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International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants

Technical Committee Sixtieth Session Geneva, October 21 and 22, 2024	**SESSIONS/2024/4** **Original:** English **Date:** September 25, 2024
Administrative and Legal Committee Eighty-First Session Geneva, October 23, 2024	

MEETINGS ON ELECTRONIC APPLICATIONS (EAM)

Document prepared by the Office of the Union

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.   This document reports on developments concerning UPOV e-PVP components, since the fifty-ninth session of the Technical Committee (TC), the eightieth session of the Administrative and Legal Committee (CAJ) and the fifty-seventh ordinary session of the Council

2.   UPOV e-PVP provides the following components to assist UPOV members in implementing the UPOV system of plant variety protection:

   a.   UPOV PRISMA: online application tool for making applications to PVP Offices;

   b.   UPOV e-PVP Administration Module: digitalized system for PVP offices to manage applications and grants, communicate with applicants and holders, publish information and transmit data to the PLUTO Database;

   c.   UPOV e-PVP DUS Report Exchange Module: platform for PVP offices to exchange DUS reports;

   d.   PLUTO database: information on plant varieties.

3.   The structure of this document is as follows:

BACKGROUND

3.   The background and previous developments concerning EAM meetings are reported in document SESSIONS/2023/6 "Meetings on Electronic Applications (EAM)".

DEVELOPMENTS

Second Meeting on Electronic Applications ("EAM/2 meeting") in October 2023

4.   The second Meeting on Electronic Applications ("EAM/2 meeting") was held via electronic means on October 24, 2023. The report of the meeting is provided in document EAM/2/6 available at: https://www.upov.int/edocs/mdocs/upov/en/eam_2/eam_2_6.pdf.

Administrative and Legal Committee (CAJ) in October 2023

5.   The Administrative and Legal Committee (CAJ), at its eightieth session, held via electronic means on October 25, 2023, noted the information provided in document SESSIONS/2023/6 in relation to recent developments concerning Meetings on Electronic Applications (see document CAJ/80/6 "Report", paragraph 42).

Third Meeting on Electronic Applications ("EAM/3 meeting") in March 2024

6.   The third Meeting on Electronic Applications ("EAM/3 meeting") was held via electronic means on March 18, 2024. The report of the meeting is provided in document EAM/3/6 available at: https://www.upov.int/edocs/mdocs/upov/en/eam_3/eam_3_6.pdf.

Use of UPOV PRISMA (as of August 31, 2024)

Number of submissions via UPOV PRISMA

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
January	1	-	7	18	107	232	206	235
February	-	3	9	5	107	95	107	122
March	2	3	6	21	67	121	54	42
April	-	3	22	11	105	96	102	74
May	1	1	33	11	65	67	123	76
June	-	7	10	18	819	78	59	94
July	-	7	3	9	58	83	57	94
August	-	1	7	11	379	435	442	460
September	3	8	16	29	154	91	104	
October	1	19	29	16	68	53	58	
November	3	16	26	41	407	353	341	
December	3	9	51	32	174	204	220	
Total	**14**	**77**	**219**	**222**	**2,509**	**1,907**	**1,873**	**(1,197)**

Number of submissions by participating Authority in UPOV PRISMA

Authority		Number of submissions in UPOV PRISMA in:							Total number of submissions in UPOV PRISMA (as of end 2023)
		2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	
African Intellectual Property Organization (OAPI)	OA			3	1		2		6
Argentina*	AR								0
Australia	AU	2	10	17	36	27	15	17	124
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)*	BO			2					2
Canada	CA		6	27	17	24	46	56	176
Chile	CL	3		3	1	9	3		19
China	CN								0
Colombia	CO			4	2	4	1		11
Costa Rica	CR			4	1	2			7
Dominican Republic	DO			2	2	4	3		11
Ecuador	EC				2	4	1	1	8
European Union	QZ		8	38	13	123	89	78	349
France	FR			20	-	4	3	2	29
Georgia	GE			2	1	3	1	3	10
Kenya	KE		13	6	14	14	26	23	96
Morocco	MA					7	4		11
Mexico	MX		7	7	13	13	25	17	82
Netherlands (Kingdom of the)	NL	1	8	12	6	1	2		30
New Zealand	NZ	5	3	8	5	18	7	7	53
Norway	NO	1		5	7	6	6	1	26
Paraguay*	PY								0
Peru	PE				2	3	1		6
Republic of Moldova	MD			2					2
Republic of Korea	KR			1	1				2
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	VC								0
Serbia	RS			2	1	3			6
South Africa	ZA		2	3	2	12	17	24	60
Sweden	SE			1					1
Switzerland	CH	2	3	4	16	13	9	6	53
Trinidad and Tobago	TT								0
Tunisia	TN			2	4		1		7

