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CBTF

UNEP-UNCTAD Capacity Building Task Force on Trade, Environment and Development

Update on Activities. December 2005 edition

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Introduction

The UNEP-UNCTAD Capacity Building Task Force on Trade, Environment and Development (CBTF) is a demand-driven programme that works in cooperation with, and responds to the needs and requirements expressed by, governments, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and specialized agencies. Due to the increased demand for work in the area of trade and environment, and especially capacity-building, as expressed at a number of meetings and workshops, the CBTF is currently focusing its activities on the following thematic areas:

- * Organic Agriculture
- * Environmental Goods and Services
- * Trade and Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs)

Thanks to the financial contributions provided by the European Union, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States of America (USA), the CBTF has been able to complete projects initiated during Phase I (2000 - 2003) and launch a number of new activities under Phase II (2004-2006).

Briefing to the Missions

Briefing on CBTF Activities for 2005, Geneva, Switzerland, 6 July 2005

The Secretariats of UNEP and UNCTAD jointly organised a briefing for Geneva-based missions, donors, intergovernmental organisations, non-governmental organisations and delegates to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Committee on Trade and Environment (CTE) to update them on CBTF activities and to respond to questions regarding cooperation between UNEP and UNCTAD. Attended by more than 120 participants, this briefing was convened on 6 July 2005 during the lunch break of the WTO CTE regular session in order to benefit from the presence of capital-based delegates in Geneva for the negotiations.

The CBTF briefed participants about the successful completion of two national and one regional thematic research projects conducted in Indonesia, Lebanon and in Central America and the Caribbean, and 11 capacity building events which were organized in its first phase (2000-2003).

Activities in Phase II focus on three thematic areas: environmental goods and services (EGS), trade in organic agricultural products; and the mutual supportiveness of environment and trade policies.

A detailed report of the briefing and a list of participants are available on the CBTF website: [more ..](#)

Environmental Goods and Services

MERCOSUR Ad Hoc Group on Trade in Environmental Goods and Services Montevideo, Uruguay, 15-16 August 2005

The CBTF was invited to make a presentation on environmental goods during the first meeting of the MERCOSUR Ad Hoc Group on Trade in Environmental Goods and Services - Sub Working Group No. 6, Environment (Grupo Ad Hoc sobre Comercio de Bienes y Servicios Ambientales - sub grupo de trabajo n° 6 medio ambiente). The meeting was attended by delegations from Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay, and Chile as an Associate Member of MERCOSUR, and representatives from UNCTAD and UNEP.

A CBTF resource person made a presentation at the meeting on environmental goods, focusing on environmentally preferable products (EPPs). The presentation was followed by an extensive question and answer session covering a broad range of issues. A detailed report of the meeting and a list of participants is available on <http://www.medioambiente.gov.ar/?idarticulo=794>

Negotiations on environmental goods in the WTO CTESS: technical workshop, Bangkok, 25-26 August 2005

The CBTF convened a technical workshop to provide a platform for a number of developing countries requesting capacity-building support with respect to the WTO negotiations on environmental goods. The consultations were held with a view to promoting a better understanding of the proposals made to date in the WTO Committee on Trade and Environment Special Session (CTESS). Representatives from the following developing countries attended the workshop: Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Malaysia and Thailand.

The workshop focused on the following specific issues:

- (1) an analysis of the Doha Ministerial Declaration paragraph 31(iii) and its mandate relevant to environmental goods;
- (2) a discussion of various approaches put forward in the negotiations; and
- (3) a discussion of special and differential treatment under the scope of paragraph 31(iii).

Negotiations on environmental goods in the WTO CTESS: follow-up technical workshop, Geneva, 11 October 2005

The CBTF convened a technical workshop on 11 October in Geneva as a follow-up capacity-building activity to the Bangkok workshop. The workshop was attended by representatives from the following countries: Brazil, China, Ecuador, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Malaysia and Thailand. The participants were particularly interested in enhancing their capacity to actively participate in the environmental goods discussions that took place at the WTO on 12 and 14 October.

The technical workshop focused on the following specific issues:

- (a) identifying goods and technology systems with clear and demonstrable environmental use;
- (c) understanding the relationship between environmental goods and environmental services;
- (d) consideration of links between the negotiations and environmental technology transfer; and
- (e) special and differential treatment.

Advisory mission to China on policy and technical aspects of the negotiations under the mandate provided for in paragraph 31(iii) of the Doha Ministerial Declaration, Beijing, China, 22-23 August 2005

At the request of the Ministry of Commerce of China, the CBTF fielded an advisory mission to Beijing with a view to assisting the Chinese authorities concerned in dealing with the various policy and technical aspects of the negotiations on environmental goods, and more specifically those relating to the product coverage, negotiating modalities and implementation problems to be handled by customs authorities. The mission was conducted as a two-day meeting between two teams of experts – national and international – with the following four areas of expertise represented on both teams:

- * environmental industry;
- * environmental policy and regulations;
- * trade policy and negotiations; and
- * customs, more specifically tariff classification.

The national team included experts from the Chinese Department of WTO Affairs of the Ministry of Commerce, State Environmental Protection Administration, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Agriculture, National Development and Reform Commission, General Administration of Customs, University of International Business and Economics, Policy Research Centre for Environment and Economy and the Association of Environmental Protection Industry.

The international team included experts from UNCTAD, UNEP and the World Customs Organization (WCO).

Participants in the meeting addressed issues of particular interest to China in environmental and resource management. More technical discussions were held on imported environmental goods as well as on environmentally preferable products of export interest to China, and the ways and means of ensuring effective S&D treatment for developing Members.

