



21 October 2022

(22-7917)

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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

Original: English

SADC SECRETARIAT REPORT ON SPS ACTIVITIES

SADC REPORT TO THE WTO COMMITTEE ON SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

The following communication, received on 21 October 2022, is being circulated at the request of the secretariat of the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

1 BACKGROUND

1.1. The Southern African Development Community (SADC) region consists of 16 member States namely Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The region has a population of 345 million people and therefore has a high responsibility to meet the international sustainable development goals for the betterment of the lives of the people through safe intra-SADC and international trade through the application of relevant international standards.

1.2. Plant pests and animal diseases can inadvertently be transported along with commodities thereby threatening the agricultural production and environment of the importing country. Food and feed may be contaminated with pesticide residues or other chemical toxins. To reduce these risks without unduly restricting regional or international trade in food and agro-products, the Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Annex to the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Trade allows SADC member States to adopt harmonized or scientifically justified SPS measures. This is in line with the implementation of the requirements of the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on the Application of SPS Measures, the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) and the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC).

2 UPDATES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SPS ANNEX TO THE SADC PROTOCOL ON TRADE

2.1 Harmonization

2.1. The SADC secretariat participated in Tripartite (COMESA, EAC and SADC) meeting of Regional Economic Communities (RECs) Experts on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) and SPS held from 2-4 September 2022 at the Imperial Golf View Hotel, Entebbe, Uganda. The objective of the meeting was to develop detailed guidelines on implementation of Annex VIII on TBT and Annex IX on SPS as mandated by the 19th meeting of the Tripartite Trade Negotiating Forum (TTNF). The meeting was supported by the African Development Bank through the Tripartite Capacity Building Programme. The Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA) Agreement is a major milestone in Africa's efforts to overcome the challenges of small, fragmented markets and overlapping REC membership, which creates a spaghetti bowl of trade rules. It consolidates the Tripartite markets into a seamless free trade area.

2.2. The SADC secretariat participated in a workshop for the development of an Implementation Plan for the Food Safety Strategy for Africa (FSSA) held in Kampala, Uganda from 22 to 26 August 2022. The objectives of the workshop were to: Draft implementation plan for the FSSA including targets and milestones; Develop coordination mechanism for food safety activities in Africa; Develop a mechanism for enhancing ownership of the FSSA and buy-in by all stakeholders. The workshop was sponsored by African Union.

2.3. The SADC secretariat participated virtually in the Pan-African Quality Infrastructure (PAQI) Forum meeting held on 3-4 October 2022 in Cairo, Egypt on a hybrid model. The Objectives of the meeting were, among others, to assess the progress of PAQI joint projects; to review the second draft action plan of the adopted Africa Quality Policy; to deliberate on PAQI cooperation with the AfCFTA; and to enhance collaboration with RECs.

3 UPDATES ON EU SUPPORTED TRADE FACILITATION PROGRAMME

3.1 The SADC-EU Trade Facilitation Programme (TFP)

3.1. The Trade Facilitation Programme focuses its attention on the SADC Protocols on Trade and Trade in Services to support implementation of the EU - SADC Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA). The TFP addresses regional implementation issues in the areas of: Technical Barriers to Trade and SPS measures; Customs technical assistance support; and the EU-SADC EPAs.

3.2. During the period under review, the following short-term assignment was launched:

3.1.1 Development of Regional Mechanisms and Guidelines for Conformity Assessment Bodies working in the area of intra-regional trade

Report by: Mr. Chiluba Mwape
SADC Key Expert on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures
