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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

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**STANDARD-SETTING ORGANISATIONS' EFFORTS TO MONITOR THE USE AND
IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR STANDARDS:
HOW THE 3 SISTERS FOLLOW THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR STANDARDS**

HIGHLIGHT ON THE FIRST ANNUAL REPORT OF THE WOAHS OBSERVATORY

COMMUNICATION FROM THE WORLD ORGANISATION FOR ANIMAL HEALTH (WOAH)

The following communication, received on 23 February 2023, is being circulated at the request of the WOAH.

INTRODUCTION

The World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH, founded as OIE), the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission (Codex), and the FAO International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), are the three international standard-setting organisations referenced in the SPS Agreement.

The standards, guidelines and recommendations of these organisations contribute to protecting animal health and welfare, public/consumer health and plant health. The implementation of international standards at country level can involve challenges, and the extent to which they are put into practice remains unclear.

These three organisations have developed monitoring systems to provide an insight into the uptake of international standards by Members.

These systems also contribute to demonstrating the value of a rule-based international system. By increasing transparency, these monitoring systems support fair and safe international trade, and the progressive harmonisation of national sanitary and phytosanitary measures.

1 THE WOAHS OBSERVATORY

1.1. The [WOAH Observatory](#) is a programme that aims to monitor the implementation of WOAHS international standards.

1.2. The data collected and analysed assists WOAHS to gain a greater understanding of the challenges Members face in the implementation of standards and to evaluate their relevance.

1.3. The Observatory is a data-driven programme as well as a key component of WOAHS's digital transformation. Timely and good quality data submitted to WOAHS by Members and collected from external sources, such as WTO, is essential to identify specific needs for Members and suggest improvements to the Organisation's standard-setting process.

1.4. The WOAHS Observatory will be useful to accomplish the following:

- Identifying what challenges Members face in implementing standards;

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- Identifying capacity building activities and supporting Members in their efforts to put standards into practice;
 - Identifying success stories around standards and promoting their implementation;
 - Ensuring that standards are fit for purpose by taking the findings back to the standard-setting process;
 - Identifying areas for improvement and proposing solutions to processes or services offered to Members that may not be fully meeting their needs.

1.1 The Annual Report of the WOH Observatory

1.5. The publication of the first [Annual Report of the WOH Observatory](#) is an important milestone; it presents a general and systematic overview of the implementation of a broad selection of WOH standards at the global level.

1.6. The document includes more than 100 indicators grouped into twelve sections. Each of them is devoted to a different area of interest, including emergency preparedness, the One Health approach and WTO notifications and disputes related to animal health.

1.7. Each section of the report includes an [interactive dashboard](#) offering an array of options for dynamic information analysis for a desired region, disease, group of diseases or time period, as well as a [one-page executive summary](#).

1.8. Findings presented in this report outline for the first time a global perspective of Members' adherence to standards. At the same time, they raise awareness of some of the current gaps in their implementation.

1.9. The report also suggests how gaps in implementation could be filled by improving practices at the national level and how Members could benefit from more tailored support.

1.10. This first edition of the Observatory Annual Report contains recommendations at the end of each section for both WOH and national Veterinary Services and Aquatic Animal Health Services.

2 MECHANISM TO MEASURE THE USE AND IMPACT OF CODEX TEXTS

2.1. The Codex Secretariat, in collaboration with FAO and WHO evaluation offices, started work on developing a mechanism to measure the use and impact of Codex standards in 2021, as mandated by the Codex Membership through the Codex Strategic Plan 2020-25. A monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework to provide data about the use and impact of Codex texts was developed with a view to obtaining information that can help Members and Observers better understand the impact, or potential for impact, of Codex texts.

2.2. The first phase of the development of the mechanism focused on data gathering and analysis. A series of interviews and a focus group were conducted with key stakeholders, and a theory of change was drafted and validated by the stakeholders consulted to form a basis for the M&E framework. Of note is the fact that no existing data set was found to be readily available as an information source on the use and impact of Codex texts.

2.3. Following the data gathering and analysis step, several options to build the mechanism were analysed and the M&E framework was further refined. Based on the review and analysis undertaken it was proposed that the development of the M&E framework as a means of assessing the use and impact of Codex Standards progress in three directions:

- A survey on the use of selected Codex texts and their impact to all Codex members be developed and issued annually;
- Work with the WTO Secretariat to explore a collaborative monitoring and reporting framework in which Codex Texts have been highlighted in trade negotiations, SPS,

TBT notifications, specific trade concerns, and disputes, but also for disputes that were prevented thanks to Codex texts;

- Tailored case studies to assess the use and impact of specific Codex texts within the context of a member country or observer.

2.4. The Codex Executive Committee endorsed the proposed approach to building the mechanism. One recommendation was to undertake a pilot of a re-designed member survey in 2022. The survey purpose was to examine the reach, usefulness, and use of a sample of Codex texts as estimates for their impact. There were 97 responses from Members, for an overall survey response rate of 51%. In general, Members from all regions were found to have good familiarity with the selected Codex texts and were able to provide feedback on the reach, usefulness, use of each. Codex texts were found extremely or mostly useful by Members. Members commented that they found Codex texts to be most useful when new knowledge is gained in the country and the texts can be used as a standard baseline. There was less consensus across regions that Codex texts were used in countries' food control systems to help improve Members' commodity trade. There were not any significant regional differences related to satisfaction.

3 IPPC OBSERVATORY

3.1. The [IPPC Observatory](#) is a system that monitors the implementation of the IPPC, ISPMs and CPM Recommendations, identifies challenges and best practices and provides recommendations to the IPPC governing and subsidiary bodies for follow-up actions.

3.2. This evaluation system gathers the best practices and identifies common challenges faced by IPPC contracting parties through surveys and studies and provides an overview to the IPPC community on the state of implementation of the IPPC, ISPMs and CPM recommendations at a global level.

3.3. The main objectives assigned to the IPPC Observatory are the following:

- set an efficient mechanism to monitor the implementation of the IPPC as well as the adopted ISPMs and CPM recommendations (through IPPC general surveys);
- monitor the implementation of the IPPC Strategic Framework (2020-2030);
- implement innovative tools and approaches to conduct studies and surveys and improve survey response rates;
- report to CPM the implementation gaps and challenges identified and formulate the recommendations to be addressed by the appropriate subsidiary body;
- improve data management from IPPC studies and surveys;
- improve communication of surveys and studies results to contracting parties;
- improve survey coordination at IPPC Secretariat level.

3.4. For more information on the IPPC Observatory you can consult the [dedicated webpage on the International Phytosanitary Portal](#), watch the [IPPC Observatory video](#) or consult the IPPC Observatory [Factsheet](#).
