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# codex alimentarius commission **E**



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE  
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## JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

### *Thirty-first Session*

*International Conference Centre, Geneva (Switzerland), 30 June - 4 July 2008*

### ACTIVITIES OF THE SPS COMMITTEE AND OTHER RELEVANT WTO ACTIVITIES FROM 2007 TO THE PRESENT\*

Report by the WTO Secretariat<sup>1</sup>

1. This report to the 31<sup>st</sup> Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) provides a summary of the activities and decisions of the WTO Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (the "SPS Committee") from January 2007 through April 2008. It identifies the work of relevance to Codex, including: specific trade concerns; equivalence; transparency; monitoring the use of international standards; the review of the operation of the SPS Agreement; technical assistance; and private standards. The report also includes relevant information on geographical indications, on dispute settlement and on the Standards and Trade Development Facility.
2. The SPS Committee held three regular meetings in 2007: on 28 February - 1 March, 27-28 June and 18-19 October.<sup>2</sup> The Committee held its first meeting in 2008 on 2-3 April. The Codex Secretariat has provided regular updates for all meetings of the SPS Committee.<sup>3</sup>
3. Two additional meetings are tentatively planned in 2008, on 25-26 June, and 8-9 October.
4. Mr. Marinus Huige (Netherlands) replaced Mr. Juan Antonio Dorantes (Mexico) as Chairperson as of the meeting in June 2007 for a period of at least one year.

#### Specific trade concerns

5. The SPS Committee devotes a large portion of each regular meeting to the consideration of specific trade concerns. Any WTO Member can raise specific concerns about the food safety, plant or animal health requirements imposed by another WTO Member. Issues raised in this context are usually related to the notification of a new or changed measure, or based on the experience of exporters. Often other countries will share the same concerns. At the SPS Committee meetings, Members usually commit themselves to exchange information and hold bilateral consultations to resolve the identified concern.

\* Document prepared by and under the responsibility of WTO

<sup>1</sup> This report has been prepared under the WTO Secretariat's own responsibility and is without prejudice to the positions of WTO Members or to their rights or obligations under the WTO.

<sup>2</sup> The report of the March meeting is contained in G/SPS/R/44, that of the June meeting in G/SPS/R/45 and Corr.1, and that of the October meeting in G/SPS/R/46.

<sup>3</sup> G/SPS/GEN/747, G/SPS/GEN/777, G/SPS/GEN/809, G/SPS/GEN/825, G/SPS/GEN/828.

6. A summary of the specific trade concerns raised in meetings of the SPS Committee is compiled on an annual basis by the WTO Secretariat.<sup>4</sup> Altogether, 261 specific trade concerns were raised between 1995 and the end of 2007, of which 26 per cent were related mainly to food safety issues.

7. Thirty-five specific trade concerns were brought to the attention of the SPS Committee during 2007, of which 16 were new issues. Of the issues considered in 2007, eight issues relate to food safety and six to plant health. 19 issues relate to animal health and zoonoses; this category includes issues such as transmissible spongiform encephalopathy (TSEs) that are also relevant for food safety.

8. The following food safety issues were raised for the first time in 2007:

- EC concerns regarding China's import restrictions on products of animal origin due to dioxin;
- US concerns regarding China's zero tolerance for pathogens on raw meat and poultry products;
- US concerns regarding El Salvador's zero tolerance for salmonella in poultry and eggs;
- US concerns regarding India's export certification requirements for dairy products;
- Argentina's concerns regarding certain Members' trade restrictions related to national systems for determining maximum residue limits (MRLs) for pesticides.

9. In April 2008, two new food safety-related issues were raised:

- Ecuador's concerns regarding the modification of EC MRLs for ethepon in pineapple;
- Brazil's concerns regarding Malaysia's price list for reimbursement of expenses for inspection missions.

10. Three issues relating to food safety that had been previously raised were discussed again in 2007 and/or April 2008, including:

- Colombia's, Ecuador's, and Peru's concerns on the application and modification of the EC regulation on novel foods;
- US concerns regarding the EC's restrictions on US poultry exports;
- US concerns regarding Romania's restrictions on US pork and poultry imports.

#### Equivalence

11. In July 2004, the SPS Committee completed its work on guidelines on the implementation of Article 4 of the SPS Agreement on equivalence in response to concerns raised by developing countries.<sup>5</sup> The Decision on Equivalence adopted by the SPS Committee notes, *inter alia*, the work on recognition of equivalence undertaken in the Codex, the OIE and the IPPC, and requests the further elaboration of specific guidance by these organizations to ensure that such recognition is maintained. Equivalence remains a standing agenda item of the Committee.

