

PRESS RELEASE

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TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Switzerland gives CHF200k for food, animal and plant health standards projects in 2008

The WTO has received 200,000 Swiss francs from Switzerland to help developing countries analyse and implement international standards on food safety and animal and plant health — so-called sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) standards.

The donation is for the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF), a programme set up for the purpose jointly by the World Trade Organization, the World Health Organization, the World Bank, the World Organization for Animal Health, and the Food and Agriculture Organization. Switzerland joins 12 other donors who have contributed to the STDF.

The Swiss funds will be used in 2008 to implement the STDF's Medium Term Strategy and more specifically its Operating Plan 2008–09. The strategy emphasizes STDF acting as a vehicle to coordinate SPS-related technical assistance and to identify related good practice.

As part of this function, the STDF is organising in-depth analysis of SPS needs in a series of pilot regions (including Central America, East Africa and a sub-group of ASEAN countries). It is holding a series of workshops in Geneva on topics related to sanitary and phytosanitary issues, and is continuing its work funding projects and project development related to SPS through out the developing world.

In the planning and delivery of its assistance, the STDF works closely with other technical assistance initiatives involving the WTO, in particular the Integrated Framework for Least-Developed Countries and Aid for Trade.

The Medium Term Strategy will run until 2011 and aims to achieve a facility with annual operating funds of \$5 million. Since its inception in 2002, the STDF has built a portfolio of 25 projects and is financing a further 24 project-preparation grants.

Weblinks

Sanitary-phytosanitary measures: http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/sps_e/sps_e.htm
STDF: <http://www.standardsfacility.org>
Integrated Framework for Least-Developed Countries:
http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/devel_e/teccop_e/if_e.htm
Aid for Trade: http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/devel_e/a4t_e/aid4trade_e.htm

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