
Committee in 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 21 December 2009 from the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Information provided by SADC is summarized below.

1. Membership (15)

Angola	Malawi	South Africa
Botswana	Mauritius	Swaziland
Democratic Republic of Congo	Mozambique	Tanzania
Lesotho	Namibia	Zambia
Madagascar	Seychelles	Zimbabwe

2. Mandate, scope and area of work

2. SADC was established as a development community with legal character on 17 August 1992, in Windhoek, Namibia, through a declaration and treaty signed at a summit of heads of state and government. However, SADC was preceded by the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC), formed in Lusaka, Zambia, on 1 April 1980. This alliance of nine states in Southern Africa had the aim of coordinating development projects in order to lessen economic dependence on South Africa.

3. The objectives of SADC included:

- Achieving development and economic growth and alleviating poverty; enhancing the standard and quality of life of the people of Southern Africa;
- Promoting self-sustaining development on the basis of collective self-reliance, and the interdependence of member states;
- Achieving complementarity between national and regional strategies and programmes;
- Promoting and maximizing productive employment and utilisation of resources of the region;
- And achieving sustainable utilisation of natural resources and effective protection of the environment.

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

The ultimate objective of SADC, the Community is to build a region in which there will be a high degree of harmonization and rationalization to enable the pooling of resources to achieve collective self-reliance in order to improve the living standards of the people of the region.

4. SADC has observer status in Codex, the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), as well as in the WTO Committee on Trade and Development

3. Contribution to the work of the SPS Committee

5. In its effort to facilitate intra-regional commerce through the removal of non-tariff barriers to trade, and also to facilitate the protection of consumers through development of standards for goods and services, the SADC Secretariat has put in place regional programmes on sanitary and phytosanitary measures (SPS) and on technical barriers to trade (TBT). In 2008, SADC Ministers of Trade and Industry approved two annexes to the SADC Protocol of Trade, namely the SPS Annex and the TBT Annex, which outline modalities of regional cooperation in SPS and TBT matters within SADC.

6. At the African region WTO Workshop on TBT held in Mauritius in May 2009, and that on SPS held in Kenya in July 2009, it became apparent that African countries, in particular Sub-Saharan African countries, do not effectively participate in SPS and TBT Committee meetings and those of the international standard setting organizations (ISSOs) closely linked to the two committees. Following these meetings, SADC decided to join both WTO committees and work with its member states to voice issues of common regional concern.

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

- A SADC Seed Certification and Quality assurance system designed to ensure that seed varieties listed in the SADC Regional Variety Catalogue and traded among SADC member states are of consistently high and known quality, and that movement of seed is efficient and less costly.
- The SADC Quarantine and Phytosanitary Measures for seed, whose purpose is to reduce costs related to seed trade, and encourage faster and safer movement of seed. This objective is to be achieved by (1) establishment of transparent and science-based common standards and procedures for seed movement and (2) the introduction of rationalized SADC pests lists for the movement of seed between member states, and from outside countries into the SADC region. To support this initiative, SADC, with the assistance of its cooperating partners, is developing a "Field Handbook on Pests and Diseases of Phytosanitary Importance in the SADC region" which will be distributed to SPS officers at border posts in the near future.
- Programmes have been put in place to prevent the spread of foot and mouth disease (FMD), including the control of movement of livestock and continuous surveillance in zones free from FMD without vaccination.
- The SADC Secretariat is currently implementing an EU funded project on Food Safety – Capacity Building in Residue Control (FSCBRC), budgeted at Euro 7.5 million. The purpose of the project is to harmonize food safety control regulations, guidelines and procedures through institutional strengthening in the SADC region in conformity with international requirements, in order to increase exports whilst complying with consumer safety requirements. The project endeavours to achieve five outputs: (1) strengthening of national food safety regulatory frameworks; (2) strengthened registration and quality control of crop protection products and veterinary drugs at national and SADC regional level; (3) food

laboratories assisted to develop quality management systems up to accreditation level; (4) enhanced coordination and communication between national and regional authorities involved in SPS; and (5) creation of public awareness on SPS issues and establishment of a regional SPS specialists database.

4. Reciprocity

8. The WTO Secretariat has not requested observer status in SADC.

9. As a regional political entity, the SADC cannot put certain high level documents of a sensitive nature in the public domain, but will readily share information concerning all technical and SPS related matters with the WTO SPS Committee Secretariat and other stakeholders upon request.
