



COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

EIGHTEENTH SESSION

PHYTOSANITARY CAPACITY EVALUATION (PCE): UPDATE TO CPM-18 AND UPCOMING ACTIVITIES FOR 2024

AGENDA ITEM 14.4

(Prepared by the IPPC Secretariat)

1. Background

- [1] The Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation (PCE) is a process of multiple phases, with a wide range of benefits, to help countries evaluate their phytosanitary capacities. The IC Team on PCE,¹ along with the IPPC Secretariat, continues to advance on the items prioritized by the IC from the PCE strategy. The PCE Strategy 2020-2030² was agreed upon by the IC and noted by CPM.
- [2] This paper highlights the achievements related to the PCE undertaken by the IPPC Secretariat in 2023. These achievements are structured as per the key results of the PCE strategy for 2020-2030:
- Contracting parties, donors and development organizations are aware of the PCE and understand the benefits arising from its application.
 - Long-term sustainable funding is in place to support the maintenance and administration of the PCE, and resources are mobilized to support the application of the PCE.
 - The PCE software and platform are reliable, effective and easy to use.
 - The PCE Tool is revised and updated regularly and new modules and strategic planning tools are added as needed to support the IPPC Mission (e.g. environmental module, implementation follow up tool).
 - A strong network of phytosanitary expertise is available to facilitate the application of PCEs.
 - The Monitoring and Evaluation framework is used to analyze, measure and report outcomes from the application of PCEs.

2. Recent PCE implementation in countries

2.1 PCEs in African Union countries

- [3] The IPPC Secretariat is currently carrying out the phytosanitary component of the “Strengthening Food Control and Phytosanitary Capacities and Governance” (GCP/GLO/949/EC)³ project, funded by the European Union. This involves conducting nine PCEs in African Union countries: Mauritius, Djibouti, Eswatini, Kenya, Malawi, Seychelles, Rwanda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. The partnership between the IPPC Secretariat with the national plant protection organizations (NPPOs) and FAO national offices has enabled the advanced implementation of these PCEs.

¹ IC Team on PCE membership list: <https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/91988/>

² The PCE Strategy 2020-2030: <https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/87701/>

³ Strengthening Food Control and Phytosanitary Capacities and Governance (GCP/GLO/949/EC) project: <https://www.ippc.int/en/core-activities/capacity-development/projects-on-implementation-and-capacity-development/strengthening-food-control-and-phytosanitary-capacities-and-governance/>

- [4] Eight out of the nine PCEs have been validated, meaning each country now has a Phytosanitary Capacity Development Strategy, a work plan, and a budget for the proposed activities that came out of the PCE process. Seven of the nine countries have also begun reviewing aspects of their plant health law, beginning with an analysis of their current legal provisions by using module 2 of the PCE –National Phytosanitary Legislation. Once these activities are implemented, they will help to improve and strengthen the national Phytosanitary systems.
- [5] The project has yielded good results, leading to its extension to two more African Union countries in 2024. Uganda and Egypt have requested the IPPC Secretariat to implement PCEs in their countries, and preparations are currently underway. This update was written in December 2022.
- [6] In keeping with key result 5 of the PCE strategy 2020-2030, before implementing the nine PCEs in African Union countries, a PCE facilitators training was conducted in November 2022. The PCE confidentiality undertaking was implemented, and the agreed procedure for fully certifying these trained facilitators and trainers will be implemented in 2024. When certified, a cadre of PCE trainers and new facilitators will be available to increase the pool of expertise available to facilitate the application of PCEs.

Other PCEs

- [7] The PCE in Uzbekistan, funded by USAID and the Asian Development Bank, was validated in April 2023. The PCE in Senegal, carried out under the IPPC project “IPPC ePhyto and Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation” (GCP/GLO/1034/GER-F), was validated in August 2023. Cambodia’s PCE validation mission took place in September under the FAO China South-South Cooperation (GCP/INT/291/CPR)⁴ programme.
- [8] A summary table of the PCE's progress in 2023 is provided in Appendix 1.
- [9] Ethiopia, Mali, and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela have expressed interest in conducting PCEs, and discussions are underway for PCEs in six Western Balkan parties. During the 2023 IPPC Regional Workshops, there was significant interest in conducting PCEs. Furthermore, a PCE is planned to be held in the Philippines.

