



PRESS RELEASE

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Australia donates over AUD 1 million to support SPS standards, LDC role in fisheries talks

Australia is donating over AUD 1 million (approximately CHF 705,000) to help developing and least-developed countries (LDCs) engage more actively in global agricultural trade and participate in fisheries subsidies negotiations taking place in Geneva.

The Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) will receive AUD 1 million for the years 2019 and 2020 to support developing countries to comply with international food safety, animal and plant health standards and increase their access to world markets. Additionally, Australia is also contributing AUD 23,000 (approximately CHF 15,800) to the recently established LDC Fisheries Subsidies Fund to support attendance by LDC capital officials at Geneva negotiating clusters in 2019, ahead of the end-of-year deadline for this work agreed by members.

WTO Director-General Roberto Azevêdo said: "I welcome Australia's continued generosity. This new donation will be important to help developing and least-developed countries improve their sanitary and phytosanitary standards, thereby accessing agricultural markets more easily. I also thank Australia for supporting the WTO fisheries trust fund that allows capital-based delegations from LDCs to participate in negotiations on fisheries subsidies. These negotiations are technically complicated and are important for LDCs, many of which rely on the sustainability of world's fish stocks and fishing communities."

Australia's Ambassador to the WTO, Frances Lisson, said: "Australia is committed to helping developing countries participate in, and benefit from, the multilateral trading system. We value the work of the STDF in improving compliance with SPS standards, sharing knowledge and building capacity. We also recognize that supporting active LDC participation is critical to achieving outcomes in the fisheries subsidies negotiations which benefit all WTO members."

Australia has contributed over CHF 17 million to WTO trust funds over the past 17 years.

The STDF is a global coordination platform that brings together leading trade, health and agriculture experts worldwide to share knowledge, tools and good practice and strengthen the effectiveness of SPS technical assistance provided to developing countries. The STDF also provides support and funding for the development and implementation of collaborative and innovative projects that promote compliance with international SPS requirements. The STDF is housed and managed by the WTO.

DG Azevêdo announced on 3 May the creation of the WTO fisheries trust fund in response to a request from LDCs.

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