

WTO's SPS Agreement

June 10, 2024 • vajiramandravi.com

WTO 25 YEARS

Basic Rules

Food Safety & Animal and Plant Health Requirements

SPS Agreement

WTO Members

Have the right to protect human, animal or plant life and health, basing their measures on science and only applying them to the extent necessary, without unjustifiable discrimination. It also encourages the use of international standards developed by Codex Alimentarius, IPPC and OIE.

International Standards

Codex Alimentarius, IPPC, OIE

About SPS Agreement:

- The Agreement on the Application of **Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures** (SPS Agreement) is a treaty of the World Trade Organization (WTO) that **came into force with the establishment of the WTO** on January 1, 1995.
- It sets out the **basic rules for food safety and animal and plant** health standards.

Key Provisions

- **Scientific basis:** SPS measures must be based on scientific principles and sufficient evidence, except for provisional measures.

- **Harmonization:** Members are encouraged to align SPS measures with international standards set by bodies like Codex Alimentarius, OIE, and IPPC.
- **Equivalence:** SPS measures of other countries should be accepted as equivalent if they achieve the same level of protection.
- **Risk assessment:** Countries must conduct risk assessments to determine the appropriate level of protection, considering the impacts of pests or diseases.
- **Regionalization:** Members should recognize pest- or disease-free areas and areas of low prevalence, even if within a single country or group of countries.
- **Transparency:** Countries must notify changes in SPS measures and provide regulatory information through the WTO's SPS notification system.

Dispute Resolution: These disputes can be taken to the WTO's Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) if consultations fail.

Q1. What is the WTO's Dispute Settlement Body?

The Dispute Settlement Body of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) makes decisions on trade disputes between governments that are adjudicated by the Organisation.

Source: Settling trade disputes through 'litigotiation'

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/wtos-sps-agreement/>

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