

# WTO's Integrated Database:

*Why does it matter  
for the MSMEs?*

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1. Where are we coming from?
2. Where are we today?
3. What else could be done?



PAST

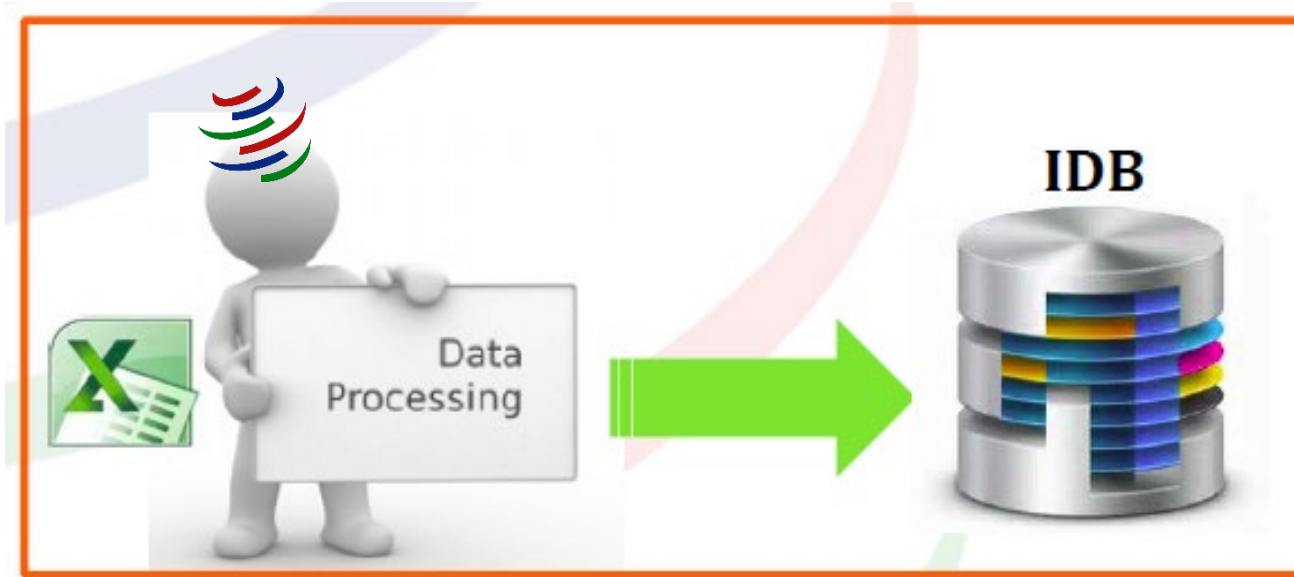
PRESENT

FUTURE

Where are  
we coming  
from?

## 1997 IDB Decision required the WTO Secretariat to:

1. *Standardize* national submissions (MFN tariffs & import data)
2. *Validate* the data
3. *Integrate* the import data with the tariffs at the national tariff level



**“Cleaning” the data is a lengthy and difficult process**

# Why is standardization important?



WTO OMC

From:

