
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 8 April 2010 from the Agency for International Trade Information and Cooperation (AITIC). Information provided by AITIC was circulated in G/SPS/GEN/1009 and is summarized below.

1. Membership

(a) Sponsoring Members (4)

Ireland
Separate Customs Territory of Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen and Matsu (Chinese Taipei)
Sweden
Switzerland

(b) Participating Members (61)

Afghanistan	Cuba	Kyrgyz, Rep.
Algeria	Djibouti	Lao People's Dem. Rep.
Antigua and Barbuda	Dominica	Madagascar
Azerbaijan	Dominican Republic	Mali
Barbados	Ecuador	Mauritania
Benin	Ethiopia	Mauritius
Bhutan	Gabon	Moldova
Bolivia	The Gambia	Mongolia
Burundi	Georgia	Montenegro
Cambodia	Grenada	Morocco
Cape Verde	Guatemala	Mozambique
Central African Republic	Guinea	Nicaragua
Chad	Guinea-Bissau	Nigeria
Congo, Rep. of the	Guyana	Rwanda
Congo, Dem. Rep. of the	Haiti	Saint Lucia
	Honduras	Samoa
	Jamaica	Senegal
	Jordan	Seychelles

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.

Sri Lanka	Trinidad and Tobago	Yemen
Sudan	Tunisia	Zambia
Suriname	Uganda	
Togo	Vanuatu	

2. Another five countries are in the process of accession. The African Intellectual Property Organization (OAPI) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) hold observer status at AITIC's Council of Representatives.

2. Mandate, scope and area of work

3. AITIC was established in Geneva in 1998 as an association and subsequently became an intergovernmental organization in 2004. AITIC's core objective is to assist the less-advantaged countries (i.e., resource-constrained developing countries and economies in transition, with a priority to the least-developed countries and countries without permanent representation in Geneva) to effectively participate in the WTO negotiations and in the multilateral trading system). AITIC currently has 61 Participating Members who receive trade-related technical assistance to better understand the implications of international trade policy issues and to further engage in the multilateral trading system.

4. AITIC has a mandate to:

- assist less-advantaged countries (LACs) to have more effective trade-led growth through personalised assistance and capacity-building programmes;
- assist LACs' participation in WTO negotiations and in the work of other international trade-related organizations;
- help LACs to become more active in the multilateral trading system and conduct more effective trade policies;
- strengthen the operational capacity of LAC trade delegations in Geneva and of non-residents located in their capitals, in Brussels or in other European cities.

3. Contribution to the work of the SPS Committee

5. AITIC has been providing tailor-made technical assistance activities on the SPS Agreement and the notification requirements to some of its Participating Members since 2008. In July 2009, AITIC and the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) entered into formal agreement to collaborate on projects aimed at providing technical assistance to LDCs and non-resident countries (without permanent representation in Geneva). One of the purposes of this two year (2009 and 2010) project is to strengthen the capacity of these countries to implement the SPS Agreement.

6. AITIC has so far organized four national workshops on SPS-related issues – in The Gambia (twice), Nepal and Togo. In 2010, AITIC is scheduled to conduct two more workshops in Africa: (i) a follow-up in Togo; and (ii) another in a country yet to be confirmed.

7. In the national workshops mentioned above, AITIC collaborated with SPS experts and local authorities to deliver tailor-made sessions. Each workshop lasted for two days and was held in the respective capital. The nodal ministries of Agriculture and/or Trade had been requested to ensure the participation of officials from other ministries and departments such as health, animal welfare, trade, chemicals and fertilizers, food safety, small-scale industries dealing with package, business houses, chambers of commerce, standards, fisheries, plant protection, customs, national committees on Codex,

packaging companies, etc. for proper dissemination of information to the different SPS stakeholders. The workshops also informed the participants of the role of the STDF and its activities.

8. In addition, AITIC has prepared background documents related to the WTO SPS Agreement, available at <http://www.acici.org/aitic/documents/docs.htm>.

9. Further information regarding AITIC's SPS activities can be found in G/SPS/GEN/1009, circulated on 30 March 2010.

4. Reciprocity

10. The WTO Secretariat has not requested observer status in AITIC. AITIC will readily share all documents and reports concerning all SPS-related activities, including the organization of technical assistance activities, with the WTO SPS Committee secretariat and other stakeholders upon request.
