



Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

**SPS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES
1 SEPTEMBER 1994 TO 31 DECEMBER 2020**

NOTE BY THE SECRETARIAT¹

Revision

1. This document provides an update of all the SPS technical assistance (TA) and training activities undertaken by the Secretariat from 1 September 1994 to 31 December 2020. Detailed information is provided in the annexed table on the TA activities undertaken by the Secretariat for the last three years (2018-2020).²
2. The main objective of SPS technical assistance and training activities undertaken by the WTO Secretariat is to increase participants' awareness about Members' rights and obligations under the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement) and its implications for national policymaking. The SPS technical assistance activities also provide an opportunity to inform participants on the discussions held and latest documents considered by the SPS Committee. In addition, participants are informed about upcoming SPS workshops and technical assistance initiatives available to their countries on SPS matters.
3. The programme is adapted to take into account the specific needs identified by the countries, the participants' knowledge of the SPS Agreement, the level of development of the countries, and any specific concerns relating to the implementation of the SPS Agreement, in order to adequately respond to individual requests. SPS technical assistance and training activities typically include presentations on the basic provisions of the SPS Agreement, the transparency provisions, specific trade concerns raised at the SPS Committee, the WTO dispute settlement and SPS-related cases, and specific issues such as risk analysis, regionalization or equivalence.
4. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Secretariat reviewed the planned technical assistance activities on the SPS Agreement scheduled to be delivered in 2020.³ In this regard, the Secretariat organized tailored SPS-related training delivered via videoconference, as in-person activities were not possible for most of the identified period.
5. Altogether, 425 SPS training activities have been undertaken by the WTO Secretariat from 1 September 1994 to 31 December 2020. In 2020, 12 SPS training activities were undertaken: eight national seminars, one regional workshop and three other activities (including two dedicated trainings on the ePing alert system and an APEC Regional Workshop).⁴

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 and obligations under the WTO.

² Detailed information on TA activities from previous years is available from the Secretariat upon request. In addition, [G/SPS/GEN/521/Rev.7](#) includes details of TA activities from 1994.

³ Please see documents [G/SPS/GEN/997/Rev.10](#) of 3 March 2020, [G/SPS/GEN/997/Rev.10/Add.1](#) of 10 June 2020, and [G/SPS/GEN/997/Rev.10/Add.2](#) of 20 October 2020. In particular, documents [G/SPS/GEN/997/Rev.10/Add.1](#) and [G/SPS/GEN/997/Rev.10/Add.2](#) provide an update on the SPS-specific WTO technical assistance activities scheduled for 2020, including information on those that were postponed/cancelled and those which were delivered via videoconference.

⁴ As announced in document [G/SPS/GEN/997/Rev.10/Add.1](#), the 2020 Advanced SPS Course could not be delivered. The Advanced SPS Course includes a follow-up activity which is held back-to-back with the June/July SPS Committee meeting of the following year. The follow-up activity to the 2019 Advanced SPS Course, originally scheduled to be held face-to-face in June 2020, was instead organised through videoconference.

6. The annexed table identifies, for the period 2018-2020, the type of technical assistance activity, the region and venue where it took place, its dates, participating countries, language used, and whether representatives from the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission (Codex), the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) Secretariat participated in the activity.

7. A regional workshop refers to an activity organized by the WTO in which a region or sub-region was invited to participate. A national seminar refers to a WTO-organized activity undertaken at the national level only. The "other" category refers to all other SPS TA and training activities that do not fall under either of the first two categories. This includes other types of SPS-specific activities organized by the WTO Secretariat as well as activities organized by Members or other bodies in which the WTO Secretariat participated. Training sessions on the SPS Agreement also take place within other general WTO training courses, such as Trade Policy Courses, Regional Trade Policy Courses, Geneva Weeks, Introduction Courses and Agriculture Courses for least-developed countries; which are not included in the list of SPS TA activities in this document.

8. The information provided in the Annex below is organized on an annual basis and in alphabetical order, based on the region where the activity was undertaken, with the more recent activities listed first.

9. SPS TA activities are organized in close collaboration with Members, the three-international standard-setting bodies referenced in the SPS Agreement (Codex, IPPC and OIE), as well as with regional organizations, when appropriate. Since 1994, the Codex has participated in 119 activities, while the IPPC secretariat participated in 103 activities and the OIE in 117 activities.

10. To meet the demands for more advanced SPS TA and training activities, a three-week Advanced Course on the SPS Agreement⁵ has normally been offered each year since 2005.⁶ However, this course, originally scheduled to be held from 26 October to 13 November 2020 in Geneva, Switzerland, in French, had to be cancelled due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The follow-up activity to the 2019 Advanced SPS Course, which was scheduled to be held face-to-face in June 2020, was organised through videoconference.

