



Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

**SPS COMMITTEE THEMATIC SESSION ON APPROVAL PROCEDURES
TUESDAY, 5 NOVEMBER 2019
WTO, CENTRE WILLIAM RAPPARD, GENEVA**

PROGRAMME

Revision

In the context of the Fifth Review of the Operation and Implementation of the *Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures* (SPS Agreement), Canada submitted a proposal for the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Committee) to consider holding a thematic session on approval procedures in November 2019.¹ At the March 2019 meeting, the SPS Committee agreed to the proposal.

The session will explore concepts within Article 8 and Annex C of the Agreement, as they relate to approval procedures in the context of the current trading environment, and any related issues concerning the implementation of the Agreement. It will focus on – but not be limited to – approval procedures related to those products or categories of products that require approval as a pre-requisite to their importation or placing on the market, including for approval of the use of additives or for the establishment of tolerances for contaminants in food, beverages or feedstuffs. This thematic session builds on the Workshop on Control, Inspection and Approval Procedures which was held on 9-10 July 2018.²

The first draft programme, based on the structure suggested by Canada, was discussed at the 2019 July SPS Committee meetings. Members were invited to submit comments on that first draft programme and suggest speakers. This final version of the programme takes into consideration comments and suggestions received.

The thematic session will be held in Geneva, Switzerland, on Tuesday, 5 November 2019, beginning at 10 am, and continue in the afternoon at 3 pm, as necessary.

Chairperson: Ms Debora Cumes Mariscal

1 THE SPS AGREEMENT, GUIDANCE AND RELEVANT JURISPRUDENCE

Review of the provisions of the SPS Agreement (Article 8 and Annex C), Committee guidance and relevant dispute settlement reports related to approval procedures

Speaker: Mr Rolando Alcala, WTO Secretariat

Followed by Q&A session and discussion

¹ [G/SPS/W/310](#).

² [G/SPS/GEN/1613/Rev.2](#) (workshop programme) and [G/SPS/R/91](#) (report of the workshop). Presentations are also available at: https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/sps_e/workshop910718_e.htm.

2 RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS

Explore how the relevant international standards, guidelines or recommendations can inform approval procedures and assist in meeting the obligations related to approval procedures as outlined in Annex C.

Speakers:

- **Codex Alimentarius:** *Codex guidance on import and export requirements including safety assessment of foods derived from biotechnology*, Ms Gracia Brisco, Codex Secretariat
- **IPPC:** *Guidance for determining and justifying phytosanitary import requirements, including for LMOs that pose a pest risk*, Mr Brent Larson, Implementation and Facilitation Unit Leader, IPPC Secretariat

Followed by Q&A session and discussion

3 SHARING OF MEMBERS' SUCCESSES, CHALLENGES, CONSIDERATIONS, IMPACTS AND BEST PRACTICES RELATED TO APPROVAL PROCEDURES

Experiences related to completing approval procedures.

3.1 Importing Members' Perspective

Speakers:

- **Canada:** *Canada's regulatory approach to approval procedures from an import perspective*, Mr Evan Lewis, Director, Trade Agreements Division, Canadian Food Inspection Agency
- **Ukraine:** *Update of Ukrainian legislation on approval procedures*, Dr Olena Koreata, Head of Directorate for International Cooperation, State Service of Ukraine on Food Safety and Consumer Protection
- **China:** *System evaluation and enterprise registration in the SPS area*, Mr Kong Xiaobang, Deputy Director, General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China
- **European Union:** *Authorization of imports of food of animal origin into the EU*, Dr John McEvoy, Head of Unit, Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety, European Commission
- **South Africa:** *Experience relating to completing approval procedures*, Dr Ernest Phoku, Director, Inspection Services at the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development of South Africa

3.2 Exporting Members' Perspective

Speakers:

- **New Zealand:** *Experiences with respect to international approval and inspection requirements*, Dr Bill Jolly, Chief Assurance Strategy Officer, New Zealand Ministry for Primary Industries
- **Turkey:** *Enhancing the institutional environment through a participatory approach*, Mr Isil Aytemiz Danyer, European Union Expert, General Directorate of EU and Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

3.3 Challenges and Costs associated with Approval Procedures

Speakers:

- **Paraguay:** *Challenges associated with approaches to biotech approvals*, Mr Santiago Bertoni, Advisor on International Trade Issues for the Minister of Agriculture
- **United States:** *Costs of asynchronous biotech approvals on trade, investment and innovation*, Mr Nicholas Kalaitzandonakes, Professor, Division of Applied Social Sciences, University of Missouri

Followed by Q&A session and discussion

4 APPROACHES TO FACILITATE APPROVAL PROCEDURES

Overview of initiatives that could facilitate effective, efficient approval procedures, enable access to tools and technologies, and facilitate international trade.

4.1 Members' Initiatives

Speakers:

- **Turkey:** *Recent applications for trade facilitation*, Ms Tugba Adiguzel Kargin, European Union Expert, General Directorate of EU and Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry; and Mr Mehmet Nadir Guneri, Trade Expert, General Directorate of Product Safety and Inspections, Ministry of Trade

4.2 Private Sector Perspective

Speakers:

- **International Grain Trade Coalition (IGTC):** *The grain trade perspective on approval procedures for biotech and pesticides*, Ms Krista Thomas, Vice President of Canada Grains Council and IGTC LLP
- **MAIZALL (International Maize Alliance):** *The maize-grower perspective on approval procedures for biotech and pesticides*, Mr Juan Minvielle, President, MAIZALL

Followed by Q&A session and discussion

5 CLOSING

Roundtable moderated by Canada

Discussion on some overarching themes such as:

- Based on the discussions throughout the thematic session, in Member's views, what are aspects of approval procedures that enable the facilitation of international trade?
- What are the key challenges of approval procedures faced by industry and by importing and exporting countries that Members should seek to address?
- As a next step, how can the SPS Committee enhance the implementation of approval procedures consistent with the obligations of the SPS Agreement that facilitate trade?
- What are possible areas for future work by the SPS Committee?
- As a next step, is there work the international standard-setting bodies could undertake to provide further guidance to Members to help ensure approval procedures do not create unjustified barriers to trade?

Speakers:

- Ms Krista Thomas, Vice President of Canada Grains Council and IGTC LLP
 - Mr Santiago Bertoni, Advisor on International Trade Issues for the Minister of Agriculture, Paraguay
 - Mr Carlos Alvarez Antolinez, Advisor, European Commission
 - Ms Gracia Brisco, Codex Secretariat
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