

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

G/L/969
27 October 2011

(11-5398)

REPORT (2011) ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMITTEE ON SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

1. The present report is being circulated by the Chairperson of the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures on his own responsibility. This report provides a summary of the activities and decisions of the Committee during 2011.
2. The Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (the "SPS Committee") held three regular meetings in 2011: 30-31 March, 30 June-1 July, and 19-20 October. At the end of the March meeting, Mr. Deny Kurnia (Indonesia) assumed the chairmanship from Mr. Flavio Soares Damico (Brazil).
3. At each meeting, Members provided information regarding changes in their SPS policies and situations. The SPS Committee also considered a wide range of specific trade concerns, including some related to individual notifications. Eighteen new specific trade concerns were raised during 2011, many previously raised concerns were again discussed. The issues discussed included, *inter alia*, restrictions relating to avian influenza and bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE); maximum levels of pesticide residues in various products; restrictions regarding food and animal feed additives; as well as some pest-specific concerns.
4. The SPS Committee examined the operation of the transparency provisions of the SPS Agreement, noting that an increasing number of Members are submitting SPS notifications, and the number of notifications is showing an upward trend. A new SPS Notification Submission System (NSS) became operational during 2011, permitting Members to submit SPS notifications on-line. This system should improve the quality of the notifications, and streamline their distribution.
5. At each of the Committee's meetings, Members, Observer Organizations and the Secretariat provided information on their respective SPS-related technical assistance activities, and the Secretariat kept the Committee informed of the work of the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF).
6. The issue of special and differential treatment was on the agenda of each meeting of the Committee.
7. The SPS Committee continued to address some issues arising from the Second Review of the Operation and Implementation of the SPS Agreement, in particular the use of ad hoc consultations under Article 12.2 of the SPS Agreement. Issues arising from the Third Review were also examined by the Committee, in particular proposals to enhance the working relationship between the SPS Committee and the Codex, IPPC and OIE. In October, the Committee agreed to request the three relevant standard-setting bodies to consider joint work on cross-cutting issues.¹

¹ G/SPS/58.

8. The effects of SPS-related private standards on trade continued to be discussed at informal meetings with a view to establishing how to deal with this matter. In March, the Committee agreed to take up five actions that were further discussed in subsequent meetings.²

9. The SPS Committee maintained its close working relationship with Codex, the IPPC, and the OIE and received regular updates on their activities. Other observer organizations also provided information on their activities, including technical assistance activities.

10. In light of the growing number of requests, the Committee decided to review its criteria and procedure for granting observer status. The Committee agreed to grant observer status, on an ad hoc, meeting-by-meeting basis, to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Community of Sahel Saharan States (CEN-SAD), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), and the Agency for International Trade Information and Co-operation (AITIC).

11. The SPS Committee agreed to hold regular meetings on 28-29 March, 11-12 July and 17-18 October 2012.

² G/SPS/55.