11. In addition to the above-mentioned SPS TA and training activities, the WTO offers an E-Learning course on the SPS Agreement. The course is offered each year in all three official languages of the WTO: English, French and Spanish.⁷

12. Since 2010, Members have been informed at the beginning of each year of all SPS-related planned technical assistance activities, and interested officials are invited to submit applications for specific events. In 2020, this was done via documents [G/SPS/GEN/997/Rev.10](#) of 3 March 2020, [G/SPS/GEN/997/Rev.10/Add.1](#) of 10 June 2020 and [G/SPS/GEN/997/Rev.10/Add.2](#) of 20 October 2020. Approximately 90 applications were received for the SPS Regional SPS Workshop for Latin America, with a focus on transparency and the role of National Notification Authorities, co-organized with the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture. Candidates were required to have successfully completed the WTO E-Learning course on the SPS Agreement at the time of their application. All applicants were requested to provide information that indicated how their professional responsibilities were related to the SPS Agreement, and the endorsement of Members' permanent representations to the WTO was sought before the final selection of participants. The Secretariat endeavoured to ensure that the selected participants represented a balance of officials with responsibilities in their national administrations' food safety, animal health or plant protection areas, as well as SPS enquiry points and national notification authorities, and

⁵ This Advanced SPS Course provides in-depth and "hands-on" SPS training. During the course, participants must elaborate an action plan to address identified SPS needs in their countries. The implementation of the action plans is monitored after the course, and participants are invited to return to Geneva about eight months after the end of the course to present the achievements reached through their action plans.

⁶ See Chart 7 for a breakdown of participants who have attended the Advanced SPS Course by region.

⁷ In addition to the existing e-Learning Course on the SPS Agreement (available in French and in Spanish), the WTO e-Learning platform offers a set of four new interactive courses on the SPS Agreement in English entitled: SPS Course Series 1 - Overview of the SPS Agreement and Committee; SPS Course Series 2 - The SPS Agreement and Science; SPS Course Series 3 - Trade Facilitating Operational Provisions of the SPS Agreement; SPS Course Series 4 - Implementation, Administration and Enforcement. Please see document [G/SPS/GEN/997/Rev.11](#) of 4 March 2021.

other officials responsible for the coordination of WTO trade issues and SPS matters within their governments.

13. The Secretariat considers that this more "demand-driven" approach, based on applications from interested officials, together with the pre-requisite of completion of the SPS E-Learning course, has resulted in a more homogeneous and higher level of background knowledge by participants, and permitted the delivery of more advanced and effective training activities since 2010. The Secretariat will again organize its 2021 training activities in this manner, as indicated in document [G/SPS/GEN/997/Rev.11](#). In addition, the activities planned for 2021 are currently scheduled to be delivered through videoconference or virtual platforms.

14. Chart 1 below lists the breakdown of the type of activities undertaken in 2020 and Chart 2 shows the number of activities per year.

