



Terms of Reference for the new ePhyto governing body

IPPC ePhyto Governing Body (EGB) terms of reference

Background and purpose:

The IPPC ePhyto Governing Body (EGB) is established to facilitate the long-term sustainability, strategic development and implementation of the IPPC ePhyto Solution and act as the main governing body, reporting to the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) Bureau, defining priorities and details of the IPPC ePhyto roadmap, in line with the below specified functions and tasks. It provides coordination, guidance, and advice on actions to develop, facilitate and implement the harmonized and sustainable use of ePhyto for the secure exchange of phytosanitary certificate data among contracting parties.

Process:

The IPPC Secretariat will issue a call for regional representatives and experts on the IPPC website to allow national plant protection organizations (NPPOs) and regional plant protection organizations (RPPOs) to nominate one or more representatives. The CPM Bureau will review the nominations and selected the members.

The EGB will meet virtually, with in-person meetings convened when required.

The IPPC Secretariat will coordinate and facilitate the functions of the EGB.

Composition:

The membership will be skills and knowledge based, with broad geographical and gender representation, and composed as follows:

- three to seven experts from NPPOs aiming for broad geographical representation (ideally one per FAO region) with extensive knowledge of phytosanitary certification processes;
- three to five experts with the collective required expertise listed below;
- no more than two Bureau members, selected by the Bureau; and
- one Implementation and Capacity Development Committee (IC) member, who is selected by the IC.

The members will serve with integrity, impartiality and independence, and will prevent or disclose in advance, possible conflicts of interest that may arise in the course of carrying out their duties and how they intend to mitigate these. The Bureau will review any identified conflicts of interest and the mitigation measures described.

Members are required to have a good working level of English, as meetings, working documents and of the EGB will be in English.

The EGB will be supported by the following resources but there are not considered as members and do not participate in decision-making:

- IPPC Secretariat ePhyto Coordinator (responsible for liaising with the technical providers and partners);
- additional experts who may be invited to support the EGB on specific topics or challenges such as handling financial management and administration, cybersecurity and data privacy; and
- external observers, who can be invited as required.

The following *collective expertise*¹ will be used to determine the membership of the EGB:

- demonstrated experience in phytosanitary certification and verification processes at export and/or import level;
- expert knowledge of, and work related to, the following International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs):
 - ISPM 12 (*Phytosanitary certificates*);
 - ISPM 13 (*Guidelines for the notification of non-compliance and emergency action*); and
 - ISPM 7 (*Phytosanitary certification system*);
- expert knowledge of international standards related to phytosanitary trade regulations and practices;
- experience working with national phytosanitary certification systems;
- experience in ePhyto implementation and capacity building;
- knowledge and experience in development and maintenance of service agreements, including financial accountability; and
- knowledge and experience in governing and managing the risks of global IT systems and the related technical service delivery.

Functions (tasks)

- ❖ Oversight of all activities related to the IPPC ePhyto Solution.
- ❖ Provide advice on the strategic direction of the IPPC ePhyto Solution.
- ❖ Identify, prepare for and support the implementation of technical changes, following the existing change management process.²
- ❖ Regularly review the funding model and make recommendations to the CPM to achieve sustainable funding for the long-term operation, development and implementation of the IPPC ePhyto Solution.
- ❖ Identify barriers that impact financial contributions and propose solutions to overcome these.
- ❖ Identify and develop initiatives to strengthen the scaling, sustainability and interoperability of the IPPC ePhyto Solution.
- ❖ Monitor and advise, in collaboration with the IPPC Secretariat, on ePhyto implementation and funding status.
- ❖ Develop a framework for the implementation the IPPC ePhyto Solution through strategic planning, communication, outreach and advocacy and related toolsets.
- ❖ Identify and propose options for implementation requirements of ePhyto-related ISPM(s).
- ❖ Promote a harmonized ePhyto implementation package, in coordination with the IPPC Secretariat, and support capacity development through standardized tools, practices, webinars and workshops across all FAO regions.
- ❖ Propose mechanisms to facilitate engagement and input from relevant stakeholders.
- ❖ Other related functions, as identified by the CPM and CPM Bureau.

¹ To ensure that the group has collective expertise, the secretariat is seeking a diverse applicant pool. Each member should have one or more of the skills listed. The Bureau will select members to ensure all essential skills are represented, with each skill being covered by at least one member of the governing body

² CPM 2026/12: <https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/95380/>

Expected start date and duration:

The programme of work and terms of reference shall be established for an initial five-year period and shall be reviewed annually by the CPM Bureau, based on the performance and results of the EGB. The Bureau may propose revisions to the terms of reference and composition of the EGB to address identified functional issues or emerging requirements.

Reports:

The governance body reports to the CPM Bureau.³

Funding:

To undertake this work, participants will be self-funded. Where extra-budgetary resources are identified and allocated to the ePhyto programme, the IPPC Secretariat can consider funding assistance for participants who meet specific criteria established by the IPPC Secretariat for assisting developing countries.

³ Reporting on different types of activities will be done in accordance with the existing reporting processes (i.e. the change management delegation of authority) and delegated to the IPPC Secretariat when involving other governing bodies (i.e. Strategic Planning Group).

Rules of procedure of the IPPC ePhyto governing body (EGB)

Rule 1. Procedure for nomination and selection of members

The IPPC Secretariat will make a call for nominations, which should be submitted via IPPC Official Contact Points or RPPO. All nominations must be accompanied by a completed competence form, curriculum vitae, statement of commitment, and any additional documents specified in the call.

Rule 2. Chairperson and vice-chairperson

The members elect the chairperson and vice-chairperson for two years, with the possibility of re-election within the five-year mandate of the group.

Rule 3. Meetings

The EGB will meet at least every two months virtually. Additional or in-person meetings may be held, when necessary, subject to the availability of resources. A majority of members will constitute the quorum to hold meetings. Offline collaboration tools and electronic feedback collection will be used to avoid any operational bottleneck derived from pending decisions.

Rule 4. Observers

The IPPC Secretariat may, with agreement from the EGB, invite individuals or representatives of organisations with relevant expertise to participate in a specific meeting or agenda item, in accordance with the applicable FAO and CPM rules and procedures, and considering the sensitivity or confidentiality of the subject.

Rule 5. Sub-groups

The EGB, subject to the availability of resources, may request that sub-groups be established by the Bureau to address specific long-term tasks and projects. The Bureau will be responsible for developing and approving terms of reference (TOR) for each sub-group.

The TOR should outline the assigned tasks, duration of the sub-group, the composition of the membership, and reporting duties. The EGB will recommend disestablishing sub-groups when they are no longer required.

Rule 6. Working groups/teams

The EGB may establish ad hoc working groups/teams to address specific issues (i.e. analysis and reporting of implementation options for a new requirement). Working group/team members are selected from its membership and may, in some cases, include external experts and are disestablished as the issue is addressed and they are no longer required.

Rule 7. Decision-making

The EGB will endeavour to make decisions based on consensus between members and following the decision-making framework of the existing change management process.⁴

Where consensus cannot be reached, the meeting report shall record the different positions maintained, and the matter shall be referred to the Bureau and, where necessary, to the CPM for consideration

Rule 8. Reporting

The EGB will report to the Bureau.

⁴ CPM 2026/12: <https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/95380/>