

## MINUTES OF THE IPPC EPHYTO STEERING GROUP (ESG) VIRTUAL MEETING

7 May 2024, 14.00-15.00, Rome Time (UTC+2)

### 1. Opening of the Meeting

- [1] The IPPC Secretariat (hereafter referred to as the “Secretariat”) opened the meeting and welcomed the participants.

### 2. Meeting arrangements

- [2] Regarding agenda adoption, the Secretariat indicated that due to the absence of the UNICC representative, items 5.1, 5.2 & 5.3 of the proposed agenda could not be dealt with and would have to be postponed to a later ESG meeting.
- [3] In addition, the Bureau representative informed that the Bureau was asking for some potential governance models for ePhyto or concepts to be presented to them. The Bureau representative then indicated that she would ask the Bureau for more questions and guidance about what they thought about this.
- [4] As a result, the participants adopted the proposed agenda of the meeting (Appendix 1) with the deferral of items 5.1, 5.2 & 5.3.

### 3. Administrative matters

- [5] The Secretariat introduced the four meeting documents: (1) the agenda, (2) the draft minutes of the ESG meeting held in April 2024 and (3) through two links for agenda item 4.1 the membership list and the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the CPM Focus Group on sustainable funding of the IPPC ePhyto Solution.
- [6] The Near East and UNICC representatives had apologized for being unable to attend the meeting. The list of participants is provided in Appendix 2.
- [7] Regarding the adoption of the minutes of the previous meeting, there were no comments from the participants and therefore the ESG:
- (1) *approved* the draft minutes of the ESG Meeting held on 23 April 2024.

### 4. IPPC Secretariat updates

#### 4.1 Presentation of membership of CPM Focus Group on sustainable funding of the IPPC ePhyto Solution

- [8] The Secretariat first reminded that at the last ESG meeting on April 23<sup>rd</sup>, the possibility of ESG being represented in the CPM Focus Group (FG) on sustainable funding for the IPPC ePhyto Solution was discussed. Then the Secretariat, indicated that the Bureau at its meeting held in August 2021:
- *“agreed* to the CPM Focus Group on ePhyto Funding Terms of Reference<sup>1</sup>;
  - *asked* the IPPC Secretariat to include at least one member of the ePhyto Steering Group into the CPM Focus Group on ePhyto Funding.”

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<sup>1</sup> Terms of Reference of the FG on ePhyto sustainable funding: <https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/92940/>

- [9] In addition, following the decision by CPM-17 (2023) to extend the mandate of the FG by one year, the Bureau at its June 2023 meeting, considered and confirmed the membership of this FG as presented in the CPM Bureau report (paragraph [173])<sup>2</sup>. It appeared that the Latin America & Caribbean representative (Mr Rodrigo ROBLES) and the Near East representative (Mr Islam ABOELELA) of the ESG are also in the membership list of the FG on sustainable funding for the IPPC ePhyto Solution.
- [10] Following a question from the Secretariat whether one member of the ESG should be explicitly mentioned in the ToR of the FG, which is not the case in the current version posted on the International Phytosanitary Portal (IPP), the ESG Chair indicated it was not necessary to nominate an additional ESG member to the FG, as two ESG members are already part of the FG as regional representatives.
- [11] During the discussion, it also appeared that the membership of the FG needs to be confirmed/updated as some people are out of their position and the Bureau representative then indicated that the Bureau should be invited to do so. In addition, the Bureau representative indicated that the intention of the Bureau was most probably to ensure connection between the FG on ePhyto sustainable funding and the ESG. In this regard, the Chair confirmed that the ESG is available to answer questions in any way they can to the FG.
- [12] Therefore, and after discussion, the ESG:
- (2) *agreed* the ESG was represented in the FG on sustainable funding for the IPPC ePhyto Solution through its Latin America & Caribbean and Near East representatives.

