

# PANORAMA

Thematic portfolio



## The Observatory: Monitoring the implementation of OIE standards



# PERSPECTIVES

# DOSSIER

# AROUND THE WORLD

*'Harmonisation' is one of the key principles of the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement), defined as: 'The establishment, recognition and application of common sanitary and phytosanitary measures by different Members' [1, 2].*

The SPS Agreement encourages WTO Members to base their SPS measures on international standards, guidelines or recommendations, developed by the three international standard-setting bodies recognised by the WTO for this purpose: the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Codex) for food safety, the Secretariat of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) for plant health, and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) for animal health and zoonoses [3].

The [SPS Committee](#) is tasked with monitoring the process of harmonisation and the use of international standards [4]. It has established a monitoring process which allows WTO Members to identify the non-use of an existing international standard, the need to update a standard, or situations where an international standard may be missing [5, 6]. The SPS Committee considers annual monitoring reports which are brought to the attention of the international standard-setting bodies, and cooperates closely with them in their respective areas.

The Fifth *Review of the operation and implementation of the SPS Agreement* highlighted the role of the international standard-setting bodies in sharing guidance on scientific uncertainty and the insufficiency of scientific evidence in the risk analysis process, and encouraged Members to periodically review their SPS measures in light of developments and updates in relevant areas [7, 8].

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## AROUND THE WORLD

### ► NETWORK INITIATIVES

# The WTO SPS Agreement and its role in monitoring the process of harmonisation and the use of international standards

## KEYWORDS

#Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement), #international standard, #OIE Observatory, #safe trade, #World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), #World Trade Organization (WTO).

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