

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SPS AGREEMENT

Information for the Workshop on 31 March 2006

Communication from the Dominican Republic

The following communication, received on 30 March 2006, is being circulated at the request of the delegation of the Dominican Republic.

1. In preparation for the workshop on the implementation of the SPS Agreement, participants were asked to provide replies to the following questions.

1. How regularly do representatives of your country participate in meetings of the SPS Committee?

2. Since the SPS initiative for countries of the Americas sponsored by the IICA and the Steering Group, the Dominican Republic has participated in almost all the meetings.

2. Who usually participates from your country (Capital-based experts or Geneva-based trade representatives)?

3. We have a permanent mission in Geneva, and at home we have technical staff in each of the SPS subcommittees in the various agencies involved in this Committee, such as the Ministry of Agriculture, the General Directorate for Livestock, the Ministries of Public Health, Industry and Trade, and Foreign Affairs.

3. What information do you receive regarding meetings of the SPS Committee and how do you receive this information?

4. In the majority of cases, information is received through the Permanent Mission in Geneva, the IICA and the SPS Committee.

4. Does your country have a national SPS Committee?

5. Yes, we have a national SPS Committee.

5. How do your exporters find out about your trading partners' new SPS requirements?

6. All notifications to sectors affected by WTO SPS measures are disseminated through the Ministry of Agriculture and the General Directorate for Livestock.

6. What national mechanisms can be created to ensure the stakeholders in your country are informed in a timely manner of new SPS requirements so that the SPS requirements of trading partners can be evaluated and so that the views of relevant stakeholders can be taken into account when responding to SPS notifications?

7. Notifications are sent for information purposes to all organized groups through the National Council for Agriculture, which is responsible for trade matters.

7. In establishing such mechanisms, how can Members identify the relevant domestic stakeholders and promote effective interaction among those stakeholders that can be sustained over time?

8. Through the meetings of the Committee on SPS measures.

8. How can information about SPS requirements be transmitted to groups outside of capital?

9. Through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the case of outbound information, and by the Ministry of Agriculture and the General Directorate for Livestock for groups inside the country.

9. Has there been any national planning on how to implement the SPS Agreement in your country? If so, was this planning developed using a particular methodology?

10. We have a plan to strengthen institutions in order to help compliance with the SPS measures.

10. How does your country identify its technical assistance needs?

11. On numerous occasions there have been diagnoses within the three areas of plant health, animal health and food safety, as well as assessment of the plant and animal health capacity of the Dominican Republic with the support of the FAO, the IICA, OIRSA, APHIS/USDA, the Professional and Technical Consultants Association (PATCA) and national and international consultancies.

11. What has been your country's experience in both the request and the supply of SPS-related technical assistance?

12. We have had a good record of participation in SPS-related courses and workshops given by the WTO.

12. How can technical assistance supply and demand be most effectively matched, priority areas identified and duplication of donor efforts avoided?

13. We are planning meetings with international donor organizations to request technical assistance in line with the priorities identified in the different institutions with a view to taking fuller advantage of this assistance.
