

**CASE STUDIES – ENQUIRY POINTS/NATIONAL NOTIFICATION AUTHORITIES**

Presentation made by Zambia at the Special Meeting  
of the SPS Committee on Transparency Provisions  
held on 9 November 1999

1. The Department of Trade in the Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry is responsible for the operation of SPS Enquiry Point. It also serves as the national Notification Authority.
2. The process of implementation and administration of Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures is done by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture. These government ministries have the statutory responsibilities to prepare and publish the necessary regulatory requirements, conduct inspections and testing as well as issue certificates. Other support institutions include Customs Division and the National Parks and Wildlife Authority.
3. As enquiry point, the department of trade has the following responsibilities:
  - liaising with the Ministries responsible for the implementation of SPS measures on new legislation or proposed amendments and report any such to the WTO Secretariat;
  - receive and maintain copies of notifications made by other Member countries and disseminate information relating to such notifications to selected government ministries and private sector organizations for their information and necessary comments;
  - collaborate with such ministries as Health and Agriculture on issues relating to SPS and respond to any inquiries.
4. Although the department has access to computers and the Internet, it has not been easy to submit in time the notification made by other countries to the relevant stakeholders for their comments because not all have access to electronic facilities.
5. To ensure consistency in national policy with obligations under the SPS Agreement consultative meetings are held with interested parties.
6. Efforts have been made by the Department of Trade to encourage the business community to make use of the information provided to them although the response has not been impressive. There are barely any comments received from the business community on notifications sent to them.
7. As the Agreement enters into full force next year our major areas of concern include the following:
  - lack of an appropriate data base to keep track of information on important requirements;

- limited electronic facilities to transmit on time information received from other countries to interested parties;
- limited infrastructure to conduct tests and fulfil our SPS requirements;
- raising awareness among the business community has proceeded slowly partly due to lack of interest among the business community themselves and partly due to limited resources to conduct awareness campaigns
- lack of appropriate technology to adjust to and comply with SPS measures necessary to achieve the levels of SPS requirements in foreign markets.

8. Other issues of concern include:

- ability to participate and influence the process in standard setting bodies;
- limited capacity to develop standards based on science and conduct risk assessment.

9. Zambia respects the sovereign rights of Member countries to implement SPS measures necessary to protect human, animal or plant life or health. However, efforts should be made to ensure that measures adopted do not create unnecessary barriers to trade. There should be sincerity in the implementation of such measures and due consideration of the special needs of LDCs should be taken into account when preparing SPS measures.

10. To facilitate the effective implementation of the SPS requirements by LDCs, technical as well as financial assistance should be extended to them in the following areas:

- upgrading infrastructure to ensure that SPS measures maintained have sufficient scientific evidence;
  - raising awareness among the business community;
  - enhancing the electronic transmission of notifications between institutions;
  - increasing technical capacity to handle issues relating to SPS;
  - providing relevant scientific and technical information;
  - creation of an appropriate data base to serve the information needs of foreign inquiries and the local business community;
  - creation of a website in the area of SPS.
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