

APEC Economies' Best Practices on the Quality of Information in SPS Notifications

APEC Committee on Trade and Investment

February 2026



**Asia-Pacific
Economic Cooperation**



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Considering the *2019 APEC Recommendations on WTO SPS Notifications* and the outcomes of the CTI Public–Private Dialogue on Promoting Transparency held in Incheon during August 2025;

Noting that the Bogor Goals emphasize the importance of reducing non-tariff barriers (NTBs); and the Putrajaya Vision 2040 and the Aotearoa Plan of Action are consistent with the APEC Cross-Cutting Principles on Non-Tariff Measures (NTMs);

Without prejudice to economies' positions in the WTO or other fora, and acknowledging that these best practices are voluntary and non-binding, APEC economies are encouraged to develop and adopt these best practices to enhance transparency and the quality of information in their SPS notifications.

In that sense, the following best practices apply to both regular and emergency SPS notifications submitted under the SPS Agreement. These aim to improve clarity, completeness, and consistency of the information contained in SPS notifications submitted to the WTO, and to facilitate understanding by trading partners and stakeholders.

Best Practices on Products Covered

As able, APEC economies are encouraged to:

- Use Harmonized System (HS) codes (at least to the six-digit level) together with common and scientific names to clearly identify the products concerned.
- Promote internal coordination with customs and competent authorities to verify product classification before notification.

Best Practices on Description of Content

As able, APEC economies are encouraged to:

- 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.

- Include, where applicable, official links to the full text of the measure or visual references of products to facilitate interpretation, and, if feasible, provide a link to an official English translation of the measure, to enhance accessibility and understanding.

Best Practices on Capacity Building and Collaboration

As able, APEC economies are encouraged to:

- Provide training and guidance for officials and stakeholders on the completion of SPS notification formats, sharing of relevant guiding materials and sample completed notifications (as reference), where appropriate.
- Support capacity-building initiatives and knowledge exchange within APEC to strengthen transparency implementation, such as experience-sharing workshops or informal exchanges of good practices among economies.
- Strengthen mechanisms between “National Notification Authorities (NNAs)”, “National Enquiry Points (NEPs)”, and other SPS competent authorities.
- Promote internally the use of the *ePing SPS & TBT Platform* to submit, track and circulate notifications domestically and regionally.

These Best Practices are voluntary and non-binding and do not prejudice any economy’s rights and obligations under the WTO SPS Agreement or other international arrangements.

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