

United Nations Environment Programme

Division of Technology, Industry and Economics

Economics and Trade Branch

INFORMATION BULLETIN

Issue No. 9, April - June 2003

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High-Level Forum on Environment, Trade and Sustainable Development in the Asia-Pacific Region

Seoul, 12-14 May 2003 **-POSTPONED-**

The Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Korea and UNEP will jointly host the High-Level Forum. The Forum aims to provide a platform for environment and trade ministers and their senior officials, from both developed and developing countries, experts and other stakeholders, to develop an action plan for capacity building on environment, trade and sustainable development in the Asia-Pacific region, and identify and establish a network of collaborating institutions in the region.

The ministerial meeting scheduled on 14 May will be preceded by a two-day technical meeting (12-13 May), during which capacity building needs on this policy interface will be reviewed in depth, and a draft action plan developed. The draft will be provided to ministers and their advisers at the end of the second day and will serve as the basis for the high-level discussions on the third day. A revised action plan will be drawn out of those discussions, and will serve as the basis for UNEP to raise extra-budgetary financial resources to support the required capacity building activities.

Governments at the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg in September 2002 agreed (paragraph 97 of the Plan of Implementation) to "continue to enhance the mutual supportiveness of trade, environment and development with a view to achieving sustainable development". They further emphasized the importance of trade as a tool for implementing the WSSD recommendations. In the 22nd session of the Governing Council of UNEP, Member States further stressed the importance of intensifying capacity and institution building in developing countries to develop mutually supportive trade and environment policies and in achieving sustainable development.

Since 2001, UNEP has convened a series of events to examine capacity building needs on this policy interface. A Ministerial Meeting on Environment, Sustainable Development and Trade was held in Berlin in March

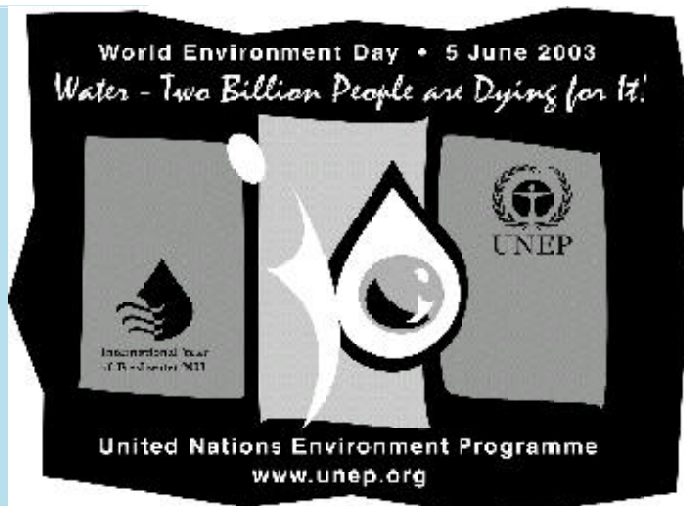
2001. Subsequent capacity building workshops were convened in March 2002 in Geneva and in July 2002 in Washington, DC. In March 2003, UNEP convened a capacity building workshop in Mexico for the Latin American and Caribbean Region (see page 2).



The Seoul High Level Forum on Environment, Trade and Sustainable Development in the Asia-Pacific Region is part of a series of regional events initiated in 2001. The Forum expects to draw participation from high-level officials from the Ministries of Environment and Trade, particularly in the Asia and the Pacific Region. With the involvement of both environment and trade officials, it is hoped that the meeting will reflect and focus on specific needs for capacity building on environment, trade and sustainable development in the region, and address specific trade and environment issues of particular concern to the region.

The Seoul High Level Forum will also build on UNEP's collaboration with the WTO in its Regional Seminars on Trade and Environment.

Additional information on the event is available on the ETB website (www.unep.ch/etu/).



Capacity Building Meeting on Environment, Trade and Sustainable Development for the Latin American and Caribbean Region, Mexico City, 27-28 March 2003

At the fourth WTO Ministerial Conference in Doha, governments 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 for developing countries. The decision taken in Doha to launch a new round of negotiations on trade-related environment and development issues, further underscored the need for effective coordinated capacity building programmes. Following this conference UNEP in collaboration with the WTO Secretariat, convened a workshop on Capacity Building on Environment, Trade and Development in Geneva in March 2002, and in July 2002 in Washington, DC, in cooperation with the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

These meetings provided a forum for assessing priorities in capacity building activities to enable countries to participate effectively in trade and environment negotiations, and develop and implement mutually supportive trade and environment policies.

