

EPHYTO NEWSLETTER



Introduction - ePhyto in the Time of Covid-19

With the onset of the global pandemic resulting from Covid-19 countries began to take actions to facilitate the continued flow of trade. In many cases this involved the acceptance of copies of paper phytosanitary certificates as flight cancellations severely impacted the delivery of the paper certificates. At the same time, as awareness of the IPPC ePhyto Solution increased, we saw a number of countries lining up to come onboard what is clearly a better, more secure and efficient alternative. So far in 2020 we have seen 1) the addition of the 27 countries Member States of the European Union (through the European system TRACES) to the IPPC ePhyto Solution family, 2) Argentina and Chile have implemented paperless trade for all their plant trade, 3) the deployment of a video training platform made available to the public by the UNICC on the web, 4) teleconference and video training performed by ESG and UNICC experts, and 5) preparations underway to deploy the “channel” feature which will allow industry systems and blockchains to receive XML ePhytos.

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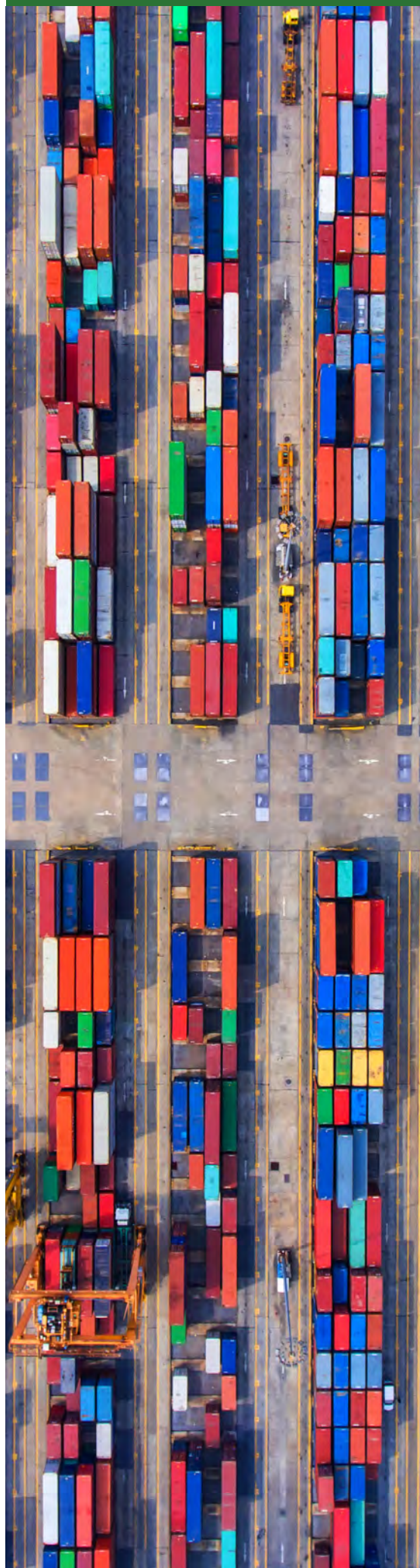
A Word from Ms Alejandra Danielson Castillo, IAG Chair



Communicating this information is not always easy however. Many observers still don't understand what the IPPC ePhyto Solution is, others see it as a threat to their business models, and still others maintain a distrust of working in the ePhyto environment with groups, companies and organizations with which they have never worked before.

Fortunately, these things are gradually breaking down as the value of the IPPC ePhyto Solution effort is being realized 1) as a means by which any country, developed or developing, wishing to do so can transmit phytosanitary certificates digitally with any other country in the system, 2) there are no favored or preferred partners/countries/organizations; it is a level playing field, and 3) access to and learning the system is easier than ever.

This comes at a time when things like the IPPC ePhyto Solution can make a contribution to a global food trading system that has been and continues to be affected by the current pandemic. It is not the total answer, but it is a part of the answer that is needed; efficient and safer trade in food to the places where it is needed. The IPPC ePhyto teams deeply thanks the efforts the ESG, UNICC, the IAG and the Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation for everything they are doing and will be doing to make this a continuing success.



A close-up photograph of several citrus fruits, likely grapefruit or orange, with a textured, bumpy skin. The fruits are in shades of yellow and orange, with some green still visible. They are piled together, filling the left side of the page.

Argentina and Chile go paperless!

For the first time, beginning on 04 May 2020, two countries have implemented electronic phytosanitary certification without paper for all their plant trade within the framework of the guidelines and development carried out by the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC).

After a thorough testing period, the NPPOs of Argentina and Chile began the exchange of electronic phytosanitary certificates (PCs) through the Hub developed by the IPPC. The Hub allows both NPPOs to transfer PCs to each other electronically through their own national systems.

