



ACTIVITIES OF THE SPS COMMITTEE AND OTHER RELEVANT WTO ACTIVITIES IN 2022

REPORT BY THE WTO SECRETARIAT¹

This report to the 17th Session of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) provides a summary of the activities of the WTO Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (the "SPS Committee") during 2022. It outlines SPS Committee discussions of relevance to the CPM related to the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) following the main agenda items of SPS Committee meetings, i.e. [specific trade concerns \(STCs\)](#); [transparency](#); [equivalence](#); [regionalization](#); [monitoring the use of international standards](#); [technical assistance](#); and [thematic sessions and workshops](#). The report also includes a sub-section on [the MC12 SPS Declaration](#) adopted in June 2022, as well as relevant information on [dispute settlement](#) in the WTO and on the [Trade Facilitation Agreement](#) (2017).

1 WORK OF THE SPS COMMITTEE

1.1. The SPS Committee held three regular meetings in 2022 (on 23-25 March, 22-24 June and 9-11 November)². Mr Juteau Déadjufo Toussé of Cameroon served as Chairperson at the March 2022 meeting. In June 2022, Tang-Kai Wang of Chinese Taipei was appointed Chairperson for the 2022-2023 period.

1.2. The Committee agreed to the following tentative calendar of regular meetings for 2023: 22-24 March, 12-14 July and 15-17 November.³

1.3. In 2020, the Committee adopted the Report of the Fifth Review of the Operation and Implementation of the Agreement ([Fifth Review of the SPS Agreement](#)), launched in 2018.⁴ Since then, Members have been working on the implementation of the recommendations in the Report.

1.1 The MC12 SPS Declaration

1.4. At the 12th Ministerial Conference (MC12) in June 2022, ministers adopted the "SPS Declaration: Responding to Modern SPS Challenges".⁵ The Declaration instructed the SPS Committee to launch a work programme, open to all Members and Observers, to further enhance the implementation of the SPS Agreement in an effort to better manage issues related to international trade in food, animals and plants.

1.5. Five thematic groups, led by (co)stewards, were set-up to suggest ideas or submit proposals for discussion in the SPS Committee, each focusing on one of the themes from the MC12 SPS Declaration, namely: (1) how to facilitate global food security and more sustainable food systems; (2) how to support basing SPS measures on scientific evidence and principles; (3) how to enhance the safe international trade in food, animals and plants and products thereof through the adaptation of SPS measures to regional conditions; (4) how to encourage cooperation with observer organizations that support the work of the SPS Committee and the international standard-setting bodies (ISSBs); and (5) how to increase participation of and support for the special needs of developing and least developed country Members in the development and application of SPS measures; and in particular, to increase awareness of and sensitivity to the impacts of SPS measures on the export possibilities of such Members.

1.6. On 4 October 2022, the SPS Committee held intersessional consultations to take stock of the initial work of these thematic groups, followed by discussions in the November 2022 SPS informal

¹ 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 and obligations under the WTO.

² The reports of the March, June and November 2022 meetings are contained in documents [G/SPS/R/105](#), [G/SPS/R/107](#), and [G/SPS/R/108](#), respectively.

³ The tentative dates of the SPS Committee meetings for 2023 are contained in document [G/SPS/GEN/2036/Rev.1](#).

⁴ See WTO official documents [G/SPS/64](#) and [G/SPS/64/Add.1](#).

⁵ [WT/MIN\(22\)/27](#).

Committee meeting. Based on these discussions, a proposed process for the work programme was adopted.⁶ The Committee is to address the outcomes of this work programme, and report on key findings and action undertaken as a result of this work to the 13th Ministerial Conference with recommendations, as appropriate.

1.2 Specific trade concerns

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

1.8. A summary of the STCs raised in meetings of the SPS Committee is compiled on an annual basis by the WTO Secretariat.⁷ Altogether, Members have raised [558 STCs](#) since the establishment of the WTO in 1995. Of these, 123 (22%) have been primarily related to [plant health](#) until 31 December 2022.

1.9. Four (15%) out of the 26 new STCs raised for the first time in 2022 stemmed from plant health issues. These were:

- Russian Federation's SPS notification [G/SPS/N/RUS/241](#) regarding eleven new quarantine pests ([ID 540](#)), raised in March 2022;
- Russian Federation's phytosanitary certificate requirements for groundnut and sesame seeds ([ID 541](#)), raised in March 2022;
- US undue delays in opening its citrus market ([ID 542](#)); raised in March 2022; and
- Morocco's import ban on ornamental plants ([ID 548](#)), raised in June 2022.