#### 4.2 Other updates

- [13] The Secretariat and the ESG Chair gave the following updates.
- **ePhyto webinars by the Industry Advisory Group supported by the Secretariat with Brazil, Canada and Egypt.** Such webinars intended to facilitate conversation between National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs) and the private sector were held on 25 April with Brazil and on 2 May with Canada. Another one is scheduled with Egypt today just after the ESG meeting. Brazil seems to be very close with the putting in place their new system and they plan on being able to exchange this month. Canada has started sending a few ePhytos to the USA and they are slowly expanding the use of their system.
  - **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).** In early April, DRC registered to the ePhyto hub through the Generic ePhyto National System (GeNS). They have not started tests yet and they are expecting some support for ePhyto implementation through the ePhyto initiative for Africa. In this regard, the Secretariat informed that together with the partners they were in the process of preparing the logical framework of the project and preparing a call for expression of interest through a letter signed by the IPPC Secretary to be sent to the 39 African countries not exchanging ePhytos.
  - **European Union support in Central Africa.** The Secretariat received a request from two consultants for a call scheduled on 8 May with them, regarding a study funded by the European Union and awarded to Luvent Consulting. They are responsible for the formulation of activities in support of trade, transit and transport facilitation, to be included in the European Union's action plan for Africa's strategic corridors, in particular for the component relating to the Central Africa region. Two strategic corridors have been defined in Central Africa, namely Libreville-Kribi-Douala-Ndjamena and the Douala-Bangui-Kysangani-Kampala corridor, covering five countries (Gabon, Cameroon, Chad, Central African Republic, and DRC). Their initial assessment suggests that the implementation and operationalization of the ePhyto solution in all the countries covered by these two corridors could be in line with the project's expected objectives.

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<sup>2</sup> CPM Bureau report – June 2023: <https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/92475/>

- **IPPC Intended Use (request from Australia)**. At its previous meeting, the ESG “*decided* to not add the two options [“Stockfeed” and “Other”] proposed by the Australian NPPO to the current List of IPPC Intended Use” (see April ESG meeting report). Since then, the Australian NPPO has suggested a call to discuss this issue in more detail. The Secretariat will schedule such a call with them and the ESG Chair.

## 5. UNICC updates

- [14] UNICC agenda items were deferred to a later ESG meeting.

## 6. Regional updates

### *Asia*

- [15] The Asia representative reported that China had a new department called “Data Security Department” and that a new policy was expected. He also invited the USA and the European Commission to send them some test certificates.

### *Europe*

- [16] The Europe representative indicated that the European Union has been ready since early October 2023 to receive ePhytos from Brazil. She also indicated they have received from Ukraine some test certificates that were quite correct and will get in touch with them to send some from TRACES application.

### *Latin America and Caribbean*

- [17] The Latin America and Caribbean representative reported that Brazil and Argentina were finalizing an agreement for the exchange of electronic animal health certificates, with the intention of carrying out tests this year *via* the IPPC ePhyto Hub. He added that he was also supporting Ecuador in introducing electronic signature for EU destinations. He went on to say that Honduras and Nicaragua were about to go paperless.
- [18] He then reported that in the framework of the Inter-American Coordinating Group in Plant Protection (GICSV - *Grupo Interamericano de Coordinación en Sanidad Vegetal*), a collaborative agreement among Regional Plant Protection Organizations (RPPOs) of the Americas and the Caribbean, discussions were ongoing on the possibility to organize this year a Symposium on ePhyto.

### *North America*

- [19] The Chair informed that Ukraine has sent to the USA a number of test certificates, both regular and re-export ePhytos. There were two issues with their XML they still need to address but hopefully they will be starting soon. And they were also able to receive test messages that were sent to them.

### *Southwest Pacific*

- [20] The Southwest Pacific representative reported that together with the ePhyto Coordinator of the Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations (PACER) Plus Organization, they were just about to conclude their second round of visits in eight of the member countries for an ePhyto training, including Fiji and Papua New Guinea that are not PACER Plus Organization’s member countries. He added there were also discussions within the region to look at some ways on how to address the non-commercial side of electronic phytosanitary certification.

**7. Any other business**

N/A

**8. Date of the next meeting**

[21] The next ESG meeting is scheduled for 4 June 2024 at 2.00 pm, Rome Time (UTC+2).

**9. Close of the meeting**

[22] The Chairperson thanked the participants for their active participation.