3. Countries, donors, and development organizations are aware of the PCE and understand the benefits arising from its application

- [10] In 2023, PCE Communications achieved a remarkable collaboration with the Food Systems and Food Safety Division under the project “Strengthening Food Control and Phytosanitary Capacities and Governance” (GCP/GLO/949/EC). FAO and IPPC published several features and interviews related to the phytosanitary component of the project GCP/GLO/949/EC on the IPP website and FAO Food Systems and Food Division webpage. These communication activities inspire and inform a wide audience of success stories on PCEs. Experiences in PCEs, such as those in Saint Lucia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, and Mauritius, serve as a shining example of what can be achieved through dedication and hard work. Among the most inspiring success stories:
- *How Saint Lucia’s PCE put data collection at the heart of plant health*, published on 26 July 2022.
 - *How PCE helps boost Nepal’s access to export markets*, published on 14 October 2022.
 - *Sri Lanka and Cambodia make progress in strengthening phytosanitary capacities, through South-South Cooperation*, and,
 - *Mauritius concludes evaluation of national phytosanitary system*, both published on 30 November 2023.
- [11] The IPPC Secretariat has been actively promoting achievements and benefits related to PCEs through diverse channels and events. A noteworthy event was World Food Safety Day, celebrated on 7 June 2023, where the Secretariat participated in a panel discussion about assessing food safety and plant health in 11 African countries. This project is promising and aims to benefit many. Additionally, the Secretariat joined

⁴ FAO China South-South Cooperation (GCP/INT/291/CPR) programme: <https://www.ippc.int/en/core-activities/capacity-development/projects-on-implementation-and-capacity-development/fao-china-project/>

the FAO office in Geneva's hybrid webinar on 24 November 2023, titled, One Health and Plant Health: Strengthening Phytosanitary Systems Worldwide.⁵ The webinar was successful, attracting over 200 registrations and over 100 connected participants.

- [12] The IPPC Secretariat has collaborated with NPPOs and FAO national representations of eight countries that have benefited from the EU-funded project, "Strengthening Food Control and Phytosanitary Capacities and Governance" (GCP/GLO/949/EC). This partnership has been instrumental in PCE communication efforts, including press releases of validated PCEs in these countries. As a result, over 10 media articles have been published in national news outlets, and NPPO, FAO, and IPPC social media channels (Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram) have featured these efforts.

4. The PCE software and platform are reliable, effective, and easy to use

- [13] At the Strategic Planning Group (SPG) meeting held in October 2023, the IPPC Secretariat presented the steps to initiate the PCE process. Countries interested in conducting the PCE have three modalities to choose from, which differ in the level of involvement of the IPPC Secretariat and PCE Facilitators, as shown below:

Bronze support:	The first modality allows countries to undertake the PCE process independently without any support from the IPPC Secretariat or a PCE Facilitator.
Silver support:	The second option enables countries to select a PCE Facilitator from the IPPC Secretariat's updated list of facilitators. The Secretariat assists the country in establishing contact with the chosen PCE Facilitator, but the country retains full responsibility for coordinating with the facilitator and agreeing on contractual terms.
Gold support:	The third option involves full engagement of the IPPC Secretariat, which supports the entire PCE process, from the recruitment of the PCE Facilitator up to the PCE validation.

4.1 PCE Desk Study

- [14] During the November 2021 IC meeting, it was agreed to use some funds allocated by the CPM Bureau to conduct a desk study on improving the PCE, with a focus on confidentiality. The SPG also agreed in their October 2021 meeting that the study should consider the accessibility and flexibility of the PCE. This decision was later endorsed during the CPM-16 discussions in 2022. During the 2021 meeting, the IC postponed updating the PCE strategy until after the STDF 401 report was published. The members agreed that it would be beneficial to conduct the desk study first and then approve the strategy after considering the study results.
- [15] The IC agreed on the Terms of Reference for the PCE desk study through e-Decision. The Secretariat circulated a call for Service Providers in January and March 2023, and after a thorough evaluation process, Gelder, Gingras & Associates were awarded the contract. The work started with a kick-off meeting on 18 September 2023, and is currently in the data synthesis stage. The PCE desk study will broadly explore the needs of its target audience (NPPOs), challenges and successes of the current PCE modules, tools, and process, and views on the issues of impartiality, flexibility, transparency, accessibility, and confidentiality of the PCE tool. The methodology used relies on a preliminary survey, followed by interviews of 16 individuals belonging to various audience categories, namely NPPOs who have implemented a PCE, PCE facilitators, NPPOs who have not implemented a PCE, and donors. The outcomes of the PCE Desk Study are expected to be available in March 2024.

