

STRATEGIC WORK PROGRAMME

CEFTA Subcommittee on TBT and NTBs

2013-2015

Proposed under the Macedonian Chairing of the Subcommittee

December 2012

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INTRODUCTION

The objective of this document is to outline the three-year Strategic Work Programme of the Subcommittee on NTBs and TBT for the period 2013-2015 and to propose a one-year Work Programme for 2013 under the Chairmanship of Macedonia.

The paper summarizes the mandate and scope of the Subcommittee, underlines its active collaboration with other CEFTA Structures and spells out the major activities planned for the three-year as well as for one-year period.

Macedonia is committed to continue with the work of its predecessors on the activities of identification and reduction of NTBs in mutual trade among CEFTA Parties.

In 2013, the priorities of Macedonia will be focused on further implementation of Article 13 of CEFTA Agreement as well as the implementation of Ministerial conclusions and Recommendation of the Joint Committee No.1/2012, which are adopted in 2012. This will lead to strengthening regional trade through easing access to the markets by removing the barriers to trade among CEFTA Parties. In addition, Macedonia will engage efforts to implement the recommendations of the Multilateral Monitoring Framework in the area of technical barriers to trade. In order to execute these tasks, along with the available resources in CEFTA Parties, the Chair envisaged the technical support and coordination of activities with relevant regional partners.

In the Ministerial Conclusions adopted at the sixth Joint Committee meeting in 2012, the ministers and authorised representatives welcomed the initiative of the SEE Investment Committee on key indicators for the regional economic growth to be accomplished by 2020, and emphasized the importance of trade policy, as a core component to achieving economic growth in an integrated and inclusive manner.

Macedonia fully supports the strategic goals of the five pillars of the SEE Strategy 2020, as stipulated in the Statement of the Ministerial Conference of the SEE Investment Committee and attaches a special importance to the pillar on Integrated Growth, which will contribute to the deepening and enhancing of the intraregional trade. The Subcommittee on NTBs and TBT together with other CEFTA Structures sees its key role in programming the activities within two dimensions of the Integrated Growth pillar that are CEFTA related: trade liberalisation and trade facilitation.

1. THE SUBCOMMITTEE AS A PART OF CEFTA STRUCTURES

1.1. Mandate and scope of the Subcommittee

The task of the CEFTA Subcommittee on Technical Barriers to Trade and Non-tariff Barriers to Trade, which was established by the Joint Committee Decision No. 5/2007, is to identify, review and propose measures for elimination of technical and non-tariff barriers to trade among the CEFTA Parties.

Its main mandate is to:

- exchange information on a regular basis to identify and review complaints in each Party concerning NTBs and propose appropriate procedures to eliminate barriers to trade;
- propose timetables for elimination of NTBs;
- exchange views, on a systematic basis, on appropriate domestic institutional arrangements to eliminate NTBs in each Party in order to ensure the adoption of best practices;
- identify and oversee the elimination of unnecessary technical barriers to trade in accordance with Article 13.2 of the Agreement;
- encourage harmonisation, where appropriate, of technical regulations, standards and procedures for assessment of conformity with those of the European Union;
- encourage recognition of conformity assessment documents made by the accredited Conformity Assessment Bodies;
- prepare and present an annual report on identifying, reviewing and proposing measures for eliminating TBTs and NTBs, based on the individual reports prepared by the Parties in accordance with a common structure/template.

The Working Group on TBT is functioning under the framework of the Subcommittee. Its mandate is, among others, to:

- (i) keep under review the achieved harmonization of technical regulations, standards and procedures for assessment of conformity with those of the EU, in accordance with the Article 13:3.b;
- (ii) encourage the negotiations to conclude the plurilateral agreements among the Parties in the area of mutual recognition of the conformity assessment;
- (iii) timely inform the Joint Committee on any notification received by the CEFTA Party on new technical regulation or standard prior to its adoption in accordance with the Article 13:3.b;
- (iv) improve the technical cooperation and networking in all quality infrastructure disciplines (metrology, standardization, conformity assessment, accreditation and market surveillance).

1.2. Organisation of Work

The members of the Subcommittee on NTBs and TBT are officially appointed senior civil servants from the CEFTA Parties responsible for the issues on non-tariff barriers to trade and technical barriers of trade. The meetings are divided into the meetings of the Working Group on TBT for the issues specifically connected to the technical barriers (technical regulations, standards, conformity assessment) and the meetings of the Subcommittee on NTBs and TBT that are dedicated to both the NTBs and TBT. The members of the WG on TBT are invited to participate at the SC on NTBs and TBT meetings.

A number of workshops, roundtables and promotional events are organized additionally to the official meetings of the Subcommittee.