Authority		Number of submissions in UPOV PRISMA in:							Total number of submissions in UPOV PRISMA (as of end 2023)
		2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	
Türkiye	TR		6	23	54	65	63	57	268
United Kingdom	GB		3	18	22	2,138	1,557	1,562	5,300
United States of America	US		6	1	3	5	26	18	59
Uruguay	UY					6			6
Viet Nam	VN							1	1
Total:	36	14	77	219	222	2,509	1,907	1,873	6,821

Until required information is provided, applicants will not be able to submit application data

Launch of Version 2.10 (September 2024)

7.   UPOV PRISMA Version 2.10, incorporating the following developments, was deployed on September 3, 2024.

Crop coverage

8.   In Version 2.10, the following new UPOV Technical Questionnaires have been added in UPOV PRISMA and applied to those UPOV members using UPOV TQ[1] or UPOV TG characteristics[2].

Common Name	UPOV TG
Hardy Geranium, Crane's Bill	TG/330/1
Calendula	TG/331/1
Black Walnut	TG/332/1 Corr.
Gazania	TG/333/1
Ranunculus	TG/334/1
Brown Mustard	TG/335/1
Coreopsis	TG/336/1
Pistachio	TG/337/1
Physic Nut	TG/338/1
Zinnia	TG/339/1
Oxypetalum	TG/340/1

9.   In Version 2.10, the following UPOV Technical Questionnaires have been revised in UPOV PRISMA and applied to those UPOV members using UPOV TQ**Error! Bookmark not defined.** or UPOV TG characteristics**Error! Bookmark not defined.**.

Common Name	UPOV TG
Wheat	TG/3/12 Rev.
Field Bean	TG/8/7
Lettuce	TG/13/11 Rev 2.
Apple Fruit Varieties	TG/14/10
Barley	TG/19/11
Oats	TG/20/11
Freesia	TG/27/7
Alstroemeria	TG/29/8
Radish; Black Radish	TG/63/7-TG/64/7 Rev.2
Pepper	TG/76/8 Rev. 2
Japanese plum	TG/84/4 Corr. 2 Rev. 2

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[1] African Intellectual Property Organization (OAPI), Argentina (Wheat, Barely, Black Radish, Pepper, Cotton, Witloof Chicory, Papaya), Chile, China (Lettuce), Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, France, Georgia (Wheat, Field Bean, Barley, Oats, Blueberry), Kenya, Morocco (Blueberry), Netherlands (Kingdom of the), New Zealand, Republic of Korea (Lettuce), Republic of Moldova (Wheat, Lettuce, Oats, Pepper), Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Serbia (Blueberry), South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia, Türkiye, United Kingdom, Viet Nam.

[2] Australia, European Union, Mexico, Norway, Peru, United States of America, Uruguay.

Common Name	UPOV TG
Cotton	TG/88/7
Macadamia	TG/111/4
Mango	TG/112/4 Corr.
Chestnut	TG/124/4
Broccoli, Calabrese, Sprouting Broccoli, Winter broccoli	TG/151/5 Rev.
Leaf Chicory	TG/154/4 Rev. Corr.
Witloof, Chicory	TG/173/4
Guzmania	TG/182/4
Fennel	TG/183/4
Artichoke, Cardoon	TG/184/4 Rev.
Lavendula, Lavendar	TG/194/1 Rev.
Petunia	TG/212/2
Agaricus	TG/259/2
Papaya, Pawpaw	TG/264/2
Urochloa	TG/322/1 Corr.
Blueberry	TG/137/5 Rev.
Portulaca	TG/242/2
Triticale	TG/121/4
Red Clover	TG/5/8
Thimoty	TG/34/7
Lagerstroemia	TG/95/4
Hydrangea	TG/133/5
Chickpea	TG/143/5
Tea	TG/238/2
Turnip	TG/37/11
Berberis	TG/68/4
Apricot	TG/70/5
Eustoma	TG/197/2
Echinacea	TG/281/2
Banana	TG/123/4

10.   In Version 2.10, the coverage for Morocco will be increased as follows:

Common Name	Botanical Name	UPOV TG
French Bean	Phaseolus vulgaris L.	TG/12/9 Rev.2
Hot pepper	Capsicum annuum L	TG/76/8
Lettuce	Lactuca sativa L.	TG/13/11 Rev.
Squash	Cucurbita pepo L.	TG/119/4 Corr.2
Tomato	Solanum lycopersicum L.	TG/44/11

11.   In Version 2.10, the coverage for Serbia has been increased to include lettuce (Lactuca sativa L.), maize (Zea mays L.) and potato (Solanum tuberosum L.).

