

CHAPTER 7

DIALOGUES ON ISSUES RELATED TO THE AGRI-FOOD CHAIN

ARTICLE 7.1

Objectives

With a view to strengthening their mutual trust and respective understanding, the Parties shall establish dialogues and exchange information on the following subjects:

- (a) animal welfare;
- (b) application of agricultural biotechnology;
- (c) combating antimicrobial resistance; and
- (d) scientific matters related to food safety, animal and plant health.

ARTICLE 7.2

Subcommittee on dialogues on issues related to the agri-food chain

The Subcommittee on dialogues on issues related to the agri-food chain, established pursuant to Article 22.3(4), shall in addition to functions listed in Articles 7.7 and 22.3, meet at expert level to conduct the dialogues referred to in Article 7.1.

ARTICLE 7.3

Animal welfare

Recognising that animals are sentient beings, the Subcommittee on dialogues on issues related to the agri-food chain shall conduct a dialogue covering, inter alia, the following matters:

- (a) specific topics on animal welfare that may affect mutual trade;
- (b) exchange of information, expertise and experiences in the field of animal welfare to improve, to the benefit of the Parties, their respective approaches on regulatory standards related to the breeding, holding, handling, transportation and slaughter of animals;
- (c) strengthening of their research collaboration; and

- (d) collaboration in international fora with a view to promoting the further development of international standards on animal welfare by the WOAH and best animal welfare practices and their implementation.

ARTICLE 7.4

Agricultural biotechnology

The Subcommittee on dialogues on issues related to the agri-food chain shall conduct a dialogue on agricultural biotechnology covering, inter alia, the following matters:

- (a) exchange of information on policies, legislation, guidelines, good practices and projects on biotechnology products;
- (b) discussions on specific topics related to biotechnology that may affect mutual trade, including cooperation on genetically modified organisms (hereinafter referred to as "GMOs") testing;
- (c) exchange of information on topics related to asynchronous authorisations of GMOs in order to minimise the possible impact on trade;
- (d) exchange of information on the economic and trade outlook for authorisations of GMOs; and
- (e) exchange of information on cases of low-level presence of GMOs non-authorised by the importing Party but authorised by the exporting Party.

ARTICLE 7.5

Combating antimicrobial resistance

The Subcommittee on dialogues on issues related to the agri-food chain shall conduct a dialogue on combatting antimicrobial resistance covering, inter alia, the following matters:

- (a) collaboration to follow up on existing and future guidelines, standards, recommendations and actions developed in relevant international organisations, initiatives and national plans aiming to promote the prudent and responsible use of antibiotics and in relation to animal production and veterinary practices;
- (b) collaboration in the implementation of the recommendations of the WOA, World Health Organization (hereinafter referred to as "WHO") and Codex Alimentarius, in particular the Code of Practice to Minimize and Contain Foodborne Antimicrobial Resistance (CAC/RCP 61-2005);
- (c) exchange of information on good farming practices;
- (d) the promotion of research, innovation and development; and
- (e) the promotion of multidisciplinary approaches to combat antimicrobial resistance, including the "One Health" approach of the WHO, WOA and Codex Alimentarius.

ARTICLE 7.6

Scientific matters related to food safety, animal and plant health

1. The Parties should foster cooperation between their respective official scientific bodies responsible for food safety, animal and plant health science. Such cooperation shall aim to deepen the scientific information available to the Parties in order to support their respective approaches on regulatory standards that may affect mutual trade.
2. The Subcommittee on dialogues on issues related to the agri-food chain, referred to in Article 7.2, shall conduct a dialogue on scientific matters related to food safety, animal and plant health covering, inter alia, the following matters:
 - (a) exchange of scientific and technical information on food and feed safety, animal and plant health areas, including risk assessment and the scientific information supporting the establishment of maximum residue levels;
 - (b) collection of data; and
 - (c) collaboration in the building of a common understanding regarding WOA, IPPC and the Codex Alimentarius standards.

ARTICLE 7.7

Additional provisions

1. The Parties shall ensure that the activities of the Subcommittee on dialogues on issues related to the agri-food chain, referred to in Article 7.2, do not endanger the independence of their respective national or regional agencies. The Subcommittee on dialogues on issues related to the agri-food chain shall establish the rules on conflicts of interest for the participants of its meetings.
2. Nothing in this Chapter shall affect the rights and obligations of each Party to protect confidential information, in accordance with each Party's relevant legislation. Each Party shall ensure that procedures are in place to prevent the disclosure of confidential information that is acquired during the process established in this Chapter.
3. Fully respecting the Parties' right to regulate, nothing in this Chapter shall be construed to oblige a Party to:
 - (a) deviate from domestic procedures for preparing and adopting regulatory measures;
 - (b) take action that would undermine or impede the timely adoption of regulatory measures to achieve its public policy objectives; or
 - (c) adopt any particular regulatory outcome.