The implementation of e-phyto will provide the opportunity for both countries not only to facilitate trade but also to provide an important preventive solution in the current context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to the ESG regional representative, Mr Walter Alessandrini, other Latin American countries are now increasing their efforts to join the ePhyto Solution and to achieve paperless exchange of phytosanitary certificates in the near future.



European Commission TRACES Welcomed to the IPPC ePhyto Solution

Since 12 May 2020, the European Union TRACES system is able to communicate with the IPPC ePhyto Hub to receive phytosanitary certificates transmitted by non-EC countries through the IPPC ePhyto Hub. TRACES is maintained as the single contact point for connection to the IPPC ePhyto Hub for all Member States of the European Union.

“Thanks to the recent EU Plant Health Law, all EU member’s states have the obligation to use TRACES to process electronic certificates received from non-EU countries. In a first phase, these PCs are considered as a complement to paper certificates, but once those transmissions are electronically signed, the exchanges will become fully paperless. TRACES will start to send ePhytos to their partners by the end of the year 2020. In addition to the inherent increase of the security and authenticity in the exchanges of electronic official documents between authorities, the present pandemic situation has acutely shown the accuracy of the ePhyto approach of heading quickly toward paperless exchanges for SPS certification.”

– Mr Philippe Loopuyt, ESG Member (Europe)



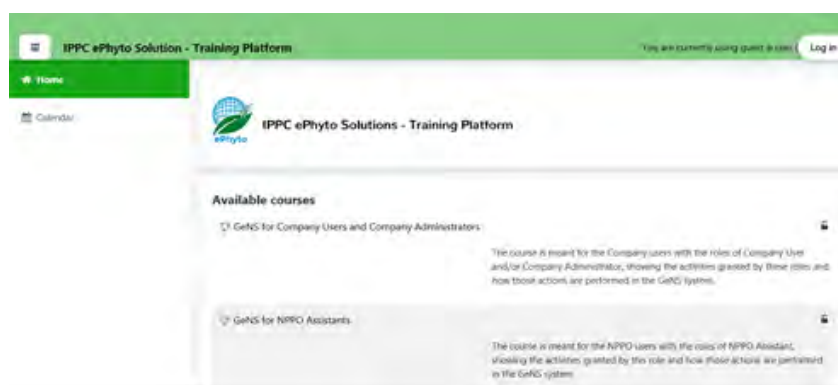
The launch of the IPPC ePhyto Solution Training Platform

A new four module e-Learning training for the ePhyto Generic ePhyto National System (GeNS) has launched in cooperation with the IPPC Secretariat and the United Nations International Computing Centre (UNICC). The training platform is now live and the available courses navigate through the use of the GeNS as different user roles.

The courses currently available are:

- GeNS for NPPO Administrators
- GeNS for NPPO Assistants
- GeNS for NPPO Officers and NPPO Inspectors
- GeNS for Company Users and Company Administrators (NOTE: **only** NPPOs have any direct access to the IPPC ePhyto Solution)

Please go to <https://training.ephytoexchange.org/> to avail of this training.





Morocco leads the way in Africa with ePhyto go live

March 2020: At a critical time when governments around the world were beginning to tackle the coronavirus crisis and looking for new ways of mitigating the effects on the economy, Morocco's Office National de Sécurité Sanitaire des produits Alimentaires (ONSSA) exchanged their first ePhyto with the United States' Department of Agriculture (USDA). Compared to the purely paper-based system, the new e-phytos will reduce the risk of loss, damage or fraud, while helping to cut delays and costs for traders. ONSSA also expect to reduce the administrative burden on border agencies and pave the way for Morocco to exchange other types of data with trading partners.

Morocco is being supported by a trade facilitation project led by the Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation, a collaboration of international organizations, governments and businesses that aims to help countries implement the World Trade Organization's Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA).

Morocco plans to fully digitalize all import and export operations and achieve paperless trade by 2021.





A Word from Ms Alejandra Danielso Castillo, IAG Chair

As Mexico, Morocco and the Republic of Korea are now in full exchange mode, there has never been a better time to conduct ePhyto industry case studies and we are coordinating action in various sectors including grain, seed and cotton. We continue to work towards an ePhyto Solution that addresses interoperability with industry, identifies processes that facilitate trade, and the building of the “Channel” component is hugely significant for the IAG. We welcome support from international organisations such as FAO, in particular newly elected Deputy Director General (DDG) Beth Bechdol who recently gave the IAG a chance to convey experiences from the perspective of diverse plant production sectors.



**International
Plant Protection
Convention**

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