



United Nations Environment Programme

برنامج الأمم المتحدة للبيئة • 联合国环境规划署
PROGRAMME DES NATIONS UNIES POUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT • PROGRAMA DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS PARA EL MEDIO AMBIENTE
ПРОГРАММА ОРГАНИЗАЦИИ ОБЪЕДИНЕННЫХ НАЦИЙ ПО ОКРУЖАЮЩЕЙ СРЕДЕ

Annotated Agenda

UNEP WORKSHOP ON CAPACITY BUILDING ON ENVIRONMENT, TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT 19 – 20 MARCH 2002, PALAIS DES NATIONS

Conference Room XII

A UNEP-sponsored meeting, in collaboration with the WTO

Tuesday, 19 March

▶ 08:00 – 10:00

Registration (Villa les Feuillantines, opposite Palais des Nations)

▶ 10:00 – 10:30

Session I: Opening of the Meeting

Annotation I

Chair – Hussein Abaza, Chief, Economics and Trade Branch, UNEP

- “Moving forward on capacity building” – presentation of structure and aims of workshop
Hussein Abaza
- Capacity building to support WTO negotiations
Ambassador Oğuz Demiralp, Permanent Representative of Turkey to the WTO, Geneva
- Comment on proposed outputs and potential relevance to WTO processes
Jan-Eirik Sorensen, Director, Trade and Environment Division, WTO
- Capacity building as a tool for development
Rene Vossenaar, Chief, Trade, Environment and Development Section, UNCTAD

▶ 10:30 – 12:30

Session II: Country and regional perspectives

Annotation II

- A. Commentaries by representatives of beneficiary countries
- B. Discussions: Experiences and needs of beneficiary countries

▶ 12:30 – 14:00

Lunch

▶ 14:00 – 17:30

Session III: Capacity building for mutually supportive environment and trade policies

Annotation III

- A. Commentaries by representatives of capacity building service providers
 - WTO Technical Cooperation Division
 - OECD Development Center
 - UNEP-UNCTAD Capacity Building Task Force on Trade, Environment and Development
 - ICTSD
 - World Bank
- B. Discussions: Addressing gaps and deficiencies of current efforts

Wednesday, 20 March

▶ 9:30 – 12:00

**Session IV: Capacity building as a tool
for achieving synergies between MEAs and the WTO**

Annotation IV

A. Overview: *Charles Arden-Clarke, Economics and Trade Branch, UNEP*

B. Presentation by representatives of the secretariats of MEAs and the WTO

C. Discussions: MEA-WTO capacity building needs

▶ 12:00 – 13:30

Lunch

▶ 13:30 – 15:30

Session V: Next steps, conclusions and recommendations

▶ 15:30

Closure of workshop

▶ ▶ ▶ In Annex: Annotations I-IV

ANNOTATION I

BACKGROUND AND OPENING OF THE MEETING

Session I (Tuesday, 19 March, 10.00am – 10.30)

There has been increasing recognition, particularly during the last decade, of the importance of capacity building for developing countries and countries with economies in transition to address the challenges of sustainable development. The urgent need for capacity building on trade and environment was further highlighted at the Fourth Session of the WTO Ministerial Conference (Doha, November 2001) where delegates from 144 countries agreed on an agenda for a new round of WTO negotiations.

Future negotiations will, for the first time, cover a range of trade-related environmental issues, both as stand-alone negotiating objectives, and integrated into other negotiating objectives. Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to sustainable development and mutually supportive trade and environment policies and stressed the “importance of technical assistance and capacity building in the field of trade and environment to developing countries”. In this context the decision by governments to launch a new round of WTO negotiations on trade-related environment and development issues further underscores the need for dynamic, structured, effective, and well coordinated capacity building programmes reflecting beneficiary countries’ current, emerging and long-term needs.

Although national and international policymaking that integrates environment, trade and development considerations is a relatively new discipline, primarily emerging only during the past decade, a considerable offering of capacity building services in this area has been made by intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations in recent years. However, despite these efforts, capacity building services have neither been adequate nor yielded desired outcomes. This is mainly due to misconceptions about what represents a useful and effective capacity building package. At the international level, neither a common understanding of, nor agreement on, capacity building requirements in the area of environment, trade and development have been established. Moreover, most service providers have not coordinated their programmes inter-alia to ensure a consistent, cost-effective long-term approach to capacity building. Nor have they sufficiently integrated regional, sub-regional, nongovernmental and national institutions into their programmes’ needs assessments, design and delivery.