Organic Agriculture

East African regional launching workshop of the CBTF initiative titled “Promoting Production and Trading Opportunities for Organic Agriculture in East Africa”, Kampala, Uganda, 19 October 2005

At the launching workshop, the Minister for Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, Honorable Janat Mukwaya stated that sustainable agriculture was the best option to increase farmers’ profits, access international market and save the environment.

The CBTF in its presentations explained the environmental, social, economic and trade benefits of organic agriculture (OA) and how integrated assessment (IA) could help identify policy options that help promote OA. A presentation was made to share preliminary results of a CBTF commissioned study entitled, “Overview of the Current State of Organic Agriculture in Kenya, Uganda and the Republic of Tanzania and the Opportunities for Regional Harmonisation”. In addition, the national project teams from Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda presented papers, which have been prepared as background documents for integrated assessment studies of the OA sector in the three countries. These papers explained the state of OA in these countries and included a stakeholders' mapping (who is doing what).

Participants were briefed about the regional harmonisation component of the project, which focuses on promoting cooperation and coordination among the three East African countries and harmonisation of the organic standards in the three countries.

IFOAM, FAO and the national organic bodies, were invited to make brief presentations about their work and future activities and how synergies could be developed between the CBTF work and their activities.

This workshop provided an opportunity to exchange information, share experiences and strengthen networks between project stakeholders, as well as to contribute to existing regional cooperation between Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. Details about the regional launching workshop are available on the CBTF website: [more ...](#)

National launching workshop of the CBTF project titled “Integrated Assessment of Organic Agriculture Production and Trade in Uganda” Kampala, 20 October 2005

After the welcome remarks by Ugandan Ministry of Agriculture, Uganda Export Promotion Board, Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment (ACODE), UNCTAD and UNEP, the CBTF made a presentation on the concept, process, methodology and tools of IA.

The national IA team presented the background paper, which focused on the state of production and trade of organic agriculture in Uganda, review of previous studies on organic agriculture as well as assessment, and mapping of stakeholders.

At the workshop, a panel discussion was also organised, which addressed the challenges for OA production and trade in Uganda. The major challenges that the OA faces in Uganda, as were discussed by the Panel are:

- * Absence of a national policy for OA;
- * Lack of financing and government support;

- * High costs of certification;
- * Lack of understanding about how the certification of OA works;
- * Lack of technical capacity to develop certifiable OA operations and lack of training opportunities for farmers;
- * Lack of finances to establish certifiable OA operations;
- * Absence of research on OA from the farmers' perspective (preparing compost, intermediate technologies for OA, etc.);
- * Insufficient investment in infrastructure; and
- * Growing regulations, requirements, standards, consumer concerns, etc.

Detailed report of the workshop and other related information is available on the CBTF website: [more ...](#)

First meeting of the East African Steering Committee for the CBTF initiative titled "Promoting Production and Trading Opportunities for Organic Agriculture in East Africa", Kampala, Uganda, 21 October 2005

The meeting of the Regional Steering Committee was held to discuss progress of the different components of the initiative and future directions. The committee has been established to ensure project coherency and provide an opportunity for information exchange. The Steering Committee meeting was attended by the National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA) of Kenya, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security of Tanzania, Uganda Export Promotion Board, the three designated national institutions undertaking IA, national organic movements from the three countries and a representative of IFOAM.

The participants selected ACODE (designated national institution from Uganda) as chair for the Steering Committee.

Regional standards technical working group (RSTWG) meeting, Kampala, Uganda, 24 October 2005

The first meeting of the Regional Standard Technical Working Group (RSTWG), another component of the CBTF initiative, was held on 24 October 2005. Members of the RSTWG include representatives of the national standards bureaus, organic bodies and certification organizations in the three countries, and the East African Business Council. The RSTWG agreed on the need for an East African regional standard on OA and will begin work on a draft regional standard.

Participants made presentations on national OA standards in the three countries. A CBTF resource person, presented a table comparing the three national standards

Further information on the meeting is available on the CBTF website: [more ...](#)

National launching workshop of the CBTF project titled "Integrated Assessment of Organic Agriculture Production and Trade in Tanzania", Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, 25 October 2005

The Tanzanian Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security and Envirocare welcomed participants to the workshop. The CBTF representative presented the IA framework and shared UNEP's experiences in implanting agriculture related IA projects.

The national IA team presented the background paper, which provides information on the state of production and trade of OA in Tanzania, a brief overview of the previous knowledge that exists on OA, and identification of stakeholders for the OA sector.

Further information on the workshop is available on the CBTF website: [more ...](#)

MEA-WTO Relationship

CBTF Workshop on Post-Doha Trade and Environment Issues, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, 21-22 July 2005

The CBTF convened a capacity-building workshop on 21-22 July in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic entitled, "Workshop on Post-Doha Trade and Environment Issues." This workshop was held back-to-back with a WTO regional training seminar on trade and environment. The aim of the

workshop was to strengthen the capacities of the Latin American and Caribbean 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, 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 70 participants from 25 countries attended the workshop, including two officials from each country – one responsible for environmental issues and one for trade issues.

Participants found the training workshop to be extremely useful and called for similar workshops to be organized in the region in the future. In particular, the workshop participants outlined the following as high priority issues for future trade and environment capacity-building activities:

- * Environmentally preferable products (EPPs)
- * Environmental goods and services, including a discussion on opportunities for identifying such goods and services of interest for developing countries
- * Eco-labelling
- * Integrated assessment and its use within the region
- * Organic agriculture
- * Impact of environmental policies on market access

A list of participants and further information related to the workshop is available on the CBTF website: [more ...](#)

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