

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

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8 January 2001

(01-0065)

Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

Original: English

NOTIFICATION

Addendum

The following communication, dated 2 January 2001, has been received from the United States.

Draft Public Involvement Policy

The Environmental Protection Agency is revising its 1981 Public Participation Policy. The revised policy is being issued as the Draft 2000 Public Involvement Policy for 120-day public comment. The Draft Policy was updated to reflect changes over the past 19 years such as additional Agency responsibilities, new regulations, expanded public involvement techniques, and the changed nature of public access due to the Internet. The Policy will provide guidance and direction to EPA officials on reasonable and effective means to involve the public in its regulatory and programme decisions.

EPA stated in its July 1999 publication "Aiming for Excellence: Actions to Encourage Stewardship and Accelerate Environmental Progress" that the Agency would evaluate and update EPA's public involvement requirements and assess how well its regulations and policies ensure public involvement in decision-making. In November 1999 the Agency sought the public's opinion on whether the 1981 Policy needed to be revised and updated (64 FR 66906, 30 November 1999 - notified to the WTO as G/SPS/N/USA/203). EPA collected, analyzed, and posted public comments on the Internet. Based on the comments received, EPA believes that, while the 1981 Policy required updating, it is basically sound and workable. Therefore, EPA is issuing today this Draft 2000 Public Involvement Policy (hereinafter called the Draft Policy) which updates and strengthens (but does not fundamentally change) the 1981 Policy. It incorporates many comments submitted in response to the 1999 Federal Register notice. After comments are received on this Draft Policy, EPA will issue a Final Public Involvement Policy.

Comments will be accepted until 27 April 2001.

The full text of this addendum is available from the US SPS Enquiry Point.

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