

**ACTIONS AIMED AT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WTO AGREEMENT  
ON SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES**

Information Presented by the Inter-American Institute  
for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)

The following communication, received on 19 June 2008, is being circulated at the request of the IICA.

1. The observer organizations of the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) of the World Trade Organization (WTO) are invited to submit reports on the activities they have carried out to promote the understanding and implementation of the SPS Agreement. The IICA wishes to present some of the actions and activities that it considers relevant to the work of this Committee.

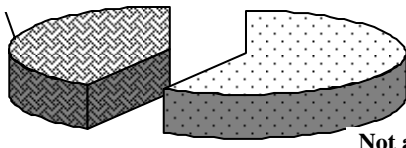
**I. SPS INITIATIVE FOR THE COUNTRIES OF THE AMERICAS**

2. The IICA continues to implement the SPS Initiative for the Americas. This 42<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the WTO SPS Committee is the 18<sup>th</sup> consecutive one for which 28 Member countries of the IICA have benefited from support under the Initiative. This accounts for 43 per cent of all the meetings held by the WTO SPS Committee.

3. This SPS Committee meeting is attended by 21 of the 28 beneficiary countries, bringing the participation rate to 75 per cent. This figure is positive when one considers that beneficiary countries must contribute 50 per cent of their participation costs. Some delegations even send more than one representative.

4. Since October 2002, the Initiative has facilitated the participation of a total of 228 capital-based experts from 32 countries. This has made it possible to strengthen existing institutional frameworks or develop new ones, thus promoting the creation or upgrading of an international agenda in the countries involved and coordinating the work of the WTO SPS Committee and that of the three relevant international organizations.

5. For further information, please contact Ricardo Molins at [ricardo.molins@iica.int](mailto:ricardo.molins@iica.int), Eric Bolaños at [erick.bolanos@iica.int](mailto:erick.bolanos@iica.int), or Mariela Madrigal at [mariela.madrigal@iica.int](mailto:mariela.madrigal@iica.int).

<p><b>42nd meeting of the WTO SPS Committee:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 21 countries supported</li> <li>• 21 capital-based experts participating</li> </ul> <p><b>The full programme:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 18 meetings supported</li> <li>• 228 specialists involved</li> <li>• 32 beneficiary countries</li> <li>• 6 countries on the Steering Group</li> <li>• Countries upgrade their institutional framework</li> </ul>	<p><b>Meetings of the WTO SPS Committee that have been attended under the SPS Initiative for the Americas</b></p> <p><b>Attended</b> 18 (43%)</p>  <p><b>Not attended</b> 24 (57%)</p>
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## II. IICA-STDF PROJECT

6. As a follow up to the development of institutional capacity in the countries of the Americas, the IICA is currently implementing the IICA-STDF 108 project.

7. The objectives of this project are to upgrade institutional frameworks, identify SPS requirements and develop a national SPS agenda that addresses the priorities identified. The project is closely linked, although not identical, to project STDF 175.

8. For further details, please contact Ricardo Molins at [ricardo.molins@iica.int](mailto:ricardo.molins@iica.int), Eric Bolaños at [erick.bolanos@iica.int](mailto:erick.bolanos@iica.int), or Mariela Madrigal at [mariela.madrigal@iica.int](mailto:mariela.madrigal@iica.int).

## III. TRAINING PROGRAMME TO PROMOTE UNDERSTANDING OF THE THREE RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND THE WTO SPS AGREEMENT

9. The first basic-level training course on the Codex Alimentarius was conducted as part of the SPS training programme developed by the IICA. The course took place thanks to the direct collaboration and participation of the Codex Alimentarius Secretariat and the FAO and was aimed at the Southern, Andean, Central and Caribbean regions.

10. The two-day course placed emphasis on the procedures for developing standards, the institutional mechanisms needed to ensure adequate involvement and the functioning of the Codex Alimentarius. The IICA's Distance Training Center (CECADI) was used for the course, which was attended by around 500 people from all over the hemisphere. Courses may soon take place for other international standard-setting organizations. For further information, contact Ricardo Molins at [ricardo.molins@iica.int](mailto:ricardo.molins@iica.int) or Ericka Calderon at [ericka.calderon@iica.int](mailto:ericka.calderon@iica.int).

11. From 22 to 24 April, Paraguay hosted a regional seminar on SPS, jointly organized by the WTO, the IICA and the IDB/INTAL. The event was attended by representatives from six countries. For further information, contact Eric Bolaños at [erick.bolanos@iica.int](mailto:erick.bolanos@iica.int).

## IV. STRENGTHENING OFFICIAL SERVICES

12. On 27 and 28 May, the IICA implemented the Performance, Vision and Strategy Instrument (PVS) for phytosanitary services in the State Phytosanitary Service of Costa Rica. The event was attended by some 50 Service representatives. The implementation of the instrument represents the start of support for institutional strengthening. Through this instrument, it will be possible to assess

the performance level of the Service and lay the foundations for a process based on a shared vision. For further details, please contact Eric Bolaños at [erick.bolanos@iica.int](mailto:erick.bolanos@iica.int) or Sacha Trelles at [sacha.trelles@iica.int](mailto:sacha.trelles@iica.int).

13. In Bolivia, the Performance, Vision and Strategy instrument for food safety has been implemented and a process has begun whereby support is given to public and private sector institutions with a view to their modernization. For further information, contact Jaime Flores at [Jflores@iica.int.ve](mailto:Jflores@iica.int.ve) or Marco Jordan at [marco.jordan@iica.int](mailto:marco.jordan@iica.int).

14. From 28 to 31 May, the IICA supported the event entitled "Prepared Communities: Assuming Leadership and Acting in an Innovative Way to Prevent Diseases Transmitted Between Animals and Humans", organized by the University of Michigan, the EARTH University, the Kellogg Foundation and the IICA. The event was attended by experts from 15 Latin American and Caribbean countries, representing various sectors and activities relating to animal and human health, including the production sector (suppliers of services and products), civil society (initiatives at community level) and academic institutions. They discussed and exchanged views on the various trends in this area and the implementation of pro-active strategies for resolving problems at local level. For further information, please contact Marisa Cordero at [ana.cordero@iica.int](mailto:ana.cordero@iica.int).

## V. SUPPORT FOR THE DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION

15. The IICA has various bulletins and channels of communication to promote the exchange of information on SPS matters and the work of the WTO, the relevant international organizations, and the regional organizations.

16. The **electronic bulletin CODEX-MSF Opinion Forum** specializes in the events taking place in the Codex Alimentarius and the WTO SPS Committee. The bulletin reports on and analyses standards and activities carried out, and aims to enhance the dissemination and study of these matters. Its readership comprises first and foremost the countries of South America, but it is available to all members at [www.iica.org.ar](http://www.iica.org.ar). For further information, contact Lourdes Fonalleras at [mlfonalleras@iica.org.ar](mailto:mlfonalleras@iica.org.ar).

17. The **AGROSALUD** information system is dedicated to the distribution of information on agricultural health and food safety, and the areas it covers include standards and actions carried out at the WTO and the relevant international organizations. It is currently launching an observatory on emerging issues and emergencies in the areas of animal and plant health and food safety ([www.infoagro.net/salud](http://www.infoagro.net/salud) for the Spanish version and [www.agrihealth.ws](http://www.agrihealth.ws) for the version in English). For further information, contact Ericka Calderón at [ericka.calderon@iica.int](mailto:ericka.calderon@iica.int).

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