1.10. The following previously raised concerns were again discussed in 2022:

- India's concern regarding US high cost of certification for mango exports ([ID 373](#)). The concern has been discussed seven times since it was first raised in July 2014;
- The EU's concern regarding US import restrictions on apples and pears ([ID 439](#)). The concern has been discussed 13 times since it was first raised in March 2018;
- The EU's concern regarding alleged undue delays in US recognition of the pest-free status in the European Union for Asian longhorn beetle and citrus longhorn beetle ([ID 471](#)). The concern has been discussed seven times since it was first raised in June 2020;
- Canada's concern on India's import requirements for pulses, including mandatory fumigation requirements ([ID 497](#)). The concern has been discussed six times since it was first raised in November 2020;
- Peru's concern regarding Bolivia's import restrictions on agricultural and livestock products ([ID 530](#)). The concern has been discussed three times since it was first raised in November 2021;
- Chinese Taipei's concern on China's import suspension of fresh fruits ([ID 532](#)). The concern has been discussed three times since it was first raised in November 2021; and
- The US undue delays in opening its citrus market ([ID 542](#)). The concern has been discussed once since it was first raised in March 2022.

⁶ [G/SPS/W/330/Rev.1](#). A [dedicated webpage](#) includes all the information related to the MC12 SPS Declaration work programme.

⁷ The latest version of this summary was circulated in March 2022 in document [G/SPS/GEN/204/Rev.22](#). These summaries are public documents available from <https://docs.wto.org/>. Information on SPS documents and STCs can also be searched through the [ePing SPS&TBT Platform](#).



1.11. In addition to the above, Members discussed several pesticide MRL-related STCs in all Committee meetings in 2022, displaying growing attention to the topic. Some of the STCs related to other concerns may also refer to issues related to control, inspection and approval procedures relevant to plant health.⁸

1.3 Other information

1.12. In 2022, WTO Members also provided to the Committee the following general information, related either in part or entirely to plant protection:

- SPS Declaration for the 12th WTO Ministerial Conference ([WT/MIN\(22\)/27](#))⁹: Australia, Brazil, Canada, India, Mongolia, the European Union, Norway, Switzerland, Türkiye, Uruguay, the United States (March, June and November 2022). Additionally, high-level representatives from Brazil, Canada, Colombia, the European Union, Japan and the United States also intervened in the June 2022 meeting following the adoption of the MC12 SPS Declaration;¹⁰
- Information on Ukraine's SPS situation¹¹: Ukraine (June and November). Several other Members spoke in support of Ukraine under the same agenda item;
- APEC Workshop on the Application of Electronic Veterinary and Phytosanitary Certificate¹²: Chinese Taipei (November 2022). Chile and New Zealand expressed support for the initiative.

1.13. In addition to the above, several Members provided information on initiatives and activities related to setting pesticide MRLs.¹³ In March 2022, the Committee held a [Thematic Session on Trade Facilitative Approaches to Pesticide MRLs, Including Substances not Approved for Use in an Import Market](#)¹⁴ (see [section 1.9](#)). Further to the thematic session, Australia, Canada, Colombia, Paraguay and the United States submitted a follow-up proposal containing actions for the Committee to explore, possibly through a dedicated working group, that was discussed in the June 2022 meeting.¹⁵ Overall, there was general interest in this topic, however no agreement was reached on establishing a working group. The proponents further indicated that they would deliberate on how best to take forward this discussion.

1.14. As a follow-up to the [Fifth Review of the SPS Agreement](#), Uganda and the United States co-sponsored a side event entitled "Responding to Fall Armyworm: Integrated Pest Management and Policy Approaches", that was held on the margins of the March 2022 SPS Committee meeting. Paraguay and the United States circulated a summary of the event, circulated in document [G/SPS/GEN/2039](#), that was presented in the June 2022 meeting.¹⁶

1.15. In March, June and November 2022, the IPPC presented reports on relevant activities contained in documents [G/SPS/GEN/1996](#), [G/SPS/GEN/2030](#) and [G/SPS/GEN/2073](#), respectively. In March 2022, the IPPC referred to the 16th session of the CPM (CPM-16) to be held in April, where

⁸ Please consult the summary reports of the Committee meetings in documents [G/SPS/R/105](#) (March 2022), [G/SPS/R/107](#) (June 2022) and [G/SPS/R/108](#) (November 2022) for more information.