12. The Codex representative provided regular updates to the Committee on Codex work in this regard. He reported that since 2004, the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICs) had been developing an Appendix to the Guidelines on the Judgment of Equivalence of Sanitary Measures Associated with Food Inspection and Certification Systems. At its meeting in November 2007, this Committee had agreed to forward the proposed draft Appendix to the 31<sup>st</sup> Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission for final adoption at Step 5/8 of the uniform procedure.

#### Transparency

13. In June 2007, a new information management system (SPS-IMS) was made public that allows easier management of all WTO SPS-related documentation. It is available at <http://spsims.wto.org/>.

<sup>4</sup> The latest version of this summary can be found in document G/SPS/GEN/204/Rev.8 and addenda. This document is a public document available from <http://docsonline.wto.org>. Specific Trade concerns can also be searched using the SPS Information Management System available at <http://spsims.wto.org/>.

<sup>5</sup> G/SPS/19/Rev.2.

14. A total of 1196 notifications of new or proposed SPS measures were submitted to the WTO in 2007. From 1 June until 31 December 2007, 527 notifications identified food safety as the objective of the measure being taken.<sup>6</sup> Seventy notifications indicated that there was a relevant Codex standard, but in most cases further details were not provided.

15. A special workshop was held in October 2007 on the implementation of the transparency provisions of the SPS Agreement.<sup>7</sup> The SPS Committee is revising the recommended transparency procedures. One change in the recommendations is to encourage WTO Members to notify new or changed measures which are based on the relevant international standards, as this would provide important information regarding which standards are being used and which are not. At its meeting in April 2008, the SPS Committee adopted the revised recommended transparency procedures on an ad referendum basis, subject to no objections being received by 30 May 2008.<sup>8</sup>

#### Monitoring the Use of International Standards

16. The procedure adopted by the SPS Committee to monitor the use of international standards invites countries to identify specific trade problems they have experienced due to the use or non-use of relevant international standards, guidelines or recommendations.<sup>9</sup> These problems, once considered by the SPS Committee, are drawn to the attention of the relevant standard-setting body.

17. At the meeting of 27-28 June 2007, Argentina drew attention to the problem faced in particular by developing country Members, when importing Members established national maximum residue limits (MRLs) for pesticides which are stricter than those developed by Codex without scientific justification. Additional problems arose from the fact that there were no Codex standards for many of the active substances used by food-exporting Members.<sup>10</sup> Many Members agreed with Argentina regarding the problem and supported Argentina's proposals with respect to the application of valid scientific principles to ensure transparency and to request Codex to develop standards for products which did not yet have MRLs. The representative of Codex stressed the problem of resources and suggested that WTO Members raise this concern within the FAO and WHO governing bodies. He noted that Codex MRLs were established on the basis of the best scientific advice available and that the Joint FAO/WHO Meeting on Pesticide Residues (JMPR) provided all the necessary scientific expertise. However, Members had to generate the necessary data and submit it to the JMPR. Argentina had raised this issue at the 39<sup>th</sup> session of the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues. Codex had abolished the procedures for countries to notify their acceptance of Codex standards, hence no information was available to Codex regarding the use of MRLs. The Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues had suggested that Argentina raise the concern at the SPS Committee because of the relation with trade problems, and had agreed to request more guidance from the Codex Commission.

18. In June 2007 the Committee adopted the Ninth Annual Report on the procedure to monitor the use of international standards.<sup>11</sup>

#### Review of the Operation and Implementation of the SPS Agreement

19. Article 12.7 of the SPS Agreement indicates that the Committee should review the operation and implementation of the Agreement three years after its entry into force, and thereafter as appropriate. A First Review of the Agreement was completed in March 1999. At the Fourth Session of the Ministerial Conference in 2001, Ministers instructed the Committee to undertake this review at least once every four

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<sup>6</sup> Multiple objectives can be indicated for one measure; data available only as of June 2007.

<sup>7</sup> A summary of the workshop is contained in document G/SPS/R/47.

<sup>8</sup> The Revised Recommended Procedures for Implementing the Transparency Obligations of the SPS Agreement (Article 7) are contained in document G/SPS/W/215/Rev.2. If adopted, the final Procedures will be circulated as G/SPS/7/Rev.3.

