



Beneficiary

28 governments and SPS stakeholders across Latin America and the Caribbean

Led by

IICA

Time-frame

October 2007 – July 2010

STDF funding

US\$575,588 (total project value US\$659,588)

BUILDING SPS CAPACITY AND COOPERATION ACROSS LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

The safe trade gap

The WTO SPS Agreement sets out the basic rules on food safety, animal and plant health requirements and trade. SPS measures have an important impact on agricultural production, trade and market access. For many developing countries across Latin America and the Caribbean, limited institutional capacity and awareness of key SPS concerns meant they were missing out on meetings of relevant international standard setting bodies and the WTO SPS Committee. A lack of financial resources also prevented countries from getting involved. Across the region, countries faced barriers to trade agri-food products if they could not develop and adopt international standards, engage with international counterparts on SPS issues and make their voices heard at the global level.

Partnership approach

Close collaboration among public, private and regional partners throughout the project, led by IICA, helped to develop a common and shared vision among SPS stakeholders in the 28 countries. At the national level, public and private sector stakeholders worked together to collect country-specific SPS information, which fed into the development of national SPS agendas. Building on the common areas found in national SPS agendas, and drawing on work done by regional organizations, four regional SPS agendas were also developed. As a result of the project, IICA was able to support countries across the region to be empowered and actively participate in the WTO SPS Committee.

Results

- 26 countries developed national SPS agendas, with guidelines setting institutional priorities and cooperation with international organizations and donors.
- Four regional SPS agendas (Caribbean, Central, Andean and Southern) were developed based on common areas in countries' national SPS agendas.
- 24 countries effectively applied IICA's "Performance, Vision and Strategy for National SPS Systems (PVS-SPS) Tool" to evaluate the development of SPS systems and the impact on investments.

- Workshops on SPS awareness and standard-setting processes, as well as risk analysis, reached 400+ participants, including high-level decision makers in Ministries of Agriculture and Health, and technical specialists.
- Knowledge tools were developed and shared including Handbooks with tips on participation in international SPS fora, management of national Codex Committees, and how to submit SPS notifications.

Sustaining impact

- Stronger regional coordination: regional SPS agendas guided technical cooperation during the project. Now, improved coordination is helping countries to work jointly on common SPS issues across the region.
- Institutional sustainability: following the project, national institutions are effectively participating, monitoring and responding to issues, demands and opportunities in the WTO SPS Committee. Countries including Belize, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Honduras, Paraguay and Peru continue to be active in the Committee thanks to the project support.
- South-South spill-over impact: African participation in the SPS Committee was given a boost thanks to an update of IICA's Handbooks developed under the project. Facilitated by STDF, the Handbooks were tailored to the African context and introduced at African Union-led regional workshops in 2014.

"The project impact was significant. Information generated continues to be used to advance SPS areas at national and regional level. Thanks to awareness-raising, countries received government support to establish SPS Enquiry Points and, in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, Pest Risk Analysis Units".

Carol Thomas,
former Chief, Plant
Quarantine, Jamaica

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