

# **CTI Public – Private Dialogue (PPD) on Follow-up Initiative on Promoting Transparency Through the Improvement of Information Submitted in the Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Notifications**

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**APEC Committee on Trade and Investment**

**February 2026**







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APEC Project: CTI 202 2024T

Produced by

Ms. Pia ARANYA, Trade Officer ([caranya@mincetur.gob.pe](mailto:caranya@mincetur.gob.pe))

And

Staff of the APEC General Coordination

Mr. Julio CHAN ([jchan@mincetur.gob.pe](mailto:jchan@mincetur.gob.pe))

Ms. Kathya VILCHEZ ([ateam@mincetur.gob.pe](mailto:ateam@mincetur.gob.pe))

Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism

050 Uno Oeste, Corpac,

San Isidro, Lima, Peru 15036

Tel: (+511)-5136100

Website: <https://www.gob.pe/mincetur>

For

Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Secretariat

35 Heng Mui Keng Terrace

Singapore 119616

Tel: (65) 68919 600

Fax: (65) 68919 690

Email: [info@apec.org](mailto:info@apec.org)

Website: [www.apec.org](http://www.apec.org)

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# **CTI Public – Private Dialogue (PPD) on Follow-up initiative on Promoting Transparency through the Improvement of Information submitted in the Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Notifications**

## **Summary Report**

### **Introduction**

On 2 and 3 August 2025, the APEC CTI Public – Private Dialogue (PPD) on Follow-up initiative on Promoting Transparency through the Improvement of Information submitted in the Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Notifications was held in Incheon, Republic of Korea. This event was organized by Peru and co-sponsored by Australia; Chile; and the Philippines.

The PPD is a component of APEC project CTI 202 2024T – “Follow-up initiative on Promoting Transparency through the Improvement of Information submitted in the Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Notifications”. The PPD’s objectives are: (1) to discuss the results of the *Follow-up Study of APEC Economies’ Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Notifications on Quality and Completeness of Information* (hereinafter, the Follow-up Study); (2) to exchange views about the main challenges faced by public and private sector due to quality and completeness of WTO’s SPS Notifications and (3) to discuss possible ways to improve the information provided in the items “Products covered” and “Description of content” by APEC members in its WTO’s SPS Notifications.

The expected outcome of this PPD, together with the study, is the development of a set of voluntary recommendations on specific items of SPS notifications to be endorsed by CTI before the end of 2025.

This report presents the summary of each session of the PPD.

## **Session 1: Transparency in APEC Region - Focus on SPS Notifications**

### **1.1. Study of APEC Economies' Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Notifications**

Trade Officer from the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism of Peru, Ms. Pia Aranya, delivered a presentation on the Study of APEC Economies' Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Notifications (hereinafter referred to as the 2019 APEC Study), a research project also led by Peru in 2019. It was highlighted that this study served as the basis for the development of the Follow-up Study.

Ms. Aranya emphasized transparency as one of the fundamental principles of the multilateral trading system (MTS) under the WTO framework, which seeks to ensure clarity, predictability, and access to information on Members' trade policies, rules, and regulations. In this sense, the SPS Agreement establishes the rights and obligations of Members regarding the transparency of SPS measures.

The 2019 APEC Study aimed to assess the quality and completeness of information submitted by APEC economies, following the Recommended Procedures for Implementing the Transparency Obligations under the SPS Agreement (G/SPS/7/Rev.3, 2008). The scope of the study included the analysis of a sample of SPS notifications issued by APEC economies between 2014 and 2017, as well as a survey conducted among private sector stakeholders.

According to the findings, APEC economies achieved an overall result of 73.62%, indicating an acceptable level of compliance with WTO recommendations. However, the study identified five notification items that require special attention, as their results were below the general average: "Products covered," "Description of content," "Proposed date of adoption," "Proposed date of entry into force," and "Final date for comments and agency or authority handling comments." From the private sector perspective, the main challenges identified were the use of different languages, insufficient information on the scope of measures, and a general lack of detail in notifications.

Finally, Ms. Aranya explained that the methodology applied in this study was taken as a reference for the development of the Follow-up Study.

## **1.2. Study of APEC Economies' TBT and SPS Specific Trade Concerns: An Analysis from the APEC Cross Cutting Principles on Non-Tariff Measures**

Ms. Pia Aranya also presented Peru's Study on APEC Economies' TBT and SPS Specific Trade Concerns: An Analysis from the APEC Cross-Cutting Principles on Non-Tariff Measures (2018). She noted that APEC economies have made significant progress in facilitating trade through tariff reduction; however, there has been an increasing trend in the use of non-tariff measures (NTMs) across the Asia-Pacific region.

From the private sector perspective, NTMs are a source of concern, as some of them become non-tariff barriers (NTBs). NTMs are often perceived as unclear and unpredictable, and can act as obstacles to the integration of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) into regional and global value chains.

In response to these concerns, the Cross-Cutting Principles on Non-Tariff Measures (2018/AMM/011app01) were endorsed at the 30th APEC Ministerial Meeting (AMM) in 2018. These principles were adopted as a reference to guide APEC members in the development and implementation of NTMs, and to minimize their potential to act as unjustified barriers to trade.

In this context, the objective of the study was to assess Specific Trade Concerns (STCs) raised in the WTO TBT and SPS Committees, in order to identify how frequently APEC economies participated in STCs related to the Cross-Cutting Principles on NTMs. The scope of this study covered all STCs raised in the WTO TBT and SPS Committees concerning APEC economies between 1995 and 2019.