As part of its regional follow-up to these two meetings, UNEP has convened a capacity building workshop in the Latin American and Caribbean region. This workshop, organized in close collaboration with the North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) and the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN-ECLAC) was held from 27-28 March 2003 in Mexico City, Mexico.

The event was convened within the framework of the Forum of Ministers for Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean and its Plan of Action for the Environment, as well as the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development which is part of the WSSD's Plan of Implementation.

The objectives of the workshop were to: (i) identify priorities for capacity building activities in the context of

ongoing regional and multilateral trade negotiations; (ii) assist in developing a long-term capacity building programme for the LAC region; (iii) identify a network of regional and sub-regional institutions to assist in undertaking these capacity building activities and; (iv) develop collaboration between UNEP and Secretariats of Trade and Economic agreements with regard to integrating environmental considerations in their activities.

The Workshop was attended by over 100 participants, including trade and environment officials of governments, IGOs, and NGOs. The working papers and other outputs prepared for the Workshop will be posted on the ETB website (www.unep.ch/etu/).

Workshop for the Development of a Framework for Strategic Integrated Assessment, Chavannes-de-Bogis, 13-14 February 2003

The last several years have witnessed an increased recognition of the importance of integrating environmental and social considerations in development planning and decision-making at the policy, planning and programme level. The result has been the emergence of a number of approaches with varying terminologies. These include strategic impact assessment, strategic impact analysis, sustainability assessment, and integrated assessment. When closely examining these approaches, it is evident that they attempt to achieve the same objective, and carry more similarities than differences.

Developing a framework which builds on the strength of these approaches and methodologies would clarify the concept behind the terminology, and define and agree on the approach for integrated planning. It will also eliminate the confusion resulting from the multiplicity of terminologies and combine efforts towards the integration of environmental, social and economic objectives, to help achieve sustainable development.

In order to realize these objectives, UNEP established a Working Group, comprising of experts and policy makers in the field of integrated assessment, to develop a framework for strategic integrated planning and to help guide eight country projects to test the integrated assessment framework. Due to the WTO negotiation currently taking place, the important role accorded to trade by the WSSD in achieving sustainable development, and the emphasis on poverty eradication at the Summit, particular focus will be given to these two aspects in the development of the framework.

To launch this project, UNEP convened the first Working Group Meeting in Chavannes-de-Bogis, Switzerland, from 13 to 14 February 2003. The meeting reviewed and provided input to the preparation of the framework, and the Working Group agreed on a road map for the testing of the framework and selection and implementation of country projects.

Third Working Group Meeting on Economic Instruments, Geneva, 17-18 February 2003

The UNEP Working Group on Economic Instruments for Environmental Policy, consisting of 30 experts from academic, governmental, nongovernmental and intergovernmental institutions, was established in 2001 and provides a forum to help define modalities for the use of economic instruments for environmental management and sustainable development. A key aim of the Group is to identify ways to enhance policy coordination at the national level related to the design and use of economic instruments.

At its third meeting, the Working Group reviewed two UNEP working papers, entitled *Opportunities, Prospects and Challenges for the Use of Economic Instruments in Environmental Policy Making* and *The Use of Economic Instruments to Implement Selected Multilateral Environmental Agreements*. The Group also exchanged national experiences on the use of economic instruments in achieving environmental policy objectives through the presentation and discussion of five UNEP-commissioned country projects.

The *Opportunities, Prospects and Challenges* report provides practical guidance on where and when economic instruments may be appropriate and effective. The report sets forth a four-stage framework to assist decision-makers, especially in developing countries, in selecting, designing and applying economic instruments to address a specific environmental problem. The report will be revised based on the comments provided by the Working Group and will be published for wide circulation.

Using the framework presented in the paper, five UNEP-commissioned country projects - Kenya, Philippines, Indonesia, Argentina and Uganda - presented their experiences on the application of economic instruments in various sectors. Their accounts provided insights into the practical use of the methodology proposed within the *Opportunities, Prospects and Challenges* report.

The second paper discussed was on *The Use of Economic Instruments to Implement Selected Multilateral Environmental Agreements*. Prepared in close collaboration between UNEP and the CBD, CITES and Ramsar Convention Secretariats, this paper explores the potential of using economic instruments in achieving the objectives of these MEAs, analyses existing provisions in these Conventions for the use of economic instruments, and provides practical examples for their implementation at the national level. This paper will also be revised and made available to national policy makers and practitioners.

Participants expressed their appreciation of the outcome of the meeting. For many attending the event, the exchange of ideas and experiences was valuable and the process itself was a form of capacity building. Furthermore, it was decided that future work should

focus on marketing and field-testing the two upcoming reports, and that future activities could additionally look at economic instruments applied in a broader development context and in alleviating specific environmental problems.