12.   In Version 2.10, the coverage for the United States of America has been increased to cover all crops and species.

13.   A full list of the crop coverage can be found in the UPOV PRISMA webpage: https://www.upov.int/upovprisma.

14.   In a second phase of Version 2.10 planned in October 2024, it is anticipated to expand the coverage of China:

Common Name	Botanical Name	UPOV TG
Soya bean	Glycine max (L.) Merrill	TG/80/7
Kiwifruit	Actinidia Lindl.	TG/98/7 Rev.2
Sunflower	Helianthus annuus L.	TG/81/7
Tomato	Solanum lycopersicum L.	TG/44/11 Rev.3
Hot pepper	Capsicum annuum L	TG/76/8
Anthurium	Anthurium Schott	TG/86/6
Guzmania	Guzmania Ruiz et Pav.	TG/182/4
Cucumber	Cucumis sativus L.	TG/61/7 Rev.3
Melon	Cucumis melo L.	TG/104/5 Rev.2

Functionalities

15.   To enhance PDF accessibility in line with WCAG 2.1 guidelines, both the title and language have been included in the document properties as of Version 2.10.

Test Campaign (May-June 2024)

16.   From May 15 to June 7, 2024, a test campaign was conducted and was available to all the authorities who had already indicated their interest in participating in the UPOV e-PVP DUS Exchange Module as of May 15, 2024. China, Japan and the United Kingdom were also allowed to join upon their request.

17.   Feedback was received from Brazil, Canada, China, Japan, New Zealand and the European Union.

18.   The following changes have been implemented in the module since the last update:

- Extend the support of browser's languages to new languages including Dutch, Chinese and Portuguese. Users can now keep their default browser language and view correctly the interface and the content in English if their language is different from: English, French, Spanish, German, Japanese and Vietnamese.

- Allow to update the breeder's name when editing a request. Users can now correct or modify the name of the breeder when they edit an existing request for a DUS report.

- Allow the display of the full botanical name along with the UPOV code. Users can now see the full scientific name of the plant species or genus in addition to the UPOV code when they search.

- When raising a request, remove the link to the application when the requesting PVP office is not using the UPOV e-PVP Administration Module. Users can now avoid confusion and unnecessary clicks when they raise a request for a DUS report from an office that does not use the administration module to manage applications.

- Remove the possibility to download a report when it is decommissioned. Decommissioned reports will be marked as such and will not have a download option.

- Support of regional authorities (European Union) in addition to countries. Users can now select the European Union as the requesting or source authority for a DUS report, as well as individual countries. This will facilitate the exchange of reports with the EU and with other authorities.

Use of UPOV e-PVP

19.   UPOV e-PVP was launched on September 28, 2023. Viet Nam was the first UPOV member to start using all the components of UPOV e-PVP.

20.   On November 28, 2023, the first application was filed via UPOV PRISMA to the UPOV e-PVP Administration Module administered by the PVP Office of Viet Nam. As of September 10, 2024, four application data were transferred to the UPOV e-PVP Administration Module using UPOV PRISMA.

21.   On December 22, 2023, the Kingdom of the Netherlands became the second UPOV member using the UPOV e-PVP DUS Report Exchange Module.

22.   Viet Nam requested an existing DUS report from the Kingdom of the Netherlands on May 24, 2024, using the UPOV e-PVP DUS Report Exchange Module.

23.   The Kingdom of the Netherlands accepted the request and uploaded the report on July 3, 2024, using the UPOV e-PVP DUS Report Exchange Module.

24.   Ghana will implement the UPOV e-PVP Administration Module in October 2024.

25.   Nine UPOV members also signed up to use the DUS Report Exchange Module increasing the number of authorities using that module to 11:

1. Brazil
2. Canada
3. European Union
4. Georgia
5. Ghana
6. Japan
7. Morocco
8. Netherlands (Kingdom of the)
9. New Zealand
10. United States of America
11. Viet Nam

Other UPOV PRISMA developments

IT Quality Software Audit

26.   A code audit was organized to improve the quality of the UPOV PRISMA software, resulting in the following recommendations:

(a)   to implement best practices in terms of coding to avoid concurrency and performance issues;

(b)   to move to the cloud for a better resource management at infrastructure level and keep following the highest security standards;

(c)   to develop a dedicated configuration interface for a controlled management of the forms.