The results showed that the main concern related to TBT measures is transparency, as Members raising STCs often cited a lack of information in notifications and insufficient consultation with stakeholders. Other key concerns were associated with the non-trade-restrictive principle and the use of international standards.

Ms. Aranya concluded by explaining that the findings of this study provided valuable inputs for the development of the Follow-up study.

## Session 2: Relevance of transparency in the framework of SPS Agreement

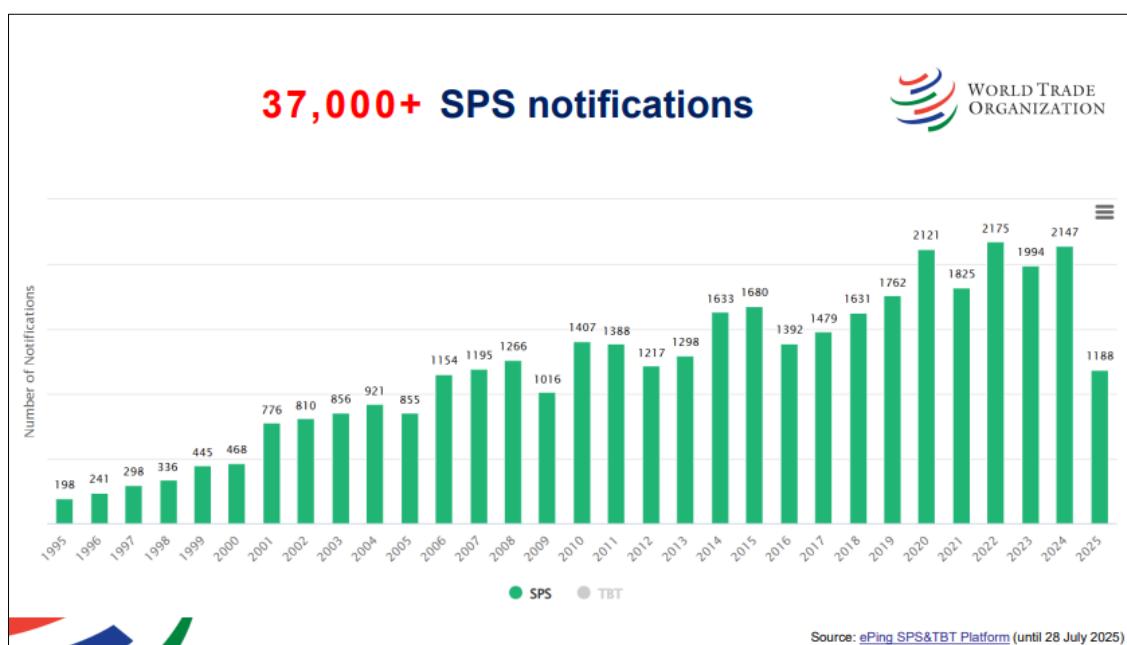
### 1.3. SPS Agreement and the principle of transparency

SPS Expert from the World Trade Organization (WTO), Ms. Nazia Mohammed, explained that transparency is one of the fundamental principles of the multilateral trading system (MTS) as it promotes predictability and provides early warning to help stakeholders adapt to regulatory changes. She highlighted that under the SPS Agreement, Members have specific obligations established in Article 7 and Annex B, but also mentioned to consider the latest SPS Recommended Transparency Procedures (G/SPS/7/Rev.5, 2023).

Ms. Mohammed emphasized that these transparency obligations ensure that SPS measures are implemented in a manner that protects human, animal, and plant health while avoiding unnecessary trade barriers.

As shown in *Figure 1*, the number of SPS notifications has increased steadily since the Agreement entered into force, reflecting Members' growing engagement with transparency provisions. She also presented trends in the use of addenda, corrigenda, and supplements to update existing notifications, noting that these mechanisms are essential to maintain accuracy and facilitate ongoing communication among Members.

**Figure 1. Number of SPS notifications from 1995 to 2025 (July)**



Moreover, Ms. Mohammed showed that several APEC economies are among the most notifying Members, reaffirming the region's leadership and strong compliance with transparency commitments.

Finally, Ms. Mohammed introduced the ePing SPS & TBT Platform, a user-friendly tool that supports transparency by allowing users to stay informed of new notifications, communicate with stakeholders, and track updates through customized alerts.

#### **1.4. Recommendations of the WTO/SPS Committee regarding transparency**

In the second part of her presentation, Ms. Mohammed provided an overview of the Sixth Review of the Operation and Implementation of the SPS Agreement, adopted by the WTO SPS Committee in March 2025 (G/SPS/74 and Add.1). She explained that this review identified key areas for strengthening transparency and led to the creation of a Transparency Working Group (TWG), open to all Members and Observers, with an initial two-year mandate.

The TWG will focus on:

- Enhancing the quality and completeness of information in SPS notifications;
- Improving access to translations and reviewing the public comment process;
- Clarifying the distinction between SPS and TBT measures; and
- Exploring possible updates to transparency tools, including the Recommended Transparency Procedures (G/SPS/7/Rev.5, 2023), the ePing SPS & TBT Platform, and the Practical Manual for NNAs and NEPs.

As shown in Figure 2, Ms. Mohammed encouraged Members to participate actively in the TWG's ongoing work and to respond to the SPS Transparency Working Group Survey open until 29 August 2025. She also highlighted several resources available through the WTO SPS Gateway, such as the SPS Transparency Toolkit, the Annual Report on SPS Transparency, and the SPS Mentoring System, which assists Members in building capacity and strengthening their implementation of transparency commitments.