Chart 1 - SPS TA and Training Activities in 2020

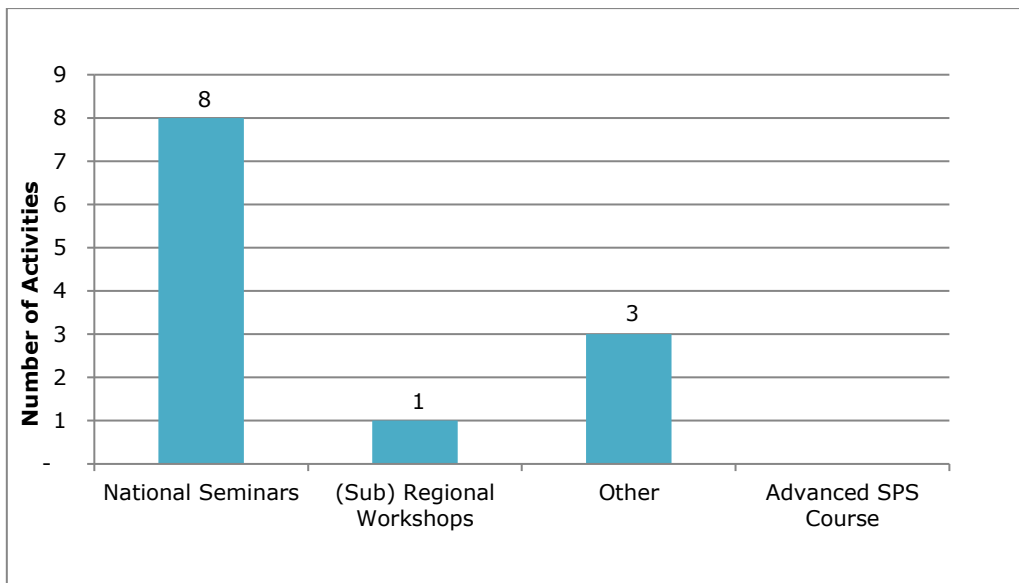
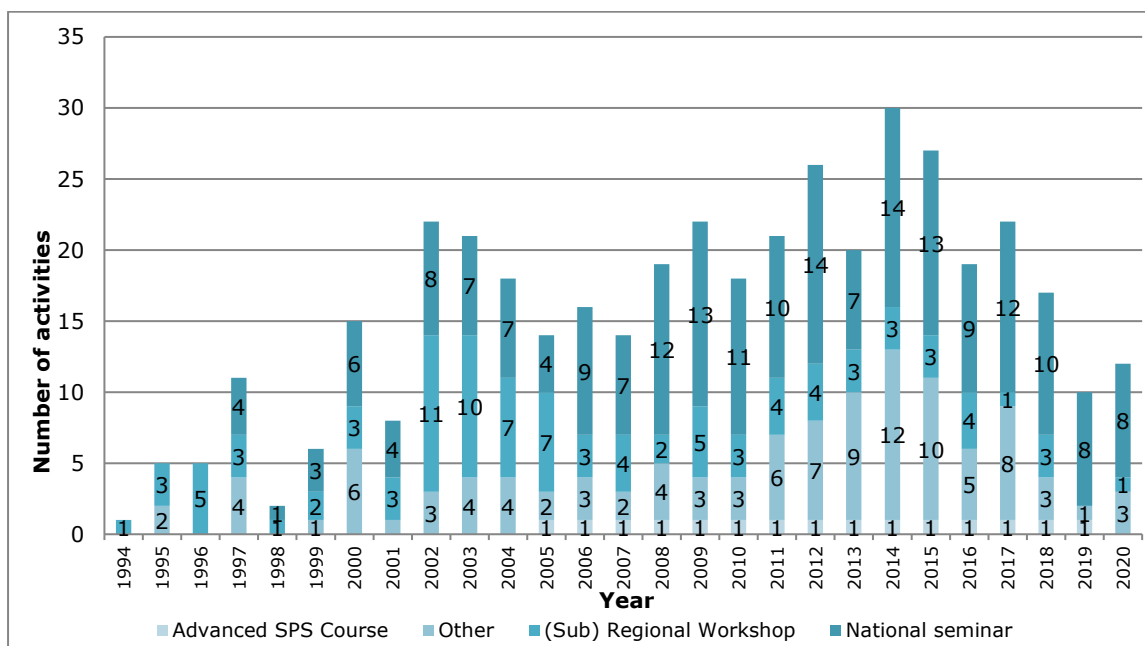
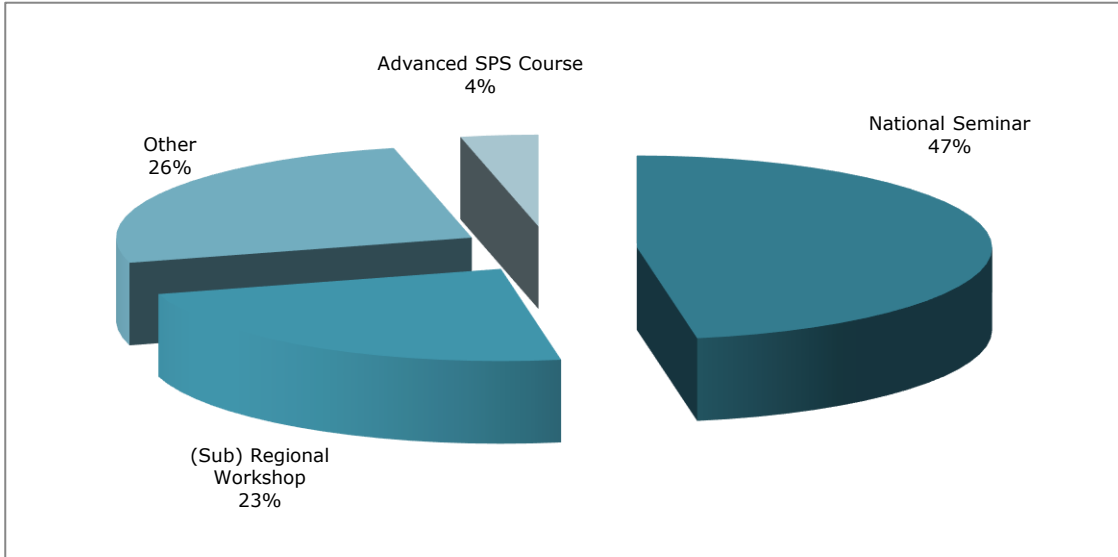


Chart 2 - SPS TA and Training Activities per year from 1994 to 2020



15. Chart 3 presents a breakdown of the type of activities undertaken since 1994: 201 national seminars, 99 regional or sub-regional workshops, 110 other activities and fifteen Advanced Courses on the SPS Agreement.

