



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

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Annotation 1

Preparatory Workshop on Integrated Assessment of Trade Liberalization in the Agriculture Sector Geneva, 11 February 2002

Context

The UNEP Economics & Trade Branch (ETB) has, over the past four years, conducted two sets of country projects, which assessed the environmental impacts of trade liberalization and other trade-related policies on various sectors in different countries¹. These UNEP Country Projects aimed at stimulating participating countries to develop sustainable development policies, including mutually supportive trade and environment policies. This involved undertaking integrated—environmental, social and economic—assessments of national trade liberalization policies and designing regulatory and economic instruments to internalize the external costs of trade and promote sustainable development.

These country projects have been undertaken simultaneously with the drafting of UNEP's *Reference Manual on Integrated Assessment of Trade-Related Policies*, which was published in June 2001. This manual was drafted with the assistance of a group of experts, which included team leaders from both rounds of UNEP country projects. This inclusive drafting process enabled UNEP to combine the knowledge of experts with conceptual and theoretical expertise of assessment methodologies with those of experts applying and developing them on the ground. In the reference manual, the experts also sought to extend assessment beyond the environmental effects to economic and developmental effects of trade-related policies.

New Studies on Agriculture and Trade Liberalization

ETB is launching a new project that consists of (1) a new set of national level, integrated assessments on the environmental, social and economic impacts of trade liberalization in the agricultural sector and (2) the preparation of a reference document on how to conduct such integrated assessments with a specific focus on the agriculture sector. This new round of studies will focus more on the effects of the existing WTO Agreement on Agriculture on the environment, both in developed and developing countries, as well as on the effects of further liberalization in this sector.

¹ Fisheries: Argentina, Bangladesh, Senegal and Uganda; Forest Management: Philippines and Tanzania; Transportation: India; Mining: Chile; Agriculture: China, Ecuador and Nigeria; Water Management: Romania; Waste Management: Kenya. A preliminary synthesis of the results of these country projects is available at www.unep.ch/etu/doha.

Objectives of the Preparatory Workshop

This preparatory workshop will contribute to the design of the new round of UNEP country projects on integrated assessment. It will examine specific issues such as the criteria for selection countries and the crop to be studied. At present it is intended to focus the studies on only one crop (early possibilities are wheat, maize or rice), with studies undertaken in four countries, which fit into each of four categories:

- a subsidised exporting country;
- an un-subsidised exporting country;
- a non-exporting country which protects its domestic market; and
- a net food importing country.

The countries would be selected with reference to their geographical spread. It is intended that these assessments would focus on following issues and policy objectives:

- market access;
- food security;
- poverty alleviation; and
- environmental protection.

These initial ideas are intended to frame the discussion in the workshop, during which other issues and policy objectives may be discussed. The structure and organisation of the case studies are issues for discussion between experts present at the meeting.

With the help of invited experts, the preparatory workshop will focus on the different alternatives offered to examine the environmental effects of the WTO Agreements and WTO negotiations on the agricultural sector. The experts will also be asked to give their advice on other issues relating to the design and conduct of the country projects, e.g.:

- which countries/regions to be chosen to give an overall picture of the transboundary impacts associated with the trade of the specific crop or in the specific sector; and
- which local institutions could collaborate in or conduct the studies?

Follow-up of the Preparatory Workshop

Once the focus and design of the new studies has been established, ETB intends to convene a larger workshop aimed at engaging representatives from the host governments, appropriate national or regional research institutions, which would finalise the selection of and launch the new country case studies. This second meeting would include experts consulted at the preparatory workshop, as well as experts from research institutions which could conduct the studies, Government representatives and other interested IGOs/NGOs. This second workshop will also serve to more accurately specify the focus of the research of the local institutions engaged to undertake the country case studies.