Too often, capacity building programmes have been conceived without due consideration to the specific requirements, needs and conditions of beneficiary countries. In most cases, services have been, and continue to be delivered in an uncoordinated ad-hoc basis by different institutions. The scope and depth of programmes have been mostly limited to the delivery of fragmented, simplistic training packages, and the convening of seminars and workshops to discuss general conceptual issues. Moreover, most activities within programmes have been one-off exercises, without linkages inter-alia and lacking related follow-up, evaluation and ongoing needs assessment to respond to emerging needs and priorities for integrated policy development and implementation.

If developing countries and countries with economies in transition are to reap maximum benefits from integrating into the multilateral trading system they must develop mutually supportive environment, trade and development policies, and effectively implement them. Capacity building efforts must advance beyond currently adopted approaches to achieve this goal, and be clearly defined and extended to meet immediate and long-term country needs for:

- Country-specific capacity building projects;
- Action-oriented research by national experts focused on specific priority areas;
- Subsequent regional and international policy dialogue allowing countries to exchange results and experiences of their projects and research.

It should also be recognised that, to date, the provision of capacity building services has hinged on a flow of such services from North to South and West to East, without encouraging the active involvement of regional, sub-regional and national organisations in their design and delivery.

This has entailed lost opportunities for enhancing South-South cooperation. Future capacity building activities should thus explore new delivery options based on active collaboration between multilateral, regional, sub-regional and national institutions.

In the follow-up to Doha, as governments seek to develop a more effective approach to environment, trade and development capacity building, there is a need to evaluate recent capacity building activities and to identify gaps where the process, scope, coordination and follow-up of activities can be improved. There is a need for the international community to develop coordinated, long-term capacity building programmes of a broader scope to enhance national institutional and human capacities for: integrated assessment of macroeconomic policies, including trade policies; the development and implementation of market-based and regulatory policies to maximise the net sustainable development gains of trade; and the adaptation and use of environmentally sound technologies to promote sustainable development and enhance market access opportunities. In addition, capacity building programmes should promote good governance, transparency and accountability by encouraging broad public participation and engaging stakeholders from government, the private sector, national institutions, local communities and NGOs in national policy assessment, development and implementation. Design and implementation of programmes should be based on national needs assessments and engage the full range of stakeholders in beneficiary countries.

Finally, funding in recent years for environment, trade and development capacity building has been unpredictable. Current levels fall far short of meeting the growing demand for capacity building services. Developing modalities to ensure adequate and sustained funding for capacity building remains an urgent priority.

The workshop is divided into four sessions. The meeting will open by examining the role and importance of capacity building on environment, trade and development in assisting countries to effectively integrate into the global economy to benefit from enhanced economic growth and sustainable development. **Session II** will commence with presentations by government representatives on national and regional experiences with capacity building and perceived needs for future activities. It is hoped that interventions from the floor will point out the strengths and weaknesses of current efforts and to both short- and long-term country needs for capacity building assistance. In **Session III**, following commentaries by representatives of organisations that provide capacity building services, discussions will focus on possible ways to address gaps and deficiencies of current efforts so that more accessible, comprehensive, integrated and better coordinated capacity building assistance can be provided. **Session IV** will examine requirements for capacity building on building synergies between MEAs and the WTO, based both on presentations made by the secretariats of these agreements and interventions from the floor. Concluding the meeting, **Session V** will allow participants to reflect on insights gained from discussions and provide an opportunity for participants to propose actions that service providers, donors and beneficiaries can undertake to promote more effective capacity building on environment, trade and development.

ANNOTATION II

SESSION II (TUESDAY, 19 MARCH, 10.30AM – 12.30)

EXPERIENCES AND NEEDS OF BENEFICIARY COUNTRIES

The purpose of this session is to build a better understanding of the environment, trade and development capacity building needs of developing countries and countries with economies in transition. This includes defining the objectives of capacity building as well as identifying process- and issue-oriented gaps and needs.

Experiences of beneficiaries

Improving the effectiveness of capacity building must start with a critique of processes adopted in the past. Reasons for their failure or limited success can point to steps that can be taken to restructure the capacity building process and expand the scope of topics covered by programmes and activities for greater effectiveness.

