



REVIEW OF THE OPERATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SPS AGREEMENT

BELIZE'S INTERVENTION AT THE 62ND WTO SPS COMMITTEE MEETING GENEVA, SWITZERLAND; 25-27 MARCH 2015

Communication from Belize

The following communication, received on 10 July 2015, is being circulated at the request of the Delegation of Belize.

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1. Belize thanks the Secretariat for the second revision of the report on the Review of the Operation and Implementation of the SPS Agreement, document: G/SPS/W/280/Rev.2.
 2. Reference to the recommendations contained under Section 14: SPS-RELATED PRIVATE STANDARDS but specifically the second bullet under paragraph 14.20; Belize would like to propose the following comments:
 - a. we do not believe that the second bullet as currently proposed adequately captures the concerns that Belize and has been raising in the SPS Committee and as such our recommendation is that the language be replaced with the following:

"The Committee should continue its consideration of specific trade concerns related to private standards and the effects of private standards on international trade."
 - b. Belize believes that its proposal captures the two major issues associated with SPS-related private standards. The first portion of its recommendation: *"the Committee should continue its consideration of specific trade concerns relates to SPS-related private standards"* would provide scope for addressing those concerns related to the:
 - i. high costs of certification;
 - ii. requirements that are more trade restrictive than necessary;
 - iii. requirements that are not based on science;
 - iv. standard setting process that is not transparent; and
 - v. standards that are not harmonised and consistently changing; among others.
 - c. The second component of Belize's recommendation: *"and the effects of private standards on international trade"* would allow for the Committee to address the global concerns arising from the proliferation of SPS-related private standards, which include:
 - i. the undermining of the International Standard Setting Bodies and their scientific role in setting standards for safe trade;
 - ii. the undermining of competent authorities given that these standards set the appropriate level of protection (ALOP) and dictate the sanitary requirements for trade in food; among others.

3. In an effort to advance the work of the Committee on this important topic, we believe that it is very important that the best recommendations be included to ensure that the scope of work is clearly defined. It is in this spirit, that Belize proposes that the recommendation contained in the second bullet under paragraph 14.20 be replaced with the following:

"The Committee should continue its consideration of specific trade concerns related to private standards and the effects of private standards on international trade."