DATA Data  
*Data* DOT@  
Data Data  
Data dATa



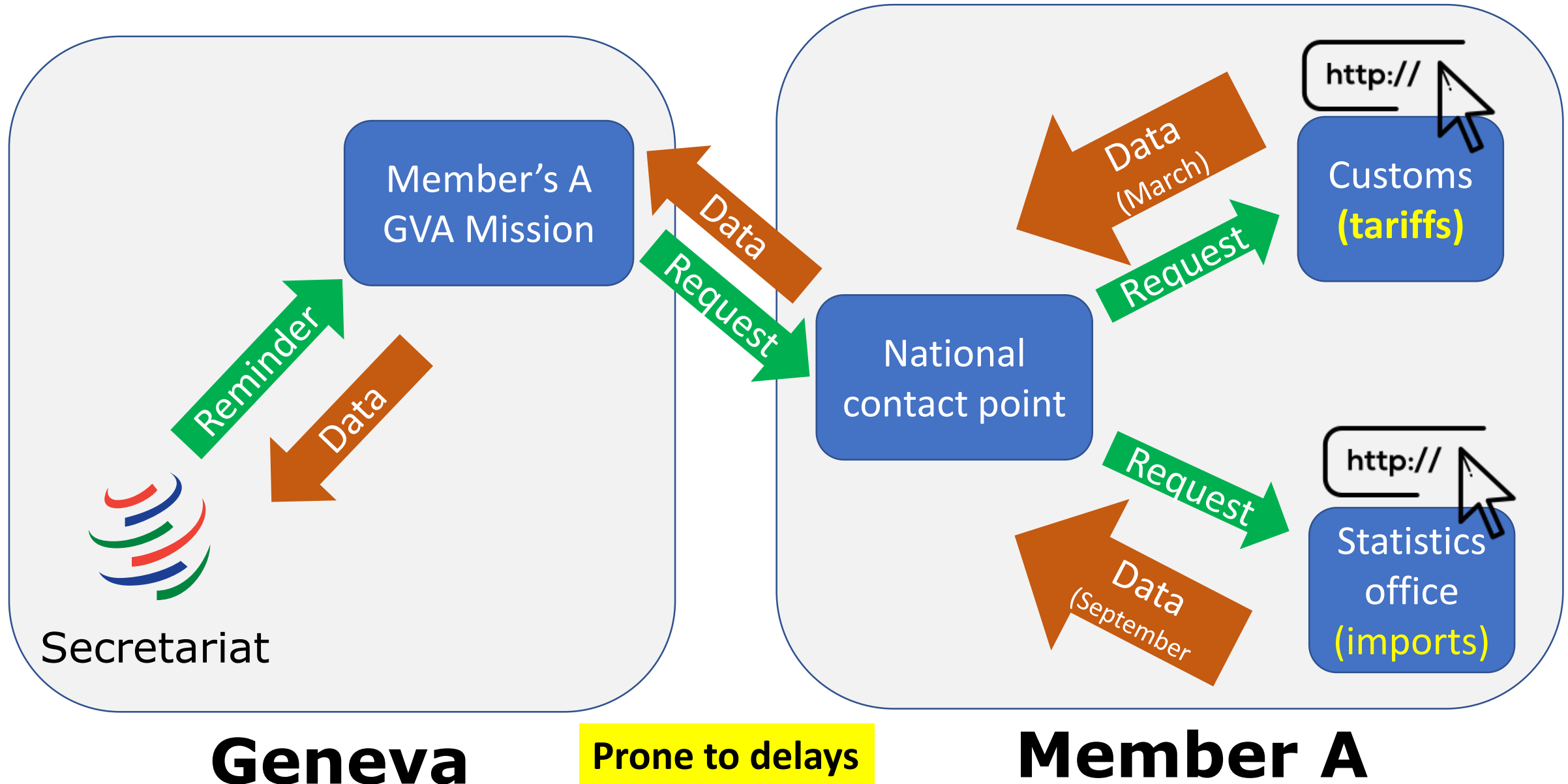
WTO  
Secretariat

Standardize

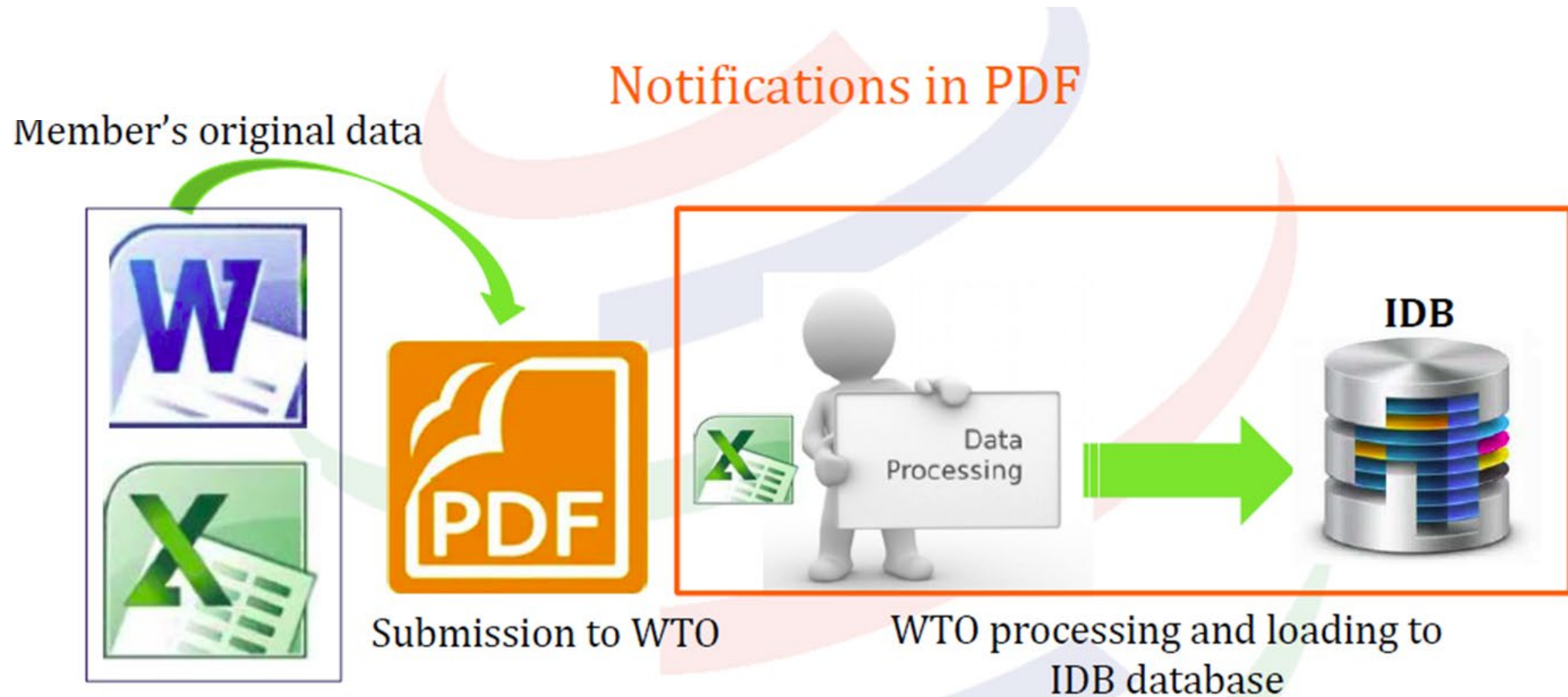
To:

DATA  
DATA  
DATA  
DATA  
DATA  
DATA  
DATA  
DATA  
DATA

# Typical data transmission flow



# Example of problems with the national submissions



**For more details, see JOB/MA/137 & Add.1**

# IDB Data dissemination

Member  
Member  
Member  
Member  
Member  
Member  
Member  
Member  
Member  
Member  
Member  
Member  
Member



**WTO online tools & publications**



UNITED NATIONS



**WORLD BANK**



International  
Trade  
Centre

**Other authorized users**  
*(More than 20)*



**Members' national systems**

**Some private companies harvest the information**

Very successful in  
some areas **despite**  
all the limitations  
and problems



WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION  
ORGANISATION MONDIALE DU COMMERCE  
ORGANIZACIÓN MUNDIAL DEL COMERCIO

DATA

**78%**  
of all tariff data used by  
international organizations  
originate in the WTO-IDB

# WTO online tools and publications



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- World tariff profiles

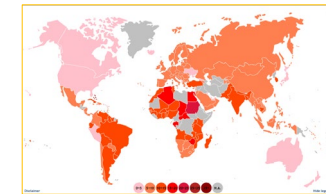
Country pages: [https://www.wto.org/english/res\\_e/reser\\_e/tariff\\_profiles\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/res_e/reser_e/tariff_profiles_e.htm)