27.   Recommendation (a) (best practices in terms of coding) was implemented in Version 2.8. A new tool to assess security at code level is used since Version 2.9.

28.   Recommendations (b) (migration to the cloud) and (c) (development of a dedicated configuration interface) will be implemented in Version 3.0, subject to available resources.

29.   After the deployment of Version 2.8, certain issues were reported by users. Those issues were not identified at the time of regression testing, mainly because the tests were made on test data and not on real data. In version 2.9, the automatic regression tests were performed on a copy of production data as agreed at the EAM/1 Meeting.

30.   The deployment of version 2.10 was supported by automatic testing of the new integrated Test Guidelines.

31.   In version 2.10, the database was migrated to the cloud as a first step of the full migration to the cloud.

32.   Following the implementation of automated regression testing for form generation, it is planned to implement automated tests for all functionalities by the end of 2024 to expand the test coverage.

Improvement of user-friendliness of UPOV PRISMA

33.   In order to improve the user-friendliness of UPOV PRISMA, consultations were organized with users to review certain current existing functionalities (copy functionality, assignment of roles) (see documents UPOV/EAF/17/3 "Report", paragraph 22, and UPOV/EAF/18/3 "Report", paragraphs 15 and 16).

34.   Participants in the UPOV PRISMA Task Force Group were consulted on the proposals made to improve the interface and the navigation through the system.

35.   Two design thinking workshops on user management were organized on December 4 and 7, 2023. After an online consultation, a final version was presented on January 30, 2024. The result of the workshops is being implemented and will be evaluated during a specific test campaign.

36.   During the UPOV PRISMA Task Force meeting on May 15, 2024, the Office of the Union gave a summary of the progress of updating the PVP office procedure. 84% of the procedures have been updated.

37.   The participating authorities have been requested to provide information about their national fees and whether or not those fees are subsidized. A Summary of the outcome is presented in Annex I.

38.   It is proposed to include information on national fees as a new section in the PVP Office Procedure.

39.   A finance-related information session was held on June 12, 2024, to address frequent finance-related questions that UPVO PRISMA mailbox receives. There were 22 UPOV PRISMA users who attended the session.

40.   New videos and a dedicated webpage have been developed to guide the user through the payment process.

41.   In addition, to address the challenges that discourage some applicants from using UPOV PRISMA when filing applications, one-to-one meetings were organized with two authorities of the top 5 receiving application data from UPOV PRISMA, namely Canada and South Africa.

42.   The following matters were discussed:

1.   Whether or not it is possible to make UPOV PRISMA mandatory: what are the incentives for applicants and PVP offices to increase the use of UPOV PRISMA and what are the challenges?

2.   What are the incentives and challenges for PVP Offices and applicants to use UPOV PRISMA for the processing of applications for National Listing?

3.   Raise awareness of UPOV PRISMA: it was agreed to arrange joint information sessions with the PVP Offices focal points, UPOV PRISMA users and local agents in the respective countries. The time will be decided jointly and will be communicated to all interested parties.

43.   It is foreseen to engage with other PVP Offices to receive feedback and address potential opportunities challenges.

Form Synchronization

44.   UPOV PRISMA ought to ensure that the most recent versions of its forms are accessible, thereby ensuring that the data submitted in applications is complete and mitigating the need for revisions due to any missing information.

45.   Maintaining up-to-date synchronization between the PVP Offices and their most recent forms is essential. Therefore, it is advised to promptly inform the UPOV PRISMA Team of any alterations in application forms or national technical questionnaires once implemented. Additionally, an annual verification with UPOV PRISMA focal points is recommended to ensure the application forms in UPOV PRISMA are up to date.

