



Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

**WORKSHOP ON TRANSPARENCY
MONDAY, 30 OCTOBER – TUESDAY, 31 OCTOBER 2017**

DRAFT PROGRAMME

Note by the Secretariat¹

1. The Secretariat of the World Trade Organization is organizing a workshop on the transparency provisions of the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement), to be held in Geneva, Switzerland, on 30-31 October 2017. The workshop will be followed by informal and formal meetings of the SPS Committee, lasting until Friday, 3 November 2017. Representatives of Members, Observers and Observer Organizations are all invited to participate in the transparency workshop as well as the subsequent meetings of the Committee.
2. Document G/SPS/GEN/997/Rev.7 provides information on the workshop. The WTO, with the financial assistance of the Doha Development Agenda Global Trust Fund (DDAGTF), will sponsor the participation of approximately 40 government officials from developing country Members and Observers to the workshop. The Secretariat will select participants to be sponsored among applications from government officials in charge of the implementation of the transparency provisions of the SPS Agreement.
3. The workshop is intended to be a highly interactive, "hands-on" event, including training on the use of the improved SPS Information Management System (SPS IMS) and on-line submission system of SPS notifications (SPS NSS), as well as on the ePing SPS/TBT notification alert system. Delegates planning to attend the hands-on training sessions are invited to bring their laptops.
4. The workshop will also provide a forum for discussion and experience sharing on developments, challenges and practices in the area of SPS transparency. In addition, it will be an occasion to continue the discussions on transparency started as part of the Fourth Review of the implementation of the SPS Agreement.
5. Members will be invited to comment on the following draft proposed programme for the workshop at the SPS Committee meeting on 13-14 July 2017.

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 and obligations under the WTO.

MONDAY, 30 OCTOBER 2017**10:00–10:15****Opening remarks**

Overview of the workshop and its objectives

10:15–10:45**Session 1: Introduction**

Overview of the transparency provisions in the SPS Agreement and of relevant Committee/Ministerial Decisions

10:45–11:15**Session 2: WTO sources of SPS information**

- *Documents Online; ePing; I-TIP...*
- *SPS gateway + presentation of the improved version of the SPS IMS*

11:30–13:30

Participants will break into three groups: (i) English speakers; (ii) French speakers; and (iii) Spanish speakers.

Session 3: Practical session on the use of the improved SPS IMS

- *SPS IMS hands-on exercise*

Session 4: Practical session on the use of ePing

- *ePing SPS/TBT notification alert system hands-on exercise*

13:30–15:00**Lunch break****15:00–15:45****Session 5: Implementation of the transparency provisions**

- *Presentation of Members' level of implementation of transparency provisions and decisions (G/SPS/GEN/804/Rev.10)*

15:45–16:15**Session 6: Overview of the improved SPS NSS**

- *How does the on-line submission facility work?*
- *Presentation of the improved SPS NSS platform: what has changed?*

16:30–18:00**Session 7: Practical session on the use of the improved SPS NSS**

Participants will break into three groups: (i) English speakers; (ii) French speakers; and (iii) Spanish speakers.

- *Intro: How to use the improved SPS NSS and how to fill in a notification form*
- *SPS NSS hands-on exercise*

TUESDAY, 31 OCTOBER 2017

10:00–10:15

Opening remarks

10:15–13:00

Session 8: Sharing of national experiences and best practices in public consultations

Possible themes of discussion, include:

- *Models and mechanisms for public consultation in SPS rulemaking, including work from other international organizations (OECD, APEC, World Bank);*
- *Members' experiences in conducting public consultations;*
- *Benefits of public consultation;*
- *Private sector views;*
- *Other.*

13:00–14:30

Lunch break

14:30–16:15 (14:30-15:00 plenary, 15:00-16:15 groups)

Session 9: What actions could improve the implementation and benefits of SPS transparency provisions?

Participants will break into groups to discuss specific topics related to the implementation of the transparency provisions or recommendations (G/SPS/7/Rev.3), which emerged from the last transparency workshop, previous proposals in the context of the Fourth Review or Members' comments received after the March 2017 Committee meeting.²

Possible themes of discussion, include:

- *Improving the quality of notifications;*
- *Identifying and targeting interested stakeholders;*
- *How to manage the volume of notifications on which to comment;*
- *Decision criteria: what to notify and when;*
- *Sharing of unofficial translations;*
- *Web access to Members' SPS regulatory measures;*
- *Other.*

Approximately 1 hour will be allocated for group discussions.

16:30–17:30 - Reporting to the plenary

*Rapporteurs of each group will report back to the plenary (**5 minutes each**). The floor will then be opened for questions and comments.*

17:30–18:00

Session 10: Conclusion and recommendations

² See G/SPS/R/80, G/SPS/W/290, G/SPS/W/294/Rev.1 and the compilation of Members' suggestions for the transparency workshop circulated by the Chair on 7 June 2017.