



**UNEP**

UNITED NATIONS  
ENVIRONMENT  
PROGRAMME

UNITED NATIONS  
CONFERENCE ON  
TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT



**UNCTAD**

---

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

---

## **Short Report**

### **UNEP-UNCTAD CBTF Training Workshop**

#### **Enhancing Policy Co-ordination on Trade and Environment Issues: Implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements Containing Trade- Related Measures**

**Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 5-6 October 2004**

# **Enhancing Policy Co-ordination on Trade and Environment Issues: Implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements Containing Trade-Related Measures**

**Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 5-6 October 2004**

## **Background**

The UNEP-UNCTAD Capacity Building Task Force on Trade, Environment and Development (CBTF) convened a training workshop on 5-6 October in Phnom Penh, Cambodia entitled, *Enhancing Policy Coordination on Trade and Environment Issues: Implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements Containing Trade-Related Measures*.

The purpose of the workshop was to enhance national coordination on trade and environment issues related to the implementation of four multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) – the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and its Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. The workshop represented the first CBTF activity to take place in Cambodia, and the second overall under the new phase of CBTF activities. In conjunction with the workshop, Mr. Chuon Chanrithy, a Cambodian consultant, was retained to prepare a case study analyzing Cambodia's policy coordination in the implementation of the four MEAs.

There were approximately 40 participants at the workshop representing Cambodian national and regional government ministries, non-governmental organizations, academia and the private sector. In addition, Ms. Keobang A. Keola from the Loa PDR Science, Technology and Environment Agency participated in the workshop.

The training workshop was organized in response to a 15 December 2003 letter from H.E. Dr. Mok Mareth, Cambodian Minister of Environment to the Secretary-General of UNCTAD specifically requesting training on MEA implementation for environment and trade officials.

## **Presentations and Discussions**

The workshop was opened by H.E. Khong Samnuon, Secretary of State, Cambodian Ministry of Environment, and H.E. Sok Siphana, Secretary of State, Cambodian Ministry of Commerce. Both speakers highlighted the importance of trade and environment capacity building activities given Cambodia's recent accession to the WTO. They also discussed current constraints, including financial and human, facing Cambodia in its efforts to implement MEAs.

Both speakers noted that in order for Cambodia to actively participate in the trade and environment negotiations taking place in the WTO it is necessary for key government ministries to have a sound understanding of the negotiating mandate, various negotiating positions and relevant provisions within MEAs. In particular, Mr. Samnuon outlined issues such as illegal trade in endangered species, international hazardous waste trafficking, the loss of biodiversity, and exposure to risks associated with imports of genetically modified organisms as being of particular concern for Cambodia.

After the opening remarks, Benjamin Simmons, the UNEP resource person, gave a short presentation on the role of MEA trade-related measures in managing global environmental challenges. The presentation highlighted the motivation behind the development of MEAs in general, and trade-related measures in particular. The presentation noted that developing countries in particular have an incentive in cooperative approaches to address transboundary or global environmental threats within the framework of MEAs given that they are often more vulnerable to the impacts. Moreover, MEAs often provide financial, technical and other support to developing countries for their implementation. Thus, Mr. Simmons noted that it is not surprising that developing countries have often been the demandeurs behind many MEAs.

Mr. Simmons also made a short presentation on the objectives, trade-related measures and implementation issues with respect to CITES. In particular, he highlighted some of the implementation issues facing Cambodia, including lack of human and financial resources to adequately monitor trade at the borders resulting in the proliferation of illegal trade in endangered species.

Ulrich Hoffman, Senior Economics Officer, UNCTAD, made a presentation on the relationship between trade-related measures in MEAs and WTO rules. The presentation focused on substantive and procedural issues related to the negotiations under paragraph 31(i) of the Doha Ministerial Declaration, possible outcomes from the negotiations, and key developing country issues in the negotiations. He concluded his remarks by noting that the Doha negotiations exclusive focus on specific trade obligations (STOs) in MEAs may be undesirable for developing countries because such measures were often taken as part of a package of trade and non-trade measures and developing countries had a particular interest in supportive measures of MEAs.

Dr. Hoffmann also made a presentation on the CBD and the Biosafety Protocol. He focused his discussion on the relationship between the TRIPS and SPS Agreements of the WTO and the CBD and the Biosafety Protocol, as well as how developing countries can utilize the advance information requirements to protect human health and biodiversity.