- Data maps

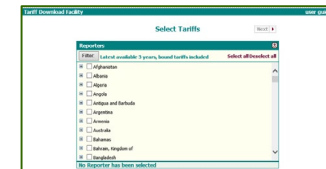
Visualize WTP indicator:

[https://www.wto.org/english/res\\_e/statis\\_e/statis\\_bis\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/res_e/statis_e/statis_bis_e.htm)



- Tariff Download Facility <http://tdf.wto.org>

Data at subheading level (6-digit), multi-country, multi-year



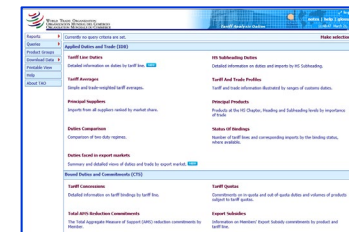
- WTO data portal, <http://data.wto.org>

ITS, FATS, Tariff, trade, NTMs



- Tariff Analysis Online

Reports, data at the most detailed level (<https://tao.wto.org>)



**For Members' feedback on these tools see G/MA/W/144**

Where are we  
today?

PAST

PRESENT

# IT has drastically changed



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- Increased data needs
- New advanced IT systems (e.g. TFA Single windows)
- Databases interconnect without human intervention
- Real time information
- Different pieces of data are connected to generate new knowledge



A revised IDB Decision was approved in **May 2019** (G/MA/367)

- Consolidated the mandatory requirements (spread across several different documents)
- Clarified the link to other Decisions (PTA-TM, RTA-TM)
- Updated the language and improved the examples
- Reaffirmed Members' control over their data
- **Improved dissemination policy (Annex 4) -> more data is publicly available**
- **Allowed the submission of additional elements / new ways to submit the data**

# IDB: mandatory information *(Para. 1)*

- **Applied MFN tariffs** at the national customs tariff nomenclature
- **Import statistics** at the tariff line level by partner
- **Non-reciprocal preferential** tariffs and import statistics by partner (e.g. GSP, LDC schemes)