Chart 3 - Type of SPS TA and Training Activities from 1994 to 2020



16. Chart 4 shows the number and type of TA activities per region, while Chart 5 presents the total number of participants who have attended SPS TA and training activities per region and per type of activity. Overall, a total of 16,493 people have received training from the WTO Secretariat on the SPS Agreement since 1994.

Chart 4 - SPS TA and Training Activities per Region from 1994 to 2020

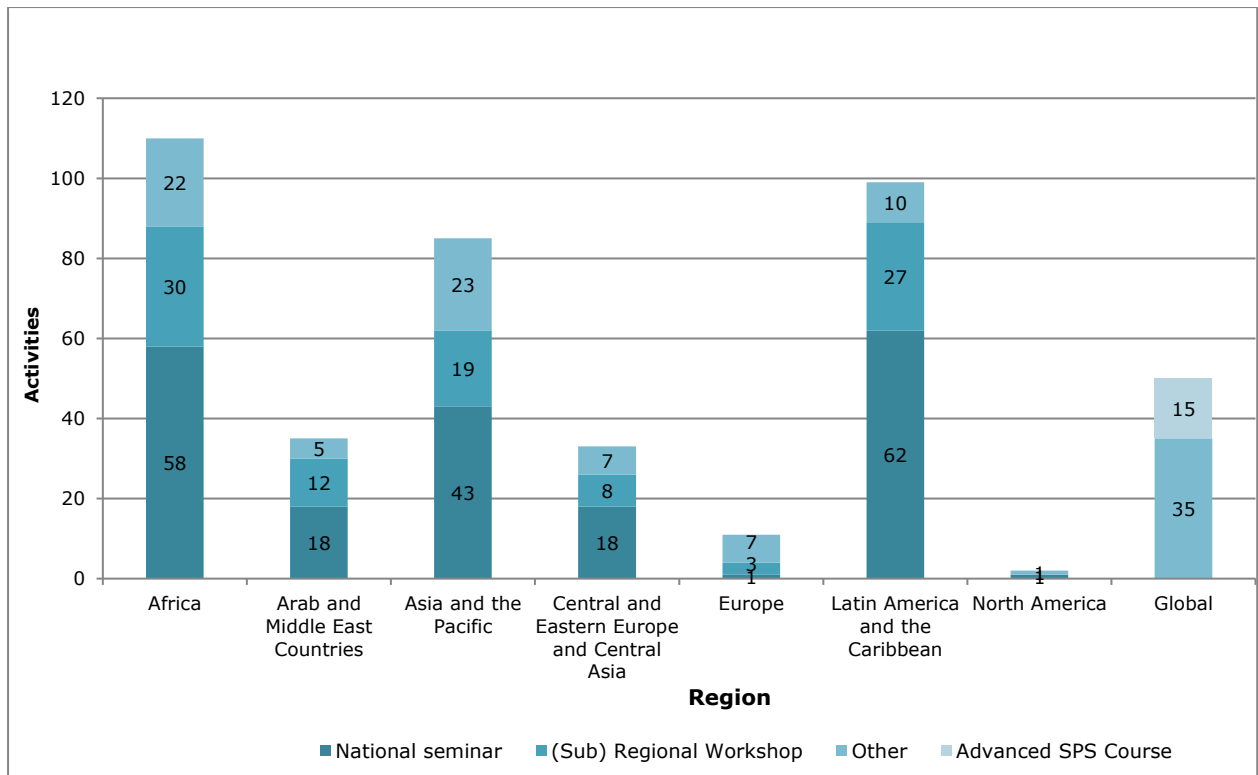
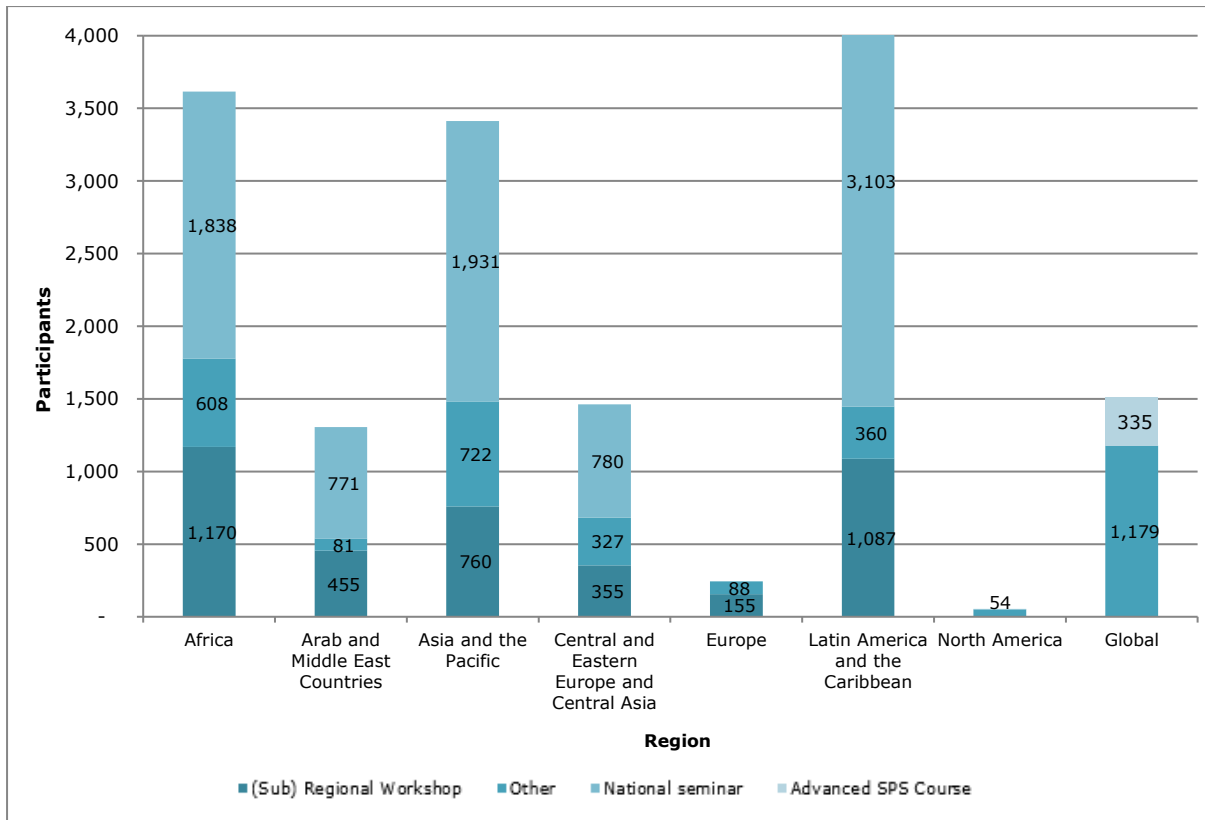
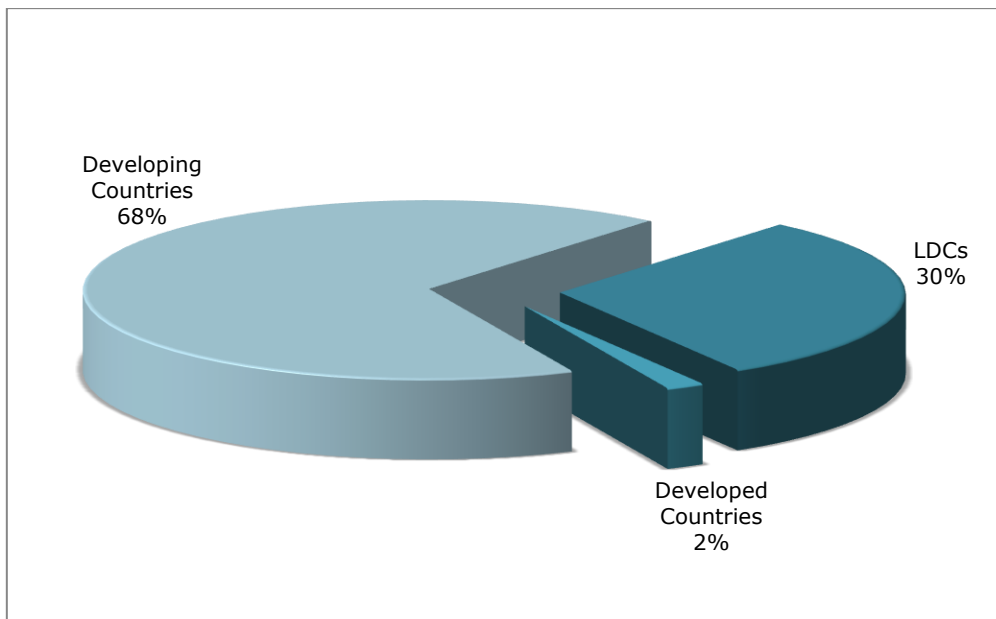