<sup>9</sup> G/SPS/11/Rev.1.

<sup>10</sup> G/SPS/W/211.

<sup>11</sup> G/SPS/45.

years. The Committee adopted the Report on the Second Review of the Operation of the SPS Agreement in June 2005.<sup>12</sup>

20. The second review report covers a wide number of areas related to implementation of the Agreement. For example, it recommends that the relevant international organizations keep the Committee informed of any work they undertake with regard to the recognition of equivalence, as well as their activities relevant to the recognition of pest- or disease-free areas or areas of low pest or disease prevalence. The report recommends that the Committee continue to monitor the use of international standards at each of its regular meetings.

21. The report also identified issues for further consideration by the Committee. Since the adoption of the report of the review, several Members have submitted papers and proposals for further work on several of these issues.<sup>13</sup> At its meeting in February/March 2007, the SPS Committee agreed to prioritize its work in this area on two of the issues identified: use of ad hoc consultations to resolve trade concerns, including through the good offices of the Chairperson of the SPS Committee; and on the relationship of the SPS Committee with the IPPC, Codex and OIE.

22. The Committee invited the IPPC, OIE and Codex to provide information regarding their respective mechanisms for resolving trade problems among Members. The representative of the Codex recalled that the Commission does not have any formal dispute settlement procedure, but Members' concerns are considered during the elaboration of standards and other Codex texts.

23. With respect to the relationship of the SPS Committee with the IPPC, OIE and Codex, Members were interested to clarify the respective roles of each of these bodies. The relationship of the SPS Committee with the three sister organizations was relevant for the consideration of a number of other issues, including regionalization and monitoring of the use of international standards. Some Members considered it important to know whether the resources dedicated to developing international standards were warranted in terms of use of these standards.

24. The WTO Secretariat presented an overview of the relationship between the SPS Committee and the three international standards-setting organizations.<sup>14</sup> The relationship has been active and positive. The standards-setting organizations have given precise and quick answers to issues related to the monitoring of international standards and to the need for the development of new standards. There is a formal cooperation agreement between the WTO and the OIE, and very good working relations between the WTO, the FAO and the WHO. Training activities organized by the WTO usually involve the three standards-setting organizations. All the organizations are represented and contribute actively to the work of the STDF. The standards setting bodies have also provided technical and scientific advice, when requested, to the dispute settlement panels on SPS matters.

25. The SPS Committee recognized that coordination at the national level between representatives to the SPS Committee, the IPPC, Codex and OIE meetings was often poor, although it had become more important given the increase in cross-sectoral issues such as regionalization, certification and traceability. At the same time, it was important to avoid unnecessary duplication. Discussions concerning technical versus administrative processes, operational versus high-level guidelines, and specific versus general issues could provide clarity with regard to the relative roles of the SPS Committee and international standards-setting bodies. It would be useful for the IPPC, OIE and Codex to describe their respective mandates and for the SPS Committee to discuss the optimal process for collaboration and communication with these organizations. It was also suggested that the three standard-setting organizations should work together on some issues and jointly elaborate standards.

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<sup>12</sup> G/SPS/36.

<sup>13</sup> A compendium of documents related to issues arising from the second review was circulated is contained in document G/SPS/GEN/722.

<sup>14</sup> WTO document G/SPS/GEN/775.

26. In the context of the discussions of monitoring the use of international standards, the representative of Codex stated that Codex had abandoned its monitoring system on the use of Codex standards but had decided to keep monitoring on the agenda of all regional coordinating committees.

#### Technical Assistance

27. At each of its meetings, the SPS Committee solicits information from Members and observer organizations regarding their technical assistance needs and activities. The representative of Codex provided regular updates to the Committee on relevant activities of the FAO and the WHO and of the FAO/WHO Trust Fund. The WTO Secretariat acknowledged the Codex's continued support in contributing knowledge and expertise to the WTO's regional technical assistance activities.

28. To meet demands for more advanced SPS technical assistance and training activities, a two-week specialized course has been developed and offered by the WTO since 2005. The third of these was held in October 2007, with the collaboration of the French Ministry of Agriculture and the Codex Secretariat.

#### Private standards

29. Since June 2005, the SPS Committee has discussed the issue of private and commercial standards on a number of occasions. The issue was initially raised by St. Vincent and the Grenadines with regard to EurepGAP (now GlobalGAP) requirements on pesticides used on bananas destined for sale in European markets.

