

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SPS AGREEMENT

Information for the Workshop of 31 March 2006

Communication from Burundi

The following communication, received on 29 March 2006, is being circulated at the request of the delegation of Burundi.

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1. In preparation for the Workshop on the Implementation of the SPS Agreement, Members were invited to submit information on their experiences relating to the issues to be discussed.
 2. With regard to the frequency of participation in meetings of the SPS Committee, Burundi seldom participates in these meetings. On the rare occasions when it is invited, the participants are capital-based experts.
 3. The information we receive is from reports sent by the WTO but it is not widely disseminated. It concerns official bulletins and reports of meetings held.
 4. Burundi has no national SPS committee.
 5. Burundi exporters are informed of trading partners' new SPS requirements by customers or over the Internet. It should be noted that in the aftermath of the war, very few products are exported from Burundi today.
 6. As to national mechanisms that could be created to inform stakeholders, Burundi could set up a national SPS committee with representatives from the relevant public sector, the private sector and consumers. This would facilitate efficient circulation of information.
 7. The national SPS committee will have to play its role efficiently. In order to perform its duties to best effect, it would need independent management so as to avoid red tape.
 8. Information about SPS requirements are disseminated through contacts in meetings or over the Internet.
 9. In Burundi, there has been no planning on how to implement the SPS Agreement.
 10. Technical assistance needs are identified through the Ministry of Trade and Industry, which serves as a clearing house pending the establishment of the national SPS committee. Needs are selected according to priorities.

11. Burundi has no experience either of requests or of supply of SPS-related technical assistance.
 12. In order for technical assistance supply and demand to be effectively matched, beneficiaries need to state expressly what their priority areas are for SPS-related technical assistance.
 13. In order to identify priority needs, Burundi is of the view that donors should take account of the real needs of beneficiaries. They should not confine themselves to assistance such as training and seminars, but should try to enlarge the scope of their action. It would be Burundi's wish for an "inventory" to be taken prior to the assistance phase.
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