

**Workshop on Environmental Requirements and Market Access for
Developing Countries: How to Turn Challenges into Opportunities?
Geneva, 3-4 July 2006**

Report of the Workshop

Wrap-up workshop of the UK-DFID-funded UNCTAD Project "Building Capacity for Improved Policy Making and Negotiation on Key Trade and Environment Issues" and 2006 Annual Session of UNCTAD's Consultative Task Force on Environmental Requirements and Market Access for Developing Countries

Geneva, 3-4 July 2006

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INTRODUCTION

1. The 2006 annual session of the Consultative Task Force (CTF) on Environmental Requirements and Market Access for Developing Countries took place in Geneva on 3 and 4 July 2006. Around 55 participants (from Governments, the private sector, donors, NGOs, academic institutions and intergovernmental organizations, among others) reviewed progress made since the first substantive meeting of the CTF (Geneva, 5 and 6 November 2004) and discussed future activities. The meeting was chaired by Miguel R. Bautista, First Secretary (Economic and Environmental Affairs) at the mission of the Philippines to the United Nations in Geneva.

The Consultative Task Force

The CTF was launched, as a project-based activity, at a pre-UNCTAD XI workshop on Environmental Requirements and Market Access for Developing Countries, organized jointly by the UNCTAD secretariat and the National Institute of Metrology, Standardization and Industrial Quality (Inmetro) of Brazil in Rio de Janeiro on 7 and 8 June 2004.

The CTF is an open-ended multi-stakeholder forum of government, private sector and NGO representatives that assists developing countries in analysing key trends of environmental and related health requirements in export markets and to exchange national experience on proactive approaches to meeting such requirements with a view to maintaining market access, harnessing developmental gains and safeguarding social welfare. CTF activities are not intended to “second guess” the legitimacy and objectives of environmental requirements, nor to develop guidelines for good regulatory practice. Rather, CTF activities will involve analysing and discussing ways of overcoming specific developing country challenges regarding the development and implementation of, as well as adjustment to, such measures. CTF activities and discussions should lead to specific conclusions and practical initiatives, based on appropriate country- and sector-focused examples.

The added value of the CTF is that it:

- Links policy and capacity-constraints issues aimed at developing a more holistic and development-oriented approach on environmental requirements and market access;
- Interfaces discussions in the WTO, notably on paragraph 32(i) of the Doha Ministerial Declaration, with other debates at the international and national level;
- Includes in the analysis and discussion voluntary standards of the private sector and NGOs and thus provides a formal exchange mechanism between these stakeholders and Governments;
- Draws into the discussion stakeholders normally not involved in WTO debates; and
- Allows a regular exchange of information among agencies and initiatives that provide technical and capacity-building assistance in fields relevant to CTF discussions.

The CTF will provide a forum for well-structured and focused dialogue and networking on relevant issues at the interface of environmental requirements and market access for developing countries (including analysis, policy dialogue, information exchange and supportive activities). Under its umbrella, the CTF launches specific, well-defined and time-limited project activities, whose results will aid the substantive debate in the CTF.

2. Following up to the discussions and recommendations made at the meeting in November 2004, CTF activities carried out in 2005 and the first half of 2006 have focused on

two sectors: (a) electrical and electronic equipment (EEE) and (b) horticulture, in particular fresh fruits and vegetables. Key issues in these sectors and priorities for future CTF activities were discussed in two breakout groups (see below).¹ Sector-focused and the general discussions also benefited from the findings of work on three sectors (electronics, horticulture, and leather/footwear) carried out under the UK-DFID-funded UNCTAD project "Building Capacity for Improved Policy Making and Negotiation on Key Trade and Environment Issues". The UNCTAD secretariat also briefed the meeting on ongoing CTF activities on an internet gateway to facilitate access to and guide users on existing databases on environmental, health and food-safety requirements and other relevant issues.