30. In October 2006 and in June 2007, informal information sessions were held in the margins of the SPS Committee meetings. A number of international organizations working on the issue of private standards, including OECD and UNCTAD, as well as a number of private standardizing groups, including GlobalGAP, provided information regarding commercial and private standards. WTO Members have raised a number of concerns regarding the trade, development and legal implications of private standards.

31. While recognizing that there could be some benefits to producers who were able to comply with private standards, a number of concerns were expressed. Among these were that:

- (a) private standards often de facto set the conditions for access to certain markets, and went beyond official requirements;
- (b) private standards were proliferating without any consultation with the recognized standard-setting bodies or with national authorities, creating confusion and a lack of transparency;
- (c) private SPS standards did not necessarily have any scientific justification, nor was there recognition of equivalence of measures;
- (d) the costs of certification of compliance with private standards was significant especially for small producers and often resulted in their exclusion from a market;
- (e) private standards often addressed a number of issues other than health protection, including social and environmental aspects;
- (f) private standards undermined the value of internationally agreed standards. Developing countries were doing everything they could to respect international and official standards, but private standards often went beyond their capacity to comply;
- (g) the legal relationship between private standards and the SPS and TBT Agreements was not clear, making it difficult for adversely affected producers to challenge private standards.

32. The Committee agreed to maintain this issue on the agenda of its meeting. WTO Members were invited to provide information regarding specific experiences and examples of problems they faced with private SPS standards.

33. At the April 2008 meeting of the SPS Committee, there was a proposal to establish a working group to discuss the way forward, while continuing to keep private standards on the agenda of future meetings of the Committee. This proposal received much support and will be discussed at an informal meeting prior to the regular SPS Committee meeting during the week of 23 June 2008.

### **Geographical indications**

34. The WTO has continued its work, pursuant to the mandate under Article 23.4 of the TRIPS Agreement and paragraph 18 of the Doha Ministerial Declaration, to negotiate the establishment of a multilateral system of notification and registration of geographical indications for wines and spirits. In paragraph 29 of the Hong Kong Ministerial Declaration of 18 December 2005, Ministers agreed to intensify these negotiations in order to complete them within the overall time-frame for the conclusion of the negotiations. However, differences have continued to remain large, in particular in respect of the legal effects of a registration and participation. In paragraph 39 of the Hong Kong Ministerial Declaration, Ministers requested the Director-General to intensify his consultative process on all outstanding implementation issues under paragraph 12(b) of the Doha Ministerial Declaration, including on issues related to the extension of the protection of geographical indications provided for in Article 23 of the TRIPS Agreement to products other than wines and spirits. In these consultations, positions remain divided both on the merits of such extension and its relationship to the Doha Round negotiations.

### **Dispute Settlement**

#### The WTO dispute settlement procedure

35. Any WTO Member may invoke the formal dispute resolution procedures of the WTO if they consider that a measure imposed by another WTO Member violates any of the WTO Agreements, including the SPS Agreement. If formal consultations on the problem are unsuccessful, a WTO Member may request that a Panel be established to consider the complaint.<sup>15</sup> A Panel of three individuals considers written and oral arguments submitted by the parties to the dispute and issues a written report of its legal findings and recommendations. The parties to the dispute may appeal a Panel's decision before the WTO's Appellate Body. The Appellate Body examines the legal findings of the Panel and may uphold or reverse these. As with a Panel report, the Appellate Body report is adopted automatically unless there is a consensus against adoption.

36. According to the SPS Agreement, when a dispute involves scientific or technical issues, the Panel should seek advice from appropriate scientific and technical experts. Scientific experts have been consulted in all SPS-related disputes. The experts are usually selected from lists provided by the OIE, IPPC and Codex, standard-setting organizations referenced in the SPS Agreement. The parties to the dispute are consulted in the selection of experts and regarding the information solicited from the experts.

#### SPS Disputes

37. There have been 33 formal complaints under the WTO dispute settlement procedures alleging violations of the SPS Agreement. Twelve panels have been established to consider seven SPS-related issues. Two panels were never composed.