⁹ See summary reports of the Committee meetings in section 5.2 of document [G/SPS/R/105](#) (March 2022), section 6.1 of document [G/SPS/R/107](#) (June 2022) and section 6.1 of document [G/SPS/R/108](#) (November 2022) for more information.

¹⁰ See the summary report of the June Committee meeting in section 3.1.1 of document [G/SPS/R/107](#).

¹¹ See document [G/SPS/GEN/2040](#) as well as section 3.1.3 of the summary report of the June 2022 Committee meeting ([G/SPS/R/107](#)) and section 2.2.4 in the November 2022 Committee meeting ([G/SPS/R/108](#)) for more information.

¹² See document [G/SPS/GEN/2060](#) and section 2.2.2 of the summary report of the November 2022 Committee meeting ([G/SPS/R/108](#)).

¹³ Please consult the summary reports of the Committee meetings in documents [G/SPS/R/105](#) (March 2022), [G/SPS/R/107](#) (June 2022) and [G/SPS/R/108](#) (November 2022) for more information.

¹⁴ The report is contained in Annex B of document [G/SPS/R/105](#).

¹⁵ See the summary report of the 2022 June Committee meeting in section 6.2 of document [G/SPS/R/107](#) for more information, as well as the 2022 November Committee meeting in section 6.3 of document [G/SPS/R/108](#). See also the latest revision of document [G/SPS/GEN/2034](#), which includes the most updated list of co-sponsors.

¹⁶ Please consult section 5.7.2.1 of the summary report of the June Committee meeting in document [G/SPS/R/107](#).

nine draft ISPMs had been recommended for adoption. The IPPC secretariat highlighted its work on commodity standards and emerging pests such as banana fusarium wilt and fall armyworm, as well as ongoing developments in guides and training materials available for its contracting parties. In June 2022, the IPPC's intervention mainly focused on the outcomes of the CPM-16. New standards were adopted, which included new phytosanitary treatments and diagnose protocols. Concerning the monitoring of the implementation of standards, the IPPC was moving towards an IPPC Observatory to have a more sustainable mechanism. On 12 May, the IPPC had celebrated the first International Day of Plant Health, an opportunity to advocate for the importance of plant health. The IPPC informed the Committee of the ongoing calls for experts, and invited Members to share the information with their respective national plant protection organizations (NPPOs). In November 2022, the IPPC informed the Committee that its Observatory was transitioning to a more sustainable approach on the monitoring of the implementation of the IPPC standards, and that the Three Sisters were involved in a working group created to improve collaboration and experience sharing on their respective monitoring activities. The main agenda item of the upcoming meeting of the IPPC Standards Committee had been the revision and potential approval of specifications that would become international standards, including commodity-specific standards. The IPPC also highlighted progress and the further potential of the ePhyto Solution, and the holding of the first Plant Health Conference in London (UK) in September 2022, in parallel with meetings of the ePhyto Industry Advisory Group and the Focus Group on Sea Containers.

1.16. The International Olive Council submitted a request for observer status in the SPS Committee. The request was circulated in document [G/SPS/GEN/121/Add.20](#). In the June 2022 meeting, the Chairperson indicated that he had been informed that it would not be possible to reach consensus status on IOC's request.¹⁷

1.4 Transparency

1.17. In 2022, the WTO pilot tested and released the beta version of the [ePing SPS&TBT Platform](#), which allows easy access and management of all WTO SPS-related documentation, including notified SPS measures, contact lists of national notification authorities (NNAs) and enquiry points (NEPs), STCs (see [section 1.1](#) above), as well as other SPS-related documents circulated at the WTO. Several information sessions were held during the year and a dedicated workshop to present the Platform was organized in June 2022.¹⁸ An ePing App became available in July 2022, allowing users to receive alerts on notifications of their interest on their mobile phone. The ePing SPS&TBT Platform was officially launched on 13 July 2022.¹⁹

1.18. The legal obligation of WTO Members is to notify new or modified draft SPS measures when these deviate from the relevant international standards, including International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs). The recommendations²⁰ adopted by the SPS Committee, however, encourage the notification of all new or modified measures even when these conform to international standards.²¹ Although this recommendation does not change the legal obligations of WTO Members, it enhances transparency regarding the application of ISPMs.