GENERAL ISSUES

3. In her introductory statement, Mrs. Lakshmi Puri, Director of the International Trade Division of UNCTAD, highlighted that the currently ongoing Mid-term Review of the work programme mandated by UNCTAD XI in 2004 had underlined the importance of the symbiosis between the three pillars of UNCTAD's work, i.e. analysis; policy dialogue; and technical co-operation. The Review also emphasized the key role of UNCTAD as a knowledge-based institution, in which objective and ahead-of-the-curve analytical work was pivotal for the other two pillars. The CTF is a good example of the close interaction between the three pillars, and the key role of analysis. CTF was also an interesting example for activities that are likely to play an important role in the Aid-for-Trade Initiative. Furthermore, Mrs. Puri underscored the added value of CTF activities in the context of the WTO discussions and negotiations on paragraph 32 (i) of the Doha Ministerial Declaration and the inputs CTF could provide to the work of the TBT and SPS Committees.

4. In 2005-2006, CTF, in cooperation with partner institutions, organized three regional and one national sector-specific dialogues which brought together a large number of stakeholders from both developing and developed countries (see Annex I). Participants to the 2006 annual meeting emphasized that the participation of all key developed countries (including their major private standard organizations) is essential for a constructive and balanced CTF discussion of new environmental, health and food-safety requirements.

5. From sector-specific activities carried out so far under the umbrella of CTF and the UK-DFID-funded project as well as discussions at the workshop, in particular in the two breakout groups on EEE and horticulture, a number of common elements were highlighted for the two sectors, such as:

- The importance of requirements transmitted through the supply chain, which may be more stringent than necessary to comply with regulations, but where companies/importers/retailers want to "play safe", and which require increasing levels of competence of producers;

¹ The discussions were aided by the following two issues notes: *Food Safety and Environmental Requirements and Export Competitiveness. Turning Challenges into Opportunities: The Horticulture Sector and Electrical and Electronic Equipment and Energy-using Product*, Geneva, June 2006, accessible at: www.unctad.org/trade_env/test1/meetings/ctf3.htm.

- The risk of small economies and small producers being marginalized, and the related tendency of large companies to seek to work with relatively small numbers of preferred suppliers;
- There is a need for a better understanding of the inter-relationship between mandatory and voluntary requirements, in particular the role the latter play in enforcing and helping to comply with the former. One also needs further information on the conditions, under which public support and assistance is being provided to meet private-sector set standards;
- The multitude and uncertainty related to conformity assessment methods and tests;
- The need in developing countries to go beyond a mere cost- and compliance-centred adjustment approach by also looking at opportunities and catalytic effects;
- The important role of stakeholder consultations in understanding the possible implications for developing countries and the need for both standard setters and exporting countries to be pro-active in this regard.

SECTOR-SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES

6. This section lists completed and ongoing sector-specific activities and summarizes discussions in two breakout groups formed during the meeting, covering, respectively, (a) electrical and electronic equipment (EEE) and energy-using products (EuP) and (b) horticultural products, i.e. fruit and vegetables. The summaries reflect subsequently discussions in the workshop's plenary session as well as further comments received by workshop participants. With regard to possible future CTF activities, the summaries seek to reflect, as far as possible, the broad range of suggestions made by participants. Based on these suggestions, and taking into account resource constraints and other considerations, plans for specific future CTF activities are presented elsewhere in this report (see section on Conclusions and Plans for future CTF activities).

Electrical and electronic equipment (EEE)

Recent CTF activities

7. CTF activities have built on work carried out in the framework of the above-mentioned UK-DFID-funded project. This work (consisting of studies as well as national and regional stakeholder consultations) has focused on the experiences of China, the Philippines and Thailand in adjusting to new environmental requirements. Under the CTF, a country-case study on Malaysia's experience was also prepared. The DFID-funded project and subsequent CTF activities have emphasized the importance of pro-active adjustment strategies to strengthen capacities of developing countries to compete successfully in international markets and achieve national environmental objectives in the light of growing volumes of domestic EEE waste.

