

National Consultation on the SASEC SPS/TBT Diagnostic Study
13th June 2016
Kathmandu, Nepal

Summary of Proceedings

1. A National Consultation on the SASEC SPS/TBT Diagnostic Study, jointly organized by the Ministry of Commerce, Nepal and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), was held in Kathmandu on 13 June 2016. The initiative is funded by ADB's Technical Assistance Special Fund. The list of the participants is in **Annex 1**.
2. Mr. Rameshwar Pokharel, Under Secretary, Ministry of Commerce, as the chair of the meeting, welcomed all participants representing from different government agencies, research institute and private sector organizations. In his welcome remarks, he believed that this meeting is expected to lay down the foundation for the national level SPS/TBT study. He stated that the presentations made in the meeting would provide feedback to finalize the TOR for national diagnostic study.
3. Ms. Rose McKenzie, Senior Regional Cooperation Specialist, South Asia Regional Department, as a co-chair, in her opening remarks thanked the participants and expressed that Nepal is the first country to hold the consultation meeting and provided brief information on how the diagnostics study will be carried out.
4. Ms. L. Savithri, Director, Economic, Trade and Finance Division, South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) in her opening remarks, provided brief information on SAARC and SARC initiatives and highlighted the importance of SASEC SPS/TBT Diagnostic Study in the overall framework of SAARC.
5. Ms. McKenzie outlined the SASEC trade facilitation strategic framework and updated on the overall trade facilitation program under ADB support.
6. Dr. Pradyumna Pandey, Chief, International Trade Promotion Section (Senior Agricultural Economist), Food Security, Agri-business Promotion and Environment Division, Ministry of Agricultural Development, Kathmandu, Nepal delivered a presentation to update on Nepal's Initiative on Sanitary/Phytosanitary (SPS).
7. In continuation, Mr. Sanjeev Kumar Thakur, Director, Nepal Bureau of Standards & Metrology (NBSM), Kathmandu, Nepal provided an update on Nepal's Initiative of Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Measures.
8. These two separate presentations from Nepal identified significant SPS and TBT related issues and challenges, namely weak conformity assessment infrastructure, non-recognition of testing certification, inadequate testing and calibration facilities, high cost and lengthy process of conformity assessment for exporter, insufficient legal and institutional mechanism for the protection of public health and safety, weak coordination among relevant national agencies and institutions, lack of risk based inspection, and inadequate technical, infrastructural and human resources. Subsequently, the presentation highlighted the government initiatives undertaken with regard to SPS/TBT. The two presentations highlighted the need of holistic and integrated SPS/TBT project to overcome value chain system for export markets.
9. Dr. Selim Raihan, Professor, Department of Economics, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh and Executive Director, South Asian Network on Economic Modeling (SANEM) made a presentation of the draft TOR for the Nepal National Diagnostic Study. Reiterating the need of consistency of the study in all the National Diagnostic Studies (NDS), he provided information on the objectives of the study, detailed tasks to be carried out and a detailed methodology of the NDS.
10. The presentation was followed by discussion. Participants provided feedback on draft TOR particularly on the methodology of identifying products, agreement on the overall methodology, aspects to be taken into account in the national context of Nepal, engagement of SPS National Focal Point and Core Group to work with the national consultant and the role between the national and international consultant. The TOR was improved and adjusted based on participants' suggestions.
11. The meeting agreed on the TOR for National SASEC SPS/TBT diagnostic study and the tentative schedule of the study as given in **Annex 2**.
12. Mr. Ahsan Tayyab, Principal Agriculture and Natural Resource Specialist, ADB provided updates on 'ADB Proposed Agriculture Sector Development Loan' and welcomed any suggestions from the meeting.

Closing of the Meeting

13. Mr. Rameshwar Pokharel, as a chair, thanked all the participants and ADB for their support and active participation and closed the meeting.