



UNEP



UNCTAD

CBTF

*Capacity Building Task Force
on Trade Environment and Development*

Concept Note

"National Stakeholder Workshop Definition, Criteria, Issues and Identification of Environmental Goods"

Manila, The Philippines

8-9 June 2005

Background

Paragraph 31(iii) of the Doha Ministerial Declaration of the World Trade Organization contains a negotiating mandate on "the reduction or, as appropriate, elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers to environmental goods and services."

WTO discussions in the Special Session of the Committee on Trade and Environment (CTESS) on the definition and selection of items of environmental goods (EGs) have recently gathered momentum. However, agreeing on a definition has remained elusive. Of the proposals received thus far, only the European Communities explicitly recognize the potential of environmentally preferable products (EPPs) of export interest to developing countries and a more balanced (North-South) approach. Without any lists of their own to negotiate against, developing countries will have little justification to reject the OECD/APEC type lists (which have been relied on in developing most other proposals) as the basis for final negotiations. These lists largely reflect developed country export interests in pollution control/management and resources management equipment. What is needed to move things forward, and to ensure that EPPs, and other goods of export interest to developing countries are reflected, is to ensure that at the next sessions of the CTESS in May and July a number of developing country submissions are included for discussion.

UNEP and UNCTAD have included the topic of environmental goods and services as a priority in the second phase of implementation of its joint Capacity Building Task Force on Trade, Environment and Development (CBTF). The Task Force has recently decided to assist interested developing countries in compiling national lists of EGs that could be submitted to WTO negotiations.

On 6 April, the Philippine Inter-Departmental Technical Committee on WTO Matters endorsed a CBTF proposal to hold a national stakeholder workshop on EGs in June.

The WTO will hold a regional workshop on trade and environment issues for Asia in Manila on 14-16 June. Right after this meeting, on 16-17 June, the CBTF will organize a supplementary meeting for the participants of the WTO workshop, plus other stakeholders from the Philippines that will *inter alia* discuss the WTO negotiating mandate on environmental goods and services and recent developments on the definition of EGs. Being in the country, CBTF wanted to seize the opportunity to hold a national stakeholder workshop on EGs that could also feed into the regional workshops.

Objective of the meeting

The aim of the event is to have an informed discussion among all concerned stakeholders on (i) the policy objectives; (ii) criteria; and (iii) procedural considerations that bear on the definition and selection of EGs for a

national list that could be submitted to the WTO. Discussions should also include "defensive" interests of the country, such as unintended liberalization for dual-use EGs or the protection of infant national EG industries.

CBTF will make available the following background documentation for the meeting:

- Briefing paper on issues of definitions and criteria used in the negotiations on EGs in the WTO.
- An analysis of trade of developing countries in potential EGs, with the emphasis on:
 - Review of the lists of EGs tabled thus far in the WTO and those EGs that are of particular export and import interest to developing countries;
 - Statistical analysis of trade of developing countries in EGs with developed and developing countries;
 - Identification of dynamic EGs;
 - Analysis of the implications of the statistical review for the definition and listing of EGs in current WTO negotiations in the Committee on Trade and Environment.
- An analysis of recent Philippine trade in potential EGs.

The meeting is not expected to draft a list of specific items of EGs. However, the event should clarify all key elements that bear on the selection of EGs, identify the core groups of EGs that are of particular export and import interest to the Philippines, and agree on follow-up activities that support the drafting of a national EG list that could be submitted to the WTO.

Target audience

The meeting should rally government representatives (notably from the Departments of Science and Technology, DENR and DTI), representatives from academia, interested NGOs and the private sector.

Timing and venue of the stakeholder workshop

Contact person for CBTF

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