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FUTURE RESILIENCE TO DISEASES OF ANIMAL ORIGIN: THE ROLE OF TRADE

INFORMATION NOTE This note was prepared by

of other recent outbreaks of such diseases. Experts warn that zoonotic pandemics may become more frequent due to factors including further environmental degradation, intensive farming practices, and the effects of climate change.

- WTO rules recognize the right

animal products was worth US$ 367.5 billion in 2018, with important implications for livelihoods, food security and nutrition worldwide.

- The SPS Committee and other WTO committees provide fora for members to discuss trade measures adopted to address the risk of COVID-19 and other zoonoses, thus helping to ensure that trade measures contribute to enhancing future resilience and prevention. Specific trade concerns related to animal diseases and zoonoses, including emerging diseases, and their effects on trade, account for 35 per cent of all trade concerns raised in the SPS Committee.

1 OVERVIEW

This information note explores trade issues associated with the spread of diseases of animal origin and the international framework in place to address them. It seeks to map actions being taken to control these diseases so as to ensure safe trade in animals and animal products, including in wildlife. The note is not exhaustive, but, rather, is an overview of the current issues and the status of legal frameworks and planned future actions to control the spread of zoonoses through t.7 (ath)-1.4 (e)7aimo-2.3 (e)-5

International trade, particularly trade in live animals, if not regulated in line with the principles outlined in the WTO SPS Agreement,

losses. WTO economists expect world merchandise trade to decline by 9.2 per cent in 2020. The IMF estimates that global economic output will shrink by 4.5 per cent this year. Even if future growth manages to return to the pre-pandemic trajectory, the lost economic activity will measure in the trillions of dollars.

The economic costs of disease outbreaks can be further increased by unnecessarily trade-restrictive measures, i.e. when trading partners adopt import restrictions in response to disease outbreaks that go beyond what is needed to avoid disease introduction and spread. Such restrictions tend to be adopted quite quickly but removed much more slowly once a disease outbreak is over, increasing their costs. Concerns about possible trade effects can thus lead to underreporting or delayed reporting of disease outbreaks, as countries try to avoid these negative consequences of transparency. The OIE 2016 survey cited above highlighted that 68 OIE member countries had faced disruptions in international trade after a disease outbreak. It also indicated that a number of countries stated "that the losses caused by a disease outbreak continued to have an impact on their trade, with some saying that they never regained their original markets. Seven countries reported that trade was still affected after a disease outbreak had ended and that their previous markets had not been regained".[12]

The SPS Agreement requires transparency in relation to trade measures and allows trading partners to submit comments on draft SPS measures to avoid unintended economic impacts.[13] When WTO members have concerns regarding SPS measures that are constraining, or have the potential to constrain, their exports, they often raise them as specific trade concerns (STCs) in the WTO Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Committee).[14] WTO members regularly raise such concerns about measures adopted in response to disease outbreaks to diffuse trade tensions and work towards a solution.

Specific trade concerns related to animal diseases and zoonoses, including emerging diseases, and their effects on trade, account for 35 per cent of all trade concerns raised in the SPS Committee. While some of these concerns are resolved quite quickly after being raised in the Committee, others can be more difficult to solve. For example, an STC on general import restrictions due to Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) was raised at 38 meetings between 2004 and 2020. While initially there was much uncertainty about the spread of BSE, as scientific evidence became available and OIE standards were adopted and revised, concerns regarding unjustified barriers and long delays in approvals for imports of beef were reiterated -0.7 (e)1.41.013 -1.213 Td6 (ts)71d[(u)-1.3 (n(rs)1 (Td[(cor)-0

animals or animal products be introduced without a justifying risk analysis.[16] The OIE recommends that evidence-based risk management principles be applied to international movement of live animals and products from animal species demonstrated to be susceptible to infection with COVID-19.

The OIE has also established a comprehensive COVID-19 portal to provide information on current and planned activities, including its collaboration with FAO and WHO on a worldwide cross-sectoral One Health Approach to prevent and control health threats of direct or indirect animal origin affecting humans.

Since February 2020, several members have notified COVID-19-related trade measures, including 26 SPS measures. In an analysis of SPS and technical barriers to trade (TBT) notifications submitted by WTO members in response to COVID-19, the WTO Secretariat noted in May 2020 that initially, a few WTO members had imposed restrictions on imports or transit of certain

Wildlife trade is an important source of income and nutrition in many regions, covering a wide range of products, from fish and wild meat as sources of protein, to fibres, skins, shells and other inputs used in the garment and other industries. Global wildlife trade can be hard to estimate since it ranges in scale from local barter to major international routes, and often relies on informal, unregulated or illegal networks. Legal wildlife trade in the European Union alone is estimated to be worth EUR 100 billion (US$ 112 billion) a year.[19] A 2016 UNEP-INTERPOL report estimates the value of illegal wildlife trade at between US$ 7 and US$ 23 billion per year.[20]

Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the need to integrate sanitary requirements into the international framework for wildlife trade has

In 2017, the three organizations committed to providing multi-sectoral, collaborative leadership in addressing health challenges. Through a 2018 memorandum of understanding, they agreed to step up joint action, with a strong focus on tackling antimicrobial resistance. Recognizing that, although the risks of emerging zoonoses had long been known, many countries lacked the capacity to implement multisectoral and multidisciplinary collaboration needed to address these risks, the three organizations developed the 2019 Tripartite Guide to Addressing Zoonotic Diseases in Countries. While focused on zoonotic diseases, this guide also covers other health threats at the human