Chart 5 - Participants per Region from 1994 to 2020



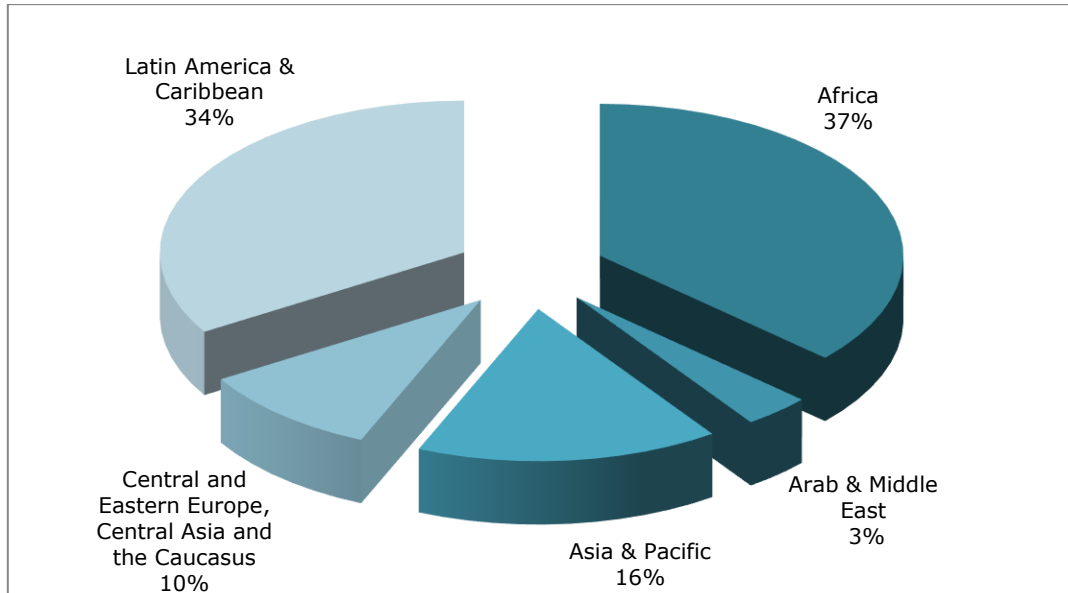
17. As shown in Chart 6, 30% of the beneficiaries of all SPS TA and training activities undertaken by the Secretariat have been from least-developed countries (LDCs), 68% from developing countries, and 2% from developed countries.

Chart 6 - Breakdown of country participation from 1994 to 2020



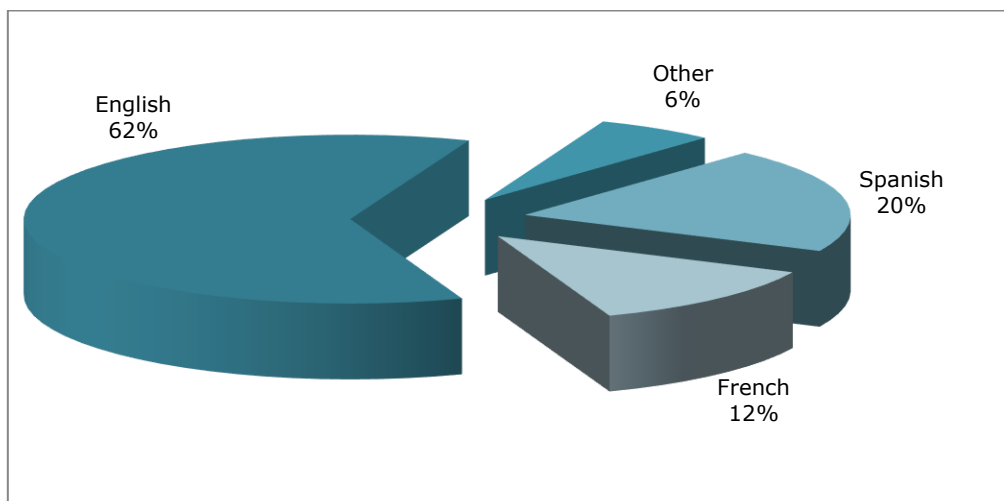
18. Chart 7 presents a breakdown by region of participants who have attended the Advanced SPS Course. Over the period 2005 to 2020, 360 officials have participated in the Advanced SPS Course from the following regions: 37% from Africa; 34% from Latin America and the Caribbean; 16% from Asia and Pacific; 10% from Central and Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus; and 3% from Arab and Middle East countries.⁸

Chart 7 – Breakdown of participants in the Advanced SPS Course by region from 2005 to 2020



19. Chart 8 presents the language breakdown of all SPS TA and training activities that have been undertaken. Overall, 62% of activities have been conducted in English, 20% in Spanish, and 12% in French. The remaining 6% have been undertaken in other languages, including Arabic, Portuguese, Turkish and Russian.⁹

Chart 8 - Language breakdown of SPS TA and Training activities from 1994 to 2020



⁸ As announced in document [G/SPS/GEN/997/Rev.10/Add.1](#) of 10 June 2020, the 2020 Advanced SPS Course could not be delivered.

