

18 March 2025, 14-15h

Geneva, Switzerland (CEST)

Venue: WTO room B and virtual via Zoom

New data, new evidence: quantifying the benefits of regulatory convergence and international standards

Background

With numerous partners worldwide, UN Trade and Development has been creating the largest database of non-tariff measures. Through in-country projects in 143 countries, the database now covers over 100'000 measures. The data shows that almost all global trade in agri-food products is regulated by sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures. On average, eleven SPS measures are applied per product.

On the one hand, these measures entail substantial costs. On the other hand, the protection of human, animal and plant life and health is paramount. Regulatory transparency and convergence, especially towards international standards, are key elements of the SPS agreement. These approaches help reduce trade costs while preserving the essential regulatory benefits of SPS measures. However, comprehensive information on the adherence of national regulations to international standards is unavailable. Quantifying the benefits of adopting international standards has therefore been limited to product-specific case studies.

Session objective

The session will present the latest research by UN Trade and Development that estimates the current state and potential benefits of regulatory convergence between countries and towards international standards. It will also cover the underlying data collection and transparency tools, which complement the WTO notification systems.

While UN Trade and Development research takes a macro perspective, Codex Alimentarius will present a micro level case study to illustrate the impacts of international standards on the ground.





>> Programme

Introductory remarks by	Ms. Teresa Moreira, Head, Competition and Consumer Protection Branch, UN Trade and Development
Presentation by	Mr. Christian Knebel Economic Affairs Officer, Trade Analysis Branch UN Trade and Development
Discussant	Mr. Farid El Haffar Technical Officer Codex Alimentarius Commission
Followed by	Q&A and discussion

Virtual participation registration

https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_KNxPzcc4SgC6MyEzorTjpw#/registration

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