**Figure 2. SPS Transparency Working Group**

A graphic featuring a green and white abstract background with several green speech bubble icons of varying sizes and depths, suggesting a conversation or dialogue. To the right of the graphic is a white box containing the following text:

**SPS Transparency Working Group**  
**Work streams**

- Quality of notification information and access to translations of notified measures
- Comment process
- SPS vs TBT measures
- Identify priorities and explore implementation of insights. This may include enhancements to ePing; revisions of the recommended procedures, annual report on transparency and the practical manual for NNAs/NEPs; and adaptation of the [TBT Comment Guide](#) to the needs of the SPS Committee.

See further details: para. 2.34 of G/SPS/74

## **Session 3: Results of the Follow-Up Study of APEC Economies' Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Notifications on Quality and Completeness of Information**

### **3.1 Recap of Peru's “Follow-up initiative on Promoting Transparency through the Improvement of Information submitted in the Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Notifications”**

Ms. Pia Aranya provided an overview of the APEC project CTI\_202\_2024T, titled “Follow-up Initiative on Promoting Transparency through the Improvement of Information submitted in the Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Notifications”.

She recalled that this initiative was conceived as a continuation of the work carried out under the 2019 APEC Study, also led by Peru, which analyzed the quality and completeness of APEC economies' SPS notifications to the WTO. The Follow-up Initiative builds on those findings, aiming to strengthen Members' capacity to implement the WTO SPS transparency obligations and to contribute to the development of voluntary recommendations on notification practices.

Ms. Aranya explained that the project consists of two main components:

1. The development of the *Follow-up Study of APEC Economies' SPS Notifications on Quality and Completeness of Information*; and

2. The *Public–Private Dialogue (PPD)*, which gathered government representatives, international organizations, and the private sector to discuss the study results, exchange experiences, and identify ways to enhance transparency practices.

**Figure 3. Peru's Follow-up initiative**



As shown in Figure 3, the project focuses specifically on improving the information provided in Item 3 (“Products covered”) and Item 6 (“Description of content”) of WTO SPS notifications, identified as the weakest areas in the 2019 evaluation. Through this work, APEC economies seek to reinforce good practices, ensure predictability in trade, and promote effective communication between regulators and stakeholders.

### **3.2 Results of the Follow-Up Study of APEC Economies’ SPS Notifications on Quality and Completeness of Information**

Ms. Aranya presented the key findings of the Follow-up Study, which analyzed regular and emergency SPS notifications submitted by APEC economies between 2020 and 2024, as well as input from the private sector. The study assessed notifications against the Recommended Procedures for Implementing the Transparency Obligations under the SPS Agreement (G/SPS/7/Rev.5, 2023) and compared results with the 2019 baseline.

A total of 865 notifications were examined (498 regular and 367 emergency notifications) from 15 APEC economies, complemented by a survey of 42 private sector entities, including exporters, importers, or both.

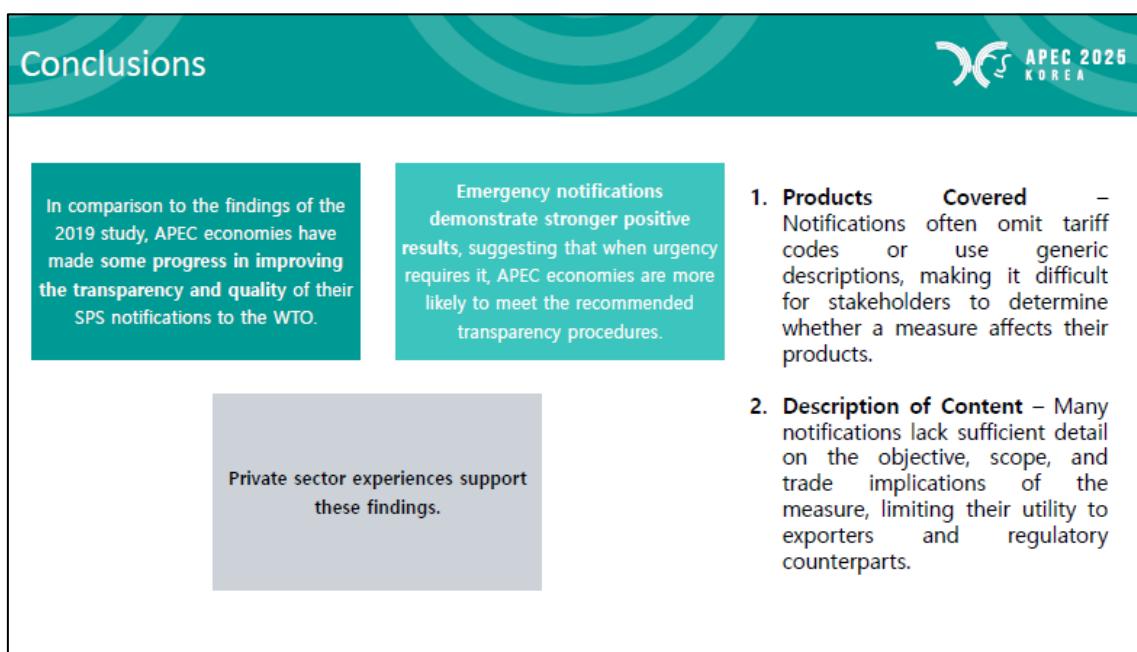
Regarding Item 3 (“Products covered”), the study found that while some economies include detailed product descriptions and HS codes, others still use broad or generic terms that make it difficult for trading partners to identify whether their products are affected.

