



# **“Regional SPS and TBT Issues in Asia”**

**Regional Workshop for Asia on WTO Agreements  
on SPS and TBT  
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**Ms. Shashi Sareen**  
**Senior Food Safety & Nutrition Officer**  
**FAO Regional Office for the Asia & the Pacific**  
E-mail: [shashi.sareen@fao.org](mailto:shashi.sareen@fao.org)



# Introduction

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- **Globalization** - increasing consumers demand for variety in food - creation of **global market** – food trade across countries
- Trade is a **main driver** of growth, job creation, alleviation of poverty, availability of choice to consumers....
- However, it also leads a **higher chance of food safety, quality and fraud** that have major health, social and economic implications – **examples** are residues, heavy metals, toxins, pathogens; fraud - horse meat sold as beef, melamine, common adulterants, etc
- Access to markets is often challenging – a major constraint being SPS and TBT issues – highlighted in the presentation



# 1. Food chain and preventive approaches and Traceability

## The food chain

Production

Transport and  
processing

Retail and  
storage

Preparation

Consumption

❑ **Food chain approach** – hazards may arise at different stages of the food supply

❑ **Preventative risk-based approach** to be followed rather than a reactive one based on sampling & testing (GAP, GMP, HACCP)

❑ **Traceability** for targeted and accurate **withdraw or recall** and validation of **claims** such as “organic”, GIs, halal, free from allergens...



## 2. Standards

- **Standards** – in terms of end-product criteria, inspection procedures, sampling and testing methods, packaging and labelling requirements, etc
  - **Differing standards by countries** (not always harmonized with Codex) – impact is that for trade the exporter needs to cater to different requirements – not easy
  - **Standards for domestic & export** differing including levels of control – what is rejected for exports finds way into domestic markets or again into the export chain – so effectiveness reduces.
  - **Labels** – language understood
  - **Recognition of controls/ standards of private sector**



### 3. Transparency and Communication

- Criteria, procedures and protocols need to have **clarity/ predictability** so that can be met - exporters, importers and exporting government aware of these.
- Many agencies each with own set of requirements, generally **no comprehensive guidance** available (decision making criteria, etc) – leads to non-compliance with mostly procedural aspects. Verbal information by government authorities.
- **Risk communication** poorly understood and addressed
- WTO requires notifications – many countries still not notifying fully



## 4. Multi- agency Coordination

- Responsibility of food safety is a **multi sectoral and multi disciplinary** subject (> 8-10 Ministries/ Departments) - good coordination, cooperation, communication important - **outcomes met** – benefits, costs or efforts
- Food safety is often not a **comprehensive system** but many independent systems by different Ministries/ Agencies. Duplicate registrations/ certificates/ standards, etc. Specifically **border controls** often lack capacity in a single authority, lack of laboratories, manpower capacity on risk-based control is low



## 5. Import Controls

- **Not risk-based** - in many cases – all consignments inspected/ tested – leads to high fees/ waiting time
- Confidence in exporting CA controls/ certificates not there – the aspect of **equivalence or recognition** provided for in Codex standards needs to be acknowledged and implemented - need to look into 3 levels of controls (pre-border/ border/ post border; risk basis)
- **E-certificates**



## 6. Infrastructure

- **Transportation** – systems for maintaining cold chain, hygiene and cross contamination issues – Code of GP in transportation/ trainings, coordinate with Ministry of Transport
- **CA infrastructure** – laboratories, inspection and accreditation systems
- **Capacities in area of animal health** not vet at par to

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