

EPHYTO IMPLEMENTATION CASE STORY

QUESTIONNAIRE

Country	Jamaica
NPPO	Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Plant Quarantine Produce Inspection Branch
Contact Person	Sanniel Wilson-Graham
Designation	Chief Plant Quarantine Inspector
Date	21 April 2021

TYPE OF IMPLEMENTATION

Please indicate if you have implemented ePhyto through:

- Your own National System
- or
- The IPPC Generic ePhyto National System (GeNS)

Jamaica – Implemented ePhyto through the IPPC GeNs

Briefly describe your ePhyto implementation setup (maximum 150 words)

Jamaica is currently setup up on the IPPC GeNs to export and import phytosanitary Certificate. All our country profiles have been implemented to make the system efficient. We have registered all our technical officers and administrators to the system and we are continuously adding new exporters to the system. We also have ongoing training of key stakeholders to use the system efficiently.

Please also indicate briefly (maximum 150 words) the main reasons for your choice of implementation model (i.e. GeNS or National System)

Jamaica is quickly moving towards a paperless environment in order to: reduce the dependence on paper, physical interaction (covid 19), and boost efficiency or turnaround time (better time management) for our services, early notification, more transparency as well as reducing cost of service. The IPPC ePhyto platform was critical in enabling Jamaica to make that transition from a paper based system to an online based system re phytosanitary certificate issuance. It was also important to implement ePhyto knowing that most of our main trading partners were moving towards ePhyto.

BASIC ePHYTO STATISTICS FOR YOUR COUNTRY

How many ePhytos do you transmit and receive per month through the IPPC ePhyto Hub (average over the past 3 months)?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Export = 320 per month average - Re-Export = n/a - Import = 110 per month average
What main countries are you exchanging ePhytos with via the IPPC ePhyto Hub?
USA (main) EU (some) Argentina Costa Rica Mexico
Are there new countries to and from which you are now trading as a result of implementing ePhyto?
No

PROJECT DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT

How did you organise the implementation of ePhyto in your country? Was a project team or steering group established to guide the project?
Jamaica implemented the ePhyto system via way of online tutoring with the help of a Technical Coach from the USDA and the IPPC Technical Engineers. The USA coach, created that bridge between Jamaica and the IPPC team to facilitate a smooth transmission of information (country profile data etc) to allow implementation. (The USDA fully supported a Trainer of Trainers platform that would facilitate implementation)
If yes, who participated in the team – what agencies and at what level (we do not need to know the specific names of the team members)?
The team composed of key stakeholders: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - USA and - The IPPC Engineers - Jamaica's NPPO Management team (include Key Inspector).
How were the key Stakeholders identified?
All stakeholders were identified base on their relationship with the ePhyto process and the impact their influence will have on the implementation of the GeNs.
What process did you have for consulting with these key stakeholders?
The consultation process with our key stakeholders was very unique but effective: International Stakeholders – Consultation by way of emails, zoom calls, Whatsapp and telephone calls. National Stakeholders – Physical meetings, emails, phone calls, live demonstrations.

Were the stakeholders engaged in the design of the ePhyto service?
The International Stakeholders were responsible for design and producing the output, while our national stakeholders (internal) focus on confirming, verify/validate the produce and signed off on the output.
What process did you undertake to get buy-in from senior management in your NPPO?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Chief Plant Quarantine Inspector head of NPPO was onboard from inception. - Senior management from the NPPO comittment was sought and received. - The Ministry's Political and Technical Directorates were all supporting the decision to go ePhyto once the NPPO have provided substansive evidence of the benefits and the positive impact GeNs will have on trade.
Did you do a Business Process Analysis (BPA) of the existing paper processes before designing and implementing the ePhyto service (including a cost comparison)?
Yes; Jamaica did a qualitative business analysis looking deeply at the status of the paperless process and compared the system with the proposed ePhyto system. Findings in respect to gaps, trade trends towards paperless, lengthy processing time, and high dependence on a manual process inspired the move to implement ePhyto.
If yes, did you use this to develop the new procedures?
Yes, the analysis provided sound data to support ePhyto implementation along with new business procedure for our business process.
Was any other research undertaken?
Jamaica looked at the use of ePhyto in other jurisdiction to have a better understanding of ePhyto systems and the benefits, opportunities, strength and even weakness (if any) of the systems.
Was there a pilot project? If yes, please describe (e.g. what countries and or products were chosen)?
No Jamaica benefited from a live demonstration of the GeNs at CPM 2019, from then we work closely with a USDA representative (coach) and the IPPC engineer team to quickly pilot one of the first Implementation exercise via wireless means and not in person.
How long did it take from the initial discussions on ePhyto in your country to the first exchange of Production ePhytos through the Hub?
It is estimated to have taken roughly two and a half months (2 ½) from first discussion and exchange of information to going live (Early July to September 13, 2019).
Did implementing ePhyto take more or less time than you expected?
The timing was less than expected especially when the implementation medium is considered (online-remote implementation). The time included: Exchange of information, creating country profile, testing, validating, training, public awareness, going live.
What was your biggest challenge to overcome in implementing ePhyto in your country?
We do not believe there were any great challenges; however, I think our biggest task was to get the buy-in from each inspector. There was a level of culture change required by Inspectors to use the online model and move away from the paper-based system. The NPPO was able to manage the change management process efficiently.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT, CHANGE MANAGEMENT