38. One complaint dealt with diseases of fish, brought by Canada against Australia's import restriction on fresh chilled or frozen salmon (*Australia-Salmon*).<sup>16</sup> A US complaint on this same issue was resolved before the panel completed its examination. Two SPS cases dealt with plant pests and quarantine requirements: the United States complaint about Japan's requirement for testing each variety of fruit for

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<sup>15</sup> A flow chart of the dispute resolution process can be consulted at ([http://www.wto.org/english/thewto\\_e/whatis\\_e/tif\\_e/disp2\\_e.htm](http://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/whatis_e/tif_e/disp2_e.htm)).

<sup>16</sup> The report of the panels is contained in document WT/DS18/RW. The Appellate Body report is in document WT/DS18/AB/R. The report of the panel established to review Australia's compliance measure is contained in WT/DS18/RW.

efficacy of treatment against codling moth (*Japan-Agricultural Products*)<sup>17</sup>; and the United States' complaint about Japan's set of requirements on apples imported from the United States relating to fire blight (*Japan-Apples*).<sup>18</sup>

39. Two dispute cases have concerned food safety regulations – the European Communities (EC) ban on imports of meat treated with growth-promoting hormones, challenged by both the United States and by Canada (*EC-Hormones*).<sup>19</sup> On 13 February 1998, the WTO Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) adopted the panel and Appellate Body reports in the *EC – Hormones* case which recommended that the European Communities bring the measures at issue into conformity with WTO obligations. When the European Communities was unable to implement by the 13 May 1999 deadline, the United States and Canada obtained authorisation from the DSB on 26 July 1999 to suspend obligations up to the level of US\$116.8 million and CDN\$11.3 million per year, respectively. On 28 October 2003, the European Communities announced that its measures were now in compliance with the rulings, and on 17 February 2005 two new panels (with the same members) were established to consider EC complaints against the continued suspension of concessions by the United States and Canada. The hearings for this panel have been the first to be made public. The report of the Panel has been circulated on 31 March 2008.<sup>20</sup> It may be appealed by any party.

40. A single panel was established in 2003 to examine the complaints by the United States, Canada and Argentina regarding the European Communities' measures affecting the approval and marketing of biotech products. The volume of submissions from the parties, the need to consult scientific advice and requests for time extensions meant that the Panel circulated its report on 29 September 2006. In its report, the panel concluded that the European Communities had applied a general *de facto* moratorium on the approval of biotech products between June 1999 and August 2003, as well as a moratorium on 24 specific product applications. As such, the European Communities had acted inconsistently with its obligations under Annex C(1)(a), first clause, and Article 8 of the SPS Agreement. In short, there had been undue delays in the completion of EC approval procedures. With respect to the safeguard measures taken by six EC member states against products authorized in the European Communities, the Panel found that the member states (and thus by extension the European Communities itself) had violated Articles 5.1 and 2.2 of the SPS Agreement. More specifically, those national safeguard measures were not based on risk assessments satisfying the definition of the SPS Agreement and, hence, could be presumed to be maintained without sufficient scientific evidence. The report was adopted without appeal.<sup>21</sup>

#### New cases

41. On 21 January 2008, a panel was established to examine the complaint by New Zealand against Australia's restrictions on imports of apples.<sup>22</sup>

#### **Other Relevant Activities - the Standards and Trade Development Facility**

42. The Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) is a global programme in capacity building and technical co-operation established by the FAO, the OIE, the World Bank, the WHO and the WTO. It assists developing countries to comply with food safety, animal and plant health measures in international trade. Other international organizations, donors and developing countries also participate. The WTO administers the STDF and provides the secretariat.

<sup>17</sup> The report of the panel is contained in document WT/DS76/R. The Appellate Body report is contained in document WT/DS76/AB/R.

<sup>18</sup> The report of the panel is contained in document WT/DS245/R. The Appellate Body report is contained in document WT/DS245/AB/R. The report of the panel established to review Japan's compliance measure is contained in WT/DS245/RW.

<sup>19</sup> The reports of the panels are contained in documents WT/DS26/R/USA and WT/DS48/R/CAN. The Appellate Body report is in document WT/DS/26/AB/R and WT/DS48/AB/R.

<sup>20</sup> The reports of the Panels are contained in documents WT/DS320/R and WT/DS/321/R.

<sup>21</sup> The reports of the Panel are contained in documents WT/DS291/R, WT/DS292/R, and WT/DS293/R.

<sup>22</sup> New Zealand's request for the establishment of a Panel is contained in document WT/DS367/5.

