

**Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures**

**PROCEDURE TO MONITOR THE PROCESS  
OF INTERNATIONAL HARMONIZATION**

Tenth Annual Report

*Adopted by the Committee on 25 June 2008*

A. INTRODUCTION

1. At its meeting of 15-16 October 1997, the SPS Committee adopted a provisional procedure to monitor the process of international harmonization and the use of international standards, guidelines or recommendations, as provided for in Articles 3.5 and 12.4 of the SPS Agreement. This procedure was subsequently revised by the Committee in October 2004.<sup>1</sup> The Committee decided to extend the provisional monitoring procedure for a further two-year period in July 1999, and again in July 2001, and in June 2003 the Committee further extended the provisional procedure for 36 months.<sup>2</sup> On 28 June 2006, the Committee agreed to extend the provisional procedure indefinitely, and to review its operation as an integral part of the periodic Review of the Operation and Implementation of the Agreement under Article 12.7.<sup>3</sup> The next such Review is to be completed in 2009, and every four years subsequently.

2. The Committee has previously adopted nine annual reports on the monitoring procedure.<sup>4</sup> These reports summarize several standards-related issues that the Committee has considered and the responses received from the relevant standard-setting organizations.

B. NEW ISSUES

3. Since the adoption of the Ninth Annual Report in July 2007, [no] new issue has been raised under this procedure.

C. PREVIOUS ISSUES

4. Since the adoption of the Ninth Annual Report, there has been [no] further discussion on any issue previously raised under this procedure.

D. RESPONSES RECEIVED FROM THE RELEVANT STANDARD-SETTING ORGANIZATIONS

5. No further information has been provided by the relevant standard-setting organizations regarding issues previously raised.

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<sup>1</sup> G/SPS/11/Rev.1.

<sup>2</sup> G/SPS/14, G/SPS/17 and G/SPS/25.

<sup>3</sup> G/SPS/40.

<sup>4</sup> These were circulated as G/SPS/13, G/SPS/16, G/SPS/18, G/SPS/21, G/SPS/28, G/SPS/31, G/SPS/37, G/SPS/42, and G/SPS/45.

E. REVIEW OF THE PROCEDURE

6. At the meeting of the SPS Committee in June 2008, a number of Members expressed concerns that the current procedure was not providing for an effective monitoring of the use of international standards. They noted that the recommendation that Members should also submit notifications of new or modified SPS measures which were based on the relevant international standards, contained in G/SPS/7/Rev.3, could provide useful information regarding the use of international standards.

7. The IPPC reported that the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures had requested the development of a system to monitor the use of IPPC standards, which could also identify emerging issues before they became disputes. A standards implementation officer was to be appointed with this responsibility.<sup>5</sup> The new mechanism would allow the identification of which IPPC standards were being used, and a database would be established. The IPPC observed that in some cases standards were not implemented because they were not relevant to the situation of an individual member.

8. The OIE noted that they had no mechanism for monitoring the implementation of OIE standards, and were not planning to develop a monitoring mechanism.

9. The Committee agreed to consider some of the suggestions that had been made and experience gained from the new recommended procedures on transparency, when it undertook the next review of the provisional procedure to monitor the process of international harmonization and the use of international standards, guidelines or recommendations.

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<sup>5</sup> See document G/SPS/GEN/849.