Macedonia as the Chair of the Subcommittee and the Working Group on TBT in 2013 envisages two regular meetings of the Subcommittee and two meetings of the Working Group on TBT. The responsible institution is the Ministry of Economy of Macedonia. This does not *a priori* exclude holding of other *ad hoc* meetings that could be convened to discuss the specific items of a mutual interest. (See Chapter 5: Calendar of Meetings and Events)

2. PRIORITIES OF THE CHAIRMANSHIP

In 2013, the Chair of the Subcommittee will follow on the activities from the previous years in the area of elimination of the non-tariff barriers and technical barriers to trade will introduce new ones in order to secure the fulfilment of a set of objectives:

2.1. Coordination with other CEFTA Structures

The Chairmanship of the Subcommittee is taken on a rotational basis with the tenure of office of one calendar year. In line with these rules, Macedonia has taken over the Chairmanship of the Subcommittee from Croatia on 1 January 2013.

According to its mandate, the Subcommittee communicates regularly with two other Subcommittees established under CEFTA: on Customs and Rules of Origin and on Agriculture and SPS in order to avoid duplication of efforts in many areas of activities.

During 2013, Macedonia will engage efforts to strengthen further cooperation of the CEFTA structures when dealing with reduction and elimination of non-tariff barriers. The cooperation presumes the more frequent collaboration, interlinking and consulting in the process of implementing the short and midterm recommendations of the Multilateral Monitoring Framework on Elimination of NTBs in the identified areas SPS - cooperation with the SC on Agriculture and SPS,

and administrative barriers to trade – cooperation with the SC on Customs and Rules of Origin.

Key activities in the area of coordination with other CEFTA Structures are:

Activity 2.1.1 Coordination with SC on Agriculture and SPS on areas with common objective

- coordination of activities in the implementation of the recommendations for the SPS to reduce potential NTBs in order to ensure synergies and avoid any overlapping (*Key dates: throughout of a current year*)

Activity 2.1.2 Coordination with SC on Customs and Rules of Origin on areas with common objective

- coordination of activities in the implementation of the recommendations for the administrative barriers to trade to reduce potential NTBs in order to ensure synergies and avoid any overlapping (*Key dates: throughout of a current year*)

Activity 2.1.3 Reporting to other CEFTA Structures

- reporting on results achieved to the Deputy Ministers meeting and the Joint Committee (*Key dates: June and October/November*)

Activity 2.1.4 Participation at the CEFTA meetings

- Participation of the Chair at the SC on Agriculture and SPS meetings (*Key dates: March - May*)
- Participation of the Chair at the SC on Customs and Rules of Origin meetings (*Key dates: June - October*)
- Participation of the Chair at the Deputy Ministers meeting and seventh Joint Committee Meeting (*Key dates: June and October/November*)

Activity 2.1.5 Promotion of the achieved results

- Promotion to the business community through events such as CEFTA Trade Portal, CEFTA Week 2013, etc (*Key dates: throughout the year, October/November*)
- Exchange of information with the members of the CEFTA Forum Chambers of Commerce (*Key dates: throughout the year*)

Outside the CEFTA Structures, the SC on NTBs and TBT will maintain regular contacts with its longstanding partners:

- (i) the IPA Quality Infrastructure Project for the Western Balkan in the area of technical barriers to trade;
- (ii) the CEFTA Forum of Chambers of Commerce in the area of cooperation with the private sectors;
- (iii) the SEE Investment Committee of the Regional Cooperation Council in the area of programming and implementing the SEE 2020 Strategy

2.2. Elimination of Non-tariff Barriers to Trade

The core activity of the Subcommittee's work – the identification and the elimination of the non-tariff barriers to trade will be further developed and advanced. Macedonia as a Chair of the Subcommittee is determined to ensure full implementation of the Multilateral Monitoring Framework on Elimination of the NTBs that started in 2010.

The main attention will be given to three identified areas that cause the NTBs: technical barriers to trade, sanitary and phytosanitary measures and administrative barriers. In the course of 2013, the assessment of the main non-tariff barriers that follow the export of the final goods is expected to be performed by the OECD Private Sector Development Division. The recommendations that will be drawn from this assessment will be presented at the Joint Committee and the Subcommittee will integrate them into the yearly working programmes.

The following activities will be organized to support the implementation of this priority in the course of 2013:

Activity 2.2.1 Finalisation of the NTBs reports on TBT and SPS

- Preliminary reports on the TBT and SPS based on the assessments done in 2012 will be prepared by the OECD and distributed to all Parties (*Key dates: January 2013*)

Activity 2.2.2 Revision of the MMF indicators on administrative barriers to trade

- Revision of the indicators on administrative barriers to trade will be done in coordination with the OECD team and will provide the basis for their detailed assessment (*Key dates: February 2013*)

Activity 2.2.3 Launching of the second assessment cycle on the administrative barriers to trade

- The questionnaires on administrative barriers to trade will be prepared by the OECD and circulated CEFTA Parties (*Key dates: February 2013*)
- Round of missions in CEFTA Parties will be conducted by the OECD experts (*Key dates: April/May 2013*)
- The preliminary results will be presented at the SC on Customs and RO and the Deputy Ministers meeting (*Key dates: June 2013*)

Activity 2.2.4 Elaboration of the Report on the NTBs based on the second cycle of assessments

- The report will be elaborated by the OECD and will comprise the results of the second assessment done in administrative barriers to trade (*Key dates: August- September 2013*)
- The set of concrete recommendations on how to reduce the NTBs in all three identified areas on a short and a long run will be developed and presented to the Parties (*September/October 2013*)

In the period of 2014-2015 the following activities are envisaged:

- (i) Implementation of the Action Plan on the NTBs reduction. Technical support will be secured through the OECD Project.
- (ii) Launching of the third NTBs assessment cycle on TBT, SPS and administrative barriers to trade. The assessment will be focused on what has been achieved on a short term and will be performed by the OECD and independent international experts.
- (iii) Elaboration of the report on the third cycle of NTBs reduction. The reports will comprise the recommendations on the NTBs reduction based on the results of the third cycle.