**No change in the mandatory elements**



# IDB: Additional voluntary elements (*Para. 2*)



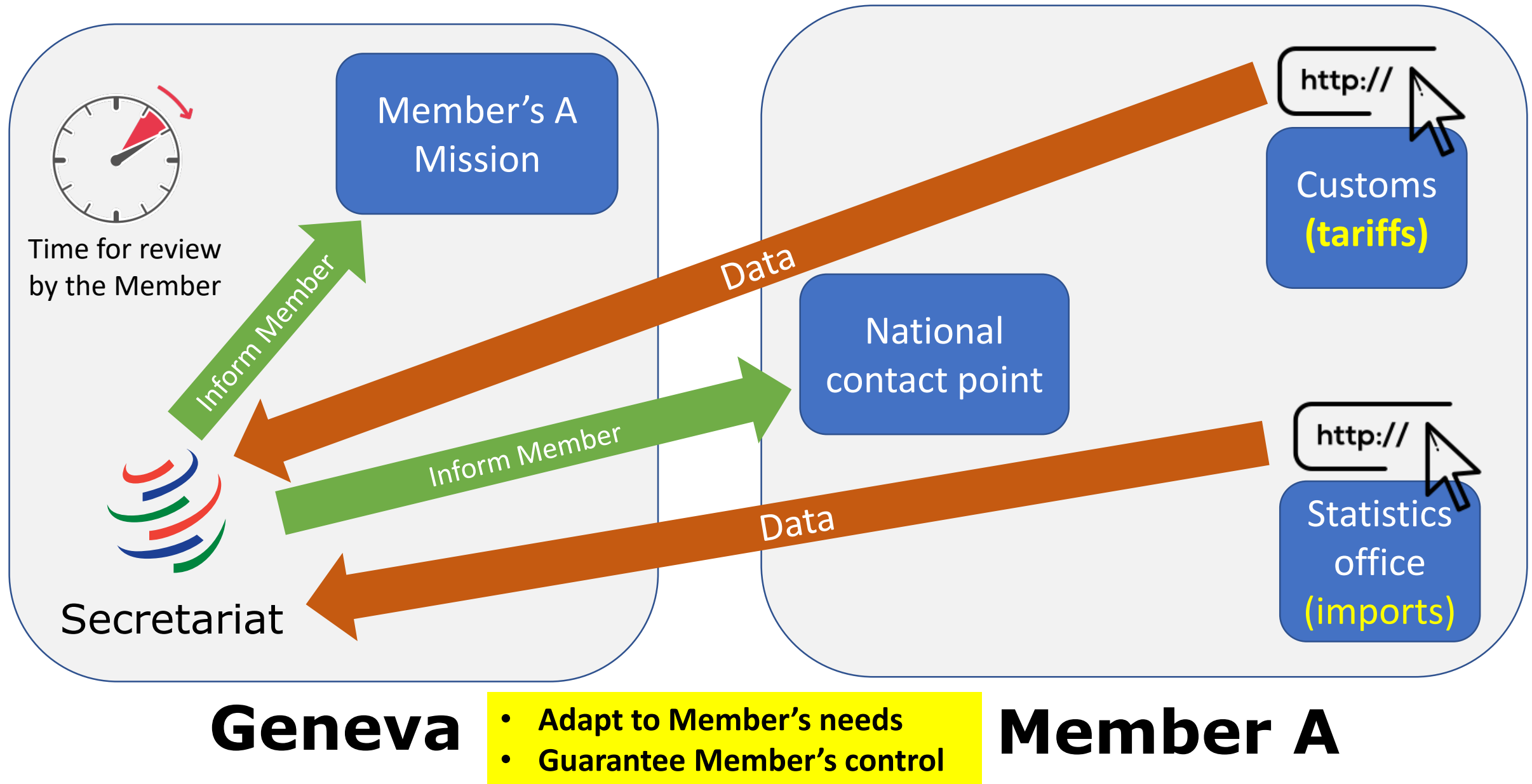
WTO OMC

- **Reciprocal preferences** (tariffs & Import), e.g. customs union, FTAs
- **Applied internal taxes and other duties and charges**, when available at the tariff line level
- ***Ad valorem* equivalents**
- **Imports under TRQs**



Some Members already submitted these data, but it was not included due to lack of mandate

## Voluntary bilateral agreement for automatic data transmission (Para. 8)





PAST

What else  
could be  
done?

FUTURE

# Examples of MSMEs problems in getting information



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**Are there trade costs that I have not considered?**  
(I don't want to lose money!)

**Where do I find the information?**  
(I am lost in the Internet...)

**Is it a reliable source?**  
(Can I really trust this information?)

**Which website is the correct one?**  
(Why do they have different information?)

**Is the information still valid?**  
(I really don't like surprises!)



# Examples of MSMEs problems in getting information



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## Members' National website



- ***I can't find it!***
- ***I can't access it!***
- ***The system changed!***
- ***I can't understand that language ...***

## International Organizations



- ***Who are they?***
- ***It's not complete...***
- ***Is it still in force?***
- ***It seems to be quite old...***

