

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

RESTRICTED

G/MA/TAR/RS/41

27 November 1997

(97-5224)

Committee on Market Access

Original: English

RECTIFICATIONS AND MODIFICATIONS OF SCHEDULES

Schedule I - Australia

The following communication, dated 12 November 1997, has been received from the Permanent Mission of Australia.

Australia submits herewith modifications to Schedule I - Australia which give effect to the commitments which it made at the Osaka APEC Economic Leaders meeting in November 1995 to accelerate and strengthen Uruguay Round outcomes.

Australia's commitment at Osaka in relation to tariffs was to bring forward, by one year, the date on which its final Uruguay Round tariff bindings will apply for up to two thirds of those items where bindings are phasing down (that is, up to 2800 tariff lines). For industrial products where implementation of bindings is being accelerated, this will mean that the final bound rates will be achieved on 1 January 1998, rather than 1 January 1999 as required under the Marrakesh Protocol to the GATT 1994. For agricultural products where the implementation of bindings is being accelerated, the final bound rates will be implemented on 1 January 1999, rather than 1 January 2000 as required under the Marrakesh Protocol. These commitments on tariff bindings represent an appreciable strengthening of Australia's Uruguay Round commitments, and are being implemented by Australia on an MFN basis, consistent with the concept of open regionalism on which APEC is based. Consistent with Australia's undertaking, details of the specific items which will be subject to accelerated bindings in this way were notified to APEC economies in 1996.

The list of tariff items on which Australia is accelerating implementation of its Uruguay Round commitments is attached. The commitment applies only to the 8-digit HS96 codes specifically listed in the attachment. Codes of less than 8 digits are often included in the attachment, but this is done so that the 8-digit items which fall below them can be adequately described, not because they are part of Australia's accelerated implementation of the Uruguay Round bindings. For example, under HS 2008, Australia's commitment applies to HS 2008.11.00, 2008.19.00 and 2008.99.00.

If no objection is notified to the Secretariat within three months from the date of this document, the rectifications and modifications to Schedule I - Australia will be deemed to be approved and will be formally certified.

Copies of this document are available in electronic form (MS Excel) from the Documents Dissemination Facility (DDF) under "Market Access Schedules--Rectifications & Modifications". It is also available in paper form from the Market Access Division (Ms. Wood, Office 3142, tel: 739 50 79).