4.2 PCE Terms and Conditions

- [16] In the past three years, the issues of ownership and open access to the online PCE system have been discussed at both the SPG and IC meetings. The Secretariat clarified during the October 2023 SPG that ICPM-3 (2001) had adopted a recommendation requesting that PCE results be kept as confidential as desired by the country and that the Secretariat undertake to maintain and update the PCE (or make

⁵ FAO webinar: One Health and plant health: Strengthening phytosanitary systems worldwide: <https://www.ippc.int/en/news/ippc-secretariat-to-moderate-fao-webinar-on-role-of-plant-health-in-one-health/>

appropriate arrangements for maintaining and updating). To allow clarity and a better understanding of the ownership and management of the PCE, the IPPC Secretariat consulted with various FAO units (legal unit, copyright unit, and data protection unit), which all clarified that the PCE is FAO property and that, as such, terms and conditions should be set according to FAO rules.

[17] A template of Terms and Conditions was provided by the copyright unit, which was further completed and commented upon by both the copyright and data protection units, which were responsible for the drafting of such document. The Terms and Conditions will be shared and agreed upon by all PCE users. The PCE Terms and Conditions were presented to the IC Team on PCE and the Bureau. The IC team on PCE commented on the document. Once approved by the relevant FAO units, the PCE Terms and Conditions will be shared with the Bureau and then noted by CPM.

5. Long-term sustainable funding of the PCE

[18] In the November IC Team on PCE meeting, the members noted that PCEs are funded by projects, and there is no dedicated budget in FAO for maintaining the process and its tool. It was suggested that this matter be considered in the IPPC resource mobilization strategy. The IC Team on PCE will discuss further options in 2024.

[19] The CPM is invited to:

- (1) *note* the achievements during 2023 aligned with the Key results of the PCE Strategy 2020-2030
- (2) *note* the advances made towards realizing the desk study on PCE.
- (3) *note* the advances made towards producing PCE terms and conditions.
- (4) *Note* the continually increasing requests for both implementing PCEs in countries and the need to improve the process and tool, while no sustainable funding is available at the Secretariat level for this activity.

Appendix 1. Update PCEs

Country	Project funding	Progress	Facilitator Arrangements	Facilitator
Uzbekistan	USAID and ADB ((Asian Development Bank)	Validated in April 2023	NPPO contracted the Facilitator	Ringolds Arnitis
Cambodia	China South-South Cooperation	Validated in September 2023	Facilitator provided by the Secretariat	Camilo Beltrán Montoya
Senegal	GCP/GLO/1034/GER-F: IPPC ePhyto and Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation	Validated in August 2023	Facilitator provided by the Secretariat	Descartes Koumba
Djibouti	UE funded project Strengthening Food Control and Phytosanitary Capacities and Governance (GCP/GLO/949/EC)	Validated in September 2023	Facilitator provided by the Secretariat	Lucien K. Kouame Mekki Chouibani
Eswatini	UE funded project Strengthening Food Control and Phytosanitary Capacities and Governance (GCP/GLO/949/EC)	Validated in November 2023	Facilitator provided by the Secretariat	Namho Mudada Francisco Gutierrez
Kenya	UE funded project Strengthening Food Control and Phytosanitary Capacities and Governance (GCP/GLO/949/EC)	Validated in November 2023	Facilitator provided by the Secretariat	Camilo Beltrán Montoya Fitzroy White
Malawi	UE funded project Strengthening Food Control and Phytosanitary Capacities and Governance (GCP/GLO/949/EC)	Validated in November 2023	Facilitator provided by the Secretariat	Barbara Peterson Ringolds Arnitis
Mauritius	UE funded project Strengthening Food Control and Phytosanitary Capacities and Governance (GCP/GLO/949/EC)	Validated in August 2023	Facilitator provided by the Secretariat	Juan Rull Fitzroy White
Rwanda	UE funded project Strengthening Food Control and Phytosanitary Capacities and Governance (GCP/GLO/949/EC)	Validated in November	Facilitator provided by the Secretariat	Brenda Mweemba Mekki Chouibani

Seychelles	UE funded project Strengthening Food Control and Phytosanitary Capacities and Governance (GCP/GLO/949/EC)	Validated in November 2023	Facilitator provided by the Secretariat	Camilo Beltrán Montoya Fitzroy White
Zambia	UE funded project Strengthening Food Control and Phytosanitary Capacities and Governance (GCP/GLO/949/EC)	Validated in December 2023	Facilitator provided by the Secretariat	Isaac Macharia Francisco Gutierrez
Zimbabwe	UE funded project Strengthening Food Control and Phytosanitary Capacities and Governance (GCP/GLO/949/EC)	To be validated in February 2024	Facilitator provided by the Secretariat	Justina Chivanga Ringolds Arnitis