8. In May 2005, the secretariats of UNCTAD and the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) jointly organized a workshop on *Exchanging National Experiences among the Principal Exporting Developing Countries -*

Environmental Requirements and Market Access for Electrical and Electronic Goods (Bangkok, 25-27 May 2005). Some 60 participants from four key Asian exporting countries of EEE (apart from China, the Philippines and Thailand, representatives from Malaysia also participated in the exchange of national experiences), the United Kingdom, Japan and Switzerland, representing government agencies, private sector associations and companies, academia and NGOs, and intergovernmental organizations (the Basel Convention, UNIDO and UNEP) to discuss the results of the UK-DFID-funded project and recommend follow up activities as part of the CTF.² For a detailed analysis see the UNCTAD Trade and Environment Review 2006.³

9. CTF has been networking and exchanging information, for example with the UN University project on solving the e-waste problem (StEP), regional activities of the secretariat of the Basel Convention (i.e. The Partnership on the Environmentally Sound Management of Electrical and Electronic Wastes for the Asia-Pacific Region) and the Asia Eco-Design Electronics (AEDE) project (<http://www.cfsd.org.uk/aede/english/index.html>) implemented by the Centre for Sustainable Design (CfSD).⁴

10. The CTF had so far focused on adjustments to environmental requirements in the area of waste management and the need to phase out the use of hazardous substances that may have implications for the management of waste from EEE. One question addressed during the workshop discussions concerned the extent to which the CTF should also consider other environmental aspects and whether it should expand the product coverage of its activities to also include other categories of “energy-using products“.

Breakout group discussions

11. The breakout discussions were moderated by Ms Ritu Kumar, Director, Tata Energy Research Institute (TERI)-Europe. The group discussed lessons learned from national experiences in adjusting to new environmental requirements in the EEE sector; issues related to the EC EuP Directive and possible future CTF activities.

12. With regard to the first issue, the Thai participants (from the Government and industry associations) highlighted some of the adjustment policies initiated by the Thai government. These include a draft Thai WEEE legislation pending approval for early 2007; a committee set up by the Department of Industrial Works to handle environmental directives including the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive, the Restriction of certain Hazardous Substances (RoHS) in EEE Directive and the EuP Directive of the European

² At the Committee on WTO Trade and Environment Committee (CTE Regular) meeting on 6 July 2005, the representative of Thailand made a statement on the outcome of the workshop, which was followed by a discussion.

³ Chapter 2 (René Vossenaar, Lorenzo Santucci and Nudjarin Ramungul (National Metal and Materials Technology Centre, Thailand), *Environmental Requirements and Market Access for Developing Countries: the Case of Electrical and Electronic Equipment*) and commentaries by a series of experts, accessible at: www.unctad.org/trade_env/test1/publications.htm

⁴ UNCTAD staff has also participated in training workshop organized by the European Commission’s Trade Directorate under the Trans-regional EU-ASEAN trade initiative (TREATI).

Union; eco-design training (e.g. the Green Camp project); and a demo project on eco-design of air-conditioning units.

13. In India, national legislation for the EEE sector is still at a nascent stage. There is draft legislation on electronic waste management in the making but this will take a while to come into effect. The Indian EEE industry is not as big as that of the other countries in the region, but it is set to grow very rapidly. This presents a good opportunity for the industry to seize the opportunities inherent in environmental legislations as well as to plan for meeting the challenges.

14. The group discussed some issues related to the EuP Directive. It was emphasized that the outcomes of relevant discussions were still uncertain, but that there was a need to move quickly to gear up to meet the EuP requirements in a balanced manner. In particular, it is important to analyze the lessons learned from the ongoing adjustment to RoHS in the EU and the Home Appliances Recycling Law in (HARL) in Japan.

15. Several participants emphasized that CTF could become a useful platform for rallying stakeholders at both national and at global level, as well as along global supply chains.

Suggestions for CTF activities

16. Recommendations on future CTF activities

- (a) CTF could support the implementation of activities at national levels. These may include:
 - Advising countries on a conceptual approach to the design and implementation of adjustment strategies to help the EEE sector in meeting requirements, such as WEEE, RoHS, HARL and the EC EuP Directive;
 - Advising companies and/or countries on how to create capacity to seize business opportunities inherent in the repair, reconditioning and recycling of e-waste. This should include putting together best practice examples in e-waste management;
 - Undertaking assessments of possible adverse (as well as positive) impacts, in particular on developing countries of and studies on the costs and benefits of alternative adjustment strategies, including the cost of inaction.
- (b) CTF should continue to facilitate national exchange of experience between developing countries. One possibility could be to organize a regional workshop on conformity assessment and testing, inviting the participation of persons from standardization bodies (i.e. International Electrotechnical Commission, Technical Committee 111, Working Group 3) as well.
- (c) CTF should communicate the lessons learnt from WEEE, RoHS, and HARL adjustments that are relevant to the adjustment to the EuP Directive. This may help trigger timely actions by exporters sooner rather than later.
- (d) The CTF can be a very important platform for brokering a more receptive approach by the standard setters. This may also include tapping funds for technical assistance to developing countries.

- (e) The CTF can also play a useful role in creating in-country networks around eco-design and the EuP implications.
- (f) The CTF may wish to consider working together with large TNCs (e.g. Philips) to document best practice in managing supply chains and implementing environmental requirements in the EEE sector. Furthermore, in co-operation with other partners, CTF could play a role in holding capacity-building seminars on environmental (and social) issues important for local suppliers in the supply chain, drawing on in-house expertise in environmental management of TNCs.
- (g) CTF may assist in analyzing the implications of the forthcoming REACH Directive, including its likely impact on the EEE sector in developing countries.
- (h) Finally, it was felt that CTF would be in a very good position to work together with other initiatives and projects that are being launched to assist developing country suppliers in meeting EEE related requirements. CTF can be a good platform for coordination and exchange of experiences.

Horticulture

Recent CTF Activities

17. CTF activities in the area of horticulture have been carried out mainly as part of the CTF project on “Reflecting National Circumstances and Development Priorities in National Codes on Good Agricultural Practices that can be benchmarked to EurepGAP”, which is being implemented in close cooperation with FoodPlus GmbH, the non-for-profit secretariat of EurepGAP. Ten developing countries in three regions have been participating in this project, as follows:

Africa:	Ghana, Kenya and Uganda
Latin America:	Argentina, Brazil and Costa Rica
South-East Asia:	Malaysia, Thailand, Philippines and Viet Nam

18. National research teams in each country have carried out initial studies on pros and cons of different options of achieving EurepGAP certification, including through benchmarking of national GAP programmes that reflect national circumstances and development priorities. Nine of these studies have been completed (see Annex I). The results of the studies on South-east Asian and Latin American countries have been discussed at sub-regional workshops in Manila (28 and 29 November 2005) and Rio de Janeiro (8 and 9 December 2005) respectively. The results of the African will be discussed at a sub-regional workshop in the second half of 2006.

Breakout group discussions

19. In the breakout group discussions, inputs were provided from different perspectives (Government, industry, NGO and other). General discussions then focused on issues such as public versus private standards; technical cooperation; general strategies to promote food

safety and access to markets; different options for GAP certification; and experiences at national and sub-regional level.

Public and private-sector standards and regulations

20. It was noted by several participants that Governments could not take responsibility for private-sector standard setting activities, in particular in the context of the WTO SPS and TBT Agreements. However, Governments could engage in discussions with private-sector standard organizations. For example, the European Commission had made private standard-setting bodies aware of the concerns raised by some developing country Members at the SPS Committee and had asked them to take these concerns into account. The Commission had also organized an informal seminar on “Private food quality standards and their implications for developing countries” (7 December, 2005) and had been inviting private-sector bodies to participate in certain technical cooperation workshops for developing countries. Also, several developing country representatives pointed to the adverse financial impact resulting from some of these private standard requirements, including costs for training and certification procedures.

21. Some discussion took place on private sector standards, in particular their scope, their relevance in the market place and the existence of many different private-sector standards. Whereas EurepGAP was set up as a standard for supermarkets/retailers, in some cases the wholesale sector was also requesting EurepGAP certification.

22. It was mentioned that no precise data is available on which quantities of EurepGAP-certified produce are actually traded. Buyers may ask their suppliers to submit a certificate, but are then buying both certified and non-certified produce. EurepGAP should inform not only the number of certified producers and certified area for specific crops but also quantities of certified produce for sale.

23. It was also mentioned that trading and retail bodies requesting EurepGAP certification are not as consequent as expected, as they frequently ask some producers for such certification and then are not interested in it anymore although the producer still has to pay for the certification. The problem is that the retailers, who get the benefits of the certifications, are not the ones investing in production-service systems.

Technical cooperation

24. In response to some questions asked by developing country participants, some information was provided on technical cooperation activities by Governments. For example, the European Commission has in place a very large technical cooperation programme for developing countries and LDCs, based largely on a strategic and long-term approach. The Commission attempts to provide such assistance well in advance.

25. Technical cooperation (TC) was also needed to assist developing countries in resolving specific problems in meeting Government regulations. The major part of TC should go beyond fire-fighting efforts (once problems have emerged) and be forward-looking, i.e.

aimed at strengthening the capacities of developing countries to address new standards and regulations before problems arise. Such TC should also enable developing countries to pursue adjustment approaches that look beyond costs at catalytic and beneficial effects of new standards in export markets. It was however also stated that making TC more effective required timely dissemination of relevant information by countries preparing new regulations as well as pro-active involvement by Governments and private-sector operators in developing countries.

26. Timely information sharing on new regulations was therefore very important. It was mentioned that the recommended procedures for the implementation of the transparency provisions of the SPS Agreement request Members to identify which countries might be particularly affected by measures being notified (G/SPS/7/Rev.2). While this was, in principle, an important step forward, some countries were including only limited information in their notifications, often stating that “all countries” were affected. Reference was also made to the "Procedure to Enhance Transparency of Special and Differential Treatment in Favour of Developing Countries" (G/SPS/33), although no Member had so far submitted information on specific concerns raised by exporting developing countries and solutions found how to address them.

27. Although discussions largely focused on private-sector standards, there was also some discussion on the possible implications for developing country exporters of horticultural products of recent developments in regulations concerning MRLs for pesticides, such as the European Union’s Plant Protection Directive (91/414/EEC) and recent amendments to Japan’s Food Sanitation Law. In this respect, the Commission has been providing funding for technical cooperation provided by COLEACP (the Pesticides Initiative Programme).

28. Several participants emphasized the need for sustainability of technical assistance provided by either governments or private-sector bodies as well as of other activities to build quality management systems in developing countries and facilitating adjustment to new requirements. Some noted that developing country Governments had a key role to play in securing continuity of efforts, including by supporting training and developing in-house capacity. There was also a need for technical and financial assistance to build or strengthen the necessary infrastructure to meet food-safety, environmental and other requirements as well as to support human resources development within relevant government departments and other institutions. In this context, there was also need to train auditors and certifiers. Special attention needed to be given to training of small producers in sustainable food production and compliance with process requirements in food value chains.

29. There was a need to further assess the costs and benefits of quality management systems and their implications for smallholders.

30. There was also a need for a better understanding of the costs and benefits of private-sector standards and whether or not certain private-sector standards could, under certain conditions, be considered a “public good”. CTF should facilitate a better understanding on the interrelationship between mandatory and private-sector-set requirements, in particular the role the latter play in enforcing and helping to comply with the former. Such analysis could

also be useful to donors in assessing the extent to which they might wish to support the development and/or or certification against private-sector standards.