1.19. In 2022, a total of 2,175 notifications were submitted to the WTO, representing a historical record since 1995. Of these, 1,134 were regular and 396 were emergency notifications; the rest was constituted by addenda and corrigenda. A total of 199 (9%) of the 1,134 regular notifications and 21 (1%) of the 396 emergency ones identified plant protection as their main objective. A majority of these (109 of the 199 regular plant protection notifications and 20 of the 21 emergency ones) indicated conformity with a relevant ISPM.

1.20. Since the beginning of the pandemic, several Members have imposed measures aimed at facilitating trade, namely through the acceptance of copies or scanned documents instead of

¹⁷ Please consult section 9.2.1.1 of the summary report of the November Committee meeting in document [G/SPS/R/107](#).

¹⁸ The programme and presentations are available at https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/sps_e/workshop_transparency_20jun22_e.htm. The report of the workshop is available in [G/SPS/R/106](#).

¹⁹ See news item available in https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news22_e/igo_13jul22_e.htm. See also document [G/SPS/GEN/2058; G/TBT/GEN/336](#).

²⁰ A technical revision of the recommended transparency procedures was adopted in the November 2022 Committee meeting and circulated as [G/SPS/7/Rev.5](#).

²¹ [G/SPS/7/Rev.5](#), paragraph 2.3.



requiring originals or implementing electronic signatures, following the on-going trend of the ePhyto solution. A total of 39 (20 regular, one revision, 14 addenda and one corrigendum to regular, as well as 3 emergency) notifications related to COVID-19 indicated plant protection as an objective. All regular notifications were trade facilitating. Detailed information on measures adopted by WTO Members is available in the dedicated website [COVID-19 and world trade](#). No updates on actions taken during the COVID-19 pandemic were presented in neither the March nor the June 2022 meetings, and the Committee agreed to remove this agenda item from future Committee meetings.

1.5 Equivalence

1.21. The guidelines on the implementation of Article 4 of the SPS Agreement on equivalence note, *inter alia*, the work undertaken on the subject in the Codex, WOH (founded as OIE) and the IPPC, and encourage the further elaboration of specific guidance by these bodies. No contributions were made by any of the standard-setting bodies in 2022 under this agenda item.

1.22. The issue of equivalence was also included in the [Fifth Review of the SPS Agreement](#).

1.6 Regionalization

1.23. Article 6 of the SPS Agreement requires that measures take into account pest- or disease-free areas or areas of low pest or disease prevalence. In the context of the SPS Committee, this concept is frequently referred to as "regionalization"²² adopted by the SPS Committee identify the type of information normally needed for the recognition of pest- or disease-free areas or areas of low pest or disease prevalence, as well as typical administrative steps in the recognition process. The Committee agreed to monitor the implementation of Article 6, on the basis of information provided by WTO Members.

1.24. The WTO Secretariat prepared one report on the implementation of Article 6, covering the period from 1 April 2021 until 31 March 2022 based on information provided by WTO Members through notification and at SPS Committee meetings.²³ The report summarized (i) requests for recognition of pest- or disease-free areas or areas of low pest or disease prevalence; (ii) determinations on recognition of regionalization; and (iii) Members' experiences in the implementation of Article 6 and the provision of relevant background information on their decisions to other interested Members. Relevant issues outlined in the report included a declaration of fruit fly-free areas.

1.25. The issue of regionalization was also included in the [Fifth Review of the SPS Agreement](#).

1.7 Monitoring the use of international standards

1.26. The procedure adopted by the SPS Committee to monitor the use of international standards invites WTO Members to identify specific trade problems they have experienced due to the use or non-use of relevant international standards, guidelines or recommendations.²⁴ These problems, once considered by the SPS Committee, are drawn to the attention of the relevant international standard-setting bodies (ISSBs). No new nor previously raised issues related to plant protection were raised since the issuance of the previous report.

1.27. The WTO Secretariat prepares annual reports on the monitoring procedure summarizing the standards-related issues that the Committee has considered and the responses received from the relevant ISSBs. The Secretariat's annual report covering the period from 1 April 2021 until 31 March 2022 was circulated to Members in May 2022.²⁵

1.28. Since November 2020, New Zealand has submitted four proposals regarding the procedure to monitor the process of international harmonization. The proposals are contained in documents [G/SPS/GEN/1851](#), [G/SPS/GEN/1877](#), [G/SPS/GEN/1915](#) and [G/SPS/GEN/1998](#), and Members have had an opportunity to discuss these submissions at the informal meetings celebrated throughout

²² See WTO official document [G/SPS/48](#).

²³ See WTO official document [G/SPS/GEN/2021](#).

