

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

8th Meeting of the CEFTA Subcommittee on Agriculture and SPS

26 May 2015 Podgorica, Montenegro

The eighth meeting of the Subcommittee on Agriculture and SPS was held in Podgorica, on 26 May 2015. The participants to the meeting were representatives from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo*, together with Ms Susanne Hartmann, and Ms Lizbeth Navas-Aleman from the GIZ as the invited guests.

The Chair presented the work programme of Moldovan Chairmanship of CEFTA Subcommittee on Agriculture and SPS. In his presentation, the Chair stated the following as the objectives of the Work Programme:

- The facilitation of trade in agricultural products and improvement of cooperation in the area of SPS matters under CEFTA,
- To participate in the negotiations of Framework Agreement on simplifications of clearance procedures and electronic exchange of data, and to contribute to elaborating methodologies of developing business process mappings of documentary requirements in agricultural trade under trade facilitation objective.
- To promote trade in processed agricultural products through identifying the regional instruments for better preferential access of products originated from CEFTA.

Also Chair informed the Subcommittee of a new project on “Addressing Market Access Barriers in the Selected Supply Chains” in CEFTA which is financed by the GIZ. The project is to be implemented by ITC (International Trade Centre) and UNCTAD. In the framework of this project, beverages are selected one of the supply chains in CEFTA in which private sector advisory groups are to be established.

In this regard, the study will assess the main bottlenecks and constraints along the wine value chain(s) within CEFTA which limit their export performance and competitiveness, explore the main barriers that stop further regional value chain integration within the CEFTA wine sector, and provide CEFTA Parties with recommendations on tools to promote competitiveness, improve export performance by producers and further regional integration (where appropriate) within the wine sector.

Regarding the proposal on wine, the CEFTA Secretariat insisted that the analysis would start from the positioning of the industry i.e. benchmarking of the wine industry in the Region with the European producers and not directly from the gap analysis perceived by the consultant as proposed by the project.

The Secretariat presented its proposal how the CEFTA Structures could be adjusted to respond to new challenges ahead. According to the Secretariat, new challenges are as follows: Trade facilitation, Regional actions in trade facilitation are related to the EU acquis and International Agreements but not directly obliged or prescribed by the acquis what to do, and how to do, High level capacity in national coordination ex-ante and ex-post, Strengthening outreach of CEFTA action in policy makers in CEFTA Parties and private sector (ensure high-political visibility and ownership for implementation) The Secretariat noted that the objectives of the adjustment of CEFTA Bodies would be to respond better to new priorities and challenges in the implementation of CEFTA, to strengthen coordination between CEFTA bodies in the areas requiring cross-sectoral action such as trade facilitation, and to enable self-monitoring (1st party monitoring) in the implementation of SEE 2020.

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSC 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence