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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

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ACTIONS REGARDING SPS-RELATED PRIVATE STANDARDS

COMMUNICATION FROM BELIZE

The following communication, received on 15 October 2013, is being circulated at the request of the Delegation of Belize.

Advancing Work on Actions 6-12

1. Belize recognizes that Members in the Committee hold divergent views in relation to Actions 6-12; however significant advances could be made, if these recommendations are considered in parallel with Actions 1-5. For such purpose, we believe it is necessary that Members consider the establishment of a small working group that could advance work on these actions.

2. We are of the view that out of the remaining seven (7) recommendations, Actions 10 and 11 are less contentious and closely linked to Action 4. As a result, Belize is hereby calling on Members to take into account the following recommendations under each of those two respective actions.

(Action 10: The SPS Committee should develop a Code of Good Practice for the preparation, adoption and application of SPS-related Private standards.)

3. Action 10 of document G/SPS/W/256 encourages Members to develop a Code of Good Practice. Since the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade already contains in Annex 3 a "Code of Good Practices for the Preparation, Adoption and Application of Standards", we would encourage Members to review the Annex and determine its applicability to this particular recommendation. If upon review it is deemed appropriate, then significant advances will be made if adopted.

(Action 11: The SPS Committee should develop guidelines for the governments of WTO Members to liaise with entities involved in SPS-related private standards.)

4. As it relates to Action 11, it is our understanding that a few Members are already liaising with entities involved in SPS-related private standards. We would encourage those Members to share their experiences with the Committee and probably the methods used could be adopted for the implementation of Action 11.

5. Once more, in order to advance work on Actions 6-12, we propose the establishment of either an ad hoc working group or electronic working group for such purposes.