2.3. Reduction and Elimination of Unnecessary Technical Barriers to Trade

In the course of 2013, the Working Group on TBT will closely monitor the implementation of the CEFTA Ministerial Recommendation on recognition of test report adopted at the sixth Joint Committee meeting in 2012.

The members of the Working Group on TBT will engage their efforts to conclude Agreements on Conformity Assessment and Acceptance of industrial products that was initiated during the previous Chairmanship.

All these activities have for a final objective the elimination of the current technical barriers to trade and the creation of the favourable environment that will lead to the reduction of the new ones.

The specific activities of the Working Group on TBT in 2013 will include:

Activity 2.3.1 Conclusion of the Agreement on conformity assessment issues and on easing access of industrial products to the markets of other CEFTA Party

- Finalisation of the proposed text of the Agreement on conformity assessments issues and on easing access of industrial products to the markets of other CEFTA Party (*Key dates: November 2013*);
- Training of the involved CEFTA Parties in order to increase capacity for timely and successful negotiations for conclusion of Agreements of conformity assessments with the technical support of the regional projects (*Key dates: throughout the current year*);

Activity 2.3.2 Implementation of the Joint Committee Recommendation on the recognition of test report

- Regularly inform each other on the implementation of the relevant Recommendation (*Key dates: throughout the current year*)
- Encouraging the rest of CEFTA Parties to join the Recommendation (*Key dates: throughout the current year*);

Activity 2.3.3 Improving the transparency in TBT

- Preparing the Report to the Joint Committee on notifications received by the CEFTA Party on new technical regulation or standard prior to its adoption in accordance with the Article 13:3.b (*Key dates: November 2013*)
- Exchanging information on functioning of the WTO Enquiry Points and possibilities for improving communications with the business community (*Key dates: throughout the current year*);
- Exchanging information among the CEFTA Parties on level achieved for harmonisation of technical regulations, standards and conformity assessment procedures with the EU (*Key dates: throughout the current year*);
- Creating a TBT Platform, which will provide extensive information related to TBT and quality infrastructure (conformity assessment, standardisation, metrology, market surveillance bodies) (*Key dates: 2013-2014*);

Activity 2.3.4 Enhancing the regional cooperation among National Accreditation bodies and other national institutions that deal with TBT

- Encouraging the rest of CEFTA Parties National Accreditation bodies to meet requirements for signing EA MLA for specific accreditation scope and participate in specific EA technical committees, working groups and task force groups (*Key dates: throughout the current year*);
- Encouraging National Accreditation bodies to meet requirements for signing ILAC MRA (*Key dates: throughout the current year*);
- Exploring the possibilities to conclude multilateral/plurilateral Agreements or Memorandums of cooperation in the field of standardisation, accreditation and metrology among the national bodies of the CEFTA Parties, and preparing a list of already concluded bilateral ones (*Key dates: throughout the current year*);

2.4. Enhancement of Transparency, Information Exchange and Notification

The transparency is perceived as a very important horizontal dimension that tackles all five pillars in the SEE Strategy 2020. The CEFTA SC on NTBs and TBT recognizes its significance and employ efforts to develop ways to improve the overall transparency in the pillar of the Integrated Growth and its two dimensions (trade liberalisation and trade facilitation). Bearing this in mind, a new transparency tool, which includes several distinctive instruments, is foreseen to support the effective and transparent flow of information with a view to enhance the efficacy of tackling the NTBs in the region.

Macedonia is fully committed to support all future activities of the Portal, thus contributing to the enhanced transparency of trade regulation and procedures in the CEFTA region.

The four instruments destined to improve the transparency in identified NTBs are:

- (i) **The Market Access Database.** The Market Access Database will remain as an ex-post instrument designed to record the existing non-tariff barriers to trade.
- (ii) **The TBT Platform.** The Parties will continue with regular notification of the technical regulations, conformity assessment procedures and standards in accordance with the Article 13.3b of the CEFTA Agreement. The specific formats have been developed in notifying the national standards during the previous Chairmanship and its notification will start with implementation as of 1 January 2013. The Platform will encompass the notification on TBT and the information on quality infrastructure across the CEFTA region.
- (iii) **SPS Database.** The area of SPS is recognized as one of the major sources of the non-tariff barriers that impede the trade in the region. The SC on NTBs and TBT supports the initiative to enhance the transparency in this field, as much it is possible in order to reduce the negative consequences of disturbing effects of the SPS on the intraregional trade. Having these thoughts in mind, the Secretariat undertook efforts in 2012 to develop the CEFTA SPS Database with the assistance of the outsourced experts.
- (iv) **CEFTA Trade Portal.** The CEFTA Trade Portal as an overall transparency instrument has an important role in raising awareness and providing information of the potentials for the intra-regional trade. As of 1 January 2013, the Parties take full ownership of the Portal.