Meeting on the Integrated Assessment of Trade Liberalization in the Agriculture Sector, Geneva, 19-20 February 2003
Environmental and integrated assessment has been one of the major activities of UNEP's work during the last decade. Since 1997, UNEP has conducted 11 studies assessing the impacts of trade-related policies on specific sectors (such as fisheries, cotton, and forestry). These assessments, undertaken by domestic policy research institutions, provide data on the linkages among trade, environment and development policies, identifying positive and negative impacts of trade and trade liberalization.

Following two workshops organised in 2002, the Economics and Trade Branch (ETB) of UNEP has launched a third set of country projects on trade liberalisation in the agricultural sector focusing on the rice sector. These projects are intended to analyse the environmental, social and economic effects of the WTO Agreement on Agriculture for the rice sector in six different countries: Colombia, Indonesia, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Senegal and Vietnam. They will also tackle important related issues, such as poverty alleviation, biological diversity and food security.



Furthermore, in parallel to this project, UNEP has also initiated the preparation of the *Reference Manual for the Integrated Assessment of Trade-Related Policies for the Agriculture Sector*. The new operational manual is designed to be a practical tool for policy makers and practitioners for the integrated assessment of the impacts of trade liberalization on the agriculture sector.

A technical review meeting was organised by UNEP and held in Geneva on 19 and 20 Feb 2003, in order to review the preliminary results of the studies, as well as the first draft of the reference manual for the agriculture sector. The meeting was attended by the team leader of each country study and by representatives of other international organisations, NGOs and academic institutions. Presentations were made by the project team leaders at the meeting and the results were commented on by the members of the Working Group. The workshop presentations, first draft of the studies and the draft of

(continued on page 4)

Briefing Session with the Geneva-based Permanent Missions on the UNEP-UNCTAD CBTF Phase II, Geneva, 21 February 2003
UNEP and UNCTAD jointly convened a briefing session for the Geneva-based Permanent Missions on the UNEP-UNCTAD Capacity Building Task Force on Trade, Environment and Development (CBTF) which was held at the International Environment House, in Geneva, on 21 February 2003.

Presentations were made by UNEP and UNCTAD and was followed by brief presentations of the project team leaders of the CBTF projects in Indonesia, Lebanon and Senegal.

The Permanent Missions expressed appreciation to UNEP and UNCTAD for their efforts in holding the event and the briefing provided on: (a) some of the successful experiences of the CBTF since its inception in 2000; (b) new financing available to strengthen capacity building efforts on this policy interface in developing countries; and (c) plans for extended activities and greater cooperation with regional organizations in a new "Phase II" of the CBTF.

The event was attended by representatives from Angola, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Chile, China, Guatemala, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Moldova, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro and the UK. Additional information on the event is available on the ETB website (www.unep.ch/etu/etp/).

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**Published by the
Economics and Trade Branch
Division of Technology, Industry &
Economics
United Nations Environment Programme**

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(Meeting on the Integrated Assessment of Trade Liberalization in the Agriculture Sector, continued from page 3)

the manual are available on the ETB website (<http://www.unep.ch/etu/etp/>).

UNEP will organise a final review meeting in September 2003 and the country studies will be completed and the results published by the end of 2003. UNEP also plans to have the *Reference Manual for the Integrated Assessment of Trade-Related Policies for the Agriculture Sector* published by the second quarter of 2003.

IMPLEMENTING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Decision-makers increasingly seek to design environmental and development policies that will support sustainable development. Thus, practical tools to help formulate sustainable development policies and clear methods to assess their acceptability and effectiveness are urgently needed. This book contributes to meeting these needs by presenting both analytical and empirical aspects of decision-making processes.

The authors explore the methods for integrating environmental and social sciences to support participatory policy design, implementation and assessment of sustainable development policies. These methods are applied, richly illustrated and discussed with reference to several case studies from various regions of the world. Although each chapter has a distinct focus, they all contribute to a clearer understanding of how sustainable development is perceived and assessed by society. The book is interdisciplinary, emphasizing how the integration of a wide set of disciplines and stakeholder perspectives into the policy-making process can help to improve the perception of sustainable development policies. The authors argue that there should be greater transparency in the processes of modelling and integrated assessment in order to increase the meaningful participation of all stakeholders involved in the decision-making process.

By deliberately avoiding technical jargon, this book will appeal to a broad audience including environmental, resource and development economists. It will also be of interest to anyone with a scientific or policy perspective in the measurement and assessment of sustainable development.

To order the book, please send requests to: info@e-elgar.co.uk or sales@e-elgar.co.uk or visit: www.e-elgar.com or: direct.order@marston.co.uk (www.marston.co.uk)

