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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

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SADC SECRETARIAT REPORT ON SPS ACTIVITIES

SADC REPORT TO THE WTO COMMITTEE ON SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

The following communication, received on 3 March 2022, is being circulated at the request of the secretariat of the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

1 BACKGROUND

1.1. The Southern African Development Community (SADC) region consists of 16 member States namely Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The region has a population of 345 million people and therefore has a high responsibility to meet the international sustainable development goals for the betterment of the lives of its citizens through safe intra-SADC and international trade through the application of relevant international standards.

1.2. Plant pests and animal diseases can inadvertently be transported along with commodities thereby threatening the agricultural production and environment of the importing country. Food and feed may be contaminated with pesticide residues or other chemical toxins. To reduce these risks without unduly restricting regional or international trade in food and agro-products, the Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Annex to the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Trade allows SADC member States to adopt harmonized or scientifically justified SPS measures. This is in line with the implementation of the requirements of the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on the Application of SPS Measures, the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC).

2 UPDATES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SPS ANNEX TO THE SADC PROTOCOL ON TRADE

2.1 Harmonization

2.1. The SADC secretariat participated in the first 2022 continental level session of National Conveners, Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and Nutrition focal point teams on 2 March 2022. The objectives of the meeting were to: provide practical information in the rolling out of the African Union food systems implementation support mechanism including key milestones and timelines; explore key issues (challenges, opportunities) to galvanise increased investments, institutional alignment as well as policy incentives to strengthen local implementation capacities within the context of National and Regional Agriculture and Food Systems Strategies/Plans and in line with Agenda 2063, Malabo Declaration and Sustainable Development Goals; and Agree on key components of the next six-months (March to August 2022) implementation support roadmap – based-on and driven by country specific needs.

2.2. On 28 February 2022, the SADC secretariat collaborated with the SADC Business Council and GIZ - CESARE in facilitating a virtual consultative meeting to discuss differences on health attestation requirements in SADC member States. The purpose of the meeting was to enable seamless movement of food commodities across borders and avoid unnecessary costs incurred due to the variations in market requirements as required by the health attestation certificates. The meeting

was attended by SPS regulatory authorities and private sector business entities involved in cross-border food trade.

2.2 Administration

2.3. The SADC secretariat facilitated the Thirteenth SADC SPS Coordinating Committee meeting held on 13–15 December 2021. The Committee discussed the implementation of SPS measures in the context of facilitating safe intra-regional and facilitation of international trade in line with the WTO SPS Agreement and the relevant international standards setting bodies.

3 UPDATES ON EU SUPPORTED TRADE FACILITATION PROGRAMMES

3.1 The SADC-EU Trade Facilitation Programme (TFP)

3.1. The Trade Facilitation Programme focuses its attention on the SADC Protocols on Trade and Trade in Services to support implementation of the EU - SADC Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA). The TFP addresses regional implementation issues in the areas of: TBT and SPS measures; Customs technical assistance support; and the EU-SADC EPAs.

3.2. During the period under review, the Programme has launched the following short-term consultancies:

3.1.1 Consultancy Service to capacitate SADC Cooperation in Standards (SADCSTAN) Technical Committee Members on the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) tools for the harmonization of standards and alignment of Regional/National Standards with international standards launched on 16 December 2021

3.3. This assignment focused on capacitating standards personnel and relevant stakeholders on ICT tool(s) that can be used to further the work of standards harmonization. Such competences are more necessary and relevant in light of the Covid-19 pandemic to expedite the development of standards at national, regional and international levels. This exercise was commissioned to ensure that the standards harmonization work is not disrupted with the prevailing restrictions on movement of people. It will contribute to the improvement of stakeholders' participation in standardization work and reduce the cost of standards harmonization process, as no travel costs will be required.

3.1.2 Consultancy Service to Train Conformity Assessment Bodies (including metrology facilities) that Operate in the SADC Industrialization Priority Areas on ISO/IEC 17020 launched on 13 December 2021

3.4. The purpose of the assignment was to train conformity assessment personnel in SADC member States in order to capacitate them to do their work competently. The training will be focused on ISO/IEC 17020. Competent conformity assessment bodies will provide the necessary support to "Factory SADC" while the SADC Industrialization Strategy Action Plan is being implemented.

3.1.3 Facilitated capacity-building training workshops for Members of the SADC TrLC on the Principles of Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) from 10 January to 11 February 2022

3.5. The purpose of the training workshops was to enhance skills of regulators in the SADC member States for developing technical regulations that are balanced and would not cause unnecessary barriers to trade.

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