²⁴ See WTO official document [G/SPS/11/Rev.1](#).

²⁵ See WTO official document [G/SPS/GEN/2022](#).

2022²⁶. In June 2022, New Zealand thanked Members and the ISSBs for their inputs. While Members and the ISSBs had acknowledged the importance of the procedure to monitor the process of international harmonization, New Zealand noted that the topic was currently not seen as a priority for Members. New Zealand invited the Secretariat to encourage the ISSBs to provide brief reports under the agenda item on harmonization in future SPS Committee meetings. New Zealand indicated that it did not intend to make further proposals on this matter.²⁷

1.29. In addition, based on a EU's proposal, the Secretariat organized a one-day thematic session on international standards and best practices in pest risk identification, assessment and management (see [section 1.9](#)).

1.8 Technical assistance

1.30. At each of its meetings, the SPS Committee solicits information from WTO Members regarding their technical assistance needs and activities. In 2022, the IPPC summarized some of the activities of the Implementation and Capacity Development Committee, that was accepting nominations at that time.

1.31. Several Members, including Canada and the United States provided information about SPS technical assistance activities provided.²⁸ Similarly, Bangladesh²⁹ informed of the technical assistance received. In addition, several observer organizations outlined their technical assistance activities to the Committee.³⁰

1.32. Document [G/SPS/GEN/997/Rev.12](#) issued in 2022, provides information on all WTO technical assistance activities in the SPS area planned for the calendar year. National seminars were provided upon request by WTO Members. The first edition of a new SPS Transparency Champions Course was delivered in English. Likewise, the first edition of a new Essentials for SPS Committee Participation was delivered in French. Further information on SPS activities is available through <http://www.wto.org/sps/ta>.

1.33. Before the March 2022 SPS Committee meeting, the WTO Secretariat circulated its report entitled "SPS Technical Assistance and Training Activities", containing detailed information on all SPS-specific technical assistance activities undertaken by the WTO Secretariat from 1994 to the end of 2021.³¹

1.9 Thematic sessions and workshops

1.34. The SPS Committee also continued to organize thematic sessions and workshops on topics included in the Fifth Review of the SPS Agreement to exchange experiences and hear from experts. In March 2022, the SPS Committee held a [Thematic Session on Trade Facilitative Approaches to Pesticide MRLs, Including Substances not Approved for Use in an Import Market](#)³², based on a proposal by Australia, Colombia, Paraguay, and the United States ([G/SPS/GEN/1947](#)).³³ The margins of the SPS Committee meetings in June 2022 welcomed Members for a [Workshop on Transparency](#)³⁴

²⁶ Please consult the summaries of the discussions held in the informal meetings in 2022, contained in Annex A of document [G/SPS/R/105](#) (March 2022) and Annex C of document [G/SPS/R/107](#) (June 2022) for more information.

²⁷ See the summary report of the 2022 June Committee meeting in section 5.6.3 of document [G/SPS/R/107](#) for more information.

²⁸ See summary report of the November 2022 Committee meeting, [G/SPS/R/108](#), section 7.2.1.

²⁹ See summary report of the November 2022 Committee meeting, [G/SPS/R/108](#), section 7.2.1.

³⁰ Please consult the summary reports of the Committee meetings in documents [G/SPS/R/105](#) (March 2022), [G/SPS/R/107](#) (June 2022) and [G/SPS/R/108](#) (November 2022) for more information.

³¹ See WTO official document [G/SPS/GEN/521/Rev.17](#).

³² The report is contained in Annex B of document [G/SPS/R/105](#).

³³ The programme and presentations are available at https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/sps_e/thematicsession220322_e.htm. The report is contained in Annex B of document [G/SPS/R/105](#).

³⁴ The programme and presentations, as well as the recordings of the sessions, are available at https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/sps_e/workshop_transparency_20jun22_e.htm. The report is contained in Annex A of document [G/SPS/R/107](#) and a detailed report is available in document [G/SPS/R/106](#).



and a [Thematic Session on the Use of Remote \(Virtual\) Audit and Verification in Regulatory Frameworks](#), based on a proposal by Australia ([G/SPS/GEN/1949/Rev.1](#)).³⁵