**Action List**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
1. Ask the Bureau for guidance to the ESG on ePhyto governance.	Bureau representative	June 2024 Bureau meeting
2. Suggest the Bureau to confirm/update membership of the CPM Focus Group on Sustainable funding for the IPPC ePhyto Solution.	Secretariat	June 2024 Bureau meeting

## Appendix 1

## AGENDA OF THE EPHYTO STEERING GROUP MEETING

7 May 2024, 14.00-15.00, Rome Time (UTC+2)

Agenda Item		Document No.	Presenter
1.	<b>Opening of the Meeting</b>		IPPC Secretariat
2.	<b>Meeting Arrangements</b>		
2.1	Adoption of the Agenda	2024-05_ESG_01_Agenda	Chairperson
3.	<b>Administrative Matters</b>		
3.1	Review of meeting documents		IPPC Secretariat
3.2	Meeting Participants	<a href="#">ESG Membership list</a>	IPPC Secretariat
3.3	Approval of minutes of previous meeting	2024-04_ESG_Meeting_Minutes_Draft	IPPC Secretariat
4.	<b>IPPC Secretariat updates</b>		
4.1	Presentation of membership of CPM Focus Group on sustainable funding of the IPPC ePhyto Solution	<a href="#">CPM FG Membership List</a> <a href="#">ToR of FG on sustainable fund</a>	IPPC Secretariat
5.	<b>UNICC updates</b>		
5.1	Discuss Hub/Infographics on ephytoexchange.org website [Deferred]		UNICC
5.2	Handling envelope duplicates [Deferred]		UNICC
5.3	Distinguish commercial <i>versus</i> non-commercial ePhytos in XML mapping [Deferred]		UNICC
6.	<b>Regional updates</b>		
	Updates of activities in the FAO Regions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Africa</li> <li>- Asia</li> <li>- Europe</li> <li>- Latin America and Carribean</li> <li>- Near East</li> <li>- North America</li> <li>- Southwest Pacific</li> </ul>		Regional representatives
7.	<b>Any other business</b>		Chairperson
8.	<b>Date of the next meeting</b>		IPPC Secretariat
9.	<b>Close of the Meeting</b>		Chairperson

## Appendix 2

## EPHYTO STEERING GROUP (ESG) MEETING PARTICIPANT LIST

7 May 2024, 14.00-15.00, Rome Time (UTC+2)

Region / Role	Name / Organization	Email address
Asia Member	<b>Mr Bojun ZHANG</b> Department of General Operation General Administration of China Customs	<a href="mailto:509249093@qq.com">509249093@qq.com</a>
Europe Member	<b>Ms Helene KLEIN</b> Directorate SANTE.DDG2.G (Crisis management in food, animals and plants) European Commission DG Health and Food Safety	<a href="mailto:Helene.KLEIN@ec.europa.eu">Helene.KLEIN@ec.europa.eu</a>
Latin America and Caribbean Member	<b>Mr Rodrigo ROBLES</b> Electronic Certification eCert SAG, Ministry of Agriculture Chile	<a href="mailto:rodrigo.robles@sag.gob.cl">rodrigo.robles@sag.gob.cl</a>
North America Member (ESG Chairperson)	<b>Mr Christian B DELLIS</b> United States Department of Agriculture, Animal, Plant Health Inspection Service, Plant Protection and Quarantine	<a href="mailto:christian.b.dellis@usda.gov">christian.b.dellis@usda.gov</a>
Southwest Pacific Member	<b>Mr Piriariki MAAO</b> Biosecurity Service Ministry of Agriculture Cook Islands	<a href="mailto:piriariki.mao@cookislands.gov.ck">piriariki.mao@cookislands.gov.ck</a>
CPM Bureau	<b>Ms Gabrielle Vivian SMITH</b> Chief Plant Protection Officer Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forest Australia	<a href="mailto:Gabrielle.Vivian-Smith@aff.gov.au">Gabrielle.Vivian-Smith@aff.gov.au</a>
	<b>Mr Dominique MENON</b> IPPC Secretariat / IFU ePhyto Programme Officer	<a href="mailto:dominique.menon@fao.org">dominique.menon@fao.org</a>