46.   In order to achieve and maintain synchronization of Technical Questionnaires (TQs) between UPOV PRISMA and CPVO, the following projects have been agreed with CPVO:

- Project 1: "Audit" (current issues/ states of affairs) for exchange of data between UPOV PRISMA and CPVO in both directions (Status: completed);

- Project 2: Part A: Resolving current issues; Part B: Synchronizing changes by UPOV/CPVO (Status: ongoing on the basis of information provided in Project 1);

- Project 3: Implementation of Project 2 outcome: Bi-directional exchange of application data (lettuce, tomato, rose) (Status: ongoing on the basis of information provided in Project 1);

- Project 4: Bulk upload of Maize applications from UPOV to CPVO (Status: ongoing on the basis of information provided in Project 1); and

- Project 5: "Transitional arrangements", to communicate to applicants about the situations in which they can use UPOV PRISMA for applications at the CPVO and the measures that need to be taken until all issues have been resolved (Status: ongoing).

47.   CPVO and UPOV are discussing the timelines in relation to the above projects taking into account the available resources. The agreed timelines will be presented at the EAM/5 Meeting.

48.   For PVP Offices that use UPOV TQs, keeping the TQ forms up to date is UPOV's responsibility. In version 2.10, various TQ forms have been revised to align with the most current version available.

49.   To ensure the TQ forms are updated promptly following the publication of a Test Guidelines (TG), we suggest adhering to the following procedure:

- After the Technical Committee (TC) adopts a TG, the UPOV PRISMA Team will distribute the necessary translations to the PVP Offices charged with handling each non-UPOV language.

- Some four months later, upon the publication of the TG, the respective TQ will become accessible in all the languages provided.

- Should a PVP Office be unable to complete the translation, it is expected that they would agree to use the English version.

PLANS FOR VERSION 3.0

Release of Version 3.0

50.   It is planned to release Version 3.0 of UPOV PRISMA in March 2025.

Crop Coverage

China:

Morchella	Morchella Dill. ex Pers.	National TG

Morocco:

Tomato Rootstocks	Solanum habrochaites S. Knapp & D.M. Spooner; Solanum lycopersicum L. x Solanum habrochaites S. Knapp & D.M. Spooner; Solanum lycopersicum L. x Solanum peruvianum (L.) Mill.; Solanum lycopersicum L. x Solanum cheesmaniae (L. Ridley) Fosberg; Solanum pimpinellifolium L. x Solanum habrochaites S. Knapp & D.M. Spooner	TG/294/1 Rev.3

51.   The coverage for Serbia will be increased to include sunflower (Helianthus annuus L.).

<u>Functionalities</u>

52.   The following functionalities are planned to being introduced in Version 3.0:

(a)   Migration of UPOV PRISMA to the cloud;

(b)   Bulk invoice upon request;

(c)   Notification/alert when a change is made to the application form or the technical questionnaire of the United Kingdom;

(d)   Restriction on the selection of crops for National listing according to the list provided by the authority: (United Kingdom and Netherlands (Kingdom of the));

(e)   PDF accessibility: all elements should be tagged and follow a proper reading order;

(f)   Implement the new screen design for Start New Application and Copy Application;

(g)   Improve user management functionality;

(h)   Add a "floating" menu for chapters in the generated form page; and

(i)   Bulk upload improvements:

1.   fix pending issues: stage, language, dropdown validation,
2.   simplify the template: reuse of applicant/breeder/agent correspondence address,
3.   add the possibility to use Purdy's notation for hybrids,
4.   implement validation after upload to minimize errors.

<u>Plans for UPOV e-PVP (2025)</u>

53.   The Office of the Union has agreed with the United Kingdom to plan for deployment of the Administration Module and the Exchange Module in 2025.

FINANCING UPOV e-PVP

54.   Document CC/104/4 gives an overview on the possible ways forward to finance UPOV e-PVP. Presently, UPOV e-PVP is financed by fees from the users of UPOV PRISMA and PLUTO, special funds from Japan and the Kingdom of the Netherlands, and the UPOV regular budget.

55.   In order to continue providing support to develop customization and maintain the standard modules, the Office will liaise with PVP Offices and users to promote the use of UPOV e-PVP which will generate increased revenues. The proposal to create a multilateral donor fund would be considered by the Consultative Committee during its session in October 2024.

JOINING REQUIREMENTS

56.   The Administration Module and the Exchange Module are available for all UPOV members.

57.   The proposal to provide access to the UPOV e-PVP platform during a trial period of three years, for future UPOV members having already received a positive advice from the UPOV Council on the conformity of their legislation with the UPOV Convention, would be considered by the Consultative Committee and the Council during their sessions in October 2024.

FOURTH MEETING ON ELECTRONIC APPLICATIONS (EAM/4)

58.   The fourth meeting of the EAM (EAM/4) will be organized as a hybrid meeting (physical/virtual means) on October 22, 2024.

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