For Item 6 (“Description of content”), there has been improvement in the inclusion of objectives and brief summaries of measures; however, many notifications continue to lack sufficient detail about the scope, the sanitary or phytosanitary requirements involved, and the expected impact on trade.

Emergency notifications showed stronger compliance, with clearer explanations of risks, rationale, and actions taken, suggesting that urgency prompts greater precision in communication.

The following Figure 4 summarizes the conclusions obtained from the Follow-up Study.

**Figure 4. Conclusions**



Private sector feedback confirmed these trends, indicating that the main challenges remain the lack of detailed product coverage, limited clarity on the measure’s purpose, and language barriers. Nevertheless, greater engagement was noted compared to 2019, particularly through the use of tools such as ePing, which facilitate access to notifications and timely reactions to proposed measures.

Overall, the results demonstrate moderate progress in the quality and completeness of SPS notifications among APEC economies. The findings were presented as the basis for

drafting voluntary best practices on SPS transparency, to be considered by APEC's Committee on Trade and Investment (CTI) before the end of 2025.

### **3.3 Conclusions and recommendations based on the results of the Study**

- Peru**

Ms. Rocio Barreda, Director of Technical Requirements to Foreign Trade of the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism of Peru (MINCETUR), delivered a presentation about the main conclusions and recommendations of the study, highlighting that while regular notifications have shown better clarity in the “Products covered” section, the omission of tariff codes and technical inconsistencies remain common challenges. Ms. Barreda emphasized the need to strengthen institutional capacities through training and coordination among competent authorities.

From Peru’s perspective, she noted that transparency remains essential to ensure predictability in trade and to strengthen trust among economies. She encouraged Members to improve the description of objectives, scope, and trade implications in the “Description of content,” and to continue investing in institutional coordination and training. Ms. Barreda concluded that sustained efforts to enhance SPS transparency will support better regulatory outcomes, minimize trade frictions, and reinforce APEC’s contribution to the multilateral trading system.

- The Philippines**

Dr. Gerald Glenn F. Panganiban, Director at the Bureau of Plant Industry, Department of Agriculture of the Philippines, shared the Philippines’ perspective on the conclusions of the Follow-up Study, emphasizing that transparency in SPS notifications is closely linked to the clarity, timeliness, and accessibility of information. Dr. Panganiban stressed that all fields in the WTO SPS notification formats should be properly and fully completed, with concise summaries supported by scientific evidence or risk assessments where applicable.

Dr. Panganiban encouraged economies to share draft measures early enough to allow meaningful comments, to respond to feedback from trading partners, and to explain how such feedback is considered in the final adoption of measures. He also underlined the importance of ensuring that notifications and related documents are easily accessible

online, and of raising awareness among small and medium-sized enterprises on how to use these resources effectively.

Finally, Dr. Panganiban highlighted the need to strengthen institutional capacity through continuous training, closer coordination among SPS authorities, and consistent use of digital tools such as the WTO ePing platform. By institutionalizing these practices, economies can make transparency a practical and sustainable element of SPS governance across the APEC region.

- **New Zealand**

Ms. Anna Tyler, Principal Advisor International at the Ministry for Primary Industries of New Zealand, presented options for addressing the transparency challenges identified in the Follow-up Study, drawing on New Zealand's extensive experience in implementing SPS transparency commitments and engaging within the WTO framework. Ms. Tyler emphasized that transparency is not only a procedural obligation but also a practical mechanism to strengthen trust, predictability, and cooperation among APEC economies.

Ms. Tyler outlined six key issues revealed in the study: (1) incomplete summaries, (2) poor timing of notifications, (3) limited access to full texts and translations, (4) low participation in the comment process, (5) weak SPS contact point functionality, and (6) capacity constraints in developing economies, but also proposed corresponding actions for each of them. These included developing best-practice templates for summaries, promoting adherence to a minimum 60-day pre-adoption notice period, improving access to complete documentation, and enhancing the efficiency of the comment process through upgrades to the ePing platform.

Ms. Tyler also highlighted the importance of strengthening SPS enquiry points through targeted training, improved inter-agency coordination, and the establishment of a peer-mentoring mechanism among APEC economies. Finally, she proposed conducting periodic peer reviews of notification practices and sharing progress with the WTO SPS Committee. In Figure 5, Ms. Tyler concluded by encouraging economies to collaborate on institutional strengthening and adopt these tools and practices to make SPS transparency a sustained driver of trade facilitation and regulatory coherence in the APEC region.

**Figure 5. Conclusion & Call to Action**

**Conclusion & Call to Action**

**APEC 2025 KOREA**

**Transparent SPS systems strengthen regional trade**

**Possible next steps for APEC Economies:**



- Adopt recommended tools and practices
- Collaborate on institutional strengthening
- Participate in ongoing training and review mechanisms

### **3.4 Challenges regarding WTO SPS notifications by private sector**

- **Mexico**

Mr. Sergio Balderas, Director of Economic Affairs at the “National Confederation of Livestock Organizations (CNOG)” in Mexico, shared the Mexican private sector’s experience in implementing transparency obligations related to sanitary and phytosanitary measures, emphasizing the key role of collaboration between the private sector and sanitary authorities, including SENASICA, COFEPRIS, SEMARNAT, CONAMER, and the Ministry of Economy. Mr. Balderas explained that Mexico’s regulatory process involves multiple agencies responsible for different aspects of animal health, food safety, and environmental protection, and that effective coordination among them is essential to ensure timely and accurate notifications to the WTO

Mr. Balderas also highlighted Mexico’s participation in WTO technical assistance programs on transparency and the incorporation of good practices derived from agreements such as USMCA, CPTPP, RCEP, and ASEAN frameworks, which help improve coherence in SPS transparency procedures. Mr. Balderas stressed that maintaining open communication channels between authorities and producers is key to ensuring that notifications reflect current field conditions and regulatory updates. He concluded that strengthening capacity-building initiatives and sharing own experiences

within APEC can further enhance transparency, predictability, and trust in international agricultural trade.

