



CPM 2024/INF/11: Call for proposals for stories of successes and challenges in implementation of the IPPC, ISPMs and CPM Recommendations

(Prepared by the IPPC Secretariat)

Introduction

The International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) Secretariat issued a [call](#) inviting IPPC contracting parties, Regional Plant Protection Organizations (RPPOs) and Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) observers to submit stories of successes, challenges and solutions related to the implementation of the IPPC, International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs), and CPM Recommendations.

Five stories of successes, challenges and solutions were submitted from Argentina, Nicaragua, the Philippines, Uganda, and Uzbekistan, covering topics such as the IPPC ePhyto Solution, Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation, simulation exercises and pest risk management.

Argentina: Pioneering the implementation of ePhyto worldwide

In 2009, Argentina embarked on a journey to adopt electronic phytosanitary certification for agricultural products, aiming to facilitate faster and safer trade. The country embraced the IPPC ePhyto Solution in 2020, becoming one of the first countries to do so.

Since going paperless, Argentina has sent over 109,000 ePhytos to 40 countries and received nearly 29,000 ePhytos from 24 countries. This transition has streamlined transactions, minimized forged or invalid certificates, and reduced processing delays at borders, thus facilitating Argentina's exports and imports in plant and plant products. Additionally, ePhyto implementation has led to decreased paper usage, particularly advantageous during the global COVID-19 pandemic, with reported savings for companies. Despite challenges, such as IT issues, Argentina's success was bolstered by national and international support and proactive measures to address technical obstacles, ensuring the effective implementation of ePhytos. To achieve this, the ISPM 12 (*Phytosanitary certificates*), Appendix 1 (*Electronic phytosanitary certificates, information on standard XML schemas and exchange mechanisms*) was a key guidance and a substantial conceptual framework.

There are many benefits offered by ePhyto, and Argentina's experience shows how this tool can streamline the certification process and communication between the sending and destination countries involved in trade activity. Argentina has made a great progress with ePhyto, and encourages more countries to join, so that the ambitious goal of achieving the use of ePhyto by all countries participating in the international trade in plant and plant products become real.

Uganda: ePhyto – Timely Intervention and Success Solution

Uganda faced many challenges due to the usage of paper certificates (PCs), which were subsequently addressed by the implementation of the IPPC ePhyto solution in 2020. Challenges related to PCs included

forged or invalid certificates, time needed to generate and deliver corrected certificates, causing processing delays at the border, and high business costs.

Since its implementation in 2020, ePhyto has been embraced across Uganda's government and the private sector, facilitating trade and improving compliance with phytosanitary and biosecurity standards. Benefits included increased reliability, faster service, and real-time data collection for the public sector, which as a result increased confidence of international trading partners in Uganda's NPPO. Uganda's private sector also benefited from ePhyto through reduced cost of doing business with the possibility to avoid delays at the border associated with PCs.

This success story serves as inspiration for other countries, highlighting the benefits of adopting ePhyto for enhancing export trade, phytosanitary controls, and informed decision-making. The ePhyto data reports have enabled NPPO Administrators to make informed staff deployment decisions based on volumes and frequency of certification through a particular border point.

Therefore, the Generic ePhyto National System (GeNS) became both a trade facilitation solution and improved Uganda's compliance obligations for phytosanitary and biosecurity to its trading partners.

Strengthening Response Capacity to Fusarium TR4: Nicaragua's Regional Simulation Success

Prevention, preparedness and timely response to possible incursion of *Fusarium oxysporum* f. sp. *cubense* Tropical Race 4 (Fusarium TR4) are essential for NPPOs to keep this deadly threat to bananas at bay. In April 2023, Nicaragua conducted regional simulation exercises in Fusarium TR4 with the objective to strengthen the response capacity of the NPPOs in the Latin America region. Representatives of 15 countries, as well as representatives from regional and international organizations, attended the simulation exercises.

