

Developing SPS Indicators

Perspectives from an SPS Practitioner

Kees van der Meer, consultant

STDF / OECD Technical Working Meeting on SPS Indicators
World Trade Organization (WTO), Geneva, 1 July 2010

Overview

- Scope
- Country specificity
- International comparison
- Estimating outcome and impact
- Data collection
- SPS and sector level indicators

Need to clarify SPS scope

Three main options

1. Broad: All animal and plant health and food safety measures, regardless of relation to trade
2. Narrow: Export promotion from developing countries to premium markets
3. Only trade-related measures and capacities

Country specificity (1)

Needs and affordability of SPS capacities depend on

1. Size of country – area, population, economy, agriculture and food sector, volume of trade
 - Demand for SPS services and resources available increase with size
 - Lumpy basic facilities – economies of scale
 - Small countries – few products: need to be selective
 - Big countries – multi-use of capacities

Country specificity (2)

2. Urbanization – higher risks

- Transport over long distances with different pest and disease situation
- Producers and consumers don't know each other

3. Product-market combinations

- Differences in SPS pest and disease situations
- SPS sensitive products
- Differences in bio-security requirements

Country specificity (3)

4. Domestic income levels

- High income societies more sensitive

5. Geo-political location

- Membership regional grouping: EU, CIS, ASEAN

Conclusion: No size fits all

International comparison (1)

- Country level indicators exist for many areas: governance, corruption, investment climate, health etc
- International comparison of situation and performance important for policy makers

How to solve / mitigate country specificity?

1. Some indicators hardly sensitive: e.g. prevalence of strategy, work programs, manuals, SOPs, rule of law
2. Design indicators corrected for scale
3. Compare countries with similar characteristics

Note: Some indicators not useful for comparison, e.g. inter-temporal program achievements.

International comparison (2)

- Indicators for comparison need to be
 - robust
 - limited in number
- Important possible indicators cannot be measured directly: transparency, governance, cost of doing business, health status
- Robust composite indicators need to be aggregated from measurable sub-indicators
- Empirical work needed to test what works
- Use could be made of detailed technical indicators in PVS, phytosanitary and food safety tools

Estimating outcome and impact

- Causality has to be clear to assess future
- Attribution to SPS measures problematic, in particular if there are many factors
- Most problems estimating social and economic outcomes and impact
- Hence, at project level
 - preference for easy to measure technical outcomes and impact; and
 - link with benefits remains weak

Collecting information for indicators

- Preparatory assessment about availability and cost of data collection needed
- Three ways to assess data for baseline and periodic follow-up:
 1. Statistics and administrative records
 2. Surveillance among stakeholders and specialists
 3. Assessment by specialists
- Limited time and budget constrains adoption of indicators

Sectoral details

- Comprehensive SPS indicators useful, but
- disaggregation by sector (food safety, plant and animal health) desirable because of
 - Different characteristics
 - Different policy priorities