

Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

APPLICANTS FOR OBSERVER STATUS

Note by the Secretariat¹

Addendum

1. An application for observer status in the SPS Committee was received on 11 March 2011 from the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). Information provided by IGAD is summarized below.

1. Membership (8)

Djibouti*	Kenya*	Sudan**
Ethiopia**	Somalia	Uganda*
Eritrea	South Sudan	

*WTO Member

**WTO Observer

2. Mandate, scope and area of work

2. IGAD was established in 1996, superseding the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD) which was founded in 1986 with a very narrow mandate around the issues of drought and desertification. In 1996 the founding members of IGADD decided to revitalise the organization into a fully-fledged regional political, economic, development, trade and security entity.

3. The objectives of IGAD include:

- Promoting joint development strategies and gradually harmonising macroeconomic policies and programmes in the productive sectors, social, technological and scientific fields;
- Harmonising policies with regard to trade, customs, transport, communications, energy, gender, pastoralists, agriculture and natural resources including shared surface and underground water resources; and promoting free movement of goods, services, and people within the sub-region;
- Creating an enabling environment for foreign, cross-border and domestic trade and investment;
- Initiating and promoting programmes and projects to achieve regional food and nutrition security and sustainable development of natural resources and environmental protection; and encouraging and assisting efforts of member states to collectively address resource conflicts and combat drought and other natural and man-made disasters and their consequences;

¹ This document has been prepared under the WTO Secretariat's own responsibility and is without prejudice to the positions of Members or to their rights or obligations under the WTO.

- Facilitating, promoting and strengthening cooperation in research development and application in science and technology; achieving development and economic growth and alleviating poverty; and enhancing the standard and quality of life of the people of the IGAD region.

3. The ultimate objective of IGAD is to assist and complement the efforts of the member states to achieve, through increased cooperation, food security and environmental protection, promotion and maintenance of peace and security, and economic cooperation and regional integration.

4. Participation and/or membership in other international standard-setting organizations (ISSOs).

4. IGAD has applied to the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) Council for admission as a full member, and the OIE has requested reciprocity from IGAD.

5. Contribution to the work of the SPS Committee

5. In its efforts to facilitate intra-regional commerce through the removal of non-tariff barriers, and also to facilitate the protection of consumers through the development of standards for goods and services, the IGAD secretariat has indicated that it intends to develop an SPS framework within the next five years. In 2009 a Regional Policy Framework on animal health in the context of trade and vulnerability of the member states of IGAD was signed in Djibouti. The framework provides a number of institutional provisions which specifically address the responsibilities of the IGAD secretariat and include the establishment of a Dryland and Livestock Development Centre. This requires the coordination of relations with relevant technical institutions in the field of non-wood forest products including honey and livestock, which include the African Union Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU/IBAR), FAO, OIE and Codex.

6. IGAD views its role with regard to SPS issues in four main areas: (i) harmonization of SPS standards and measures between member states; (ii) facilitation of data and information exchange among member states; (iv) support to capacity building; and (v) facilitating and promoting studies and research on relevant SPS issues. The capacity of the IGAD Secretariat to implement this role has been boosted by the establishment of the IGAD Centre for Pastoral Areas and Livestock Development, which has augmented the services that were being provided by the one SPS expert. To further enhance its role IGAD has opted to develop some of its actions in collaboration with AU/IBAR and other RECs, especially EAC and COMESA. With a large membership of developed countries and international organizations, the IGAD Partners Forum (IPF) is also instrumental to IGAD's general functioning, including within the SPS area.

7. IGAD has several activities that relate to SPS matters in the region including:

- A Regional Policy Framework on animal health in the context of trade and vulnerability signed in 2009 by IGAD members, which recognised that the livestock economy in the region had been repeatedly affected by trans-boundary animal diseases which cause high mortality, production losses and export trade restrictions. In signing the Regional Policy Framework, member states agreed to launch a process of harmonization of livestock policies and regulations at IGAD level in an attempt to address their common challenges in a coordinated manner with the assistance of the IGAD Secretariat.
- An IGAD Drylands and Livestock Information Portal (DLIP), which serves as a web-based gateway information management system in order to provide IGAD member states and stakeholders within the livestock industry with comprehensive information in order to strengthen the sector, has been launched and is operational. The portal was established to

harness the vast data and information in the IGAD region and IGAD member states that was scattered across multiple sites, ministries and organizations. The portal, which was developed in cooperation with FAO with funding from the European Union, is expected to benefit from funding by various development partners supporting knowledge management under the IGAD regional drought resilience platform.

- The implementation of the EU-funded Participation of African Nations in Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standard-Setting Organizations (PAN-SPSO) project. The MOU between IGAD and AU/IBAR provides for partnership in the implementation of the PAN-SPSO programme. The European Union (Intra-ACP funds) has provided funding for this programme of approximately EUR 3.5 million. The rationale behind this project is to enhance the participation of African institutions in the activities of the OIE, IPPC and Codex, which is presently very low. The poor participation is partly due to the fact that the majority of African countries cannot avail and/or do not have qualified personnel to participate in these meetings, and is exacerbated by inability of the countries to have commonality of purpose to enable them to arrive at common and mutually beneficial positions on SPS issues. A combination of these factors has caused Africa to merely be on the receiving end of SPS matters with little or no influence over the formulation processes of emerging standards, despite the fact that the standards, once set and adopted, impact, immensely on the continent's economy. The PAN-SPSO project seeks to provide (a) institutional support to ensure more effective representation in international standard-setting organizations (ISSOs); (b) regional and continental harmonization to enable communication among African institutions through workshops and electronic channels so as to identify common interests and policies; (c) technical capacity building to enable national institutions to receive training and technical assistance to strengthen their technical capacity and ability to effectively contribute to the process of standard setting, and (d) data and information collection and sharing.

6. Reciprocity

8. IGAD is willing to give access to the WTO Secretariat to the records of its relevant meetings and SPS-related documents, upon request. It is further suggested that both IGAD and WTO enrich the cooperation through both formal and informal consultations on issues of common interest.