⁹ For all the SPS TA and training activities undertaken in other languages, at least one of the official WTO languages was also used (with the exception of activities conducted in Portuguese).

ANNEX
SPS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES

(1 JANUARY 2018 TO 31 DECEMBER 2020)

Year	Region	SPS TA Activity	Host	Location	From	To	Participants			Participants	Participation of representatives from the standard-setting organizations			Language
							LDCs	Developing	Developed		Codex	OIE	IPPC	
2020	Africa	Other	Virtual delivery (via video-conference)	Virtual delivery (via video-conference)	15/05/2020	15/05/2020	Burundi	Tunisia		2	No	No	No	French
2020	Latin America and the Caribbean	Other	Virtual delivery (via video-conference)	Virtual delivery (via video-conference)	19/05/2020	19/05/2020		Colombia, Ecuador, Nicaragua		7	No	No	No	Spanish
2020	Latin America and the Caribbean	National Seminar	Virtual delivery (via video-conference)	Virtual delivery (via video-conference)	03/06/2020	03/06/2020		Paraguay		10	No	No	No	Spanish
2020	North America	National Seminar	Virtual delivery (via video-conference)	Virtual delivery (via video-conference)	05/06/2020	05/06/2020			United States of America	4	No	No	No	English
2020	Global	Other	Virtual delivery (via video-conference)	Virtual delivery (via video-conference)	08/07/2020	14/07/2020	Chile, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Philippines, Russian Federation, Thailand, Viet Nam	Australia, New Zealand		97	No	No	No	English
2020	Latin America and the Caribbean	National Seminar	Virtual delivery (via video-conference)	Virtual delivery (via video-conference)	27/07/2020	31/07/2020	Mexico			218	No	No	No	Spanish
2020	Latin America and the Caribbean	National Seminar	Virtual delivery (via video-conference)	Virtual delivery (via video-conference)	08/09/2020	08/09/2020	Dominican Republic			115	No	No	No	Spanish
2020	Latin America and the Caribbean	National Seminar	Virtual delivery (via video-conference)	Virtual delivery (via video-conference)	18/09/2020	18/09/2020	Guatemala			5	No	No	No	Spanish
2020	Latin America and the Caribbean	National Seminar	Virtual delivery (via video-conference)	Virtual delivery (via video-conference)	06/10/2020	06/10/2020	El Salvador			2	No	No	No	Spanish

Year	Region	SPS TA Activity	Host	Location	From	To	Participants			Participants	Participation of representatives from the standard-setting organizations			Language
							LDCs	Developing	Developed		Codex	OIE	IPPC	
2020	Latin America and the Caribbean	National Seminar	Virtual delivery (via video-conference)	Virtual delivery (via video-conference)	10/11/2020	03/12/2020	Brazil			183	No	No	No	English
2020	Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia	National seminar	Virtual delivery (via video-conference)	Virtual delivery (via video-conference)	30/11/2020	04/12/2020	Belarus			38	No	No	No	English
2020	Latin America and the Caribbean	(Sub) Regional Workshop	Virtual delivery (via video-conference)	Virtual delivery (via video-conference)	30/11/2020	04/12/2020	Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay			57	No	No	No	Spanish
2019	Africa	National seminar	Angola	Luanda	11/12/2019	12/12/2019	Angola			58	No	No	No	Portuguese
2019	Asia and the Pacific	National seminar	China	Beijing	10/09/2019	12/09/2019		China		19	No	No	No	English
2019	Asia and the Pacific	National seminar	Nepal	Kathmandu	10/12/2019	12/12/2019		Nepal		38	No	No	No	English
2019	Central and Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus	National seminar	Turkey	Ankara	02/05/2019	03/05/2019		Turkey		28	No	No	No	English