31. In discussing the pros and cons of private-sector standards, some expressed the view that EurepGAP certification could assist developing country suppliers in complying with mandatory food-safety requirements of the European Union and Member States by setting out specific measures to ensure compliance (in addition to the already existing EC measures to ensure compliance with food safety requirements). There was some discussion on the extent to which, for example, EurepGAP certification would reduce the need for multiple auditing to demonstrate compliance with different private-sector schemes as well as on whether or not multiple audits to different standards represented actually a cost-effective option.

15. There was also a discussion on the role of new environmental, health, and food-safety requirements as supply-chain governance tools of retailers, which lead to a shifting of risk management functions and associated costs to suppliers. More empirical information was required in this regard. Likewise, it was suggested to have more fact-finding studies on the EurepGAP impact on smallholders.

GAP programmes and EurepGAP certification

32. Several participants referred to developments of national and regional GAP programmes and EurepGAP certification in their countries. Different regions had different approaches to GAP programmes, for example with regard to the weight being given to helping to secure compliance with national food safety legislation that may otherwise be poorly enforced, on the one hand, and promoting access to external markets, on the other. The approach chosen would depend on factors such as destination of exports and producer profiles in specific categories of fruits and vegetables. In the case of Malaysia, for example, a two-tier approach, whereby in addition to a national GAP standard there is also a benchmarked or equivalent standard to e.g. EurepGAP, might have some advantages. This would enable smaller farms to implement the national GAP programme while the larger farms or producer organizations could implement the benchmarked standard. Priorities may be different in Latin America and Africa as horticultural exports destined for European markets played a far more important role. National stakeholder dialogues could be a key element in finding out the pros and cons of different options. The studies and exchanges of national experiences in regional meetings that the CTF has organized so far in Asia and Latin America were very useful in this context (similar activities are being implemented in Africa).

33. Some participants expressed the view that there was a need to consider holding or supporting annual sub-regional conferences in developing countries on opportunities and constraints of the EurepGAP standard and its interrelationship with mandatory requirements in key export markets. Such sub-regional conferences could be a useful forum to

- Summarize relevant CTF multi-stakeholder dialogues held at country level;
- Provide a forum for conceptual discussion on the most appropriate adjustment approaches and related policies;
- Discuss relevant issues of upcoming revisions to EUREPGAP Standards;
- Advise on the correct interpretation of requirements;
- Identify specific difficulties in complying to EUREPGAP;

- Encourage policy dialogue on supportive or flanking policies for national GAP programs.

34. A question was raised whether the present scope of CTF activities should be expanded to cover cash crops other than those in the fruit and vegetables sector. It was noted that, for example in Malaysia, many smallholders, apart from growing fruits and vegetables also cultivate cash crops. Typically, a smallholder might grow oil palm together with cash crops, which may include fruit and vegetables, but also tea, coffee, pepper or similar items. All of these would ultimately enter the food supply chain. In this regard, note was made to the fact that EurepGAP had a code for coffee and more recently had issued a standard for tea.

Suggestions for CTF activities

35. The group put forward some suggestions for future CTF activities. All these activities should be underpinned by conceptual and empirical analysis, building on the country studies already completed or in process. CTF could play an important role in gathering information and promoting studies to take stock of initiatives already underway in different developing countries and regions in designing and implementing pro-active adjustment strategies to facilitate adjustment to new requirements in international markets while at the same time promote the sustainable production of safe food, as well as in conceptualizing different options for pro-active strategies.

36. There was a need for developing countries to promote national food safety strategies. FAO and regional institutions had a key role to support such efforts. The CTF, working with interested governments, FAO and other institutions, private-sector standard organizations and other stakeholders, had a key role to play in enhancing understanding of the trade and development dimension of pro-active adjustment policies.

37. Discussions focused on several clusters of activities:

- (a) At the global/regional level: dialogues between Government and private-sector standard bodies, producer/exporter organizations in developing countries, and other stakeholders on the role of mandatory and voluntary requirements and conceptual issues of adjustment strategies, including potential benefits or catalytic effects.⁵
- (b) At the country and sub-regional levels, the CTF could play a useful role in promoting further dialogues between Government and private-sector standard bodies, producer/exporter organizations and other stakeholders in developing countries, on conceptual and policy issues on the most appropriate ways of adjustment, including the further development of conventional/organic production and building capacity of smallholders with a view to reducing the coordination costs of incorporating smallholders in value chains. This was an important analytical phase that should involve all relevant stakeholders that should precede the implementation of strategies

⁵ It was announced that a special event on EurepGAP would be organized by the WTO SPS Committee in October 2006. The suggestion was made that UNCTAD, as an observer in the SPS Committee, should inform Committee Members about the relevant CTF activities and their findings.

with clear ownership and that can be sustained in the long run. Good communication and outreach were considered very important in this context.

- (c) CTF could provide useful inputs to (annual) regional conferences on EurepGAP and related issues as suggested in the previous section.
- (d) The CTF could play a key role in assisting interested Governments, farmer organizations and other stakeholders in exploring different options for EurepGAP certification. Building on completed and ongoing work, such stakeholder consultations should further clarify the pros and cons of different options, such as direct certification, group certification or benchmarking, and use of interpretive guidelines, given the specific characteristics of each country.
- (e) CTF should also play a supportive role in creating more awareness on TBT and SPS requirements and disciplines as well as in identifying steps that can be taken to build or strengthen appropriate institutional infrastructure on SMTQ (Standards, Metrology, Testing, and Quality assurance) systems. The CTF should aim to strengthen the capacities of farmers and processing firms to comply with current and future requirements in international markets as well as to meet national food safety and environmental standards.

CTF ONLINE PORTAL ON ENVIRONMENTAL REQUIREMENTS

38. The UNCTAD secretariat gave a short update on progress towards the CTF's proposed internet portal on environmental and related health requirements. The CTF working group⁶ on this subject decided to commission a feasibility study (currently under preparation) on the creation of an online portal which will facilitate access to existing online information sources. The meeting heard some clarification of the purpose and scope of the study, including that:

- (a) The study will outline various options for an online portal.
- (b) The portal would not aim to function as an 'information clearinghouse' that gathers information on requirements from the various sources available and delivers them to users; rather, it would function as a diagnostic and facilitation tool that helps users identify the information they require and directs them to appropriate on-line information sources.
- (c) The study will focus on identifying the institutional, financial and technical resources necessary for setting up and maintaining a portal. Its findings will then serve to inform a future decision by the CTF as to whether or not to go ahead with the proposed portal.

FUNDING

39. The CTF meeting held in November 2004 asked the UNCTAD secretariat to prepare a CTF funding proposal to raise sufficient extra-budgetary resources to support (a) the

⁶ The working group was created following a recommendation made at the CTF meeting in November 2004. The Centre for the Promotion of Imports from developing countries (CBI) in the Netherlands, FAO, the National Institute of Metrology, Standardization and Industrial Quality (Inmetro) in Brazil have been participating in the working group (through e-mail discussions)

participation of developing country experts in future CTF meetings; (b) project activities; and (c) the work on the above-mentioned “portal”. The UNCTAD secretariat prepared a fund-raising proposal and submitted it to various potential donors (European Commission, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom). The UNCTAD secretariat has been following up with the donors concerned.

INFORMATION EXCHANGE

40. Several institutions informed the meeting about their activities that are directly relevant for the work of the CTF. These are summarized below, in alphabetic order. Also included are summaries provided by some institutions that could not attend the CTF meeting in July 2006 but have been collaborating in CTF activities and have expressed an interest in continuing their cooperation with the CTF.

