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**Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures**

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## **INFORMATION ON SPS ACTIVITIES OF THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION**

### COMMUNICATION FROM THE AFRICAN UNION

The following communication, received on 12 July 2023, is being circulated at the request of the African Union.

#### **1 INTRODUCTION**

1.1. The African Union Commission Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy, and Sustainable Environment (ARBE) is responsible for coordinating continent-wide initiatives in agriculture, fisheries, food and nutrition security, strengthening the resilience of African food production systems, facilitating harmonization of agricultural and knowledge support systems policies, mobilizing resources to address implementation of priority issues in the continent and advocacy for implementation of priority programmes in Africa.

#### **2 SPS ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN IN 2023**

2.1. The Commission convened the AU SPS Coordination Forum in March 2023. The Forum promotes mainstreaming and implementation of SPS issues into CAADP implementation, AU trade-related, health and environmental initiatives and frameworks. The Forum is composed of AU institutions working on SPS issues, regional economic communities and development partners.

2.2. An SPS learning event to promote harmonized SPS policies and capacities in Africa was organized from 30 to 31 March 2023 by AKADMEMIYA2063, Texas A&M University, USDA and the African Union Commission.

2.3. The African Union Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-BAR) organized the 15<sup>th</sup> Pan African Chief Veterinary Officers meeting in May 2023, Africa Common Positions on draft WOH chapters were developed and presented during the 90<sup>th</sup> General Session of the WOH World Assembly of Delegates in May 2023.

2.4. Convened the African Union member States National Plant Protection Organizations meeting in February 2023 to develop African Positions on draft International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures and other plant health related topics. Africa Common positions were developed and presented during the 17<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM-17) in March 2023.

2.5. The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) secretariat conducted a series of training and awareness workshops on the AfCFTA non-tariff barrier (NTB) Online Mechanism/Tool in January and March in Togo, Gabon and Cameroon with various stakeholders including national NTB Focal Points, customs officials, the private sector among others. The online Tool is a platform available for Economic Operators to register a complaint regarding a trade barrier encountered along a trade corridor. The training enhanced the capacities of stakeholders to identify, report, monitor and facilitate the elimination of NTBs.

2.6. The Commission has commenced data collection on the Africa SPS Index as part of reporting performance of SPS systems in Africa and reporting within the 5<sup>th</sup> CAADP Biennial Review.

2.7. Notable upcoming SPS activities:

- AU SPS Coordination Forum, 19-20 September 2023, Accra, Ghana;
  - Learning event on Using Good Regulatory Practice to Facilitate Safe Trade in Africa, Accra, Ghana, 21-22 September 2023 organized by African Union Commission, AfCFTA secretariat, STDF and USDA.
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