Year	Region	SPS TA Activity	Host	Location	From	To	Participants			Participants	Participation of representatives from the standard-setting organizations			Language
							LDCs	Developing	Developed		Codex	OIE	IPPC	
2019	Global	Other	Switzerland	Geneva	15/07/2019	16/07/2019	Bangladesh, Benin, Burkina Faso, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Mali, Myanmar (Burma), Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda	Argentina, Bahamas, Belize, Cameroon, Chile, Chinese Taipei, Côte d'Ivoire, Ecuador, Ghana, Honduras, Morocco, Mauritius, Paraguay, Peru, Dominican Republic, Russian Federation, Samoa, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Turkey, Viet Nam		34	No	No	No	English, French, Spanish
2019	Latin America and the Caribbean	National seminar	Jamaica	Kingston	20/05/2019	22/05/2019		Jamaica		37	No	No	No	Spanish
2019	Latin America and the Caribbean	National seminar	Peru	Lima	19/11/2019	21/11/2019		Peru		73	No	No	No	Spanish
2019	Global	Advanced SPS Course	Switzerland	Geneva	28/10/2019	15/11/2019	Lao People's Democratic Republic, Liberia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Rwanda, Sudan	Bahamas, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Cameroon, China, Egypt, India, Jordan, Kenya, Malaysia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine	Paraguay	24	Yes	Yes	Yes	English
2019	Latin America and the Caribbean	National seminar	Virtual delivery (via video-conference)	Virtual delivery (via video-conference)	17/10/2019	17/10/2019		Paraguay		9	No	No	No	Spanish
2019	Latin America and the Caribbean	National seminar	Guatemala	Ciudad de Guatemala	29/08/2019	30/08/2019		Guatemala		24	No	No	No	Spanish
2018	Africa	National seminar	Côte d'Ivoire	Abidjan	05/12/2018	07/12/2018		Côte d'Ivoire		50	No	No	No	French

Year	Region	SPS TA Activity	Host	Location	From	To	Participants			Participants	Participation of representatives from the standard-setting organizations			Language
							LDCs	Developing	Developed		Codex	OIE	IPPC	
2018	Africa	(Sub) Regional Workshop	Benin	Cotonou	25/06/2018	27/06/2018	Angola, Comoros, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Madagascar, Mali, Senegal, Togo	Cameroon, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Guinea, Morocco, Tunisia		37	No	No	No	French
2018	Arab and Middle East Countries	(Sub) Regional Workshop	Kuwait, the State of	Kuwait City	16/04/2018	19/04/2018	Somalia, Sudan	Bahrain, Kingdom of; Djibouti; Egypt; Jordan; Lebanese Republic; Syrian Arab Republic; Tunisia		20	Yes	Yes	Yes	English
2018	Arab and Middle East Countries	(Sub) Regional Workshop	Saudi Arabia, Kingdom of	Jeddah	09/10/2018	11/10/2018		Bahrain, Kingdom of; Kuwait, the State of; Oman; Saudi Arabia, Kingdom of	Chinese Taipei	25	No	No	No	English
2018	Asia and the Pacific	National seminar	Chinese Taipei	Taipei	04/12/2018	06/12/2018				38	No	No	No	English
2018	Asia and the Pacific	National seminar	Tonga	Nuku'alofa	29/05/2018	31/05/2018		Tonga		28	No	No	No	English
2018	Asia and the Pacific	Other	India	New Delhi	11/04/2018	13/04/2018	Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar, Nepal	India, Maldives, Sri Lanka		29	No	No	No	English
2018	Central and Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus	National seminar	Belarus	Minsk	23/01/2018	24/01/2018		Belarus		58	No	No	No	English
2018	Central and Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus	National seminar	Moldova, Republic of	Chisinau	07/08/2018	08/08/2018		Moldova, Republic of		25	No	No	No	English
2018	Latin America and the Caribbean	National seminar	Bolivia, Plurinational State of	La Paz	15/05/2018	18/05/2018		Bolivia, Plurinational State of		19	No	No	No	Spanish

Year	Region	SPS TA Activity	Host	Location	From	To	Participants			Participants	Participation of representatives from the standard-setting organizations			Language
							LDCs	Developing	Developed		Codex	OIE	IPPC	
2018	Latin America and the Caribbean	National seminar	Chile	Santiago and Concepción	20/11/2018	22/11/2018		Chile		108	No	No	No	Spanish
2018	Latin America and the Caribbean	National seminar	Costa Rica	San José	03/12/2018	05/12/2018		Costa Rica		51	No	No	No	Spanish
2018	Latin America and the Caribbean	National seminar	Ecuador	Quito	05/11/2018	08/12/2018		Ecuador		49	No	No	No	Spanish
2018	Latin America and the Caribbean	National seminar	Saint Kitts and Nevis	Basseterre	13/11/2018	15/11/2018		Saint Kitts and Nevis		32	No	No	No	English
2018	Global	Other	Peru	Lima	21/06/2018	22/06/2018		Chile, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Philippines, Russian Federation, Thailand, Viet Nam	Australia, New Zealand	56	No	No	No	Spanish
2018	Global	Advanced SPS Course	Switzerland	Geneva	22/10/2018	09/11/2018		Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru		25	Yes	Yes	Yes	Spanish
2018	Global	Thematic SPS Workshop	Switzerland	Geneva	09/07/2018	10/07/2018	Benin, Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Comoros, Madagascar, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Vanuatu, Zambia	Algeria, Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Guatemala, Jordan, Kyrgyz Republic, Montenegro, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Saint Kitts and Nevis, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Zimbabwe		32	Yes	Yes	Yes	English, French, Spanish