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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

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### COMMUNICATION FROM ISO (REPORT OF ACTIVITIES)

The following communication, received on 16 June 2016, is being circulated at the request of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).

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The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) has prepared this information paper as part of ongoing updates and communication between the SPS Committee and the ISO Central Secretariat. It provides a summary of current work undertaken by ISO that may be of interest to Members of the WTO SPS Committee and is intended to support and enhance dialogue and coordination between the two organizations.

Any general information regarding the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) can be found on <http://www.iso.org/>. ISO counts more than 21,200 international standards, 232 technical committees and 491 subcommittees managing some 2,607 working groups.

## 1 ISO'S INTERNATIONAL STATUS

1.1. ISO has a specific status with many UN agencies, including the WHO and FAO. It is also an observer at the WTO Committee on Trade and Environment (CTE), the Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade (WTO TBT), the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) and also at the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) and the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE). ISO entered into a liaison relationship with the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC).

## 2 ISO STRATEGY 2016-2020

2.1. The ISO Strategy 2016-2020 was approved at the ISO General Assembly in September 2015. It outlines the ISO priorities for the next five years and focuses on six interlinked strategic directions: ISO will *Develop high-quality standards* through ISO global membership, by ensuring to effectively *Engage stakeholders and partners*. A strong foundation in *People and organization development*, effective *Use of technology*, and a focus on *Communication*, will help to achieve the ultimate objective of *ISO standards used everywhere*.

## 3 ISO ACADEMY

3.1. An "ISO Academy" has been established to strengthen and build from the work being done for developing countries under the Action Plan for Developing Countries (APDC) framework. Further to the confirmation by the ISO Council in March 2016 of its strategic direction, the ISO Academy oversees the following six programme areas:

- Implementation of the ISO Action Plan for developing countries  
[http://www.iso.org/iso/iso\\_action\\_plan\\_2016-2020\\_en\\_id.pdf](http://www.iso.org/iso/iso_action_plan_2016-2020_en_id.pdf)
- DEVCO secretariat
- Development of training materials
- Provision of training services to ISO members
- Education
- Research activities

3.2. The ISO Academy also manages ISO's revised sponsorship programme to further increase the participation of developing countries in the ISO technical work. Sponsorships were granted to experts from developing countries to participate in the standardization work of the committees dealing with food. A number of sponsorships were also granted to experts from developing countries to participate in the standardization work on conformity assessment led by ISO/CASCO and on several other fields covered in ISO.

3.3. A capacity building workshop for French-speaking developing countries, sponsored by ISO, will be held in conjunction with the plenary meeting of ISO Technical Committee 34 (*Food products*), in Paris, in July 2016.

#### 4 ISO AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES - DEVCO

4.1. DEVCO, ISO's policy committee on developing country matters, established in 1961 is a unique forum for ISO members from developed and developing countries to discuss standardization and related issues, to exchange experience and best practice, and to identify needs and requirements of developing countries. It is also the role of DEVCO to monitor the implementation of the ISO Action Plan for developing countries.

4.2. Today, 155 out of the 161 ISO members are members of DEVCO. Find out more about DEVCO on <http://www.iso.org/iso/home/about/iso-and-developing-countries.htm>.

#### 5 ISO TECHNICAL WORK UPDATES

5.1. The priority areas of mutual interest on which ISO would like to maintain and nurture dialogue with the SPS Committee are the work of ISO/TC 34 on food products and the generic work of the ISO Committee on conformity assessment (ISO/CASCO).

#### 6 ISO'S CONFORMITY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

6.1. It is this body within ISO that is closest to covering the same subject matter as the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS). To date, CASCO has 132 members. More information about the scope, the structure and the membership as well as a quick link to the work programme of ISO/CASCO is available on the ISO website ([http://www.iso.org/iso/home/standards\\_development/list\\_of\\_iso\\_technical\\_committees/iso\\_technical\\_committee.htm?commid=54998](http://www.iso.org/iso/home/standards_development/list_of_iso_technical_committees/iso_technical_committee.htm?commid=54998)).

6.2. Topical issues currently being addressed in CASCO:

- CASCO co-organized with IEC and ITU the WSC Workshop on Conformity Assessment, hosted by UNECE from 1-2 December 2015, at the Palais des Nations, in Geneva. The workshop included 4 panels and gathered some 130 industry representatives, government regulators and economic leaders, who confirmed their interest in building on the success of the workshop with similar events in the future.
- Last year, CASCO launched an interactive online tool that introduces the basics of conformity assessment and the CASCO toolbox, [http://www.iso.org/sites/cascoregulators/02\\_casco\\_toolbox.html](http://www.iso.org/sites/cascoregulators/02_casco_toolbox.html) (publicly available) explaining why and how conformity assessment can be used by regulators, providing concrete examples from various fields. CASCO is in process of developing a similar deliverable addressing specifically the concept of Suppliers' Declaration of Conformity (SDoC).
- An educational brochure identifying what should be considered when developing personnel certification schemes is to be published in 2016.
- CASCO compiled a FAQ document to be published in 2016 on what should be considered when deciding between a management system standard and a conformity assessment standard.
- A project plan has been developed to organize a pilot stakeholders forum on conformity assessment towards the end of 2016. The forum would allow CASCO to engage with a broad range of stakeholders on key conformity assessment matters.

