

**WORLD TRADE  
ORGANIZATION**

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**Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures**

Original: English

**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE – RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

Submission by the Maldives

Addendum

<b>Technical assistance <u>requirements</u>:</b>					
	<b>Information</b>	<b>Training</b>	<b>Infrastructure: (Hard and/or Soft)</b>	<b>Specific concern</b>	<b>Other</b>
<b>Rights, obligations and practical operation of the SPS Agreement:</b>	Hosting conferences, seminars and workshops.	Hosting conferences, seminars and workshops to train personnel concerned.	To train personnel including analysts and inspectors.	Compliance with international regulatory mechanisms.	International standards such as ISO standards.
<b>Food safety</b>	Hosting conferences, seminars and workshops.	Training programmes for inspectors and analysts.	Laboratory equipment purchase and training of personnel.	To improve consumer awareness and education.	
				Vetting of certificates, validity/details which these should contain – training of Customs Services	
<b>Animal health</b>				Vetting of certificates, validity/details which these should contain – training of Customs Services	
<b>Plant health</b>	Technical expertise to: 1. Develop national phytosanitary certificates based on the FAO-IPP Model. 2. Prepare legal framework (Plant Protection Legislation) to strengthen plant quarantine and phytosanitary procedures.	Financial assistance for: 1. Academic (University) training to develop HR in the field. 2. Short-term training through certificate courses, workshops, seminars, study tours etc.	Laboratory and field equipment for a plant quarantine facility.	Several exotic pests and diseases are introduced to the country through trade of plant products and materials. This affects agricultural production adversely. No quarantine facility exists in the country.  To overcome the problem, financial assistance to build a plant quarantine facility at the port of entry is required.	

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				Vetting of certificates, validity/details which these should contain – training of Customs Services	
<b>Contact details</b>	<p><u>Food safety:</u> Director, Public Health Laboratory, Ministry of Health, Male, Maldives; Tel: 00960 312284/332608; Fax: 00960 312281; E-mail: quaslab@dhivehinet.net.mv</p> <p><u>Plant health:</u> Mr. Mohamed Zuhair, Assistant Director-General, Ministry of Fisheries, Agriculture and Marine Resources; Ghazee Building, Male, Maldives; Tel: 00960 323928/322625; Fax: 00960 326558; E-mail: agri@fishagri.gov.mv</p> <p>Maldives Customs Service: Planning and International Relation Section</p>				

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

*(Such information could include, inter alia, a more detailed description of the technical assistance required, any relevant background information on the reasons for the request, the possibility of using a regional approach to the provision of the requested assistance and the scope for a coordinated approach among relevant international organizations.)*

The Public Health Laboratory (PHL) is an organization within the Ministry of Health to provide analytical services for the quality control of food as well as monitoring compliance of safety standards and regulations. The PHL is responsible for carrying out the monitoring of sanitary standards of food establishments and food processing plants.

Shortage of adequately trained food inspectors and analytical personnel is one of the biggest problems in addition to the shortage of needed equipments, to carry out the mentioned tasks.

Agriculture development in the Maldives remains a serious challenge due to lack of human and institutional capabilities to implement change, and inadequate physical infrastructure for expanding agriculture in the Maldives. Apart from the physical inadequacies, technical incompetence, due shortage of key skills also hinders agricultural development. Pests and disease management is the most crucial among them. A number of pest and diseases as well as non-parasitic diseases (salt spray, mechanical injury, water-logging, chemical injuries etc.) affect the productivity of agricultural produce in the Maldives. The influx of planting materials, fruits and vegetables from the neighbouring countries without proper quarantine procedures lead to the rapid build-up of these pests and diseases in the country. Moreover, the country lacks its own quarantine facilities hence, the isolated and scattered nature of the country no longer affords an effective barrier against the importation of new pests and diseases. This is detrimental to agricultural production in the country and the dependency on imported products is increasing.

Also in the face of this build-up of pests and diseases, more and more people has to rely on the use of hazardous pesticides for its control. Unfortunately, this does not offer long-term solutions and is likely to make the problem worse in the tiny island environment. The environment, soil and the harvested products become contaminated with dangerous levels of pesticide residues. It is important that the pest and diseases are correctly identified and the appropriate control measures chosen while causing little damage as possible to the host, environment and beneficial organisms existing. An integrated approach of pest/disease management need to be immediately developed and implemented to protect occupational health risks with work related exposure of humans to toxic chemicals and to safeguard our fragile, vulnerable environment from further effluence.

Therefore, it is extremely important to strengthen the plant quarantine and phytosanitary capability of the country. For this purpose the Government of Maldives requires international assistance.