



Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade

**STATEMENT DELIVERED BY THE WTO SECRETARIAT AT
THE TBT COMMITTEE MEETINGS OF 14-15 JUNE 2017**

AID FOR TRADE GLOBAL REVIEW 2017

This document contains the statement made by the WTO Secretariat at the regular meeting on 14-15 June 2017.

You might recall that at the last meeting of the TBT Committee I drew your attention to the Aid for Trade Global Review 2017 which will be taking place at the WTO Headquarters in Geneva on 11-13 July 2017. This year, the focus will be on "Promoting Trade, Inclusiveness and Connectivity for Sustainable Development". Given that theme, the Trade and Environment Division will be contributing to the event by co-organising or participating in a number of events that are relevant to standards – so I take this opportunity to provide you with an update and a description of these events.

1 CLICKS NEED BRICKS: PROMOTING TRADE THROUGH QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE

1.1. This side event is organized by Germany, World Bank Group, UNCTAD and ICTSD, with support from us in the Trade and Environment Division. The event is essentially about the importance of quality infrastructure, or what we in this Committee refer to as "technical infrastructure" for competitiveness and trade. This Committee often hears about the difficulty of demonstrating compliance with requirements in export markets and how this often translates into significant technical barriers to trade. In this context, while IT and connectivity – "clicks" – certainly offer great trade potential, the issue of basic quality infrastructure – "bricks" – is vital for goods to actually cross borders. In this event, which we think will also have a particular interest to SMEs, there will be an opportunity to both understand what is happening on quality infrastructure, and its relevance to the TBT Agreement and to trade in general. There will be interventions from the World Bank, UNIDO, UNCTAD, the WTO Secretariat, academia, and regional organizations – and we do hope you will be able to join that discussion.

2 HOW CAN AID FOR TRADE CONNECT SMES MORE EFFECTIVELY TO VALUE CHAINS IN GREEN GOODS AND SERVICES?

2.1. This side event, co-organized with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development – EBRD and the Trade and Environment Division will be an opportunity to hear directly from SMEs about the main bottlenecks they face when trying to access global supply chains for green goods and services. The panel will include SMEs who will talk about their own experiences. "Green" supply chains are a growing area of focus for Aid for Trade donors such as EBRD. In particular, in supply chains today, sustainability standards are an important instrument that are on the one hand used to help SMEs achieve better economic and environmental outcomes, and on the other, they also pose significant challenges for connecting and integrating to global value chains. This discussion will certainly involve standards, technical regulations and conformity assessment and we hope that you will be able to join us for this event.

3 EPING: HELPING SMES KEEP TRACK OF PRODUCT REQUIREMENTS IN THEIR EXPORT MARKETS

3.1. The third event is on ePing, our new SPS/TBT notification alert system. The event will focus on how ePing can help SMEs to keep track of products requirements in their export markets. This event, sponsored by Australia, in close cooperation with the Trade and Environment Division, will focus on how ePing can assist SMEs to keep track of regulatory developments. It will also be an opportunity for us to identify challenges and opportunities for scaling-up this new tool to further promote connectivity between SMEs and their export markets. The experiences of our own implementation of ePing, together with our partners (UNDESA, ITC) as well as some regional organisations will be quite instructive in this discussion. I would also like to take this opportunity to inform you that the Secretariat has made available a Room document (contained in RD/TBT/223)¹, which summarizes the results of the ePing survey undertaken earlier this year. This is in response to requests by some Members for this data. Overall, the feedback has been very encouraging and shows that ePing fills a gap for public and private stakeholders and we are getting increasingly more requests for training on this particular tool.

4 TRADE AND FOOD STANDARDS, JOINT FAO-WTO PUBLICATION

4.1. This publication will be launched by WTO DG Azevêdo and FAO DG Graziano on 13 July. The Trade and Environment Division, together with the Agriculture and Commodities Division, authored the WTO contributions together with counterparts in the FAO. The publication sets out how FAO and WTO provide governments with the means to establish a framework to facilitate trade on the basis of internationally agreed food standards, highlighting the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and WTO SPS and TBT Committees.

¹ Subsequently circulated in G/TBT/GEN/227/Rev.1