Recent Developments related to the ePhyto Solution

*Prepared by the IPPC Secretariat*

The IPPC ePhyto Solution continues to be a sustained success for the IPPC Community. Through 30 September 2021, the system is exchanging an average of 100,000 ePhytos per month. The number of countries registered on the system stands at 101, with additional countries being added on a regular basis. Of the 101 registered countries, 58 countries are now exchanging in production. This means they are using the ePhyto Solution as their primary business tool for the exchange of phytosanitary certificates.

The ePhyto Steering Group (ESG) meets on a monthly basis to review developments across the IPPC regions, discuss enhancements and technical upgrades to the ePhyto Hub and the web-based Generic ePhyto National System (GeNS), as well as to provide input and feedback on ePhyto issues that ESG members may raise. These monthly meetings are held in in coordination with the IPPC Secretariat’s IT provider for ePhyto, the United Nations International Computing Centre (UNICC). UNICC continues to provide uninterrupted 24/7 operations while providing the latest security enhancements, additional features (such as eSignature and additional messaging), as well outstanding technical support.

Since CPM-15 (2021) and in collaboration with FAO regional offices in Budapest, Cairo, and Harare, the Industry Advisory Group, the Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation, APEC, UNESCAP, and the World Bank, the IPPC Secretariat ePhyto team has participated in several webinars presenting the IPPC ePhyto Solution globally. The various webinars involved more than 1000 attendees in total. Additional webinars are being planned for Colombia, Turkey and others Contracting parties.

The IPPC ePhyto Solution has also been promoted as an example of digitizing SPS certificates in a recent OECD publication, “Digital Opportunities for Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Systems and the Trade Facilitation Effects of SPS Electronic Certification". Special thanks are also extended from the IPPC Secretariat to the Republic of Korea for the recent production of an ePhyto promotional video available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8HEK_gRNEKY> , to Australia for the recent donation of AUD$200,000 for the ePhyto Solution, and to all the other Contracting Party donors who have continued to contribute to the Multidonor Trust Fund for sustaining the IPPC ePhyto Solution.

Finally, the IPPC ePhyto Solution continues to have sufficient resources to sustain operations beyond the end of 2022 and well into 2023. In addition, the Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation is also progressing to provide US$95,000 for the ePhyto Solution. The Secretariat is also working with the Alliance to put in place a “letter of intent” which will serve to further cement the relationship between the Secretariat and the Alliance for work not only on ePhyto but also to support PCEs at least in Senegal and perhaps elsewhere.

An announcement for the focus group on ePhyto financial sustainability has been issued and the closing date for nominations is October 22. The Secretariat is looking forward to having this group get started in order to put into place a viable and secure financial plan for ePhyto which will ensure sustainability well into the future.