Commission on Phytosanitary Measures

STRATEGIC PLANNING GROUP

ePhyto Change Management and Governance

(*Prepared by the United Kingdom*)

Introduction

The UK has been a vocal, and financial, supporter of ePhyto and of the ePhyto work program which has led to the successful development and introduction of the IPPC ePhyto solution. The UK extends its gratitude to the ePhyto Steering Group (ESG) for getting us to a position where ePhyto is being successfully used by multiple parties, this is an achievement which should not underestimated.

Following the adoption by CPM in 2024 of the sustainable funding model we believe now is the appropriate time to review the current ePhyto governance arrangements, including the ESG and current Bureau oversight.

The impact of maintaining and improving ePhyto should not be underestimated. Even a minor change can require significant work for users, especially those not using the GeNS solution. This, in turn, requires a robust and transparent change management process, including funding requirements, to be implemented by the UNICC[[1]](#footnote-1).

Change Management

UNICC, as the organisation responsible for the support of the ePhyto solution, have now implemented a formal change management process:

* Any registered party can request a change to the ePhyto solution (HUB or GeNS)
* These items are reviewed by UNICC, with the aim of identifying a high-level cost, effort, and complexity estimate and then is added to the ePhyto backlog
* The backlog items are reviewed by the UNICC and ESG and prioritised – the prioritisation of these changes is then placed on the ePhyto solution roadmap
* UNICC deliver change aligned with the solution roadmap

Governance

For the change management process to be robust and trusted, an appropriate governance structure needs to be implemented. The UK is supportive of the New Zealand proposal[[2]](#footnote-2) which outlines a new governance process which would be:

* open and clear to build trust between the governance process and the registered parties
* responsible for setting and communicating the strategic direction for the ePhyto solution
* cognizant of the fact that the relative size of a registered party is not proportionate to the priority of a change requested
* responsible for managing financial and expenditure in a sustainable and appropriate manner
* responsible for change management approval
* responsible for proactively identifying and managing strategic risks and issues
* responsible for ensuring thing integrity, security, assurance, and quality of the ePhyto solution
* accountable to the CPM via regular updates on the roadmap, strategic direction and change progress

Alongside that, the governance process should be:

* sufficient to ensure that all aspects of any change request is considered
* responsive and sized appropriately so that the rate of change is not negatively impacted
* balanced between technical and bio secure requirements and between registered parties
* able to identify:
* routine changes – changes that can be done within an existing release schedule additional funding
* major changes –changes that require additional funding or resources to complete
* restricted to representatives from contracting parties, but with support from the IPPC secretariat and UNICC.

Recommendations

We invite the SPG to:

1. *Thank* and acknowledge all who have been involved in getting ePhyto to the stage it is at today
2. *Review* the current ePhyto governance arrangements and make recommendations to CPM-20 on possible alternatives.
1. United Nations International Computing Centre [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. 06\_ SPG\_2025\_Oct [↑](#footnote-ref-2)