Activity 2.4.1 Upgrading of the CEFTA Market Access Database

- Upgrade the version of the Market Access Database to include the migration to the web-based environment, easier use and updating, possibility to produce the reports and integration with the import-export information. (*Key date: first quarter of 2013*)

Activity 2.4.2 Establishment of the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Platform

- Develop and establish the TBT platform that will comprise the regular TBT notifications, and the important information on quality infrastructure, such as conformity assessment, standardization, accreditation, metrology, market surveillance, etc will be available. This platform will be developed and established in assistance with various partners, including the GiZ and the IPA Quality Infrastructure Project.

Activity 2.4.3 Establishment of the CEFTA Sanitary, Phytosanitary and Veterinary (SPS) Database

- Develop and establish the SPS Database that will contain the regular information on the SPS measures applied across the CEFTA region as well as other information that are considered necessary to facilitate the mutual trade (e.g. list of accredited laboratories, etc.).

Activity 2.4.4 Taking ownership and further development of the CEFTA Trade Portal

- Regular updating and upgrading of the structure (e.g. improved search engine, etc) and content (e.g adding new features) of the Trade Portal. An Editorial Body will be established with the main role to discuss the updating of the content and future developments of the Portal.

2.5. Improved Cooperation with Business Community

In 2013, Macedonia will give specific attention to strengthening the relations with business community in the region.

The regular exchange of information on non-tariff barriers to trade will be continued with the main regional partner, the CEFTA Forum of Chambers of Commerce. The members of the Subcommittee on TBT and NTB will work closely with contact points of Chambers of Commerce, exchanging the views on different issues related to proper functioning of trade among the CEFTA business community.

The information gathered through the questionnaires by the companies on the NTBs (in all three identified fields: SPS, TBT and administrative barriers) will be exchanged with the Subcommittee in order to better address the notified issues.

The specific efforts will be undertaken to encourage companies to use the CEFTA Trade Portal regularly, in particular the information on harmonization of technical regulations, level of adopted standards by each CEFTA Party, etc, in order to better understand the trade climate in the region.

Activity 2.5.1 Enhanced cooperation with the business community

- Regular exchange of information on the NTBs with the CEFTA Forum of Chambers of Commerce
- Participation at each other meetings and reporting on progress in elimination of NTBs

Activity 2.5.2 Promotion of CEFTA

- Inclusion of business community in the promotional events such as CEFTA Week
- Promotion of CEFTA Trade Portal and other transparency tools among the business community users

3. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND RELATED REGIONAL PROJECTS

3.1. Coordination with other CEFTA Structures

Activity 2.1.1 Coordination with SC on Agriculture and SPS on areas with common objective

- No outsourced technical assistance required.

Activity 2.1.2 Coordination with SC on Customs and Rules of Origin on areas with common objective

- No outsourced technical assistance required.

Activity 2.1.3 Reporting to other CEFTA Structures

- No outsourced technical assistance required.

Activity 2.1.4 Participation at the CEFTA meetings

- No outsourced technical assistance required.

Activity 2.1.5 Promotion of the achieved results

- No outsourced technical assistance required.

3.2. Technical Assistance in the Area of NTBs

The work on the elimination of the NTBs is supported by the expertise provided by the OECD team of experts. The main objective of this assistance is to conduct regular independent monitoring of the elimination of NTBs through the instrument called Multilateral Monitoring Framework for Eliminating the NTBs. The instrument is based on the set of indicators for each of the key NTBs area namely: (i) technical barriers to trade (standards, technical regulations and conformity assessment); (ii) sanitary and phytosanitary measures; (iii) administrative barriers to trade.

The outcomes from this project include structured quantitative and qualitative data combined with the detailed policy and practitioner-oriented guidance and recommendations how to continue the NBTs reduction process conducted under the Multilateral Monitoring Framework and how to extend its coverage to a new set of traded goods. For each category of the NTBs, the specific guidance and recommendations will be prepared. The project is supported by the European Commission and will last until end of 2015.

In the period of 2013-2015, the following activities will be supported by the project:

1. The assessment of the administrative barriers to trade
2. The policy recommendations on elimination of NTBs on short and midterm
3. Detailed Action Plan for 2014 on elimination of NTBs on a short run
4. Next assessment cycle of all three identified NTBs (SPS, TBT and administrative barriers) and the recommendations for future activities

For the activities during 2013, the following technical assistance is foreseen:

Activity 2.2.1 Finalisation of the NTBs reports on TBT and SPS

- The completion of the Report on TBT and SPS identified NTBs will be done in coordination with the OECD

Activity 2.2.2 Revision of the MMF indicators on administrative barriers to trade

- The Revision of the MMF indicators on administrative barriers to trade will be done in coordination with the OECD and the IFC.

Activity 2.2.3 Launching of the second assessment cycle on the administrative barriers to trade

- The launching of the second assessment will be supported by the OECD team of outsourced experts.

Activity 2.2.4 Elaboration of the Report on the NTBs based on the second cycle of assessments

- The elaboration of the Report will be performed in cooperation with the OECD experts.

The SC on NTBs and TBT will regularly include the OECD into the brainstorming discussions on programming the activities for the SEE 2020 Strategy, especially in the dimension of trade facilitation under the pillar on Integrated Growth.

3.3. Technical assistance in the Area of TBT

Cooperation with the IPA 2011 Project on Quality Infrastructure in the Western Balkans and Turkey will continue since this project has a scope to provide in-depth training in the areas of TBT as well as networking opportunities. WG on TBT and the CEFTA Secretariat will work closely with the Project to develop joint initiatives in the area of facilitating the intra regional trade with the final objective to remove the technical barriers to trade. The future cooperation with the IPA Project on QI is seen in the area of improved transparency on TBT. In particular, the Project's extensive knowledge and information on quality infrastructure across the region is deemed valuable in the process of developing the content part of the TBT Platform.

The GiZ is a crucial partner in setting up the TBT Platform. The project on TBT will be developed under the framework of creating the overall transparency tool that comprises four different and interlinked CEFTA databases (market access, TBT, SPS and tariff information system) as well as the CEFTA Trade Portal.

Activity 2.3.1 Conclusion of the Agreement on conformity assessment issues and on easing access of industrial products to the markets of other CEFTA Party

- The outsourced assistance might be needed in the area of training. Potential partners include the IPA Quality Infrastructure Project.

Activity 2.3.2 Implementation of the Joint Committee Recommendation on the recognition of test report

- No additional technical assistance is needed.

Activity 2.3.3 Improving the transparency in TBT

- The additional assistance is needed in creating the TBT Platform. Potential partners include the GiZ and the IPA Quality Infrastructure Project.

Activity 2.3.4 Enhancing the regional cooperation among National Accreditation bodies and other national institutions that deal with TBT

- Some additional technical assistance might be needed in the area of exploring the potentials for concluding multilateral/plurilateral Agreements or Memorandums of cooperation in the field of standardisation, accreditation and metrology among the national bodies

3.4. Enhancement of Transparency, Information Exchange and Notification

Activity 2.4.1 Upgrading of the CEFTA Market Access Database

- The outsourced technical assistance is needed to perform the upgrading of the existing MADB. The identified partner is the GiZ.

Activity 2.4.2 Establishment of the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Platform

- The establishment of the TBT Platform will be done with the assistance of the GiZ.

Activity 2.4.3 Establishment of the CEFTA Sanitary, Phytosanitary and Veterinary (SPS) Database

- The establishment of the SPS Database will be supported by the CEFTA Secretariat through its CEFTA Project Facility.

Activity 2.4.4 Taking ownership and further development of the CEFTA Trade Portal

- Some additional technical assistance might be asked. The potential partner includes the GiZ.

3.5. Improved Cooperation with Business Community

Activity 2.5.1 Enhanced cooperation with the business community

- No outsourced assistance is required.

Activity 2.5.2 Promotion of CEFTA

- No outsourced assistance is required.

3.6. Other Related Projects

The GiZ project on market surveillance focuses on strengthening of cooperation and coordination of common activities in the field of market surveillance in the South-East European Countries (SEE). The objective of the project is to establish a sustainable network of market surveillance institutions

in the SEE region and to develop joint activities in the area of market surveillance focused on coordination, cooperation and harmonisation.

The SC on NTBs and TBT and especially the Working Group on TBT will maintain close cooperation with this project in the next three-year period. The potential areas of cooperation include: (i) institutionalised exchange of information (e.g. joint meetings), (ii) joint participation in regional projects and initiatives; (iii) contribution to the enhanced transparency (Trade Portal, TBT platform) and (iv) exchange of views and experiences in the process of programming and implementing the SEE 2020 Strategy (pillar Integrated Growth).

5. EXPECTED RESULTS

The expected results of our Chairmanship are outlined in the span of the three-year period.

5.1. Coordination with other CEFTA Structures

Activity 2.1.1 Coordination with SC on Agriculture and SPS on areas with common objective

- Two Subcommittees coordinate activities and engage in projects of joint interest.

Activity 2.1.2 Coordination with SC on Customs and Rules of Origin on areas with common objective

- Two Subcommittees coordinate activities and engage in projects of joint interest.

Activity 2.1.3 Reporting to other CEFTA Structures

- The reporting is done in a timely manner to all the CEFTA Structures (Deputy Ministers and Joint Committee meeting).

Activity 2.1.4 Participation at the CEFTA meetings

- The Chair of the SC on NTBs and TBT participates regularly to the meetings of other two Subcommittees, the Deputy Ministers and Joint Committee meetings.