Was there resistance from any specific sectors or agencies in establishing the service? If so, how was this handled?

Whilst there were no resistance internal to the country, the attempts to have the Caribbean region and its members included in the pilot by the IPPC was a challenge despite being a member of ACP.

When the region got funding support to implement ePhyto (GeNS), Jamaica despite expressing an interest since 2017 was still not selected. Subsequently, Jamaica engaged key discussions with representative from the IPPC and USDA that resulted in support to implement GeNS.

Currently, all our external stakeholders are very impressed with this new system and actually wanted to be a part of the process. Jamaica is in the 19th month since implementation and the support for this system continues to grow across Government sectors and private companies.

Currently, Single Window in Jamaica is trying to figure out a possibility for linkage in order to establish greater streamlining and communication across systems.

Jamaica is now interested in talks surrounding ePhyto integrating with the Customs Single Window platform to further improve the ease of doing business.

Was a specific Change Management programme implemented? If so, please describe.

We had an internal Change Management programme geared towards getting our inspectors to embrace the system for greater efficiency. We also embarked on a series of Customs officer training, along with various importer and exporter sensitization to increase the awareness and acceptance of the GeNs.

What kind of training was provided for users?

Inspectors – “Introduction to the system” and “How to effectively use the GeNS”

Customs – Introduction to GeNS along and benefits in plant trade

Exporter/Importer – “Introduction to GeNS”, and “How to effectively submit application (exporter)”

Do you provide any helpdesk or customer service?

Help desk and customer service requirements for GeNS was incorporated in the NPPO existing customer service programme.

- NPPO Head Office – Designated Client Service Personnel
- Kingston and Montego Bay Offices – each location has a Inspectorate Unit provide technical customer service support to importer/exporter

COMMUNICATIONS

How were the stakeholders kept informed about the ePhyto implementation progress?

- Exporter/Importers seminars/workshops (sensitization)
- Customs sensitization and training
- Newspaper Articles
- Radio Interviews (Ministry AgroBuz programme)
- Brochures, flyers etc

How did you promote ePhyto to the business community, other stakeholders?

- Exporter/Importers seminars/workshops
- Customs training
- Newspaper Articles
- Radio Interviews (Ministry AgroBuz programme)
- Brochures, flyers etc

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

How did you monitor and evaluate progress in implementing ePhyto and in achieving the project objectives? What Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) did you use?

- We establish a system to continuously monitor and evaluate the ePhyto platform using the following performance indicators:
- Time taken to implement ePhyto
- Number of country trading (export and import) with Jamaica on the ePhyto platform
- Number of Phyto produce monthly
- % increase or decrease in Phyto on a monthly basis
- Number of new users to the system
- % accuracy or quality of issued Phyto

BENEFITS OBTAINED

What are the main benefits generated by the introduction of ePhyto?

- (1) For your NPPO
 - Reduce use and dependence on paper certificate
 - Faster turnaround time
 - Advance notification – the ability to see what’s coming before actual arrival.
 - Cost saving – actual monetary saving is not yet evaluated
 - Allow for efficient reporting of pest findings
- (2) For Companies
 - Faster turnaround time - Time saving
 - Enjoying the ease of doing business via paperless means
- (3) Others?
 - External and International Stakeholders - There is a greater appreciation for Jamaica’s move towards a paperless environment for ePhyto which will eventually impact the ease of doing business index in Jamaica

What problems did it solve?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The High dependence on paper - Turnaround time - Advance notification
Is it possible to put a dollar value on the benefits achieved?
It is possible, however we are not able to provide a number at this moment – we await further financial/cost benefits analysis