1.35. The last thematic session of the year, held in November 2022, was dedicated to [International Standards and Best Practices in Pest Risk Identification, Assessment, and Management](#), based on a proposal by the European Union ([G/SPS/GEN/1951/Rev.2](#)). The purpose of the thematic session was to increase awareness about the relevant IPPC International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs) and share experiences in pest risk identification, assessment, and management. In particular, in session 2 of the thematic session, speakers shared insights on the relevant standards developed by the IPPC and explored the use of pest risk analysis (PRA) as a tool to enable trade whilst ensuring plant health protection. The session also highlighted the importance of plant health and trade in supporting food security. The last session was a panel discussion moderated by the IPPC secretary, which allowed for an exchange of experiences, challenges, opportunities, and best practices related to pest risk identification, assessment, and management.³⁶

1.36. In the November 2022 SPS Committee meeting, Members discussed a proposal to hold a thematic session on risk communication, misinformation and disinformation in November 2023, based on a proposal by the United States.³⁷

1.10 Dispute Settlement

1.10.1 The WTO Dispute Settlement Procedure

1.37. 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.³⁸ 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 could, until December 2019, appeal a panel's decision before the WTO's Appellate Body which has not been operative since end-2019 due to a lack of quorum. The Appellate Body examined the legal findings of the panel and could uphold or reverse these.

1.38. 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 but one SPS-related dispute. The experts are usually selected from lists provided by the relevant international organizations, including the ISSBs 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.

1.10.2 SPS Disputes

1.39. As of January 2023, 615 complaints have formally been raised under the WTO's dispute settlement procedures. Of these, 53 have concerned SPS issues, and panel (and as the case may be, Appellate Body) reports have been issued in fourteen SPS-related disputes.

1.40. Four panel reports have concerned plant pests and quarantine requirements: (i) the United States' complaint about Japan's requirement for testing each variety of fruit for efficacy of treatment against codling moth (*Japan-Agricultural Products*)³⁹; (ii) the United States' complaint about Japan's set of requirements on apples imported from the United States relating to

³⁵ The programme and presentations, as well as the recordings of the sessions, are available at https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/sps_e/thematic_session_21jun22_e.htm. The report is contained in Annex B of document [G/SPS/R/107](#).

³⁶ The programme and presentations are available at https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/sps_e/sps_nov21_e.htm. The report is available in Annex A of document [G/SPS/R/108](#).

³⁷ See WTO official document [G/SPS/GEN/2067](#).

³⁸ 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.

³⁹ The report of the panel is contained in document [WT/DS76/R](#). The Appellate Body report is contained in document [WT/DS76/AB/R](#).

fire blight (*Japan-Apples*)⁴⁰; (iii) New Zealand's complaint against Australia's restrictions on apples (*Australia-Apples*)⁴¹; and (iv) Mexico's complaint against Costa Rica's restrictions on fresh avocados (*Costa Rica-Avocados*).⁴²

1.41. The developments of these and other disputes can be followed at <http://www.wto.org/disputes>.

1.11 Trade Facilitation

1.42. The WTO's multilateral Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA), which entered into force in 2017, aims to enhance the movement, release and clearance of goods across borders. The TFAs 36 provisions set out requirements for border agencies to streamline border formalities, improve transparency and enhance intra-agency and cross-border cooperation. It requires each WTO Member to establish a national committee to oversee its implementation.

1.43. In 2022, the ratifications of the TFA rose to comprise 95% of the WTO's Membership (156 out of the 164 Members have now deposited their ratification of the Agreement).

1.44. Under the TFA, developing and least-developed country (LDC) Members can self-designate which provisions they will implement either immediately, after a transition period, or upon receiving assistance and support for capacity building. By end-2022, 95% of developing and LDC Members had designated their commitments accordingly.⁴³

1.45. In order to meet the national implementation deadlines, and reap the full benefits from implementation of this Agreement, the successful integration of plant protection authorities into national discussions on trade facilitation is essential. Indeed, the objectives of trade facilitation and plant protection support each other. Trade facilitation seeks to incentivize trade in safe plant products by promoting more efficient and effective controls, such as through a greater focus on inspections on high-risk products, while also suggesting ways to conduct checks before or after the border to avoid the creation of bottlenecks.

⁴⁰ The report of the panel is contained in document [WT/DS245/R](#). The Appellate Body report is contained in document [WT/DS245/AB/R](#).

⁴¹ The report of the panel is contained in document [WT/DS367/R](#). The Appellate Body report is contained in document [WT/DS367/AB/R](#).

⁴² The report of the panel is contained in document [WT/DS524/R](#).

⁴³ Developed countries were required to implement all provisions of the TFA from its entry into force on 22 February 2017.