



**Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures**

**WORKSHOP ON TRANSPARENCY  
MONDAY, 12 OCTOBER – TUESDAY, 13 OCTOBER 2015**

PROGRAMME<sup>1</sup>

*Note by the Secretariat<sup>2</sup>*

1. The Secretariat of the World Trade Organization is organizing a special workshop on the transparency provisions of the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement), to be held in Geneva, Switzerland, on 12-13 October 2015. The workshop will be followed by informal and formal meetings of the SPS Committee, lasting until Friday, 16 October 2015. Representatives of Members, Observers and Observer Organizations are all invited to participate in the transparency workshop as well as the subsequent meetings of the Committee.

2. The workshop is intended to be a highly interactive, "hands-on" event including training on the use of the SPS Information Management System (SPS IMS) and the improved on-line submission system of SPS notifications (SPS NSS), while also providing a forum for discussion and experience sharing on developments, challenges and practices in the area of SPS transparency. Delegates who would like to participate in the hands-on exercises are kindly invited to bring their own laptops to the sessions.

3. The workshop will also be an occasion to continue the discussions on transparency started with the joint proposal by Chile, the European Union, Morocco and Norway for actions related to the fulfilment of transparency obligations<sup>3</sup>, which was developed as part of the Fourth Review of the implementation of the SPS Agreement. The Analysis of the Replies to the Questionnaire on Transparency under the SPS Agreement (G/SPS/GEN/1402) provides background information on Members' implementation practices and challenges encountered.

4. The WTO, with the financial assistance of the Doha Development Agenda Global Trust Fund (DDAGTF), will sponsor the participation of approximately 50 government officials from developing country Members and Observers. The Secretariat will select participants to be sponsored among applications from government officials in charge of the implementation of the transparency provisions of the SPS Agreement.

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<sup>1</sup> A draft version of this programme was circulated as G/SPS/GEN/1419 on 26 June 2015, for discussion at the July 2015 meeting of the SPS Committee. Members' comments were taken into account in preparing the final version.

<sup>2</sup> This document has been prepared under the Secretariat's own responsibility and is without prejudice to the positions of Members or to their rights and obligations under the WTO.

<sup>3</sup> G/SPS/W/278, which built on two former proposals regarding transparency (G/SPS/W/274 and G/SPS/W/277).

**MONDAY, 12 OCTOBER 2015**

**10:00–10:15**

**Opening remarks by Mr Felipe Hees, Chair of the SPS Committee**

*Overview of the workshop and its objectives*

**10:15–10:45**

**Session 1: Introduction**

**Speaker: Rolando Alcala**, WTO Secretariat

*Overview of the transparency provisions in the SPS Agreement and of relevant Committee/Ministerial Decisions*

**10:45–11:45**

**Session 2: WTO sources of information**

**Speakers:**

- **Steve Cooper**, WTO Secretariat  
*Presentation of the new WTO Members' website*
- **John Dickson**, WTO Secretariat  
*Presentation of WTO Documents Online*
- **Jürgen Richtering**, WTO Secretariat  
*I-TIP and SPS-related Information*
- **Roland Mollerus**, Senior Economic Affairs Officer at UN DESA  
*ePing Toolkit: Accessing SPS & TBT Notifications and Alerts*
- **Rolando Alcala**, WTO Secretariat  
*Presentation of the SPS gateway and the new version of the SPS IMS*

**12:00-13:30**

**Session 3: Practical session on the use of the SPS IMS\***

*Participants will break into three groups (i) English speakers, (ii) French speakers and (iii) Spanish speakers. Participants are kindly encouraged to bring their own laptops to this session when possible.*

- *SPS IMS hands-on exercise*

*\*Although a new SPS IMS is under development, this practical session will focus on the current system in place.*

**13:30–15:00      Lunch break**

**15:00–18:00**

**Session 4: Sharing of national experiences**

**Speakers:**

- **Kimberly Redden**, Analyst at the Canadian Food Inspection Agency  
*The Canadian Experience: Tracking, Sorting and Distributing SPS Notifications*
- **Mariam Somé Damoué**, Responsible for phytosanitary controls and SPS National Enquiry Point of Burkina Faso  
*Examples of Phytosanitary Notifications in Burkina Faso*

- **Virginie Spits**, Member of the EU SPS Team  
*EU Coordination Practices in Handling the Life Cycle of WTO SPS Notifications*
- **Roxana Inés Vera Muñoz**, Coordinator Agreements Unit, Subdepartment of Negotiations, International Affairs Division  
*Functioning of the National Notification Authority in Chile, Application of Article 7 and Annex B of the SPS Agreement*
- **Julia Doherty**, Senior Director of SPS & Agricultural Affairs at the Office of the US Trade Representative  
*US Experience in Taking Comments into Account*
- **Sally Jennings**, Senior Policy Analyst at the Ministry for Primary Industries in New Zealand  
*Transparency – It's All About Communication!*

**TUESDAY, 13 OCTOBER 2015****10:00–10:15**      **Opening Remarks****10:15–10:45****Session 5: 20 Years of Transparency****Speaker: Rolando Alcala**, WTO Secretariat*Presentation of Members' level of implementation of transparency provisions and decisions (G/SPS/GEN/804/Rev.8)***10:45–11:30****Session 6: Overview of the SPS NSS****Speaker: Rolando Alcala**, WTO Secretariat*Presentation of the new SPS NSS platform: what has changed?***11:30–13:00****Session 7: Practical session on how to prepare notifications (SPS NSS)***Participants will break into three groups (i) English speakers, (ii) French speakers and (iii) Spanish speakers. Participants are kindly encouraged to bring their own laptops to this session when possible.*

- *Introduction: How to use the new SPS NSS and how to fill in a notification form*
- *SPS NSS hands-on exercise*

**13:00–14:30**      **Lunch break**

**14:30–16:15**

**Session 8: Improving the implementation and benefits of SPS transparency provisions**

*Participants will break into four groups (i) English speakers Group A, (ii) English speakers Group B, (iii) French speakers and (iv) Spanish speakers.*

*In groups, the participants will discuss the issues that emerged from the replies to the **transparency questionnaire** and how they could be addressed. The following topics will be covered:*

- *Difficulties in filling in notifications*
- *Identifying trade facilitating measures*
- *Identifying and targeting interested stakeholders*
- *Handling comments*
- *Dealing with, and obtaining translations for, notified documents not in one of the WTO languages*

*Each language group will be assigned two topics for discussion, and will be supported by a rapporteur as well as two members of the Secretariat. Group discussions will run in parallel and should focus on possible ways to address these issues.*

*Approximately 1 hour will be allocated for group discussions.*

**16:30–17:30 - Reporting to the plenary**

*Rapporteurs of each group will report back to the plenary (**5 minutes each**). The floor will then be opened for questions and comments.*

**17:30–18:00**

**Session 9: Conclusions**