Starting off this session, government representatives of beneficiary countries will comment on national and regional experiences with environment, trade and development capacity building. They will discuss strengths and weaknesses of previous capacity building experiences and identify gaps in capacity building efforts – i.e., short- and long-term needs – that remain to be addressed.

Commentaries will be followed by an open discussion on environment, trade and development capacity building gaps and needs.

Discussion: Capacity building gaps and needs

Points for discussion:

► ***Do the objectives of capacity building programmes meet beneficiary needs?***

A capacity building service furnished by a provider to a beneficiary should provide the latter with assistance to enhance national capacity to address environment, trade and development issues of national interest. Typical objectives of capacity building programmes in the field of environment, trade and development are to enhance governments' capacities to:

- Raise awareness and understanding about the linkages between environment, trade and development.
- Enhance understanding of the implications (environmental, economic and social) of trade liberalisation, and formulate and implement policies that can maximise the net sustainable development gains of trade.
- Capture environment-related development opportunities offered by trade and globalisation.
- Engage effectively in trade and environment negotiations.

The provider and beneficiary should agree on the objectives of a proposed capacity building programme or activity before any decision for cooperation on its implementation.

► ***Is the process adopted in capacity building programmes appropriate?***

The capacity building process – i.e., how programmes are designed, delivered and followed-up – ultimately determines its effectiveness:

- Are programmes country-driven, based on national needs assessments?
- Do programmes comprise intensive and participative country-based activities aimed at human resource development and institution building needed to support countries' immediate and long-term objectives?
- Do programmes offer complementary and mutually supportive activities?
- Are durable long-term partnerships between service providers and beneficiaries established to ensure follow-up assistance is available as needed?

- Do programmes' delivery mechanisms involve active cooperation with relevant regional, sub-regional and national institutions?
- Do service providers adequately coordinate their programmes and activities to avoid gaps, prevent redundancies and ensure continuity?

► ***Do the activities of capacity building programmes build needed capacities?***

If developing countries and countries with economies in transition are to reap maximum benefits from integrating into the multilateral trading system they must develop mutually supportive environment, trade and development policies, and effectively implement them. To support their efforts, capacity building activities must extend beyond awareness raising seminars and formal training to practical 'hands-on' activities where experience in policy assessment, development and implementation is gained.

► ***Is the scope of capacity building programmes broad enough to cover needs?***

In broad terms, effective capacity building must enhance national capacities to address the sustainable development challenges of trade liberalisation; and to fully capture international opportunities for sustainable development offered by globalisation and supported by multilateral agreements. Do capacity building programmes provide assistance in specific areas required to further these objectives? Is there a need to develop capacity building programmes of extended scope – i.e., in-depth treatment of a broader set of topics?

ANNOTATION III

SESSION III (TUESDAY, 19 MARCH, 14.00AM – 17.30)

CAPACITY BUILDING FOR MUTUALLY SUPPORTIVE TRADE AND ENVIRONMENT POLICIES

This session seeks to define the challenges and requirements for more effective environment, trade and development capacity building with a view towards identifying actions that service providers and beneficiaries can take to improve capacity building programmes.

Experiences of service providers

Enhancing the effectiveness of capacity building requires that service providers build on successes of their previous efforts. It also requires they appreciate the shortcomings of their capacity building programmes and are prepared to address them. Starting off this session, representatives of organisations providing environment, trade and development capacity building services will comment on the strengths and weaknesses of their programmes and outline ways that they can address programme gaps and deficiencies.

Commentaries will be followed by an open discussion on ways to enhance the effectiveness of environment, trade and development capacity building programmes.

Discussion: Ways to enhance the effectiveness of capacity building programmes

Points for discussion:

► ***Providing assistance throughout the policy cycle***

Capacity building continues to mean different things to different providers and beneficiaries alike. There is a need to establish a common understanding of capacity building. A capacity building service furnished by a provider to a beneficiary should provide the latter with assistance to enhance national capacity to address environment, trade and development issues of national priority. Beneficiaries should be assisted to develop programmes that are comprehensive, sustainable and meet national needs and priorities.

It is useful to consider capacity building within the context of a complete policy cycle: assessment (of existing policies) → identification → development → implementation → assessment and evaluation (of new/reformed policies). Programmes should aim to assist the beneficiary country in addressing each element of the policy cycle, rather than only within one or a subset of elements. Programmes should be complete in the sense that a full policy cycle can be catalysed and subsequently sustained following the termination of programme activities.

