



Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

**PROPOSED PROCESS FOR THE FOURTH REVIEW OF THE OPERATION AND
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT ON THE APPLICATION
OF SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES**

NOTE BY THE SECRETARIAT¹

At the Fourth Session of the Ministerial Conference, Ministers instructed the Committee to review the operation and implementation of the SPS Agreement at least once every four years, pursuant to the provisions of Article 12.7 of the Agreement.² The Third Review was concluded by the Committee in March 2010 (G/SPS/53). In order to facilitate an efficient review process, the Secretariat, in consultation with the Chairperson, is proposing that the Committee agree to the following procedure. The Committee will be invited to agree on this procedure at its meeting of 17-18 October 2013.

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1. The Review will initially be conducted through open-ended informal meetings of the Committee. The informal meetings will normally be scheduled back-to-back with the regular meetings of the Committee. Interpretation will be provided at the informal meetings. If necessary, further informal and special meetings of the Committee may be scheduled.
 2. Members will be invited to identify issues for discussion as part of the Review, and subsequently to submit papers and propose specific actions on the issues under consideration. The Chairperson will propose the order in which issues will be considered at each informal meeting of the Committee, in light of the proposals and submissions received.
 3. An item relating to the Review will be included in the agenda of each regular meeting of the Committee during the Review period, under which the Chairperson will provide an oral report on the informal Review process, including the issues discussed and conclusions reached. On the basis of this report, the SPS Committee will consider what further action may be appropriate.
 4. The Secretariat will prepare a background document summarizing information regarding the implementation of the Agreement (e.g., notifications, technical assistance, dispute resolution), as well as the work of the Committee since the Third Review (e.g., specific trade concerns, issues considered by the Committee, decisions adopted). This document will be revised to also include background information on any specific issues proposed for consideration, and may serve as the basis for the Committee's report on the Fourth Review.
 5. The Review process will be conducted on the basis of the following calendar, recognizing that some of the dates may need to be modified in light of other activities and resource constraints.

¹ This document has been prepared under the Secretariat's own responsibility and is without prejudice to the positions of Members or to their rights or obligations under the WTO.

² Implementation-Related Issues and Concerns, Decision of 14 November 2001, WT/MIN(01)/17, paragraph 3.4.

3 October 2013

- Initial identification by Members of issues they wish to be considered during the Review

Informal and formal meetings of 16-18 October 2013

- Adoption by the Committee of the procedure for the Fourth Review
- Initial discussion of issues identified by Members for consideration during the Review

19 November 2013

- Circulation by Secretariat of background document

17 December 2013

- Submission by Members of any written comments on the background paper prepared by the Secretariat and/or requests for background information on additional specific issues
- Identification by Members of any other issues they wish to be considered during the Review

12 February 2014

- Submission by Members of papers on the issues proposed for consideration
- Identification by Members of any further issues for consideration during the Review

6 March 2014

- Circulation by Secretariat of updated background document

14 March 2014

- Submission by Members of papers on the issues proposed for consideration

Informal meeting of 24 March 2014

- Discussions on issues identified

24 April 2014

- Submission by Members, in writing, of proposals for actions on issues under consideration

15 May 2014

- Comments by other Members, in writing, on proposed actions on issues under consideration

19 June 2014

- Circulation by Secretariat of first draft report on the Fourth Review

Informal meeting of 8 July 2014

- Discussion of first draft of report
- Identification of issues for further work by the Committee

31 July 2014

- Submission of written comments by Members on the draft report of the Review

18 September 2014

- Circulation by Secretariat of revised draft report on the Review

Informal meeting of 14 October 2014

- Consideration and, if possible, finalization of the report on the Review

Formal meeting of 15-16 October 2014

- Adoption of the report on the Fourth Review
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