43. The STDF aims:

- to act as a vehicle for co-ordination among technical cooperation providers, the mobilization of funds, the exchange of experience and the dissemination of best practice; and
- to assist developing countries in enhancing their capacity to analyse and implement international sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) standards with the ultimate objective of improving the human, animal and plant health, and thus gaining and maintaining market access.

44. Increasing emphasis is being placed on the STDF fulfilling its promise as a co-ordination mechanism and centre of good practice. A series of three regional consultations were initiated in 2007 which examined SPS capacity building needs and responses in terms of the provision of capacity building in East Africa, Central America and three countries in the Greater Mekong Delta Sub-Region (Cambodia, Lao P.D.R and Viet Nam). The first component of this work was a review of SPS capacity evaluation studies, overviews and SPS related technical assistance provided in the period of 2001-2006 in each region. Results were presented during the Regional Reviews of Aid for Trade in Peru, Philippines and Tanzania in September 2007.<sup>23</sup>

45. The results of the second stage of consultations will be presented in workshops in May and June 2008 entitled "Mobilizing Aid for Trade for SPS-related Technical Assistance Needs". The workshops will be held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia on 20-21 May; in Kampala, Uganda on 28-29 May; and in Guatemala on 11-12 June. The objective is to take stock of where SPS capacity building needs are not being met and to identify actions to mobilize resources to address these needs. It is expected that food safety issues will feature prominently among the outstanding needs.

46. In collaboration with the Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) the STDF is conducting research into good practice in SPS-related technical cooperation. The first phase of this work is to conduct research in the same three regions (i.e. East Africa, Central America and Cambodia, Lao P.D.R and Viet Nam). The first stage of this research work has been to request donors to identify projects which they consider to be good practice in each of the three regions. On the basis of responses provided, field research will be carried out to identify elements of good practice which can be replicated in future capacity building activities.<sup>24</sup> Results of this research will be presented at a joint STDF-OECD workshop on good practice in SPS-related technical cooperation in October 2008.

47. The STDF is also organizing a series of thematic workshops to discuss issues of general concern in SPS-related technical capacity building. Two workshops have been held to date. A first workshop on investment in laboratory infrastructure was held by the World Bank and UNIDO in November 2007. The STDF Secretariat organized a workshop on SPS-related capacity evaluation tools on 31 March 2008. Further thematic events are planned including the joint STDF-OECD workshop on good practice in SPS-related technical co-operation.

48. As a financing mechanism, the STDF provides grant funding to public and private organizations in developing countries seeking to comply with international SPS standards and hence gain or maintain market access. Two types of grants are available through the STDF: project preparation grants and project grants.

49. Project preparation grants (PPGs) are a key mechanism for STDF programme development. PPGs help overcome constraints faced by developing countries in the articulation of their needs and are a mechanism for ensuring synergies with other ongoing initiatives in the SPS area. A total of 27 PPGs have been approved and funded since the STDF's inception. The main criterion when awarding PPGs is the likelihood that the project developed may receive funding. Final project funding may be provided by the STDF or from another funding source (e.g. bilateral donors). Greater reliance is being placed on the use of PPGs to provide a basis for donor interventions and as a vehicle for mobilizing funds for projects developed by the STDF.

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<sup>23</sup> G/SPS/GEN/812.

<sup>24</sup> G/SPS/GEN816.

50. A target has been set in the STDF Operating Plan for 2008-09 to fund at least 12 PPGs. Applications for PPGs are actively encouraged and requests for funding from food safety regulatory authorities will be considered.

51. Project grants typically range from US\$300,000 to US\$600,000 in size and are up to two years in duration. Beneficiaries are required to contribute to the total cost of the project through an in-kind or financial contribution. The STDF funds project which address:

- underlying issues of SPS capacity building in beneficiary countries (in particular in LDCs or OLIEs, or on a regional basis), ideally through innovative, preventative and / or pilot projects which may be replicated by other donors; and
- gaps in SPS information, training materials or which aim to improve co-ordination among SPS technical co-operation providers through collaborative projects.

52. The STDF aims to fund a total of 12 projects in the period 2008-2009. Applications for project funding are encouraged and requests from food safety authorities will be considered. Proposals may be submitted at any point in the year. The STDF Working Group meets three times per year to consider funding requests. The next deadline for the submission of funding requests is 2 September 2008.

53. Further information on the STDF, including the Medium Term Strategy, application forms, eligibility criteria and information on projects approved can be found at the STDF website ([www.standardsfacility.org](http://www.standardsfacility.org)). A list of STDF projects in the food safety area can be found in Table 1. A list of STDF projects of general SPS interest is presented in Table 2.

