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*Capacity Building Task Force on Trade, Environment and Development*

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## **Short Report**

# **UNEP-UNCTAD CBTF Regional Workshop on Post-Doha Trade and Environment Issues**

**Manila, Philippines  
16-17 June 2005**



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### **Background**

The UNEP-UNCTAD Capacity Building Task Force on Trade, Environment and Development (CBTF) convened a capacity-building workshop on 16-17 July in Manila, Philippines entitled *Workshop on Post-Doha Trade and Environment Issues*. This workshop was held back-to-back with a WTO regional workshop on trade and environment for Asian and Pacific countries.

The purpose of the CBTF regional workshop was to strengthen the capacities of Asian and Pacific countries on current issues relevant to trade, environment and sustainable development. In particular, the workshop considered the role of integrated assessment in ensuring the development of mutually supportive trade and environment policies, analysed the effect of environmental measures on market access for developing countries, and examined key issues relevant to the current WTO negotiations on environmental goods and services, particularly with respect to developing countries in the region. Approximately 60 trade and environment officials from 22 countries attended the workshop, plus some 15 participants from government institutions, NGOs and the private sector in the Philippines.

### **Presentations and Discussions**

The workshop was opened by Asad Naqvi, Programme Officer, UNEP, and Ulrich Hoffman, Senior Economics Officer, UNCTAD. The speakers provided background information on the UNEP-UNCTAD CBTF and highlighted the importance of trade and environment capacity-building activities in the region.

Initial presentations focused on environmental goods and services (EGS), in the context of ongoing negotiations at the WTO on EGS subject to tariff reduction or elimination. Mr. Hoffman introduced a draft CBTF briefing paper identifying environmental goods of particular export interest to developing countries. While many countries have proposed that tariff reductions be awarded based on lists of environmental goods submitted by Members, known as the "list approach," analysis by UNCTAD found that developing countries are often net importers of the goods proposed. UNCTAD's briefing led to discussion of increasing export opportunities from Environmental Goods, highlighting Environmentally Preferable Products as an area of opportunity.

Sanjay Kumar, of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry in India, provided an overview of the two main conceptual approaches on identifying environmental goods and services: the list approach, and the Environmental Project Approach (EPA), proposed by India, whereby a designated national authority approves tariff concessions for goods and services associated with a particular environmental project. He outlined some problems with the list approach, including "dual-use," where many goods can be used for non-environmental purposes; lack of technology transfer mechanism; and lack of synergy between goods and services. He stated that the EPA addresses these deficiencies, and benefits developing countries whose export interests are not reflected by the list approach.

Romulo T. Aggangan, of the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources Research and Development, then provided an overview of presentations at the recent Philippine national workshop on environmental goods and services. The purpose of this national workshop was to discuss the ongoing environmental goods (EGs) negotiations in the WTO Committee on Trade and Environment aimed towards establishing environmental goods and services subject to tariff reduction or elimination. The workshop, he stated, focused on policy objectives, criteria, and procedural considerations in the selection of EGs.

The next presentations focused on integrated assessment, and its contributions to mutually supportive trade and environment policies. Benjamin Simmons, Legal Officer, UNEP, introduced the concept of integrated assessment (IA), a systematic process for obtaining information on environmental, social and economic aspects of a specific policy, set of policies, sector or planning process. He stated that UNEP has supported national institutions in undertaking IA of trade-related policies. The outcomes of assessment are used to develop policy responses supportive of sustainable development goals. He stated that IA can inform decisionmaking, enhance coordination, build consensus and save time and money.

Mr. Naqvi then outlined specific IA projects that UNEP had assisted Asian and Pacific countries in undertaking, all of which focused on the rice sector. He provided an overview of the outcomes of the assessments, which demonstrated varied economic and social impacts of trade-related policies, both positive and negative. The environmental impacts were more clearly negative, including increased use of agrochemicals, soil degradation, water pollution and loss of biodiversity. He summarized some lessons learned from the IA process, including that the impacts of domestic policies were found to be stronger than those of external trade agreements. In addition, he stated the need for increased systemization and dissemination of the outcomes so that they could impact decisionmaking. He identified increased awareness and increased coordination as positive outcomes of the IA process.

The final session focused on the effect of environmental measures on market access. Hoffman outlined findings of recent country-case studies in Asia on leather and footwear, horticultural products, and electrical and electronic goods.

Christie Roberts of QA Plus, Malaysia, then made a presentation on issues, challenges and solutions in trade and sustainable agriculture practices. Due to increasing depletion of the world's resources, he advocated ecological and economic sustainability in agriculture. Though standards and quality assurance schemes in food products can be a tool in achieving sustainability, he stated that their proliferation has caused consumer confusion. To foster Good Agricultural Practice (GAP), he advocated EurepGAP (The Global Partnership for Safe and Sustainable Agriculture). He presented the goal of EurepGAP: to reduce the risk of food safety lapses in agricultural production, to objectively verify best practices, and to ensure they are applied systematically and consistently throughout the world. Certification Bodies ensure compliance with EurepGAP standards. EurepGAP's advantages, he stated, include that it is accepted by major retailers as a common baseline standard; being certified by third parties it has credibility; and it is flexible. He stated that adapting EurepGAP standards would ensure acceptance of horticultural products in export markets.

Roberto C. Amores, President of the HILAS Marketing Corporation, Philippines, then made a presentation on environmental concerns, market access and export competitiveness of Philippines fresh mangoes. He stated that the Philippine mango industry had been affected by the imposition of stricter environmental and health regulations by Japan, one of its major export markets. He stated that lack of GAP, and imposition of environmental and health requirements were creating environmental problems and export barriers; a similar problem occurred in the Philippines fresh okra industry. In order to respond to this problem, his recommendations included: increased collaboration between the government and the private sector; challenging of seemingly arbitrary maximum residue level standards in export markets; technology advancement to assure environmental protection and safety; increased funds for research and development

studies; and following the example of other sectors (ie fresh okra) and other countries (ie Chinese horticultural products) which were faced with the same problem.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

The participants overwhelmingly found the training workshop to be useful. In particular, the workshop participants outlined the following as high priority issues for future trade and environment capacity-building activities:

- Water quality and waste management
- Technical Barriers to Trade and Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures
- Environmental goods and services, including a discussion on opportunities for identifying such goods and services of interest for developing countries
- Economic Instruments
- Corporate Social Responsibility
- WTO issues and MEAs
- Industrial pollution and industrial recycling
- Impact of environmental policies on market access