



COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

TWENTIETH SESSION

IPPC EPHYTO SOLUTION NEW GOVERNANCE BODY TERMS OF REFERENCE

AGENDA ITEM 13.1.1

(Prepared by the IPPC Secretariat in collaboration with the CPM Bureau)

IPPC ePhyto Solution Governance Body

- [1] Following up on CPM 2026/11, and CPM 2026/CRP 04 on the IPPC ePhyto Governance and sustainability needs the IPPC Secretariat in collaboration with the CPM Bureau as drafted the new Terms of Reference (TOR) for the main ePhyto Governance Body to be formed.
- [2] The following TOR have been reviewed and collaboratively amended through a dedicated “Friends of the Chair” meeting.

Terms of reference for the ePhyto Governance Body

Background and purpose:

The ePhyto Governance Body is established to facilitate the long-term sustainability, strategic development and implementation of the IPPC ePhyto Solution and act as the main governing board, reporting to the CPM Bureau, defining priorities and details of the IPPC ePhyto Solution 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 electronic phytosanitary certificates and their exchange among contracting parties.

Process:

The IPPC Secretariat will issue a call for regional representatives and experts on the IPPC website to allow national and regional plant protection organizations to nominate one or more representatives to be part of the group. Nominations will be presented to the CPM Bureau for their review and selection.

The governance body will meet virtually, with additional or in-person meetings convened as required by the work program. It is expected that the majority of regions will be represented, regions can nominate replacements to support the effective execution of the planned work.

Membership:

The membership should be both skills- and knowledge-based, with broad geographical and gender representation, nominated by NPPO and RPPOs, and it is composed as follows:

- Several members will have extensive knowledge of phytosanitary certification processes.
- Several members will have the collective required expertise listed below
- At least one Bureau member, selected by the Bureau
- Implementation and Capacity Development Committee (IC) member, who is selected by the IC

- IPPC Secretariat ePhyto Product Manager (responsible for liaising with the technical providers and partners)

Additional experts to deal with specific topics or challenges can be invited, such as handling financial management and administration, cybersecurity and data privacy.

External observers can be invited as required.

The IPPC Secretariat through the Implementation and Facilitation (IFU) Unit, will coordinate and facilitate the functions of the governing body.

The following collective expertise¹ should be used for selecting members and forming the group:

- Demonstrated engagement in phytosanitary certification and verification processes at export and/or import level.
- Expert knowledge of, and work related to, the following 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 plant products trade regulations and practices.
- Experience working with national phytosanitary certification systems.
- Experience in ePhyto implementation and capacity building.
- Experience with SPS, trade agreements and country legal frameworks.
- Knowledge and experience in service agreements development and maintenance, including financial accountability.
- Knowledge and experience in governing and managing the risks of global IT systems and the related technical service delivery.

Functions (tasks)

The governing body will:

- ❖ Provide 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, considering the existing change management process²
- ❖ Review the funding model and make recommendations to CPM to achieve sufficient and reliable funding for the long-term operation, development and implementation of the IPPC ePhyto Solution;
- ❖ Identify barriers that impact contributions and propose solutions to overcome these barriers.
- ❖ Identify and develop initiatives for the IPPC ePhyto Solution scaling, sustainability and interoperability;
- ❖ Monitor and advise in collaboration with the IPPC Secretariat on ePhyto implementation and funding status;

¹ To ensure that the group has collective expertise, we are seeking a diverse applicant pool. Each member should have one or more of the following skills. The Bureau will evaluate and select members in a manner that ensures all essential skills are represented by at least one member of the governing body. The IPPC Secretariat will issue the application form with the required information and guidance on how to apply for the relevant skill/function, clarifying the collective expertise selection approach.

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

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Define the framework to implement the multilateral use of the IPPC ePhyto Solution through strategic planning, communication, outreach and advocacy and related toolsets; ❖ Identify and propose solution options for implementation requirements of the ePhyto-related ISPM(s); ❖ Collaborate and promote the use of an harmonized implementation package, in coordination with the IPPC Secretariat, by consolidating practices towards a holistic 360-degree approach which would include capacity evaluation, plant health, IT landscape and legal framework. ❖ Contribute to capacity development amongst contracting parties by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Supporting and collaborating in organizing regular webinars and workshops, dedicated to ePhyto to improve the adoption with a consistent, standardized and collaborative approach, in all the FAO regions; ❖ Propose mechanisms to facilitate engagement and input from relevant stakeholders; ❖ Other related functions, as identified by CPM and CPM Bureau.
<p>Expected start date and duration:</p> <p>The program of work and Terms of Reference will be established for five years with regular reviews of the governing body functioning.</p>
<p>Expected outputs:</p> <p>As identified by the above functions.</p>
<p>Reports:</p> <p>The governance body, supported by the IPPC Secretariat IFU unit, reports to the CPM Bureau³.</p>
<p>Funding:</p> <p>To undertake this work, participants will be self-funded. Where extra-budgetary resources are identified and allocated to the ePhyto program, the IPPC Secretariat can consider funding assistance for participants who meet specific criteria established by the IPPC for assisting developing countries.</p>

Recommendations

[3] The CPM is *invited* to:

- (1) *endorse* the drafted terms of reference for the new ePhyto governance body;
- (2) *request* the IPPC Secretariat to launch the call for nominations;
- (3) *request* the CPM Bureau to operationalize the new governing body by 2026 Q3; and
- (4) *agree* that the ePhyto Steering Group would be disestablished upon establishment of the new ePhyto governance body.

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