

**CLARIFICATIONS - REGIONALIZATION AND THE NEED FOR
GUIDELINES TO IMPROVE ITS IMPLEMENTATION**

Communication by Chile

The following communication, dated 25 October 2004, is being circulated at the request of the delegation of Chile.

1. The aim is to strengthen and in no sense to replace or duplicate the work of the international scientific organizations recognized by the SPS Agreement.
2. There is a need for a framework or guidelines for the process of recognition of sanitary status that takes place after a country has attained the status of being "free" or a "free area".
3. Since all Members are exporters and importers, there is a need for clarity in the post-sanitary status process for the purpose of recognition by the other Members; this involves implementation of the SPS Agreement.
4. Clearly, the process of obtaining sanitary status varies depending on whether animals or plants are involved, and there will even be differences between the different pests and diseases. However, once a country has attained a specific sanitary or phytosanitary status and is declared to be pest- or disease-free, the recognition process will include administrative and legal procedures and, in the technical part, risk analysis mainly with regard to the documentation, and may include technical checks. In the whole of this latter process guidelines could be devised so as to establish a clearer importer/exporter relationship, bearing in mind that there is currently a wide variety of procedures.
5. The exporting country that attains pest- or disease-free status will have to have followed the international guidelines laid down by the international scientific organizations (OIE or IPPC); the importing countries will be able to verify this situation.
6. The importing country will have to grant recognition if the procedure has complied with international (OIE or IPPC) guidelines and, even more so, if the sanitary status in question has been verified by the competent international organization, although in actual fact in the recognition process followed in this situation there may well be differences between the Members as regards the time-frames and procedures.
7. The situation also arises of countries whose appropriate level of protection (ALP) is higher and whose admission requirements are stricter than the international norms. Such countries would have to justify that situation or, within the international organization, propose changes to the international norm if there is a firm scientific basis for such a change.

8. Finally, there are countries which, in the case of recognition, do not comply with the international regulations and make no attempt to justify their action, thereby prolonging the process of recognition.
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