Thanavat Junchaya, Regional Network Coordinator, UNEP Regional Office of Asia and Pacific, made a presentation on the objectives, trade measures and implementation issues with respect to the Montreal Protocol. Mr. Junchaya highlighted the importance of trade-related measures in the Montreal Protocol, noting that they were essential to its global ratification and a key reason why it has become one of the most successful MEAs, resulting in a 90% phase-out of global production and consumption of ozone depleting substances (ODS). Participants at the workshop were particularly interested in the capacity building activities that have or will take place in Cambodia focusing on the phase-out of ODS.

Sulistyowati Listy, Director, Basel Convention Regional Center – Jakarta, gave a short presentation on the Basel Convention's objectives, strategic plan, and technical assistance activities. She discussed activities of the Basel Regional Center aimed at supporting national implementation of the Basel Convention, such as the creation of a database and information exchange regarding hazardous waste management technology, promotion of waste minimization, facilitation of field visits, and cooperation with the private sector and other regional and sub-regional sectors. The Cambodian government participants voiced their concern about waste issues in Cambodia, and, in particular, noted that lead in used car batteries was beginning to pose a serious environmental and health threat. The participants also noted their general concern that Cambodia was becoming a dumping ground for the region. Ms. Listy pointed out that a consultant had just made two field trips to Cambodia to take stock of the situation of domestically generated waste car batteries. The consultant would produce a report, which would include proposals for follow-up action, including suitable management approaches, training and awareness raising.

Chuon Chanrithy presented the findings of his case study that considered Cambodia's national policy coordination in implementing the Basel Convention, CITES, the Montreal Protocol, and the CBD. For each MEA, Mr. Chanrithy highlighted the Cambodia government's institutional arrangement for implementation and participation in technical assistance programmes. Mr. Chanrithy also made a number of recommendations for enhancing Cambodia's implementation of MEAs, including, most importantly, enhancing the capacity of government officials and customs officials.

Cambodochine Dao gave a brief presentation on the findings of a study he conducted on the potential for Cambodian horticulture exports. Mr. Dao noted that Cambodia is currently unable to meet its domestic needs with respect to horticulture because of a lack of infrastructure and supply capacity. He also noted that one of the primary challenges for Cambodia is its proximity to Vietnam and Thailand, two very strong exporters of horticulture products. In this light, Mr. Doa suggested that Cambodian farmers may need to distinguish themselves in order to gain overseas market access. One of the primary ways to do so in horticulture products, according to Mr. Doa, is through organic farming.

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

The workshop provided an opportunity to promote discussions on the linkages between trade and environment among key stakeholders, including representatives from the government ministries in the regions, local NGOs, the private sector and the University of Phnom Penh.

Participants noted that Cambodia faces serious capacity constraints, both human and financial, in complying with various MEA reporting requirements. A number of participants called for a streamlining of MEA reporting requirements to ease the burden of implementation on developing countries.

The workshop participants outlined the following as high priority issues for future trade and environment capacity building activities in Cambodia:

- Need for training on the application of environmental impact assessments to determine the impact of economic activity on sustainable development
- Need for technical assistance and capacity building for government officials and customs officers on issues related to MEA implementation
- Need to study the potential and risks of promoting organic agriculture in Cambodia
- Specific thematic areas mentioned as critical to Cambodia:
  - Deforestation and illegal logging
  - Water quality – illegal settlements along major lakes
  - Coastal areas under threat from unregulated development
  - Loss of biodiversity from illegal trade and pollution
  - Application of chemicals, herbicides and pesticides in agriculture
  - Disposal of used batteries

In addition, Ms. Keola from the Loa PDR Science, Technology and Environment Agency stated her interest in organizing a similar CBTF activity in Loa PDR.

In his closing remarks, H.E. Khong Samnuon noted that the workshop made a valuable contribution to enhancing implementation of MEAs in Cambodia. It also contributed to improving the capacity of national policymakers to engage in regional and international negotiations. He encouraged participants at the meeting to pass on the knowledge they gained from the workshop to colleagues in their regions. Finally, Mr. Samnuon requested that UNEP and UNCTAD return to Cambodia to address future training needs on trade and environment issues, as requested in Minister Mareth's letter to the Secretary-General of UNCTAD.