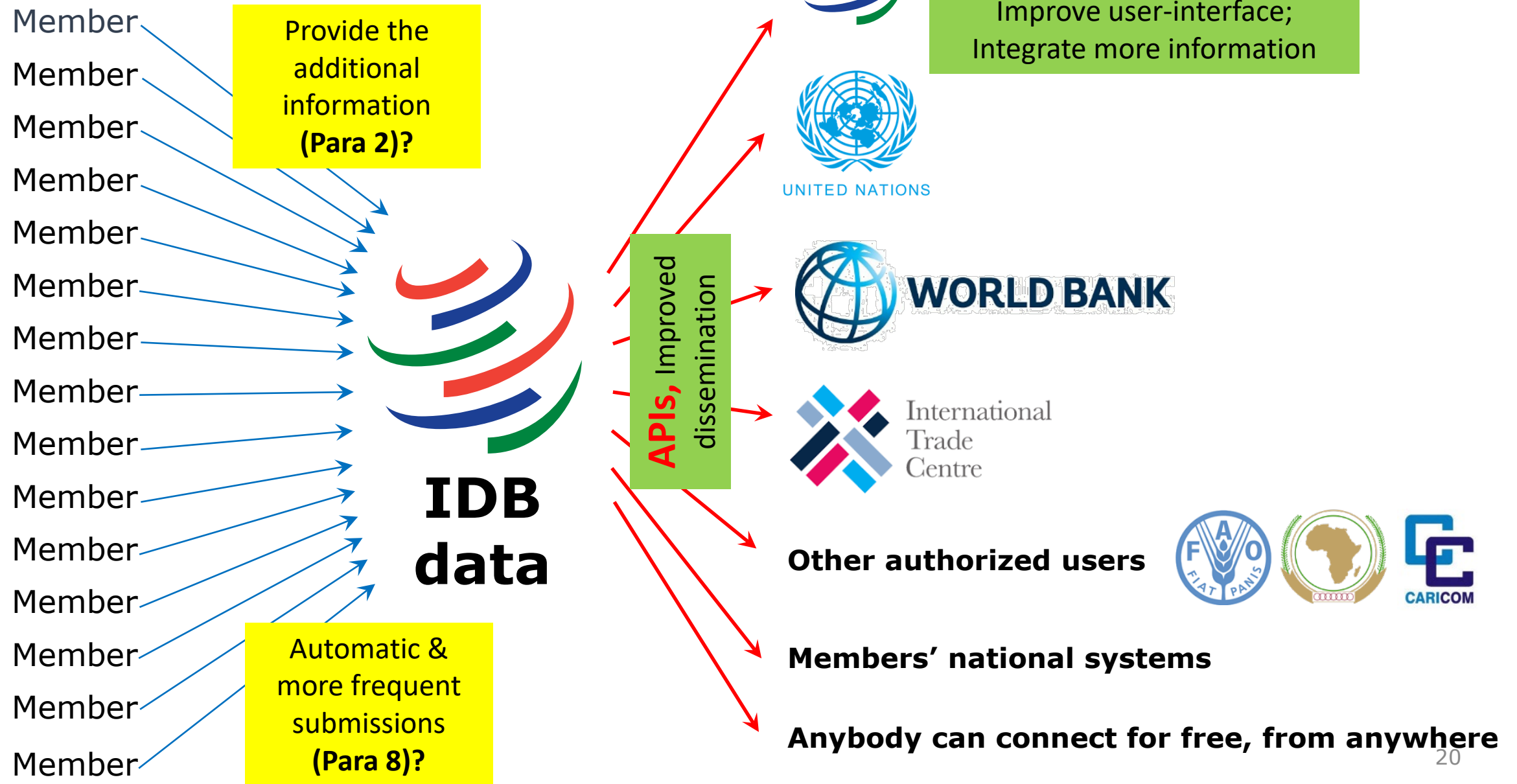
## Online company



- ***Is it official information?***
- ***Can I trust it?***
- ***Why is it different from the others?***
- ***I need to pay...***

**What if all of them could have the same data in real time?**

# Possible areas for improvement



## To summarize:

1. **Proven:** The WTO-IDB is already at the center of the collection and dissemination of official tariff information (WTO's transparency function)
2. **Effective dissemination:** Once submitted to the WTO and processed, a large number of international organizations, governments and private companies also have free access to these data
3. **How to build on top of the IDB Decision?**
  - By submitting the additional voluntary elements (IDB, Para. 2)
  - By subscribing an agreement to automatically submit the tariffs and eventually other information (real time data?) (IDB, Para. 8)
  - The WTO Secretariat could further improve:
    - The data dissemination through, e.g. APIs, bulk downloads, etc.
    - The user-friendliness of its online tools and databases (See G/MA/W/144)

# Thank you!

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