



EPHYTO STEERING GROUP MEETING
ONLINE MEETING
2 DECEMBER 2025

Interventions from:

Region / Role	Name / Organization	Email address
Africa Member	Mr Josiah Musili SYANDA Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS)	syanda@kephis.org
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Southwest Pacific Member	Mr Piriariki MAAO Biosecurity Service Ministry of Agriculture Cook Islands	piriariki.maao@cookislands.gov.ck
CPM Bureau	Mr Barik Dris Chef de la Division de la protection des végétaux Office National de Sécurité Sanitaire des Produits Alimentaires (ONSSA) Morocco	dris.barik@onssa.gov.ma
IPPC Secretariat	Mr Gianluca NUZZO Product Manager for IPPC ePhyto Solution	Gianluca.Nuzzo@fao.org
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Approval of Previous Meeting Notes and Adoption of Agenda

- [1] The notes of the previous ePhyto Steering Group (ESG) meeting were reviewed and formally approved by the members without further amendments. The agenda of the current meeting was also presented and adopted.

Overview of CPM Papers

- [2] The Secretariat opened the meeting by recalling the main papers to be presented to the CPM:
- A general document on the ePhyto Solution: a summary of the main changes proposed for CPM approval.
 - A document outlining the proposed governance and change management approach.
 - A paper on ePhyto Enhancements, outlining all improvements proposed for CPM approval.
 - A paper on the funding model reflecting revised costs based on the latest usage, and

General document on the ePhyto Solution

- [3] The Secretariat presented the general document that will be submitted to the CPM, noting that it consolidates a summary of the main changes proposed for CPM approval, together with an overview of the current status of the ePhyto Solution. In introducing this document, the Secretariat highlighted the proposal to expand regional representation in the ESG to two country representatives per region to strengthen participation, ensure continuity across meetings and enhance communication with countries. The Secretariat further explained that organizing region-specific virtual ePhyto meetings, including periodic regional webinars, would support the exchange of updates on the ePhyto Solution, provide information on recent changes and allow the collection of feedback from countries. The Secretariat also underlined the need to revitalize collaboration with the Industry Advisory Group. Finally, the IPPC Secretariat underlined the importance of maintaining a transparent change backlog and roadmap to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of ongoing and planned developments, including discussions such as those on mixed commodities. The Secretariat further noted that improvements to the e-learning materials are being planned as part of the broader effort to strengthen support to countries implementing the ePhyto Solution.
- [4] The Africa member representative proposed revising the reference to “two country representatives” to correctly reflect two representatives per region. The Bureau representative agreed with this proposal and added that, while the preference is for the two representatives to come from different countries, they may come from the same country if no alternative candidates are available.
- [5] The European representative asked whether the requirement to appoint two representatives per region would be mandatory. The Secretariat clarified that this would become mandatory once the CPM approves the proposal. The Secretariat further explained that, following CPM endorsement, each region would be asked to appoint two representatives and, if one of them does not participate, the region may be requested to nominate a replacement. The Secretariat emphasized that the objective of this proposal is to strengthen participation and ensure continuity within the ESG.



Governance Document

- [6] The Secretariat introduced the governance and change management document, explaining that it formalizes how decisions on changes to the ePhyto Solution are taken. The first part outlines the decision-making process, in which the ESG approves standard and normal changes, while major changes require CPM approval. The second part describes the roles and responsibilities for implementing these changes.
- [7] The Secretariat also reviewed the overall governance structure, noting that it remains unchanged: the ESG acts as the primary governing body, followed by the CPM Bureau and the CPM. The document confirms the ESG's mandate to approve standard and normal changes, with major changes to be submitted to the CPM for endorsement.
- [8] The Secretariat highlighted the categorization of changes into standard, normal and major. Standard changes address defects, security measures or adjustments that do not alter system functionalities. Normal changes include small enrichments or optional features that can be implemented within existing budget levels. Major changes introduce new functionalities with broader implications and therefore require CPM approval.
- [9] The Bureau representative sought clarification on the handling of emergency situations, particularly in cases where an incident may compromise the normal operation of the ePhyto Solution and whether such situations should be treated as standard changes. The Secretariat explained that emergency incidents would not fall under the standard change management workflow, as they follow a separate incident management process. It was agreed that the governance document should include a reference to the incident management process, which covers emergencies and outlines the immediate actions that the technical provider is required to take.
- [10] The Africa member representative also stressed the need for a single, centralized source of information on the performance and impact of the ePhyto Solution and emphasized that the document should clearly state that change management operates at the level of the global ePhyto governance structure, as this is not currently evident.

ESG Terms of Reference

- [11] The Secretariat presented the updated ESG Terms of Reference, noting that they now specify the appointment of two experts from each region. These experts are nominated by the respective Regional Plant Protection Organization. The Secretariat explained that at least one of the two representatives must attend each meeting to ensure consistent and continuous regional participation. The Secretariat also recalled that the ESG composition continues to include a Bureau member, a member of the Financial Committee—given the ESG's role in taking decisions related to the budget—and an IC member.
- [12] The Bureau representative suggested drawing on the approach used by the Standards Committee, whereby if a member does not attend two consecutive meetings, the region would be asked to provide a replacement and nominate a new representative. It was proposed that this provision be added to the Terms of Reference, as it would help ensure that regional representatives participate consistently in the meetings.
- [13] The Southwest Pacific representative noted that the Terms of Reference should specify the duration of membership, observing that the document refers to a three-year term for the Chair but does not define a term for the other ESG members. The representative suggested aligning the membership period with the practice of other IPPC committees, typically two or three years. The Secretariat agreed that this was an important point and confirmed that the term of membership would be added to the document.



ePhyto Enhancement Document

- [14] The Secretariat presented the proposed changes for the CPM paper, namely: non-compliance notification, improvements to the ePhyto landing page, updates to the ePhyto training materials, and the harmonization of additional declarations. Mixed commodities were removed as the work remains on hold pending ISPM 12 revisions.

Funding Model Document

- [15] The Secretariat introduced updates to the funding model, noting that while the structure remains unchanged, a recalculation based on 2025 data results in reduced base and usage fees for all countries. Members welcomed the revision and were invited to provide comments. The Secretariat also emphasized the need to encourage more countries to contribute to the ePhyto MDTF, given the current limited number of contributors.

Next Meeting

- [16] Members requested an additional ESG meeting to validate the governance and Terms of Reference before submission to the Bureau. The Secretariat proposed 11 December as a possible date.