



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



International  
Plant Protection  
Convention

# The IPPC ePhyto Solution

Investing in Trade Facilitation



**The International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) has initiated an innovative project called the ePhyto Solution. The ePhyto solution aims to modernize the phytosanitary certification process and holds tremendous potential for trade facilitation.**

The IPPC Secretariat on behalf of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) has received initial funding from the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) to develop the ePhyto Solution. The development of the Solution has been noted by the contracting parties as a critical need.

Several countries have also provided donor funding to support development. However, the current funding is only sufficient to permit a limited operation of the Solution. Further donor funding is required to bridge the gap between development and the operation of the Solution under a CPM approved cost recovery scheme. We are now soliciting the financial support from governments and/or industry associations willing to sustain the programme into the next phase.

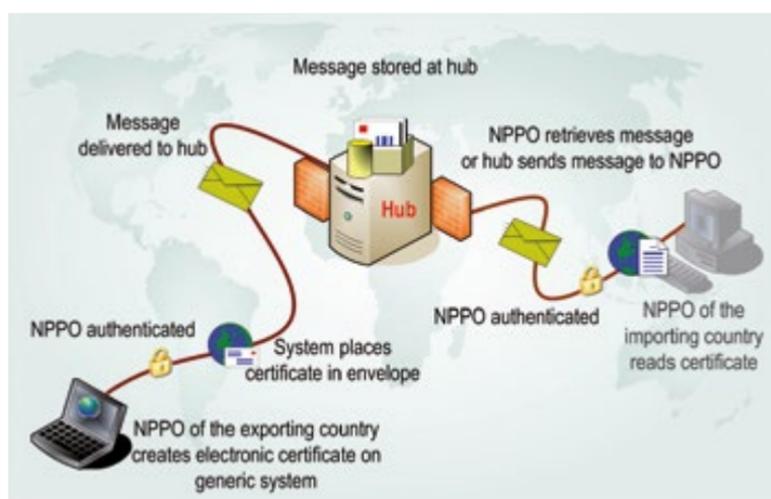


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The ePhyto Solution transitions the phytosanitary certification process to the electronic era. It will allow all phytosanitary certificate information to be exchanged, in the form of an ePhyto, electronically between countries. By providing a single point of exchange the system will increase safe trade, enhance connections, improve security, and provide the opportunity for countries to connect to traders and border agencies through national trade facilitation initiatives to develop "Single Windows" .

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## Transmission of an ePhyto



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## What is ePhyto?

"ePhyto" is short for electronic phytosanitary certificate. In simple terms, it is the electronic data contained in a phytosanitary certificate. The ePhyto Solution has two core structural components, the hub and the generic ePhyto national system (GeNS). The ePhyto Hub is a centralized exchange system for ePhytos that can be used by all national plant protection organizations (NPPOs) once they are connected.

The purpose of the GeNS is to allow countries, particularly developing countries without the infrastructure to produce and receive electronic phytosanitary certificates, the ability to connect to the Hub. While some countries may have their own national electronic systems, the GeNS will allow all countries without a national system to produce, send, and receive electronic phytosanitary certificates through the hub.

All ePhyto's are produced in accordance with International Standard on Phytosanitary Measures (ISPM) 12 and its Appendix 1. All ePhyto data is formatted in XML in accordance with international standards on the exchange of electronic data.

## Who is it for?

The IPPC ePhyto Solution will benefit both the private and public sectors. Both NPPOs and the agricultural and forestry industries can benefit from transaction cost reductions, improved trade security, risk management and increased trade flows through the ePhyto Solution.

Countries will be able to connect their electronic phytosanitary certification systems into a single hub, with a standard format, where they will be able to exchange certificates quickly, accurately, with multiple countries and at a low cost. These benefits translate into lower costs for exporters and reduced numbers of shipments detained at customs. NPPOs will be able to communicate with each other regarding not only the arrival of the phytosanitary certificates before time, but also any required edits or additions that may be needed to ensure that the shipment be admitted entry without delay.

Cost saving opportunities extend further as ePhyto will be able to reduce staff time and costs required in negotiating bilateral arrangements to allow for the exchange electronic certificates.



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Adult *Ceratitis capitata* (Mediterranean fruit fly) on a mango. *Ceratitis capitata* is native to sub-Saharan Africa but it is a highly invasive species. This pest attacks more than 200 different plant species. To stop the spread of this pest poses a great phytosanitary challenge to the regions that import and export its host fruits (e.g. citrus species, peach, mango, plum, cherry, pear, guava, apple).



ePhyto will reduce the use of paper for phytosanitary certificates, along with the costs associated with sorting, distributing, retrieving and archiving. Bringing phytosanitary certificates onto an electronic platform reduces the risk of fraudulent certificates, improves communication, and reduces possibilities for misunderstandings and disputes. One of the most exciting components to this project is that through the harmonized approach of ePhyto, developing countries have the opportunity to maintain or even expand their market access. The advancement of IPPC ePhyto also spills over into areas of concern such as the environment, sustainability and opportunities for development.



## How to get involved?

The funding provided thus far will cover the development of the IPPC ePhyto Solution and its operations until the end of the pilot phase. Following the pilot phase the objective is to establish a business cost recovery model for the long term operation of the ePhyto Solution. However the gap created between the funding of the project and initiation of the business model requires that a financial mechanism (trust fund) be established with the objective of securing funds to cover the expenses related to the operation of the ePhyto Solution (hosting, maintenance, help desk function to new and existing users, etc.) and to provide support to developing countries requiring major capacity building to implement the GeNS until a cost recovery mechanism is established. The IPPC ePhyto financial mechanism will be dependent on donor funding. Involvement in the form of a financial contribution is essential for taking the ePhyto Solution beyond its pilot phase, and to make it available to all countries interested in participating.

If you have any further questions regarding the ePhyto Solution find more details on <https://www.ippc.int/en/ephyto/> or email Shane Sela at [Shane.Sela@fao.org](mailto:Shane.Sela@fao.org).



## IPPC

The International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) is an international plant health agreement that aims to protect cultivated and wild plants by preventing the introduction and spread of pests. International travel and trade are greater than ever before. As people and commodities move around the world, organisms that present risks to plants travel with them.

### Organization

- ◆ There are over 180 contracting parties to the IPPC.
- ◆ Each contracting party has a national plant protection organization (NPPO) and an Official IPPC contact point.
- ◆ Nine regional plant protection organizations (RPPOs) work to facilitate the implementation of the IPPC in countries.
- ◆ IPPC liaises with relevant international organizations to help build regional and national capacities.
- ◆ The Secretariat is provided by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).