the model. The PAC discussed the different models that were originally considered, as well as the current status and final recommendation given in the report. The representative of the OIE noted that the PAC should be aware that any decision on a funding model may also create expectations for its Members in the future, as it was also in the very early stages of exploring its own role in e-veterinary certification. Following some initial discussion, there was consensus that over the long term the CPM should consider a combined approach to funding (where different aspects of the operation are funded through differing strategies such as FAO increases in resources to the Secretariat, donor support, user-pay, etc.). The PAC requested to obtain a copy of the final business model report.

5-year Strategic Plan

The IPPC Secretariat reported that the CPM and CPM Bureau had advocated that the Secretariat commence the development of a 5-year operating strategy that outlines how the Solution will operate following the closure of the project. The plan will outline the governance, financing, operating structure, implementation and transition arrangements. The PAC agreed that such a plan is critical to a stabilized operation of the Solution. NPPOs and traders will want assurance that once electronic certificates are adopted that these remain the basis of trade, particularly since certain benefits achieved by transition from paper to electronic certificates can be maintained. The PAC noted that the objective of the plan must be to move fully to paperless certification which is contingent on a number of key factors including interoperability between systems, agreement on security measures, etc. The Secretariat noted that the plan needs to be presented to the CPM in April 2019 and to meet that deadline, a draft should be available for the PAC to review in September.

The PAC reiterated the key strategic priorities/ consideration of the PAC in relation to the 5 year strategic Plan. These priorities will form part of the Bureau paper that will sit over the 5 year strategic plan document.

As outline above these were:

- Mapping challenges (specific to the schema, and have it endorsed by the PAC)
- Security of the message (digital signature, EC context and non-repudiation)
- Implementation/harmonization (partnerships, who will this be with and what will the objectives be)
- How do we remove paper (go Paperless- making this a long run Objective from the start)

IPPC and World Bank work to improve border procedures

A short review was provided on the interaction between the World Bank and the IPPC, including that a consultant with the IPPC Secretariat in preparing the GeNS pilot countries of Sri Lanka and Samoa for implementation, in cooperation with the ESG member from the South Pacific. The World Bank also advised on the blueprint work in Sri Lanka and the time-release studies in Lesotho and Swaziland. The representative of the World Bank noted that various efforts are underway to implement electronic certificates by SPS standard setting bodies and that continued collaboration among the three sisters was encouraged.

Work by international organizations in electronic certification

WCO

The World Customs Organization (WCO) reported that it is looking to consult with IPPC ePhyto experts in order to align the WCO data model with the mapping work being undertaken by the IPPC. The Secretariat indicated that it would support this collaboration by making experts available.



CODEX

The PAC chair provided a quick overview of CODEX's work on paperless certification. She noted that the CCFICS Working Group is developing a guideline on paperless certification that generally outlines the process of using a harmonized electronic certificate.

OIE

The OIE has recently received funding from the STDF to undertake an analysis of what its member countries may need in order to implement electronic veterinary certification. As part of this project, 12 countries (6 developed and 6 developing) have been selected for an assessment of needs. Project is expected to be completed in 2020. A first meeting of the group was to occur in July at which time the scope and strategy for the survey was to be developed.

ASEAN Single Window

A representative from ASEAN (the ASEAN Secretariat) presented and provided an update on the development of the ASEAN Single Window (ASW) and its challenges. The system has been designed for the exchange of electronic document among ASEAN Member States within the region. ASEAN are currently exchanging the electronic version of the Certificates of Origin (COO) under the ASEAN Trade In Goods Agreement (ATIGA) "e-ATIGA Form D", since the commencement of live operation of the ASW begun on 1 January 2018. As far ASEAN goes further, ASEAN Member States have committed to include other trade-related documents, amongst others is electronic phytosanitary certificates, through the ASW Gateway. However, it has been unclear on how these exchanges would align with the proposed ePhyto Solution given that i) ASEAN focuses on the operationalization of the ASW within the region, and ii) the details of the ASEAN exchange could not be available at the current stage. Further collaboration between the IPPC and ASEAN was highlighted and encouraged as the continuation to the development of the Single Window system in the near future.

New PAC TOR

The PAC proposed, during its last meeting, that its scope should be expanded to address collaboration of standard setting bodies in electronic certificates as opposed to a singular focus on ePhyto. The PAC reviewed a proposed draft terms of reference for the new body. It was agreed that further discussion and revision of the documents is needed. Particularly to more clearly identify the objectives of the group and who should steward such a group. The representative of the STDF agreed to follow up on a potential role of the STDF stewarding or hosting such a committee. However, given the importance of completing the ePhyto Project the PAC will continue until the end of 2019.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be defined by the outcome of the Bureau meeting in October of 2018. Overall aiming for the next face to face meeting to take place in the summer 2019.

Action Item	Owner	Due Date	Status
Distribute Business Model Report to the PAC	Vicaria	ASAP	Done
Draft strategic 5 year plan for review	Sela	14 September	Done
PAC to provide feedback on plan	PAC	20 th September	Done
Initiate WCO and IPPC collaboration, in particular to data model alignment (IPPC		Progress



outlining benefits and needs)			
Letter from the IPPC to the ASEAN Secretariat to encourage and request working together	Vicaria	1st September	progress
STDF to follow back on potential future role of the organization as the PAC evolves in future years	Padilla	Next meeting	
Develop a proposal for a pilot of exchanging food certs through the Hub with NZ	Cooper	October?	