The drill, conducted across various scenarios including international airports, laboratories, border posts and farms, showcased the country's preparedness in detecting and responding to Fusarium TR4. Notably, Instituto de Protección y Sanidad Agropecuaria (IPSA), demonstrated the implementation of the Canine Technique for inspection, where the IPSA officials used specially trained dogs to detect the high-risk materials that were 'planted' in the luggage of a traveler. In the field simulation, Nicaragua showcased the benefit of its unique mobile laboratory equipped with loop-mediated isothermal amplification (LAMP) technology for quick sampling and diagnosis, enabling rapid response measures.

Through the simulation exercises, IPSA's response capacity was significantly bolstered, facilitating enhanced coordination among governmental institutions and regional organizations. This success story has inspired other NPPOs and RPPOs to conduct similar drills, fostering preparedness and strategic partnerships to effectively address potential emergencies.

Revolutionizing Plant Health: The Impact of Remote Microscopy Systems in the Philippines

A new era in plant quarantine has dawned with the introduction of remote microscopy systems in the Philippines. Initiated through the project "*Capacity Building on an Efficient Approach for Insect Pest Identification Using Remote Microscopy System*" in 2022, funded by a generous grant from the Korea Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs, this project aimed to enhance the capabilities of the Bureau of Plant Industry, National Plant Quarantine Services Division in pest identification. With the installation of advanced remote microscopy systems and comprehensive training for plant quarantine officers, the process of pest inspection and analysis has been revolutionized. The Philippines is no longer

reliant solely on physical inspections, the new system allows for rapid and accurate identification of pests through detailed imaging and networked laboratories. Deployed across six major ports in the Philippines, this technology has significantly expedited the identification of potential threats, leading to swifter decision-making and response efforts. Consequently, the Philippines has seen a marked improvement in its plant quarantine capabilities, bolstering its ability to address emerging threats and ensuring the continued health and prosperity of its plant life. This success story serves as inspiration for other nations facing similar challenges, highlighting the transformative potential of technology in environmental preservation and plant quarantine.

Uzbekistan: Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation (PCE) – Uzbekistan’s experience

The NPPO of Uzbekistan faced a specific challenge: the need to analyze and improve the national phytosanitary system to align with international standards. To address this, Uzbekistan conducted two Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluations (PCE).

following the completion of the first PCE (2017-2018), supported by FAO, Uzbekistan amended *The Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan about Plant Quarantine* in 2018, which was later adopted in 2020. The amendments were implemented to ensure that the legislation was in line with the global standards and requirements. Additionally, Uzbekistan joined the IPPC in 2020, and developed the *National Phytosanitary Capacity Development Strategy*.

The second PCE (2022-2023) supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), aimed to evaluate phytosanitary potential and capabilities, identify gaps, and harmonize national phytosanitary standards with the ISPMs.

Throughout the application of all 12 modules of PCE, various stakeholders participated in the analysis and discussions, representing various ministries, customs offices, and the private sector, including the exporters, farmers, manufacturers and associations. This interaction between the public and private sector representatives brought a wide range of perspectives on the challenges and opportunities identified for the country’s agricultural sector, thus making their voices heard.

As a result, problem analysis was conducted to review and critically study the identified problems. Drawing on the outcomes of the analysis, extensive Logical Frameworks for each PCE module were prepared. Since the completion of the second PCE, the NPPO has taken several resource mobilization efforts in cooperation with international development organizations, such as Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) to address the phytosanitary capacity needs identified during the evaluation. Additionally, based on the results of PCE, in September 2023, Uzbekistan adopted a new law on Plant Protection, thus marking a significant step towards ensuring plant health, protection against spread of pests, and enhancing trade in Uzbekistan-grown crops.

The PCE became a mechanism which helped the Uzbek NPPO to identify both strengths and weaknesses in the phytosanitary systems, which was instrumental to build a national phytosanitary capacity building strategy and prioritize actions to be taken.