

**WORLD TRADE
ORGANIZATION**

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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

Original: English

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE – RESPONSE TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Submission by Trinidad and Tobago

Revision

Technical assistance <u>requirements</u>:					
	Information	Training	Infrastructure: (Hard and/or Soft)	Specific concern	Other
Rights, obligations and practical operation of the SPS Agreement	✓	✓	✓		
Food safety		Risk Assessment of pesticides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a regulatory framework to modernize laws and regulations in keeping with international standards guidelines and regulations • Training of technical and scientific personnel re: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pesticides permitted for use - Restriction of pesticide use by crop • Developing a registration and framework for Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) in foods • Developing inspection, sampling and investigative procedures for use of pesticides in foods • Training of analytical chemists and microbiologists re: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pesticide residues in food - Aflatoxins in agricultural produce - Food standards of processed products - Food microbiology 		

Technical assistance <u>requirements</u>:					
	Information	Training	Infrastructure: (Hard and/or Soft)	Specific concern	Other
Food safety (Cont'd)			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrade laboratory equipment in food and pesticide testing • Providing laboratory methods and improving laboratory practices e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing inspection, sampling and investigative procedures for foods • Establishing quality assurance programmes and analytical procedures for Inspectors • Updating food control law and regulations • Develop information systems related to pesticides and food safety programmes • Strengthening national contact points and national Codex co-ordinating Committees • Develop consumer education programmes 		
Animal health	SPS information at all levels - technical, policy, public, media and private sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of transparency provisions • Application of risk analysis • Determination of appropriate level of protection • Recognition of equivalence and regionalization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training of technical and scientific experts in disease surveillance activities and the setting up of epidemiological monitoring systems, risk assessment and HACCP techniques. • Veterinary drug registration and development of veterinary drug residue testing capability 	Enhancing awareness and understanding of Member's rights and obligations under the SPS Agreement	

Technical assistance <u>requirements</u>:					
	Information	Training	Infrastructure: (Hard and/or Soft)	Specific concern	Other
Plant health	SPS information at all levels – technical, policy and public - for full appreciation/ implementation of the SPS Agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All SPS related training in technical and policy matters e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PRAs - Equivalence - Determining appropriate levels of protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training in pest identification capability • Training in diagnostics for plant quarantine • Training in phytosanitary treatment, inspection and certification • Developing surveillance/ monitoring systems with relevant laboratory and testing equipment • Computerization of records and plant protection databases or access to same • Developing a public awareness programme 	Improve awareness of SPS obligations and understanding of the issues involved and the means to convert these to action in the practical sphere of operations	
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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 organisations.)

With regard to Plant Health, training on SPS matters has been minimal. Information on SPS matters remained at the technical level without further explanation, discussion or implementation. It has not filtered down to the wider public. Consequently, the SPS Agreement remains mostly a concept at both the technical and policy levels. Accordingly, assistance is needed to fully explain these concepts; to convince clients and stakeholders to support, comply and contribute in everyone's interest. Clear details and definition of the contents of the SPS Agreement are needed to at least meet minimum acceptable international standards/requirements. (On occasion, the standards are neither quantified nor measurable.)

Therefore accreditation is also needed in every sphere, so that methods, procedures, test results and data can all meet the necessary standards. Participation in a critical external assessment of our plant quarantine system (as it relates to the SPS Agreement) will be beneficial. This could result in clear validated recommendations in terms of manpower, training, equipment and operational procedures. Our own assessment indicates certain weaknesses and suggests that assistance is needed in the following areas:

- Training in surveillance - so that a team can be established
- Training in pest identification for plant quarantine purposes
- Training in pest risk analyses for additional persons to establish a dedicated, functional unit
- Training in information/data management
- Training in plant quarantine procedures and operation manuals
- Training in management
- Training in establishment and management of pest free areas
- Improved laboratory support
- Computerization of records/activities
- Improved communication and access to information
- Accreditation of plant quarantine systems and personnel

Other countries in the region have also completed phytosanitary assessments and there could be a real possibility for a coordinated regional approach.