► ***Defining the objectives of capacity building***

Beneficiary countries should take the lead in defining the objectives of national and regional capacity building programmes in the field of environment, trade and development. In order to meet these objectives, they should also decide upon tools of implementation, national institutions to be involved, and funding requirements, both national and external.

► ***Designing the capacity building process***

Several aspects of the capacity building process should be evaluated when assessing and restructuring capacity building programmes:

- Structure – Does the programme encompass needs assessment, design, delivery and follow-up?
- Needs assessment – Are topics and issues addressed by capacity building programmes of national interest? Do they reflect national concerns and priorities? Are they treated within the context of the beneficiary country, or in a general way that countries themselves need to translate into national terms? Needs assessment is critical to programme design.
- Objectives – Are clear programme objectives set and evaluated? Who sets these objectives? For which elements of the policy cycle is assistance provided?

- Endogenous vs. exogenous process – Is the capacity building process country driven, i.e., actively pursued by national stakeholders based on their interests, and advanced based on their evolving capabilities, or is it driven by the objectives of the service provider?
- Mode of learning – Is learning advanced primarily through learning-by-doing or through learning-by-showing?
- Types of activities – What kinds of activities are employed in the programme, for example: formal training, on-the-job training, policy development, seminars, projects, research?
- Complementarity of activities – are activities linked and mutually reinforcing?
- Multi-stakeholder participation – What is the level of involvement of national stakeholders, institutions and experts? Are regional and sub-regional partners included in programme activities? Broad stakeholder participation promotes good governance, transparency and accountability. A participatory process benefits from stakeholder ownership of national policy assessment, design and implementation while helping to establish a dispersed 'threshold' of in-country capacity needed to replicate this process in the future.
- Delivery – Do national, sub-regional and regional institutions participate?
- Coordination – Is the programme coordinated at the national and international levels with other programmes and efforts?
- Timeframe – Is the programme run for a long enough period to initiate a process of continuous, endogenous capacity building which extends significantly beyond the time frame of the service provider's activities?
- Follow-up – Are long-term partnerships between the provider and beneficiary formed? Is programme effectiveness evaluated? Are additional activities implemented as needed to meet unattained objectives?
- Financing – Is there a sufficient and predictable commitment to fund the programme?

Any systematic examination of the process characterizing recent capacity building efforts should evaluate each of these, as well as other, aspects.

► **Employing a wide set of activities in capacity building**

Capacity building activities should be extended to meet short- and long-term country needs. National needs assessment workshops should identify beneficiary needs, priorities and target groups and define a process for implementation of activities, through:

- Action-oriented research by national experts focused on specific priority areas.
- Country projects – i.e., country-based, sector-specific policy assessment, development and implementation activities incorporating national stakeholder consultation and founded on a national learning by doing approach to capacity development.
- Subsequent regional and international policy dialogue allowing countries to exchange results and experiences of their projects and research.

Over time, undertaking complementary activities such as these in addition to awareness raising seminars and training, provides for a more integrated approach for capacity building, where each component activity can feed into and reinforce subsequent ones (within and between beneficiary countries).

► **Ensuring the topical scope of capacity building programmes covers needs**

There is a need to develop capacity building programmes of extended scope – i.e., in-depth treatment of a broader set of topics. Based on regional and country-based needs assessments, and results from UNEP's survey, the following is a preliminary listing of important topics to be covered by capacity building programmes:

- Integrated assessment of trade and trade-related policies.
- Addressing the implications (environmental, economic and social) of trade liberalisation.
- Natural resource valuation and accounting.

- Approaches and measures for the development and implementation of mutually supportive trade and environment policies.
- Enhancing market access for exports through compliance with international health and environmental product standards.
- Developing national systems for the management of traditional knowledge.
- Adaptation and use of environmentally sound technologies (ESTs) to promote sustainable development and capture market access opportunities for exports of environmentally preferable products (EPPs).
- Poverty, trade and environment.
- Building national capacities for the negotiation of MEAs and the WTO agreements, and to enhance synergies between them inter-alia.
- Building national capacities for the negotiation of WTO Agreements with environmental implications:
 - The relationship between existing WTO rules and specific trade obligations set out in MEAs.
 - Environmental goods and services.
 - Fisheries subsidies.
 - Agriculture and environment.
 - TRIPS, environment and traditional knowledge.
 - Environmental measures and market access for developing countries.
 - Integrated assessments of trade liberalisation.

