



Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

**SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY DECLARATION FOR THE
TWELFTH WTO MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE: RESPONDING
TO MODERN SPS CHALLENGES ([WT/MIN\(22\)/27](#))**

PROPOSED PROCESS FOR THE WORK PROGRAMME

NOTE BY THE SECRETARIAT¹

Revision

1. The SPS Declaration for MC12, adopted by Ministers in June 2022, instructs the SPS Committee to carry out a work programme, open to all Members and Observers. The Committee is to address the outcomes of this work programme and report on key findings and actions undertaken as a result of this work to the Thirteenth Ministerial Conference (MC13) with recommendations, as appropriate.
2. The work will be carried out in the SPS Committee. In between meetings of the SPS Committee, Members and Observers have the possibility to work together in thematic groups, led by (co)stewards, on specific themes identified in paragraph 8 of the SPS Declaration. The (co)stewards will play the role of neutral facilitators of the work in the thematic groups. The thematic groups will be open to all Members and interested Observers, who will be able to join any of the groups at any time.² These thematic groups will suggest ideas and/or submit proposals for discussion in the SPS Committee.
3. An initial timeline until November 2022 was circulated for Members' consideration, recognizing that some of the dates may need to be modified in light of other activities and/or resource constraints.³ Based on inputs from Members, the Secretariat prepared a more complete proposed process for the work programme until MC13 for adoption at the November 2022 meeting of the SPS Committee. Members and Observers were invited to submit comments on this document by 16 September 2022. This revision of the proposed timeline incorporates lessons learnt since the launch of the process, as well as comments provided by Members in writing and at the November Committee meeting.
4. In addition to the proposed process detailed in this document, Members may wish to consider the possibility of complementing the work in thematic groups by dedicated thematic sessions, workshops, webinars or additional specific discussions on particular topics. Members were invited to submit proposals for such thematic sessions, workshops, webinars etc., with a view to agreeing the Committee's schedule of such events for 2023 at the Committee meeting in November 2022.

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 Meeting times will be communicated to all SPS Committee delegates; work may also take place in writing.

³ See document [G/SPS/W/329](#).

Twelfth WTO Ministerial Conference, 12-17 June 2022

- Adoption by consensus of the SPS Declaration: Responding to Modern Challenges

Informal and formal meetings of the SPS Committee, 22-24 June 2022

- Preliminary discussions on the work programme for the SPS Declaration

22 July 2022

- Members indicate their interest in participating in work of thematic groups on specific topics identified in the SPS Declaration work programme
- Members propose colleagues to act as (co)stewards for thematic groups
- Members submit suggestions for the organization of the work programme until MC13

Late July 2022

- Secretariat circulates list of Members and Observers that volunteered to participate in the thematic groups on specific topics identified in the SPS Declaration work programme, and possible (co)stewards, in consultation with the Chairperson
- Secretariat circulates a draft timeline for the work programme until MC13, based on inputs from Members, in consultation with the Chairperson

September – October 2022

- Thematic groups meet virtually to develop a common understanding regarding the scope of their work
- Friday, 16 September 2022: Members and Observers submit comments on the draft timeline for the work programme until MC13
- Tuesday, 4 October 2022 (14h00-17h00): **Intersessional SPS Committee consultations**, (co)stewards to report on work in thematic groups, consideration of proposals for thematic sessions, workshops, webinars etc. on particular topics

Informal and formal meetings of the SPS Committee, 9-11 November 2022

- (Co)stewards present oral summaries on the work of thematic groups on topics identified in the SPS Declaration work programme
- Discussion of the oral summaries submitted by thematic groups in the informal meeting, with reporting to the formal meeting of the Committee
- Timeline for the work programme until MC13 adopted by the SPS Committee, possibly including thematic sessions, workshops, webinars etc. on particular topics

February – early March 2023

- Early February 2023: Thematic groups meet in hybrid format, with interpretation, to advance work on the topics identified in the SPS Declaration work programme
- Early February 2023: **Intersessional SPS Committee consultations**, (co)stewards to report on work in thematic groups
- 1 March 2023⁴: (Co)stewards submit proposals/summaries of the work in thematic groups

Informal and formal meetings of the SPS Committee, 22-24 March 2023

- Thematic groups meet in hybrid format, with interpretation, prior to the informal meeting of the SPS Committee
- Discussion of the proposals/summaries submitted by thematic groups in the informal meeting, with reporting to the formal meeting of the Committee

May – June 2023

- May 2023: Thematic groups meet in hybrid format, with interpretation, to advance work on the topics identified in the SPS Declaration work programme
- May 2023: **Intersessional SPS Committee consultations**, (co)stewards to report on work in thematic groups
- May/June 2023: (Co)stewards submit reports, including key findings and actions with recommendations, as appropriate, that could serve as a basis for the Committee report to MC13

⁴ 1 March 2023 is the deadline for submission of documents for the SPS Committee meeting on 22-24 March 2023.

- 21 June 2023⁵: Secretariat circulates draft report, including key findings and actions with recommendations, as appropriate

Informal and formal meetings of the SPS Committee, 12-14 July 2023

- Discussion of the draft report, including key findings and actions with recommendations, as appropriate, in the informal meeting, with reporting to the formal meeting of the Committee

September - October 2023

- Deadline after the Committee meetings for Members and Observers to submit comments on the draft report, including key findings and actions with recommendations, as appropriate
- Secretariat circulates revised report, including key findings and actions with recommendations, as appropriate
- **Intersessional SPS Committee consultations**, (co)stewards to report on work in thematic groups
- 25 October 2023⁶: Secretariat circulates revised draft report, including key findings and actions with recommendations, as appropriate, that could serve as a basis for the Committee report to MC13

Informal and formal meetings of the SPS Committee, 15-17 November 2023

- Discussion/adoption of the revised draft report, including key findings and actions with recommendations, as appropriate, that could serve as a basis for the Committee report to MC13

Thirteenth WTO Ministerial Conference, 2023-2024

- Reporting to MC13
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⁵ 21 June 2023 is the deadline for submission of documents for the SPS Committee meeting on 28-30 June 2023.

⁶ 25 October is the deadline for submission of documents for the SPS Committee meeting on 15-17 November 2023.