



## **Awareness Raising**

### ***Enhancing awareness and understanding***

**Background:** Agreements stemming from the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) clearly underlined the importance of integrating environmental, social and economic considerations in policies aimed at sustainable development. However, in most instances environmental policy has continued to be implemented in isolation from mainstream economic policies.

Lack of progress in policy integration is in a large part due to insufficient awareness and understanding of the linkages between the economy, society and the environment by decision makers. There is a particular need to clarify the relationships and complementarities between trade, environment and development in order to design mutually supportive policies. Policies which can result in win-win situations need to be identified, appropriate policy responses communicated, and future work priorities outlined. New analysis and policy solutions need to be transmitted to policy-making communities and to other stakeholders at both national and international levels. This must be done in a way that reflects the differing interests and needs of countries at different levels of development.

**Goals and Objectives:** UNEP seeks to expand outreach efforts to convey information on trade-environment-development issues to a wide audience of decision makers, and civil society generally, at national, regional and international levels. UNEP has recently initiated this effort by hosting and participating in international meetings, producing several publications on major issues, and upgrading the Economics and Trade Unit website in 2000. Additional resources will be allocated to these ETU activities, as well as those of the UNEP-UNCTAD Capacity Building Task Force (CBTF) in the future.

### **Activities:**

**Handbook on Environment and Trade:** In collaboration with the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), UNEP published a handbook on environment-trade issues in early 2000. Aimed at a non-expert audience, it seeks to increase an understanding of these issues through clear, user-friendly writing and presentation. This handbook is also available on the website. The handbook has been well received by a wide cross-section of the policy community dealing with trade-environment issues.

**Seminars on trade, environment and sustainable development:** These seminars provide trade and environment officials with a better understanding of the linkages between trade, environment and sustainable development. They also help identify trade-environment issues where further capacity and consensus building are needed:

- In 2000, UNEP participated in WTO Regional Trade and Environment Seminars in Malta, Gabon and Argentina.
- UNEP has also participated in a number of regional capacity building seminars with UNCTAD and the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD), in Harare, Caracas, and Geneva.

**Consultations with governments:** To ensure that country needs are met by the programme, UNEP regularly consults with governments on the development and progress of programme activities. Such consultations provide an opportunity for governments to express their concerns on particular environment-trade issues and their related interest to participate in specific programme research, capacity building and consensus building activities. They also provide UNEP with an opportunity to make governments aware of the benefits of integrating environmental considerations into economic and development planning.

**National trade and environment workshops** are convened as an integral component of each UNEP Country Project. In 2000, ETU participated in the National Stakeholders Workshops organized by national teams in seven countries as they began their Country Projects:

- The Nigeria Export Crop Project, Abeokuta, 21 June;
- The Tanzania Forestry Sector Project, Dar es Salaam, 26 June;
- The Ecuador Banana Sector Project, Quito, 29 June;
- The Argentina Fisheries Sector Project, Buenos Aires, 11 July;
- The China Cotton Sector Project, Shanghai, 19 July;
- The Senegal Fisheries Sector Project, Dakar, 20 July; and

- The Kenya Waste Management Sector Project, Nairobi, 28 November.

**International conferences and workshops:** UNEP aims not only to contribute to expert meetings on trade and environment, but also to inject trade-environment considerations into meetings examining development issues from other perspectives. During 2000, UNEP participated in the following meetings:

- Expert Working Group Meeting on EIA Guidelines for the Commonwealth of Independent States in collaboration with the Centre for International Projects, Moscow, Russia, December 2000;
- Conference on Methodologies for Sustainability Impact Assessment of Trade Policy, Manchester, UK, November 2000;
- Rio + 10 Conference on Foreign Direct Investment and Sustainable Development, Berlin, Germany, November 2000;
- International Roundtable of the UNEP Finance Initiatives “Globalisation and Sustainable Development, Opportunities and Challenges for the Financial Services Sector,” Frankfurt, Germany, November 2000;
- International Consultation on World Trade & Environmental Regulation, Loccum Protestant Academy, Rehburg, Germany, October 2000;
- Workshop on Free Trade and Environment in the Euro-Med Context, Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development, Montpellier, France, October 2000;
- First North American Symposium on Assessing the Linkages between Trade and the Environment, Commission for Environmental Cooperation, Washington DC, USA, September 2000;
- Workshop on Policy Responses to Environmental Change, GEO-3, UNEP, Cambridge, UK, September 2000;
- WTO Committee on Trade and Development, Fall Session, WTO, Geneva;
- IMF Annual Meeting “Making the Global Economy Work for Everyone,” Prague, Czech Republic, September 2000;
- OECD Joint Working Paper on Trade and Environment, Paris, France, May and November 2000;
- European Commission for Environment’s Brainstorming Seminar on Trade and Environment, Brussels, Belgium, April 2000;
- UN Commission on Sustainable Development, 8<sup>th</sup> Session, UN New York, April 2000;
- Royal Institute of International Affairs Conference on Trade, Investment and Sustainability, London, UK, March 2000;
- WWF Workshop on Sustainability Impact Assessment, Quito, Ecuador, February 2000;
- UNCTAD Expert Meeting on Traditional Knowledge and Development, October, UN Geneva; and
- WTO Committee on Trade and Environment Winter, Spring and Fall Sessions, WTO, Geneva;

**UNEP-UNCTAD CBTF Policy Dialogues:** A number of critical issues in the environment, trade and sustainable development debate have been identified by governments as requiring additional dialogue among stakeholders because of their complexity and the divergence of government views on some of them. Policy Dialogue activities of the CBTF therefore seek to bring experts and decision makers, from developed and developing countries, together in informal dialogue to exchange views, raise awareness and enhance appreciation of these issues. These activities will take place in the form of seminars, briefings, conferences, workshops and round-tables. The first CBTF Policy Dialogue will be an International Conference on Trade, Environment and Sustainable Development: Perspectives from Latin America and the Caribbean, in Mexico City, February 2001 (see separate [Fact Sheet on Capacity Building: CBTF](#)).

**Further Information** on UNEP’s activities in the area of awareness raising and understanding is available at the website: [www.unep.ch/etu](http://www.unep.ch/etu) and through numerous publications available in electronic format online and in hardcopy format through the Online UNEP EarthPrint Bookshop.