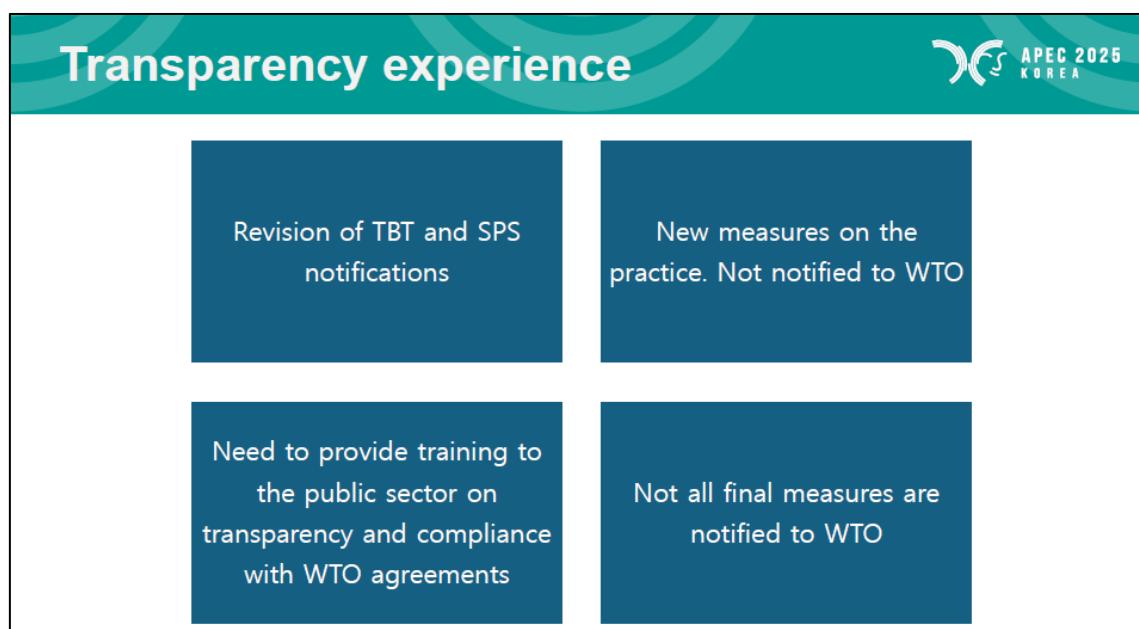
- **Peru**

Mr. Marcelo Valverde, Deputy Manager of Food Committees at the “National Society of Industries (SNI)” in Peru shared the Peruvian private sector’s perspective on the challenges linked to WTO SPS notifications, emphasizing that many measures notified by trading partners still require additional clarification to fully understand their technical scope and potential trade implications. He noted that short comment periods often limit the capacity of industry associations to provide timely feedback, particularly when technical information or draft texts are not readily available.

He also underlined that in many cases, the coverage of notified products is too broad or lacks clear reference to HS codes, creating uncertainty for exporters. The “Description of content” item frequently omits essential details about the sanitary or phytosanitary justification of the measure, which complicates the assessment of its real trade impact.

From Peru’s perspective, Mr. Valverde highlighted the importance of strengthening inter-institutional coordination between authorities and industry, as well as providing capacity-building for officials and businesses on WTO transparency requirements (Figure 6).

*Figure 6. Transparency experience*



- **China**

Ms. Claire Zhou, Compliance and Registry Director at GACC Registration Service Organization, shared the Chinese private sector's experience in promoting transparency and facilitating access to SPS information for enterprises. Ms. Zhou introduced the China TBT/SPS Notification Platform and the GACC Food Safety Bureau information systems, which provide centralized access to SPS notifications, alerts, and updates on import requirements.

Ms. Zhou explained how private stakeholders can use modern digital tools and databases, such as the GACC Registration System and the China SPS website, in order to identify the "Products covered" and "Description of content" of notified measures by HS code. These systems also enable users to check customs data, quarantine requirements, and food safety regulations in both English and Chinese.

As shown in Figure 7, Ms. Zhou encouraged APEC economies to explore ways to improve information accessibility for private operators, including through subscription-based alert systems, online publications, and cross-agency data integration. Finally, she concluded by emphasizing that digitalization and open data are key to supporting transparency, helping businesses comply with SPS measures, and fostering greater collaboration between the public and private sectors in the APEC region.