Activity 2.1.5 Promotion of the achieved results

- The CEFTA Trade Portal and the CEFTA TBT Platform are promoted to the wider audience

5.2. Elimination of the NTBs:

Activity 2.2.1 Finalisation of the NTBs reports on TBT and SPS

- The Reports on the TBT and SPS identified NTBs are completed and distributed to all Parties. The Results are shared with wider audience through the events such as Regional Roundtable on NTBs which is held at once per year.

Activity 2.2.2 Revision of the MMF indicators on administrative barriers to trade

- The MMF indicators on the administrative barriers to trade are revised in coordination with the OECD and the IFC. The revised indicators will be used as a basis for the next cycle of assessment.

Activity 2.2.3 Launching of the second assessment cycle on the administrative barriers to trade

- The second assessment cycle on the administrative barriers is launched.

Activity 2.2.4 Elaboration of the Report on the NTBs based on the second cycle of assessments

- The Report on the NTBs is completed and presented at the Joint Committee meeting.
- The concrete recommendations are developed and presented to the Parties.

5.3. Reduction and Elimination of the unnecessary TBT:

Activity 2.3.1 Conclusion of the Agreement on conformity assessment issues and on easing access of industrial products to the markets of other CEFTA Party

- Agreement on conformity assessments issues and on easing access of industrial products to the markets of other CEFTA Party is concluded.
- The envisaged training is performed in a satisfactory manner and the capacity of competent authorities involved in negotiations for conclusion of agreements on conformity assessment among CEFTA Parties increased.

Activity 2.3.2 Implementation of the Joint Committee Recommendation on the recognition of test report

- The monitoring of the JC Recommendation on the recognition of test report is done regularly

Activity 2.3.3 Improving the transparency in TBT

- The Report on the notification of the TBT (standards, technical regulations and conformity assessments) is prepared and presented at the Joint Committee Meeting
- The network of Enquiry points is functioning well.
- Review of the legislation on adopted standards, technical regulations and cooperation among quality infrastructure bodies amongst the CEFTA Parties made available and updated regularly.
- The TBT Platform is operational and functioning.

Activity 2.3.4 Enhancing the regional cooperation among National Accreditation bodies and other national institutions that deal with TBT

- All the CEFTA Party's national accreditation bodies are signatories to the EA MLA and ILAC MRA
- Multilateral/plurilateral Agreements or Memorandums of cooperation in the field of standardisation, accreditation and metrology among the national bodies of the CEFTA Parties

5.4. Enhancement of Transparency, Information Exchange and Notification

Activity 2.4.1 Upgrading of the CEFTA Market Access Database

- The MADB is upgraded and functioning.

Activity 2.4.2 Establishment of the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Platform

- TBT Platform is established and operational.

Activity 2.4.3 Establishment of the CEFTA Sanitary, Phytosanitary and Veterinary (SPS) Database

- The SPS Database is established and operational.

Activity 2.4.4 Taking ownership and further development of the CEFTA Trade Portal

- The CEFTA Trade Portal is functioning properly and is updated regularly.

5.5. Improved Cooperation with Business Community

Activity 2.5.2 Promotion of CEFTA

- The CEFTA is regularly promoted to the wider audience. The image of CEFTA is improved.

Activity 2.5.1 Enhanced cooperation with the business community

- The cooperation with business community is strengthened.

6. CALENDAR OF MEETINGS AND EVENTS

The 2013 tentative calendar of meetings and events is the following:

MEETING/EVENT	DATE	Venue
Sixth Meeting of the Working Group on TBT	1 February	Brussels, Belgium
Sixth meeting of the Subcommittee on NTBs and TBT	7 February 2013	Budapest Hungary
Fourth Regional Roundtable on Elimination of NTBs	7-8 February 2013	Budapest Hungary
Seventh Meeting of the Subcommittee on NTBs and TBT	End of May	Skopje, Macedonia
Seventh Working Group on TBT	End of May	Skopje, Macedonia

Annex 1: ACTION PLAN FOR 2013

OBJECTIVE	PHASES	ACTION	KEY MILESTONES	TIMEFRAME
Coordination with other CEFTA Structures	1. Coordination with SC on Agriculture and SPS on areas with common objective	1.1. coordination of activities in the implementation of the recommendations for the SPS to reduce potential NTBs in order to ensure synergies and avoid any overlapping	Recommendations in the area of SPS are implemented	January-December2013
	2. Coordination with SC on Customs and Rules of Origin on areas with common objective	2.1. coordination of activities in the implementation of the recommendations for the administrative barriers to trade to reduce potential NTBs in order to ensure synergies and avoid any overlapping	Recommendations in the area of administrative barriers to trade are implemented	January-December2013
	3. Reporting to other CEFTA Structures	3.1. reporting on results achieved to the Deputy Ministers meeting and the Joint Committee	Annual and semi-annual Report submitted to Deputy Ministers and Joint Committee	June 2013 October 2013
	4. Participation at the CEFTA meetings	4.1.Participation of the Chair at the SC on Agriculture and SPS and SC on Customs and Rules of Origin meetings 4.2.Participation of the Chair at the Deputy Ministers meeting and seventh Joint Committee Meeting	CEFTA Parties are regularly participating at the official CEFTA meetings, roundtables.	January-November
	5. Promotion of the results	5.1.Promotion to the business community through events such as CEFTA Trade Portal, CEFTA Week 2013 5.2.Exchange of information with the members of the CEFTA Forum Chambers of Commerce	Implemented recommendations and results are promoted at the CEFTA Trade Portal, CEFTA Secretariat's website, CEFTA Week, at international conferences, forums	Continuous October/November
Elimination of non-tariff barriers to trade	1. Finalisation of the NTBs reports on TBT and SPS	1.1. Preliminary Reports on the TBT and SPS will be discussed amongst the members of the SC	Final Reports approved by the members of the SC on NTBs and TBT	January
	2. Revision of the MMF indicators on administrative barriers to trade	2.1. The revision of MMF indicators is done amongst members of the SC, the OECD team	The revised indicators are approved by the members of the SC	February
	3. Launching of the second assessment cycle on the administrative barriers to trade	3.1. The launching of the second assessment based on the revised indicators on administrative barriers to trade 3.2. Verification of the results	The questionnaires are dispatched The missions on the assessment are performed The Verification is done by the members	February-May
	4. Elaboration of the Report on the NTBs based on the second cycle of assessments	4.1. Elaboration of the Report on the NTBs by the OECD 4.2. Developing of the concrete recommendations and discussion on future actions	The report is approved and presented at the Joint Committee The concrete recommendations are developed and approved	August - November

Reduction and elimination of unnecessary TBT	1. Conclusion of the Agreement on conformity assessment issues and on easing access of industrial products to the markets of other CEFTA Party	1.1. Finalisation of the proposed text of the Agreement 1.2. Training of the involved CEFTA Parties in order to increase capacity	The Agreement on conformity assessment issues and on easing of industrial products is concluded	November 2013
	2. Implementation of the Joint Committee Recommendation on the recognition of test report	2.1. Monitoring of the implementation of the JC Recommendation	The implementation of the Recommendation is regularly monitored and reported to the Joint Committee	January-December
	3. Improving the transparency in TBT	3.1. Notifying regularly on the TBT 3.2. Strengthening of the Enquiry Points network 3.3. Exchanging the information on harmonization process 3.4. Establishing the TBT Platform	The Report on the TBT notifications is completed and presented to the JC CEFTA TBT Platform is established and operational	November 2013
	4. Enhancing the regional cooperation among National Accreditation bodies and other national institutions that deal with TBT	4.1. Encouraging the CEFTA Parties to become signatories to the EA MLA and ILAC MRA 4.2. Exploring the possibilities to conclude multilateral/plurilateral Agreements or Memorandums of cooperation	All CEFTA Parties are signatories to EA MLA and ILAC MRA Multilateral/Plurilateral Agreements on cooperation are concluded	January -2015
Enhancement of Transparency, Information Exchange and Notification	1. Upgrading of the Market Access Database	1.1. Upgrade the version of the Market Access Database to include the migration to the web-based environment, easier use and updating	The MADB is upgraded and functions properly	January 2013
	2. Establishing of the CEFTA TBT Platform	2.1. Develop and establish the TBT platform that will comprise the regular TBT notifications, and the important information on quality infrastructure	The TBT Platform is established and operational	End of 2013
	3. Establishing of the CEFTA SPS Database	3.1. Develop and establish the SPS Database that will contain the regular information on the SPS measures applied across the CEFTA region	The SPS Platform is established and operational	Mid of 2013
	4. Taking ownership over Trade Portal	4.1. Regular updating and upgrading of the structure and content	The Trade Portal functions properly	January-
Improved Cooperation with Business Community	1. Regular updating and upgrading of the structure (e.g. improved search engine, etc) and content	1.1. Regular exchange of information on the NTBs with the CEFTA Forum of Chambers of Commerce	Information regularly exchanged, participation at the meetings secured	January -
	2. Promotion of CEFTA	2.1. Inclusion of business community in the promotional events, CEFTA Week and Trade Portal	CEFTA widely promoted	January-

ANNEX 3: LOGICAL FRAMEWORK MATRIX

LOG FRAME PLANNING MATRIX FOR PRIORITIES OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON TBT and NTBs		Period: January – December 2013	
Overall objective	Indicators of Achievement	Sources of verification	
to develop further actions, particularly in the following priority areas, with the objective to fully implement the Multilateral Monitoring Framework on Elimination of NTBs, ensure transparency, deeper collaboration with the private sector and strengthen the cooperation with other CEFTA Structures.	All meetings of the Subcommittee and the Working Group on TBT are held with the active participation of CEFTA Parties	Report of the Subcommittee on NTBs and TBT Report of the WG on TBT	
Priorities	Indicators of Achievement	Sources of Verification	Assumptions
1) Coordination with other CEFTA Structures 2) Elimination of the identified non-tariff barriers to trade, 3) Elimination of the unnecessary technical barriers to trade, 4) Enhancement of the transparency, information exchange and notification 5) Improved cooperation with the business community	1) The number of participations at each other meetings increased 2) Number of identified non-tariff barriers to trade among the CEFTA Parties has a decreasing tendency 3) Number of unnecessary technical barriers to trade decreased 4) The CEFTA Parties are timely informed about the new regulations with a potential hindering impact on trade 5) Relations with the private sector improved with regular exchange of data	Report of SC on NTBs and TBT Report of SC on Agriculture and SPS Report of SC on Customs and Rules of Origin Report of the Working Group on TBT Report of the Working Group on Trade in Services CEFTA Market Access Database CEFTA TBT Platform CEFTA SPS Database CEFTA Trade Portal	1) Each CEFTA Party remains committed to the CEFTA process and its provisions. 2) Bilateral problems between the CEFTA Parties which do not have any direct relevance to the implementation of the Agreement do not affect the smooth functioning of the Agreement, 3) International donors keep committed to support financially the CEFTA.

