



26 October 2021

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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

**SPS COMMITTEE THEMATIC SESSION ON THE PROCEDURE TO
MONITOR THE PROCESS OF INTERNATIONAL HARMONIZATION
TUESDAY, 2 NOVEMBER 2021
WTO, CENTRE WILLIAM RAPPARD, GENEVA**

PROGRAMME

The SPS Committee agreed, at its July 2021 meeting, to hold a thematic session on international harmonization in November 2021, based on proposals submitted by New Zealand.¹

The thematic session will provide an opportunity for WTO Members to exchange views and review progress on international harmonization. The WTO SPS Agreement encourages Members to harmonize their measures, to the maximum extent possible, with the standards, guidelines and recommendations established by the relevant international standard-setting bodies (ISSBs): Codex, OIE and IPPC. Relevant ISSBs are interested in understanding the extent to which their standards and related texts are used. The SPS Committee has a role in monitoring the process of international harmonization in close collaboration with the relevant ISSBs.

This thematic session will focus on three broad areas:

1. Relevant provisions of the SPS Agreement and actions taken thus far to monitor the process of international harmonization;
2. The actions and initiatives that Codex, OIE and the IPPC have taken to monitor the use of their standards, guidelines and recommendations, and consideration of opportunities for coordination between these standard-setting bodies and the SPS Committee; and
3. Members' approaches, experiences and challenges with the use of international standards at the national and regional levels, and consideration of actions and initiatives to support uptake and use of international standards.

The thematic session will be held in Geneva, Switzerland, on Tuesday, 2 November 2021, beginning at 10 a.m., and continuing in the afternoon at 3 p.m., as necessary. The thematic session can be attended in person or virtually through the Interpretify platform.

¹ [G/SPS/GEN/1851](#), [G/SPS/GEN/1877](#), and [G/SPS/GEN/1915](#).

Chairperson: Mr Juteau Déadjufo Toussé

1 RELEVANT PROVISIONS OF THE SPS AGREEMENT, WORK OF THE SPS COMMITTEE AND RELEVANT DISPUTE SETTLEMENT REPORTS

Speaker:

- **Mr Rolando Alcalá**, WTO Secretariat.

Followed by Q&A session and discussion

2 INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS AND MONITORING HARMONIZATION

International standard-setting bodies: their priorities and interest; their initiatives to monitor the implementation of international standards, guidelines and recommendations; and the financial, technical, and human resources required, as well as the support provided to Members to meet the harmonization provisions of the SPS Agreement.

Speakers:

- **Mr Michael Ennis**, Consultant, Codex Secretariat. *Designing a monitoring framework for Codex standards.*
- **Mr Gaspar Avendaño**, Technical Coordinator, the OIE Observatory, OIE. *The OIE Observatory.*
- **Dr Adriana G. Moreira**, IPPC Standard Setting Officer (FAO Agricultural Officer), IPPC Secretariat. *The IPPC and international harmonization of standards: An overview.*

Followed by Q&A session and discussion

3 REGIONAL INITIATIVES

Regional/cross border cooperation and regional or economic bodies, which are currently pursuing harmonization of SPS measures.

Speaker:

- **Mr Raúl Peralta Girón**, Regional Director for Food Safety, OIRSA. *Harmonized regional guide to good risk-based agricultural practices.*

Followed by Q&A session and discussion

4 NATIONAL INITIATIVES

Members will share their technical approaches and experiences with regard to harmonizing with international standards and challenges faced when harmonizing SPS measures.

Speakers:

- **Dr Bill Jolly**, Chief Assurance Strategy Officer, Market Access, Ministry for Primary Industries, New Zealand. *New Zealand's experience with international harmonization.*
- **Ms Edith Villanueva Huamán**, Food Safety Expert, General Directorate of Environmental Health and Food Safety (DIGESA), Peru. *Harmonization of the national regulatory framework with Codex standards and guidelines, and other regulations.*

- **Mr Sam Bishop**, Head of International Plant Health Policy and Risk Co-ordination, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), United Kingdom. *Utilizing International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures to shape national legislation and decision-making processes.*
- **Ms Sarah O'Rourke**, Senior Trade Policy Analyst, Trade Agreements Division, Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), Canada. *Canada's experiences with harmonization to international standards, guidelines and recommendations.*

Followed by Q&A session and discussion

5 CLOSING REMARKS