- The results of the 2014 ISO Survey of Certifications have been published on <http://www.iso.org> (<http://www.iso.org/iso/home/standards/certification/iso-survey.htm?certificate=ISO%209001&countrycode=AF>) in September 2015.
- Members of CASCO/CPC agreed to survey the ISO landscape with regard to the terms "validation and verification" in the conformity assessment context in a view to evaluate the need to develop a generic CASCO document to cover those two activities. A full description of the technical work is available from the CASCO Committee page ([http://www.iso.org/iso/home/store/catalogue\\_tc/catalogue\\_tc\\_browse.htm?commid=54998&development=on](http://www.iso.org/iso/home/store/catalogue_tc/catalogue_tc_browse.htm?commid=54998&development=on)).

## 7 ISO TECHNICAL COMMITTEE 34 COOPERATION WITH CODEX, OIE AND OTHERS

7.1. There is a long history of collaboration between the Codex Committees and ISO/TC 34, *Food products*. ISO/TC 34 supports the establishment of an ongoing and sustainable framework for collaboration between Codex and ISO, in order to enhance the mutual coordination of work and the elimination of duplication and contradictions. This also includes interest to support any joint or collaborative communication on each others' work.

7.2. ISO's observer status to the CAC provides an opportunity for the coordination of issues related to a variety of ISO standards that are adopted and used by Codex in its work. ISO methods have been endorsed in the document "*Recommended methods of analysis and sampling*" (CODEX STAN 234-1999) which is updated each year during the CCMAS meeting.

7.3. Codex and ISO activities are complementary. Codex, as a governmental organization, prepares documents to assist governments in their statutory and regulatory work to protect their citizens from health hazards caused by food consumption. ISO, as a non-governmental organization, prepares standards in particular on test methods to assist stakeholders along the whole food chain to fulfil both the statutory and regulatory requirements, as well as the requirements of consumers of these products. ISO/TC 34 also works on how to involve more developing countries in the works.

7.4. ISO/TC 34 will continue to offer its full support and cooperation to the Commission with a view to avoiding duplication of work and will adopt, for its own documents, the conclusions of the Commission on all matters concerning food hygiene requirements.

7.5. Annex 1 lists the projects that might be of interest to the SPS committee. It is to be noted that project ISO/TS 34700 *Animal welfare management — General requirements and guidance for organizations in the food supply chain*, which is developed with the participation of OIE and other international organizations and is based on OIE codes, will be published by the end of 2016.

## 8 USING AND REFERENCING ISO AND IEC STANDARDS TO SUPPORT PUBLIC POLICY — CONFERENCE AND TRAINING

8.1. To learn about the many ways in which international standards can support public policy goals, ISO, IEC and UNECE organized a full-day conference on 2 November 2015, at the Palais des Nations, Geneva. This was followed by a half-day training course at ISO Central Secretariat premises on 3 November.

8.2. ISO and IEC national standards bodies were invited together with their policymakers. UNECE also brought in regulators. This event was back to back with the WTO TBT Committee meeting in Geneva. There was a good mix of standardizers and policymakers.

8.3. Focus was made on how to reference standards in regulations, how standards can help implement policy commitments taken at the global level (e.g. sustainability, resilience and development goals). The event was a good opportunity to connect national and international policymakers with standards developers, in order to share experience and best practices. To learn more on how standards can help you: Using ISO and IEC standards to support public policy (<http://www.iso.org/iso/PUB100358.pdf>)

## 9 CONCLUSION

9.1. It is recognized that the SPS Committee's Members, as governments, have the authority to regulate at the national level and that ISO, as a producer of voluntary international standards, does not. In the framework of good regulatory practice, as promoted at international and regional levels, international standards and guides may be considered useful by regulators as effective and efficient tools to achieve important regulatory mandates, manage risk and address market confidence.

9.2. ISO considers that by using its international standards, regulatory authorities will achieve their aims in public health and safety at less cost to manufacturers and consumers. Using international standards also assists countries to meet their WTO TBT and SPS Agreement obligations.

9.3. For any further information on technical developments within ISO that have been reported in this paper, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs. Marie-Noëlle Bourquin at ISO Central Secretariat ([bourquin@iso.org](mailto:bourquin@iso.org)).

## ANNEX 1

SELECTED ISO PROJECTS HAVING CHANGED STATUS  
DURING THE PAST TWELVE MONTHS (AS OF APRIL 2016)

Project number	Title	Status
ISO 18743	<i>Microbiology of the food chain — Detection of Trichinella larvae in meat by artificial digestion method</i>	Published in 2015
ISO 17604	<i>Microbiology of the food chain — Carcass sampling for microbiological analysis</i>	Published in 2015
ISO/TS 22002-6	<i>Prerequisite programmes on food safety — Part 6: Feed production</i>	Published in 2016
ISO 16140-2	<i>Microbiology of the food chain — Method validation — Part 2: Protocol for the validation of alternative (proprietary) methods against a reference method</i>	Published in 2016
ISO/DIS 19657	<i>Definition and technical criteria for food ingredients to be considered as natural</i>	Under development
ISO/CD 34101-1	<i>Sustainable and traceable cocoa beans — Part 1: Requirements for sustainability management systems</i>	Under development
ISO/CD 34101-2	<i>Sustainable and traceable cocoa beans — Part 2: Requirements for performance (profit, people and planet related)</i>	Under development
ISO/CD 34101-3	<i>Sustainable and traceable cocoa beans — Part 3: Requirements for traceability</i>	Under development
ISO/NP 34101-4	<i>Sustainable and traceable cocoa beans — Part 4: Requirements for certification schemes</i>	Under development
ISO/DTS 34700	<i>Animal welfare management — General requirements and guidance for organizations in the food supply chain</i>	Under development (with OIE participation and based on OIE codes)
ISO/AWI 19565	<i>Fisheries — Minima requirements for fisheries labels: environmental aspects</i>	Under development (with FAO participation)