***Figure 7. How private sector stakeholders can get more help***



## **Session 4: Experiences and lessons learned on transparency of SPS notifications**

### **4.1 Experiences from APEC economies**

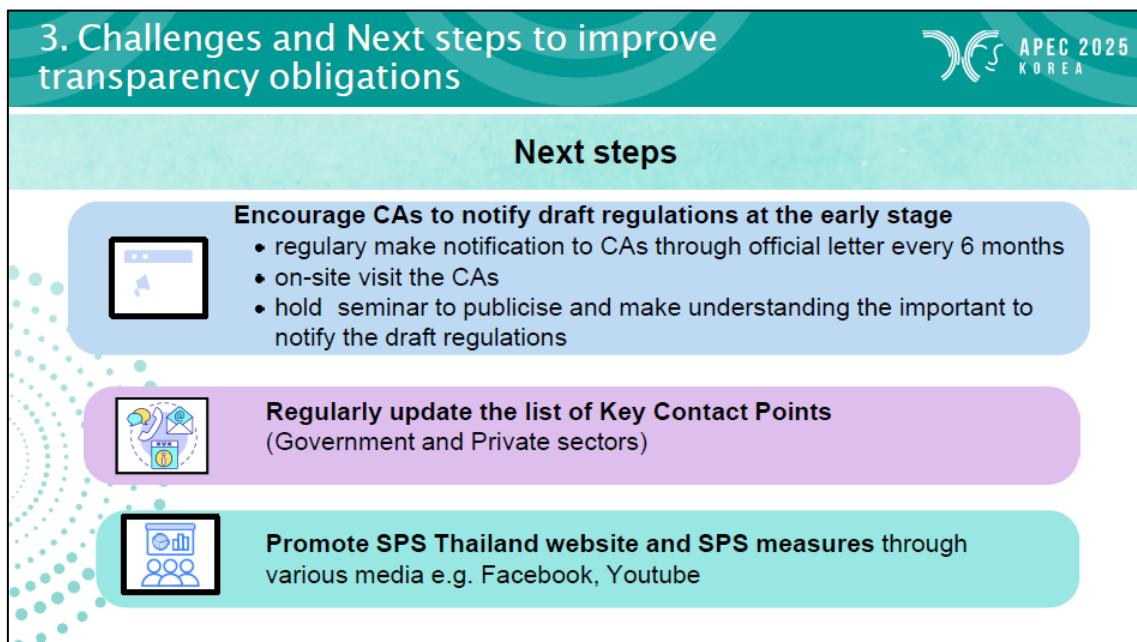
- **Thailand**

Ms. Surisa Noiin, Plan and Policy Analyst at the “National Bureau of Agricultural Commodity and Food Standards (ACFS)” of Thailand, presented Thailand’s experience in strengthening transparency under the SPS Agreement. She explained that the ACFS serves as both the “National Notification Authority (NNA)” and the “National Enquiry Point (NEP)”, coordinating with the main competent authorities for agriculture, livestock, fisheries, and food safety. Through the use of the ePing platform and the “SPS Thailand” website, ACFS disseminates information, collects feedback, and promotes awareness of WTO SPS notifications among stakeholders.

Ms. Noiin noted that this system has contributed to more consistent communication between public institutions and the private sector, although challenges remain. Among them are limited resources, language barriers, and short comment periods, which sometimes restrict effective participation. To address these gaps, Thailand is improving the efficiency of inter-agency coordination, enhancing the usability of its SPS website, and using AI-assisted translation tools to facilitate understanding of notifications.

In Figure 8, Ms. Noiin concluded by encouraging competent authorities (CAs) to notify draft measures as early as possible, maintain updated contact networks, and use digital platforms to promote engagement. She emphasized that transparency is not only a procedural obligation but a shared responsibility that requires cooperation, capacity building, and a culture of openness to strengthen trust and predictability in trade.

**Figure 8. Challenges and Next steps to improve transparency obligations**



- **Peru**

Mrs. Mary An Tito, Director of the Health and Food Safety Directorate, “National Authority for Health and Safety in Fisheries and Aquaculture (SANIPES)” of Peru presented the Peruvian experience in promoting transparency within the fisheries and aquaculture sectors. She explained that SANIPES, as the competent authority under the Ministry of Production, regulates and supervises health and safety standards for fisheries and aquaculture products along the entire value chain, ensuring alignment with international standards and promoting risk-based inspections and good practices among producers.

Mrs. Tito highlighted that SANIPES has implemented internal procedures to ensure the timely management of health notifications and alerts, supported by laboratory accreditations and internationally recognized quality systems. These measures contribute to maintaining traceability, accountability, and confidence in Peru’s regulatory framework.

In Figure 9, Mrs. Tito emphasized the importance of effective coordination between SANIPES and other competent authorities through Working Groups, as well as close collaboration with the private sector through technical assistance and joint training. She concluded that strengthening inter-institutional cooperation and transparency

mechanisms contributes to greater predictability and trust in trade across the APEC region.

**Figure 9. Mechanisms to promote the participation of the private sector**



- **The Philippines**

Dr. Panganiban shared the Philippines' experiences in improving transparency and public participation in the implementation of SPS-related measures. He explained that the Bureau of Plant Industry is strengthening its coordination with courier and logistics companies to ensure the effective implementation of domestic transport clearance protocols and to improve compliance with phytosanitary regulations. Collaboration with provincial and municipal agriculturists has also been expanded to increase public awareness of export and domestic movement requirements for agricultural commodities.

Finally, Dr. Panganiban emphasized the importance of using digital communication tools and social media to disseminate information on international standards for phytosanitary measures and promote plant health awareness through educational outreach programs in schools and students. He concluded that promoting transparency, education, and early consultation with stakeholders are essential steps to enhance compliance and trust between authorities and producers across the APEC region.

## 4.2 Panel discussion

The panel discussion brought together representatives from government agencies, the private sector, officials from APEC member economies, international organizations, and industry associations. The dialogue, moderated by Ms. Pia Aranya, explored the practical meaning of transparency in SPS notifications, key challenges faced by Members, and possible ways to strengthen cooperation and information quality in the APEC region.

*Figure 10. Panel Discussion photography*



### 1.4.1. What does “transparency” in SPS notifications mean in practice?

Panelists agreed that transparency goes beyond simply fulfilling formal WTO requirements. It means ensuring that information on new or modified measures is communicated early, clearly, and accessibly, allowing all interested parties to analyze and adapt before implementation. Transparency was described as a process that builds predictability and trust in trade, especially when draft measures are accompanied by sufficient background, rationale, and time for comments.