**Table 1: STDF Projects Addressing Food Safety Issues**

<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Budget (US\$)</b>
STDF 62: Strengthening the food safety system in Cameroon	Project approved in November 2007. The objective is to reactivate a national committee on food safety and train public and private sector stakeholders in Cameroon. Pending.	461,359
STDF 48: Quality control for shea and cashew nut products in Benin	Project approved in November 2007. The objective is to apply good agricultural practices to overcome problems of mycotoxin contamination in shea and cashew nut production. Pending.	470,575
STDF 69: Improved capacity to ensure safety and quality of Yemeni seafood products	Project approved in June 2007. The objective is to assist the Yemen Seafood Exporter's Association to improve the quality and safety of Yemeni seafood products. Implementation ongoing.	462,804
STDF 134: Capacity building to improve fish trade performance of selected West African countries	Project approved in March 2007. The objective is to improve knowledge and awareness of SPS issues in the fisheries sector in five West African countries. Implementation ongoing.	469,000
STDF 114: Effective aflatoxin management in Brazil nut production	Project approved in February 2006. The purpose was to conduct research on factors affecting aflatoxin contamination in Brazil nut production and provide training to meet international standards. Results will be shared with other producers in the region. Implementation ongoing.	619,664
STDF 65: Support compliance with official and commercial standards in the fruit and vegetable sector in Guinea	Project approved in September 2005. The objective is to assist the public and private sector in Guinea to meet official and commercial standards for fruit and vegetable exports. Implementation ongoing.	600,000
STDF 173: Strengthening capacity in assessing food control systems in developing APEC Member Economies	Project approved in March 2007. The objective was to train food safety regulators from developing Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) countries in the use of FAO's food safety capacity evaluation tools to enable them to assess food safety capacity needs in their countries. Implementation ongoing.	96,500
STDF 56: Capacity building for implementation of the Codex Code of Practice for Good Animal Feeding	Project approved in March 2005. The objective was to support implementation of the Codex Code of Good Practice on Animal Feeding through a series of regional training workshops in Africa, Latin America and Asia. Completed.	150,000
STDF 9: Model Programme for Developing Food Standards within a Risk Analysis Framework	Project approved in November 2003. The objective was to strengthen capacity of low income countries in the Asia Pacific region to develop food standards based on international requirements and participate in Codex. Completed.	70,848

**Table 2: STDF Projects Addressing General SPS Issues**

<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Budget (US\$)</b>
STDF 170: Strengthening capacity of government SPS officials in Nepal	Project approved in March 2007. The objective of the project is to train government officials on SPS implementation issues. Awaiting FAO implementation.	321,600
STDF 127: Support for SPS information systems in Benin	Project approved in November 2007. The aim is to improve information flow on SPS requirements and coordination among stakeholders, particularly in the private sector in Benin. Awaiting FAO implementation.	363,858
STDF 120: Risk analysis and risk assessment training in India	Project approved in February 2006. Provided training on risk analysis procedures for key Indian officials. Completed. Evaluation ongoing.	244,050
STDF 108: Institutional capacity of countries in the Americas	Project approved in October 2006. A peer review of SPS compliance structures and practice in IICA countries. Implementation ongoing.	585,588
STDF 79: Quality information on SPS issues, a prerequisite for capacity building	Project approved in September 2005. It aims to improve the sharing of information on official standards through the International Portal on Food Safety, Animal and Plant Health. Implementation ongoing.	470,000
STDF 20: Country-based plans for SPS-related development	Project approved in September 2003. The objective was to undertake baseline studies of SPS capacity and apply cost-benefit analysis to examine returns on investment in terms of foreign trade and an improved SPS situation. Completed. Evaluation ongoing.	170,862
STDF 19: Model arrangements for SPS stakeholder involvement at the national level	Project approved in September 2004. The project examined national arrangements for circulation of SPS information and make recommendations of general applicability on how co-ordination could be improved. Fieldwork in Paraguay and Sri Lanka. Completed. Evaluation ongoing.	291,218
STDF 10: International Portal on Food Safety, Animal and Plant Health project	Project approved in September 2003. Establishment of national windows to the International Portal on Food Safety, Animal and Plant Health. Fieldwork was undertaken in Turkey and Uganda. Completed.	59,400