

**Capacity Building Meeting on Environment,
Trade and Sustainable Development for the Latin
American and Caribbean Region**

Mexico City, MEXICO

27th-28th March 2003

Background Papers

Co-sponsored by UNEP Economics and Trade Branch, UNEP Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Forum of the Ministers of Environment for Latin America and the Caribbean, in collaboration with the North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation and the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

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Background and Overview

The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) held in Johannesburg, South Africa, emphasized the role of trade in achieving sustainable development. The WSSD *Plan of Implementation* states that assisting developing countries to respond to the challenges and opportunities of globalization will require action to continue to promote an open, equitable, rules-based, predictable and non-discriminatory multilateral trading system that benefits all countries in the pursuit of sustainable development. Additionally, at the fourth WTO Ministerial Conference in Doha, Qatar, governments reaffirmed their commitment to sustainable development and to 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.

The launch of negotiations on trade-related environment and development issues underscores the need for effective and coordinated capacity building programmes. This workshop builds on the findings of recent events – including the February 2001 capacity building meeting in Mexico City sponsored by UNEP, UNCTAD, IISD and the National Autonomous University of Mexico. It aims to encourage a discussion of priorities for capacity building on the trade, environment and sustainable development interface, as a step towards developing long-term capacity building programme for the LAC region, and a network of regional and sub-regional institutions to assist in undertaking these capacity building activities. As background to discussion at the meeting, the following six papers have been prepared:

- ***Environment, Trade and Sustainable Development: An Overview of Key Issues arising from the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the WTO Doha Work Programme*** offers an overview of some of the main issues of environment, trade and sustainable development. It emphasizes the importance of additional efforts to build capacity to assist policy-makers and other stakeholders to respond to the linkages between trade, the environment, society and the economy. It also serves as a summary of the issues discussed in the following five more specific papers, which themselves will serve as a basis for discussion in Working Groups during the second day of the Meeting.
- ***Enhancing Capacity Building for Environment, Trade and Sustainable Development*** provides a basic overview of the processes, tools and approaches for capacity building in the field of environment, trade and sustainable development. It is intended to help focus discussion on identifying capacity building needs throughout the conference, and will provide a background to each of the Working Groups as a reference to discussions of capacity building in the specific context of the issues discussed in those Groups.
- ***Maximizing the Contribution of Trade to Sustainable Development: the Role of Integrated Assessments*** explores the role of integrated assessment – the process of systematic evaluation of the environmental, social and economic effects of past or proposed future policies. It examines some factors to consider in the design of an integrated assessment, the *approaches and techniques* that can be employed, and the *various policy tools available* to governments when designing their response to an integrated assessment.
- ***Agriculture, trade and sustainable development*** explores some of the linkages between agriculture, trade, and sustainable development, and identifies a range of capacity building challenges at this interface.

- *Trade Preferences and Environmental Goods and Services* discusses a range of issues relating to environmental goods and services. It offers explores issues of market and trade facilitation, and provides information on the ongoing discussions of environmental goods and services at the World Trade Organization.
- *Intellectual Property and Environment: The Relationship Between the Convention on Biological Diversity and the TRIPS Agreement* provides a brief overview of the CBD and the TRIPS Agreement, and of recent developments at the Doha Ministerial and the WSSD. It also identifies some key issues for sustainable development including those arising from intellectual property and conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources, protection of traditional knowledge, agricultural biodiversity, transfer of technology, and development.

The discussion in these papers is also supplemented by relevant information on the UNEP website www.unep.ch/etu.

Note: These papers have been prepared by a range of authors as background to this meeting, in order to facilitate dialogue and discussion by participants, towards the development of a regionally-defined program of capacity building activities. The views expressed in these papers are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect an expression of views by the United Nations Environment Programme.