### 1.4.2. What are some of the common gaps or challenges observed in SPS notifications?

It was noted that notifications often lack detail in the description of measures and product coverage, reducing their usefulness for trading partners. Other recurring challenges include short comment periods, limited alignment with international standards, and language or capacity constraints in smaller economies. Panelists also highlighted that, in

some cases, different domestic agencies handle parts of the same SPS measure, which can lead to inconsistencies or delays in the notification process.

#### **1.4.3. How can better coordination among stakeholders improve the quality of information?**

The discussion concluded that coordination among ministries responsible for agriculture, health, trade, and environment is crucial to producing coherent and complete notifications. Regular domestic consultations with the private sector were identified as a valuable mechanism for gathering technical input, improving clarity, and identifying potential trade implications before measures are adopted. Enhanced inter-agency communication was seen as key to building a unified approach to transparency.

#### **1.4.4. What good practices or tools have proven useful in your experience?**

Panelists emphasized the value of using the WTO ePing SPS&TBT platform to stay informed about notifications and facilitate exchanges between the public and private sectors. They also mentioned the benefits of domestic transparency portals, bilateral dialogues, and capacity-building workshops to strengthen institutional knowledge and promote more consistent application of transparency procedures. Sharing practical experiences among economies was viewed as one of the most effective ways to enhance regional understanding and alignment.

#### **1.4.5. What concrete steps could help strengthen SPS transparency at the regional level?**

In this section, panelists proposed notifying draft measures as early as possible, providing sufficient time for comments, and ensuring that enquiry and notification points have the technical capacity and resources needed to perform effectively. The exchange of well-prepared examples (“model notifications”) among APEC economies was encouraged as a tool to harmonize approaches. Additionally, expanding training initiatives, adopting digital tools and translation support, and strengthening collaboration under the WTO SPS Transparency Working Group were recognized as concrete steps to advance transparency across the region.

## Session 5: Best practices on the quality of information of SPS notifications

### 5.1. Breakout session - Draft of best practices

This final session of the Dialogue consisted of a Breakout Session designed to collect practical inputs and recommendations to guide future work on improving transparency and information quality in SPS notifications. Participants were divided into three working groups, each focusing on a specific area related to the WTO SPS notification format. The exercise aimed to share diverse experiences and identify concrete best practices that could serve as non-binding guidance for APEC economies and potential contributions to the WTO SPS Committee.

Each group addressed one key topic:

- **Group 1** discussed how to enhance clarity and precision in Products covered.
- **Group 2** focused on improving the Description of content section.
- **Group 3** examined how to strengthen capacity building and collaboration mechanisms.

**Figure 11. Breakout session photography**



## **5.2. Teams' presentation, draft recommendations and next steps**

Each group presented challenges, proposed practical tools, and drafted initial recommendations based on their collective experience and institutional perspectives. These suggestions were taken as inputs to draft APEC Economies' Best Practices on the Quality of Information in WTO SPS Notifications which will be circulated to CTI for endorsement.

### **5.2.1. Group 1 – Clarity and precision in "Products Covered"**

Group 1 discussed how to improve the accuracy and consistency of information under Products covered. Participants noted that descriptions are often too broad or inconsistent across economies, with differences in the use of common, scientific, or commercial names. They recommended using specific product names, referencing international standards such as those from Codex, IPPC, and WOAH, and including HS codes where possible through cooperation with customs authorities. The group also suggested developing model formats, checklists, and an internal coordination mechanism to ensure the completeness and uniformity of notifications.

### **5.2.2. Group 2 – Improving the "Description of Content"**

Group 2 focused on improving the Description of content and emphasized that this section could provide a clear and complete explanation of the measure, indicating its objective, rationale, scope, and main requirements to ensure transparency and understanding among trading partners. Participants noted that clarity and completeness should prevail over brevity to avoid misunderstandings, and recommended including, where relevant, references to international standards or scientific evidence, as well as links to the full text of the measure or visual references of products to facilitate interpretation. They also highlighted that addressing language barriers, ensuring consistency in translation, and reaffirmed using accurate HS codes and common product names would significantly enhance the accessibility of SPS notifications for stakeholders.

### **5.2.3. Group 3 – Capacity Building and Collaboration**

Group 3 discussed Capacity building and collaboration, highlighting the need to strengthen Enquiry Points through regularly updated contact information, guiding manuals, and active participation in internal coordination groups. They also proposed developing e-learning tools, organizing SPS workshops, and integrating customs officials

into transparency training. To enhance engagement with the private sector, participants suggested establishing feedback mechanisms, holding regular dialogues, and using digital communication channels, including social media, to disseminate information and encourage participation from stakeholders.