Activities	Results	Means	Assumptions
<p><u>Priority 1 :</u></p> <p>1) Coordination with SC on Agriculture and SPS on areas with common objective</p> <p>2) Coordination with SC on Customs and Rules of Origin on areas with common objective</p> <p>3) Reporting to other CEFTA Structures</p> <p>4) Participation at the CEFTA meetings</p> <p>5) Promotion of the results</p>	<p><u>Priority 1:</u></p> <p>1) Recommendations in the area of SPS implemented</p> <p>2) Recommendations in the area of administrative barriers implemented</p> <p>3) Annual and semi-annual Report submitted to Deputy Ministers and Joint Committee</p> <p>4) CEFTA Parties are regularly participating at the official CEFTA meetings</p> <p>5) Implemented recommendations and results are promoted at the CEFTA Trade Portal, CEFTA Secretariat's website, CEFTA Week, at international conferences, forums</p>	<p>SC on Agriculture and SPS meetings SC on NTBs and TBT meetings SC on Customs and RO meetings</p> <p>Deputy Ministers Meetings Joint Committee Meeting</p>	<p>1) Each CEFTA Party remains committed to the CEFTA process and its provisions.</p> <p>2) Bilateral problems between the CEFTA Parties which do not have any direct relevance to the implementation of the Agreement do not affect the smooth functioning of the Agreement,</p> <p>3) International donors keep committed to support financially the CEFTA.</p>
<p><u>Priority 2:</u></p> <p>1) Finalisation of the NTBs reports on TBT and SPS</p> <p>2) Revision of the MMF indicators on administrative barriers to trade</p> <p>3) Launching of the second assessment cycle on the administrative barriers to trade</p> <p>4) Elaboration of the Report on the NTBs based on the second cycle of assessments</p>	<p><u>Priority 2:</u></p> <p>1) Final Reports approved by the members of the SC on NTBs and TBT</p> <p>2) The revised indicators are approved by the members of the SC</p> <p>4) The questionnaires are dispatched, the missions on the assessment are performed, the verification is done by the members</p> <p>5) The report is approved and presented at the Joint Committee</p> <p>6) The concrete recommendations are developed and approved</p>	<p>OECD MMF Project</p> <p>Regional Roundtable on NTBs</p>	

<p><u>Priority 3:</u></p> <p>1) Conclusion of the Agreement on conformity assessment issues and on easing access of industrial products to the markets of other CEFTA Party</p> <p>2) Implementation of the Joint Committee Recommendation on the recognition of test report</p> <p>3) Improving the transparency in TBT</p> <p>4) Enhancing the regional cooperation among National Accreditation bodies and other national institutions that deal with TBT</p>	<p><u>Priority 3:</u></p> <p>1) The Agreement on conformity assessment issues and on easing of industrial products is concluded</p> <p>2) The implementation of the Recommendation is regularly monitored and reported to the Joint Committee</p> <p>3) The Report on the TBT notifications is completed and presented to the JC</p> <p>4) Multilateral/Plurilateral Agreements on cooperation are concluded</p>	<p>WG on TBT meetings Joint Committee Meeting</p> <p>IPA Quality Infrastructure Project GIZ Project on Market Surveillance</p>	
<p><u>Priority 4:</u></p> <p>1). Upgrading of the Market Access Database</p> <p>2) Establishing of the CEFTA TBT Platform</p> <p>3) Establishing of the CEFTA SPS Database</p> <p>4) Taking ownership over Trade Portal</p>	<p><u>Priority 4:</u></p> <p>1) The MADB is upgraded and functions properly</p> <p>2) The TBT Platform is established and operational</p> <p>3) The SPS Platform is established and operational</p> <p>4) The Trade Portal functions properly</p>	<p>CEFTA Market Access Database CEFTA TBT Platform CEFTA SPS Database CEFTA Trade Portal</p>	
<p><u>Priority 5:</u></p> <p>1) Regular updating and upgrading of the structure (e.g. improved search engine, etc) and content</p> <p>2) Promotion of CEFTA</p>	<p><u>Priority 5:</u></p> <p>1) Information regularly exchanged, participation at the meetings secured</p> <p>2) CEFTA widely promoted</p>	<p>CEFTA Forum of Chambers meetings</p>	