The above is a preliminary listing of important topics to be covered by environment, trade and development capacity building programmes is meant to provide an illustrative set of areas where capacity building assistance is needed. Needs assessments would certainly identify others.

ANNOTATION IV

SESSION IV (WEDNESDAY, 20 MARCH, 10.00AM – 12.30)

CAPACITY BUILDING AS A TOOL FOR ACHIEVING SYNERGIES BETWEEN MEAs AND THE WTO

Growing global interdependencies, both economic and environmental, increase the need for policy coherence and coordination at all levels, and demand renewed efforts to build mutually supportive relationships between MEAs and the WTO. Strengthening the mutual supportiveness and coherence of trade and environment policies, rules and institutions is required to maximise their joint contribution to sustainable development, and is likely to yield significant benefits for MEA parties and WTO Members, particularly developing countries. Efforts to build links between national co-implementation of these agreements would benefit both developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

The purpose of this session is to identify the role capacity building can play to deliver potential synergies that can arise through the implementation of the provisions of MEAs and the WTO.

Commentaries by MEA and WTO secretariats

The MEAs and the WTO each have programmes of technical assistance and capacity building. There are significant opportunities for synergies in relation to these programmes. Capacity building and technical assistance are also crosscutting and may thus be of relevance in realising synergies in substantive areas. Starting off this session, representatives of MEA and WTO secretariats will outline ways that their diverse capacity building programmes can be brought together and integrated to yield greater synergies.

Commentaries will be followed by an open discussion on ways that capacity building can enhance synergies between MEAs and the WTO.

Discussion: Capacity building to enhance synergies between MEAs and the WTO

Points for discussion:

► ***Capacity building for better compliance and implementation of international environmental and trade agreements***

It has been recognised that for many developing countries, lack of capacity and limited technical, technological and financial resources are all important factors limiting implementation of MEAs. These constraints can be addressed in the context of MEAs themselves, but it is clear that trade can make an important contribution to increasing developing countries' abilities to comply with MEA obligations. Examples of this are provided by trade in environmentally sustainable technologies (ESTs), and situations where revenues secured from trade allow increased investment in environmental protection and ESTs. Joint capacity building efforts by MEA, UNEP and WTO Secretariats, in collaboration with other relevant organisations such as UNCTAD, can help maximise the contribution of trade and trade-related policies towards meeting MEA objectives. The MEA-WTO process has identified the following specific areas, among others, in which cooperation and joint capacity building activities by international organisations could achieve this end.

Integrated assessments of trade-related policies at national level help to identify challenges faced by countries while trying to implement MEAs in the context of trade liberalisation. For example, the Conference of the Parties (COP) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) has been mandated to undertake an assessment of the effects of trade liberalisation on agricultural biodiversity. UNEP has initiated work to apply methodologies for the 'integrated assessment' of the effects (environmental, economic and social) of trade liberalisation on the agricultural sector. This work is being undertaken with the participation of the WTO and CBD Secretariats, FAO, and UNCTAD, all of which could contribute to associated capacity building activities.

Training of customs officers on regulations required by MEAs is necessary for more effective implementation of these agreements. The Secretariats of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), the Montreal Protocol on Substances which Deplete the Ozone Layer, and the Basel Convention consider such training vital to reinforce implementation of controls on illegal trade in endangered species, ozone depleting substances, and hazardous wastes respectively. Joint training workshops for customs officers, on the implementation of MEA provisions and WTO rules, would strengthen compliance actions with both trade and environment agreements, and build synergies between them. In this regard, existing efforts of the Secretariat of the Basel Convention, together with CITES, and other MEAs, the World Custom Organization (WCO) and Interpol, for the training of customs officers as well as Port authorities in Asia, should be expanded to all regions. These efforts attempt to match the expressed needs from Parties to MEAs from all regions for the delivery of integrated capacity building programmes, in line with enhancing the concept of 'environmental customs'.

Collaborative implementation of technology transfer and technical assistance measures in MEAs and the WTO, and cooperative capacity building activities in support of this implementation, could enhance the mutual supportiveness of these agreements. The Secretariats of the Basel Convention, the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the CBD have all expressed interest in developing synergies between provisions on technology transfer contained in those agreements, and related provisions in the TRIPS Agreement and other WTO agreements. Collaborative capacity building activities could focus on expanding trade in environmentally sustainable technologies (ESTs) on more favourable terms for developing countries, and also enhancing the capacity of those countries to develop and adapt technologies to meet their own requirements. There may be a need to develop a common MEA-UNEP agenda for the delivery of technology transfer and development capacity building activities that is supportive of the implementation of the MEAs concerned. Preliminary action taken by MEAs in this area in consultation with regional centres (such as the regional centres for training and technology transfer) may be valuable.