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## Annex 1. Agenda of the PPD

### CTI Public – Private Dialogue (PPD) on Follow-up initiative on Promoting Transparency through the Improvement of Information submitted in the Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Notifications

2-3 August 2025  
 Songdo Convensia  
 Incheon, Republic of Korea

Day 1: Current Trends of Transparency on SPS Notifications in the APEC Region		
Time	Agenda	Speakers
08:30 – 09:00	Registration	
09:00 – 09:10	Opening Remarks	<b>Ms. Pia ARANYA</b> , Project Overseer
09:10 – 09:20	Welcome Speech	<b>Ms. Rocio BARREDA</b> , Director of Technical Requirement for Foreign Trade, Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism of Peru
09:20 – 09:30	Indications for the PPD's development	
09:30 – 09:45	Family photo	
Session 1: Transparency in APEC Region - Focus on SPS Notifications		
09:45 – 10:30	<p><i>Previous studies on transparency in APEC Region</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Study of APEC Economies' Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Notifications</li> <li>Q&amp;As (5 min)</li> <li>- Study of APEC Economies' TBT and SPS Specific Trade Concerns: An Analysis from the APEC Cross Cutting Principles on Non-Tariff Measures</li> <li>Q&amp;As (5 min)</li> </ul>	<b>Ms. Pia ARANYA</b> MINCETUR – PERU
10:30 – 11:00	<i>COFFEE BREAK</i>	
Session 2: Relevance of transparency in the framework of SPS Agreement		
11:00 – 11:30	<p><i>SPS Agreement and the principle of transparency (20min)</i></p> <p>WTO/SPS experts will explain WTO Members' rights and obligations regarding the principle of transparency in the framework of the SPS Agreement.</p> <p>Q&amp;As (10min)</p>	<b>Ms. Nazia MOHAMMED</b> WTO
11:30 – 12:00	<p><i>Recommendations of the WTO/SPS Committee regarding transparency (20 min):</i></p> <p>WTO/SPS experts will explain the use of E-Ping platform, and relevant WTO/SPS tools.</p> <p>Q&amp;As (10min)</p>	<b>Ms. Nazia MOHAMMED</b> WTO
12:00 – 14:00	LUNCH BREAK	

**Session 3: Results of the Follow-Up Study of APEC Economies' Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Notifications on Quality and Completeness of Information**

14:00 – 14:30	<p><i>Recap of Peru's "Follow-up initiative on Promoting Transparency through the Improvement of Information submitted in the Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Notifications" (CTI_202_2024T) (20min):</i></p> <p>Project Overseer will inform about the Initiative, the activities that are part of it, the development, and the possible next steps.</p> <p>Q&amp;As (10min)</p>	<b>Ms. Pia ARANYA</b> MINCETUR – PERU
14:30 – 15:00	<p><i>Results of the Follow-Up Study of APEC Economies' SPS Notifications on Quality and Completeness of Information (20min):</i></p> <p>The Project Overseer will inform about the methodology, the process of collecting information and the analysis of the results.</p> <p>Q&amp;As (10min)</p>	<b>Ms. Pia ARANYA</b> MINCETUR – PERU
15:00 – 15:30	<i>COFFEE BREAK</i>	
15:30 – 16:15	<p><i>Conclusions and recommendations based on the results of the Study (30min):</i></p> <p>SPS experts from APEC economies and the Project Overseer will explain the conclusions derived from the Study. They will also propose a set of recommendations on transparency for further discussion.</p> <p>Q&amp;As (15min)</p>	<b>Ms. Rocio BARREDA</b> MINCETUR – PERU  <b>Dr. Gerald Glenn F.</b> <b>PANGANIBAN</b> BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY - THE PHILIPPINES  <b>Ms. Anna TYLER</b> MPI – NEW ZEALAND
16:15 – 17:00	<p><i>Challenges regarding WTO SPS notifications by private sector (30min):</i></p> <p>Representatives from the private sector will discuss the conclusions and recommendations based on the Study. They will also share their experience regarding transparency matters.</p> <p>Q&amp;As (15min)</p>	<b>Mr. Sergio BALDERAS</b> “National Confederation of Livestock Organizations (CNOG)” – MEXICO  <b>Mr. Marcelo VALVERDE</b> “National Society of Industries (SNI)” – PERU  <b>Ms. Claire ZHOU</b> GACC Registration Service Org. - CHINA

**Day 2: How to Improve Transparency on SPS Notifications in the APEC Region**

Time	Agenda	Speakers
08:30 – 09:00	Registration	
<b>Session 4: Experiences and lessons learned on transparency of SPS notifications</b>		
09:00 – 10:30	<i>Experiences from APEC economies (60min):</i>	<b>Ms. Surisa NOIIN</b>

	<p>Representatives from APEC economies will share presentations on the mechanisms they use to improve transparency and to promote the private sector engagement on SPS notifications.</p> <p>Q&amp;As (30min)</p>	<p>MOAC - THAILAND</p> <p><b>Mrs. Mary An TITO</b> SANIPES - PERU</p> <p><b>Dr. Gerald Glenn F. PANGANIBAN</b> BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY - THE PHILIPPINES</p>
10:30 – 11:00		<i>COFFEE BREAK</i>
11:00 – 12:00	<p><b><i>Panel discussion (60min):</i></b> Representatives from the public and private sectors will discuss the topic of lessons learned on transparency of SPS notifications.</p>	
12:00 – 14:00		<i>LUNCH BREAK</i>
<b>Session 5: Best practices on the quality of information of SPS notifications</b>		
14:00 – 15:00	<p><b><i>Breakout session - Draft of best practices (60min):</i></b> The participants will gather in groups in order to discuss practical inputs and recommendations to guide future work on improving transparency and information quality in SPS notifications.</p>	
15:00 – 15:30		<i>COFFEE BREAK</i>
15:30 – 16:30	<p><b><i>Teams presentation, draft recommendations and next steps (60min):</i></b> Representatives from the public and private sectors will discuss the results of the two-day PPD</p>	
16:30 – 17:00	Closing remarks	<p><b>Ms. Pia Aranya</b>, Project Overseer</p> <p><b>Ms. Rocio BARREDA</b>, Director of Technical Requirement for Foreign Trade, Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism of Peru</p>