COSTS AND SUSTAINABILITY

How much did it cost to establish ePhyto in your country?
Cost for the system – no charge from IPPC Coaching cost – No Charge from USDA Ephyto was incorporated into the operation cost for the NPPO to compliment the services offered.
What were the main costs areas?
ePhyto was incorporated into our Trade Facilitation Agreement Implementation funding from Multinationals. Cost included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainability of a suitable network (internet) connectivity (on base and for remote access) - Procurement of technology hardware to support
What are the ongoing operational costs (annual)?
The cost for ePhyto forms part of the larger operational objective of the NPPO and include cost relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public awareness - Training – Include procurement of training material
Do you charge for issuing a Phytosanitary Certificate? If yes, what is the charge per certificate?
Yes – our normal business process remain unchanged US\$6.5/certificate
Are there any additional user fees for ePhyto?
No. Other fees that the Branch Charge is related to the Inspection process
If yes, Do the revenues generated cover operational costs?
No. The majority of costs associated are covered by funding from Central Government as revenue collected is insufficient to cover the expense of the services provided.
Are the revenues (if any) reinvested in the facility?
Revenues collected are negligible and are remitted to Central Government who then decided what monies are allocated to the NPPO to cover operational expenses.
How will the facility/service be sustained over the coming years?
This is a concern for the NPPO, and efforts have been made to engaged Central Government for additional budgetary support, however no additional budgetary support was approved due to the current economic climate.

FUNDING SOURCE(S)

How was the implementation of ePhyto funded?
The implementation was supported by the IPPC (software etc) and the USDA (training aspect).
Did you receive Donor Support? If so, please describe.
Not specific to ePhyto

CAPACITY BUILDING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Describe any capacity building or technical assistance you received, including the source:
(1) to conceptualize and design your country's approach to ePhyto <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All training related to the GeNs and its implementation was supported and delivered by our USDA Coach - Conceptualizing and designing the country's profile was heavily supported by the IPPC Team and USDA.
(2) to actually implement ePhyto <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Primary support from our USDA coach and the IPPC engineers in the background.

LEGISLATION CHANGES REQUIRED

Were any specific legislation changes necessary?
No change to the mother legislation – not required
If so, what was the process and how long did this take?
N/A
How is the privacy of information protected?
The NPPO and the Government policy on access to information and maintaining privacy or confidentiality take precedence. Only officers and managers that are given the privilege to access the GeNs are allowed. Computers are encrypted with access control and accessible only to internal staff. Documents are stored in a secured access control system – accessible by managerial authorization.

TECHNOLOGY

What were the additional hardware or software or Internet facilities required to introduce ePhyto in your NPPO?

The implementation of WCO ASYCUDA system in Jamaica saw our computers, network etc being modernized/upgraded shortly before implementing ePhyto. The ePhyto implementation benefited significantly from this project and the overarching Trade Facilitation endeavours by Jamaica. At current our systems are:

- All compatible to use GeNs
- Equipped with adequate internet connectivity

We have procured new tablets for all inspectors to increase access to GeNs and other platforms remotely.

SUCCESS FACTORS AND LESSONS LEARNED

What are the main lessons learned from implementing this service?

- ePhyto (GeNS) can be remotely implemented with support from technical experts (Jamaica and Dominica prepared a **Road Map** to guide a remote implementation process)
- Mentorship from developed countries can result in harmonized standard and efficiency.
- Positive change is achievable in a short time once communicated properly.
- Management commitment and buy in is critical to the success of the implementation process.

What were the crucial success factors?

- The main success for Jamaica was primarily the implementation of the GeNS (export and import) via way of online coaching in such a short period. Also Jamaica became one of the first Caribbean countries to fully implement GeNS.
- Ease of transmitting ephyto; advance notification, ability to pull-back and make amendments to issued Phyto.

What were the greatest obstacles?

Getting started – being included in the pilots

What are the biggest obstacles to further development of the Facility/service?

- What is currently in demand or required is the ability of the IPPC ePhyto Systems to communicate directly with Single Window (the link).
- The number of countries using the platform – once more countries accepts and begins trading ePhyto the more efficient the platform will become.
- Language translation feature would be a great boost to the system
- An element of continues system improvement must always be built in the system to enhance efficiency.

Are you or other colleagues available to be resources to other countries implementing ePhyto?

Yes Jamaica stand ready

CONTACT DETAILS FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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