► ***Capacity building for enhancing coordination between environment and trade ministries at the national level***

There is a broad recognition that the development of mutually supportive trade and environment policies requires more interaction and cooperation between respective national policy-makers in these two sectors. There are a number of ways in which trade and environment policy coordination at the national level could be enhanced, through joint workshops, preparation of training and capacity building materials, and research activities.

Increased participation of environment officials in the WTO Committee on Trade and Environment (CTE), including those responsible for negotiation and implementation of MEAs, enhances inter-ministerial contact and understanding at the national level. Since October 2000, UNEP has been providing financial support to environment officials from developing countries and economies in transition to attend CTE Sessions, and has also been organising back-to-back meetings on related issues (e.g., fisheries subsidies and MEA-WTO interactions). Similarly, the WTO Secretariat is now planning to hold side events at some MEA COPs, for example COP 6 of the CBD in April 2002. These exercises also enhance cooperation and coordination between the relevant secretariats, themselves.

Collaborative training and preparation of capacity building materials and activities by the MEA and WTO Secretariats, and UNEP could provide valuable guidance to national officials seeking to integrate policy objectives. The UNEP and WTO Secretariats have already prepared a joint paper on compliance and dispute settlement procedures in the WTO and MEAs, with input from their secretariats, to identify potential synergies. Similar joint analysis could be undertaken on the design and application of economic instruments for environmental purposes, and be developed into capacity building materials and activities.

Country case studies on environment, trade and development interactions can help bring relevant ministries together, and build national networks and in-country capacity to address these policy linkages. The secretariats to of the WTO and MEAs, together with UNEP and other relevant institutions like UNCTAD, could undertake such studies cooperatively, with the

participation of relevant national ministries and other stakeholders. Such studies might be focused on sectors of particular relevance to the implementation of specific MEAs, for example the energy, chemical, forestry and agricultural sectors.

Aid agencies and development cooperation ministries could become important collaborators for the secretariats of MEAs, the WTO and UNEP, helping them to strengthen their capacity building efforts on policy integration at the national level. Developing capacity building materials and activities supportive of national sustainable development strategies, in accordance with MEA and WTO objectives, could be a fruitful area of cooperation.

► ***Collaborative capacity building activities between the MEAs, the WTO and UNEP at regional and sub-regional levels.***

The recent collaboration between the WTO and MEA secretariats, and UNEP, in the context of the WTO Regional Seminars on Trade and Environment, demonstrates both the need for and potential of joint capacity building activities between these institutions. At the regional and sub-regional level, balanced groups of trade and environment officials, from countries with shared levels of development, economic priorities, environmental challenges, and linguistic and cultural commonalities are often able to progress faster with policy integration challenges than officials working at a global level. Coordinated and complementary capacity building activities could be offered in the context of regional and national sustainable development plans. There is already interest in the European Commission in supporting regional capacity building activities, perhaps including some of those outlined below.

Regional workshops and training seminars provide a potentially powerful and cost effective tool to bring trade and environment officials together to explore and enhance synergies on specific policies and issues. In addition to the opportunity offered by the WTO's Regional Seminars on Trade and Environment, UNEP intends to employ its network of regional offices (notably in Africa, West Asia, Asia-Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean) to enhance regionally-based capacity building activities. The expressed interest of Parties to MEAs for regional training and activities addressing both trade and environment issues (such as the above mentioned WTO Regional Seminars) underlines the need to develop a comprehensive and focused programme of activities covering policy development and mechanisms for technology transfer and development. In this regard, MEAs (such as the Basel Convention, which has 12 regional centres offering support for the conduct of training and technology transfer-related programmes) provide a valuable framework in which the collaboration of interested partners, including industry, can help meet the needs of Parties.

Regional organisations for economic integration (such as Mercosur in Latin America, and SADC in Southern Africa), which in some cases are expanding their activities into cooperation on environmental policies and/or sustainable development strategies, may also be of relevance. Capacity building activities could be cooperatively developed by the WTO, MEAs and UNEP in economic sectors that relate closely to implementation of some MEAs (e.g., the energy, agriculture and water sectors).