

Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

MONITORING THE USE OF INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS,
GUIDELINES OR RECOMMENDATIONS

Request for Information by the Secretariat

1. The Committee has the task of developing a procedure to monitor the process of international harmonization and the use of international standards, guidelines and recommendations (Article 12:4). For this purpose, the Committee is to establish, in conjunction with the relevant international organizations, a list of international standards, guidelines and recommendations which it determines to have a major trade impact. One approach for the development of a monitoring procedure has recently been suggested for consideration by the Committee (G/SPS/W/51).

2. To facilitate the identification of those international standards, guidelines and recommendations which might be considered to have a major trade impact, the Secretariat has been asked to solicit certain information from Members. Such information would be relevant to the task before the Committee if the approach proposed in G/SPS/W/51 is adopted or if an alternative approach is eventually used.

3. Members are asked to submit to the Secretariat an indicative list of those international standards, guidelines and recommendations which they consider to be of major importance to their trade (both import and export). In determining trade importance, Members should consider, as appropriate, such factors as:

- the volume and value of trade affected;
- the relative importance of this trade for their economy (as an import or export);
- the extent to which the use of the international standard, guideline or recommendation would facilitate trade flows, or the extent to which its non-use hinders trade;
- the extent to which variations in the application of the international standard, guideline or recommendation, as opposed to the level of the standard or the guideline or recommendation itself, give rise to (potential) trade difficulties.

Members are also asked to identify particular instances or products for which they believe the **absence** of an international standard, guideline or recommendation has a major impact on their trade, taking into account, *inter alia*, the factors suggested above.

4. In identifying the international standards, guidelines or recommendations of major importance to their trade, Members are requested to be as specific as possible. The information regarding existing

international standards, guidelines and recommendations which has been provided by the relevant international organizations could be helpful in this regard (see G/SPS/W/18 and Rev.1, G/SPS/W/21 and G/SPS/W/23). For example, identification of Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs) established by Codex should indicate the name of the pesticide, the Codex Code Number and the product(s) for which this standard is of major trade importance.

Example: (031) Diquat in or on wheat 2 mg/kg.

When a Codex guideline or code of hygienic practice is indicated, the full name of the guideline/code should be provided as well as identification of any particular section considered most relevant.

Example: Recommended Code of Hygienic Practice for Poultry Processing, (CAC/RCP 14), Section 4.3 on Hygienic Operating Requirements

In a similar fashion, references to OIE recommendations or guidelines should identify the Chapter and, if applicable, the Article(s) (International Animal Health Code or International Aquatic Animal Health Code) or the Chapter reference No. and, if applicable, the paragraph(s) (Manual of Standards for Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines or Diagnostic Manual for Aquatic Animal Diseases), and the relevant species where there is more than one possible host.

Example: International Animal Health Code Chapter 3.1.8 with regard to Screwworm in domestic or wild animals

Example: The Manual of Standards for Diagnostic Techniques with regard to Brucellosis in sheep, goats or swine (B23, 24, 52)

5. Although there is no specific limit on the number of standards, guidelines or recommendations which Members may identify, it should be kept in mind that the task before the Committee is to establish a list of those which have a **major** trade impact. Members are asked to provide their indicative lists of standards, guidelines and recommendations to the Secretariat (Mrs. G. Stanton) before 20 May 1996. The resulting compilation of identified standards, guidelines and recommendations is, at this stage, for indicative purposes only and without prejudice to any decisions the Committee may eventually reach with regard to the monitoring procedure.