GtZ

41. The GTZ is undertaking a number of activities in the area of standards, which can be considered complementary to the work of CTF. The three clusters of activities of key relevance are:

Making SPS Enquiry Points operational

42. GTZ is providing, upon request, practical on-the-job training for SPS Enquiry Points to tackle their most common problems originating from the complex coordination and analytical tasks they have to perform. To increase the efficiency of SPS Enquiry Points and Notification Authorities, GTZ is organizing tailor-made training for key staff. Participants acquire basic skills to process enquiries and to notify draft SPS measures correctly and timely. To this end, mechanisms for harmonising information flows between different ministries involved in drafting regulations, conformity assessments and standards will have to be established. Furthermore, training is provided in the downloading of notifications from other WTO members, the assessment of potential impacts of notified measures on trade and the dissemination of notifications as a day-to-day business. In the long run, the GTZ sees Enquiry Points as coordinators of a national consultation process not only with regard to mandatory SPS measures, but also to private sector standards.

Linking small farmers to horticultural export markets through group certification

43. A viable option for the certification of small farmers is group certification under option two of EurepGAP. Group certification is already successfully used by other schemes, e.g. Forest Stewardship Council or IFOAM. A key element in EurepGAP’s option two is a documented Quality Management System that allows the external Certification Body to certify the entire group rather than each individual group member. GTZ is providing practical guidance on how to establish and document such an Internal Control System. GTZ developed a manual that has been approved by EurepGAP and which includes operational procedures and recording forms for a fictional farmer group. The manual can be taken by producer

associations as a starting point to create their own documents, adapting contents according to the situation of their farmers and the specific circumstances within their groups. On the basis of the lessons learned in a trial phase (2005 – 2007) with pilot groups in Africa, Asia and Latin America (pilot partners in Latin America are still to be identified), a completed and improved final version shall be made available as public shareware.

Good Risk-based Agricultural Social Practices (GRASP)

44. To be able to compete with efficient market chains and subsidized agricultural products, some of the producers worldwide reduce their inputs in social conditions for workers and their families. Most workers are vulnerable to depreciative working conditions. Consumers in developed countries are becoming more and more concerned about working conditions of migrant workers or workers' welfare on farms, and retailers feel obliged to respond to these concerns. In a Public-Private Partnership Project between the GTZ, EurepGAP and Coop (Switzerland) a set of Good Risk-based Agricultural Social Practices (GRASP) has been elaborated. The set will be tested in selected developing countries, discussed in national workgroups (multi-stakeholder-approach) and adapted to national/regional needs. First priority is the applicability and verifiability of the requirements to be proposed in the 2007 revision of the EurepGAP standards.

ISEAL Alliance

45. The ISEAL Alliance is setting up a network of organisations interested in improving small producer access to (multiple) certifications, bringing together the experiences of producer groups, extension agencies, certification bodies, standards-owners, and traders, among others.⁷ We will be developing a separate page on our website by August where various tools and approaches for improving small producer access to certifications can be found. One particular project will be to facilitate the development of a common framework for internal quality management systems that small producers could use in order to increase their capacity for managing their own operations and for interfacing with external certification systems. As there are a number of efforts already underway, the approach taken is to begin with one existing modular system and invite comments and suggestions from the broader network.

ITC

33. ITC organized a consultation under its Executive Forum programme in Malaysia in June 2005 to consider the best approach to quality assurance for strategy-makers in developing countries and transition economies through the creation of an appropriate infrastructure. This has resulted in the ITC publication on Innovations in Export Strategy – A strategic approach to the quality assurance challenge, which can be downloaded from the web page of the Standards and Quality Management service of ITC at www.intracen.org/eqm.

⁷ For further information about the network and activities, please contact Dr. Sasha Courville at sasha@isealalliance.org. Information and resources will be accessible from the ISEAL website: www.isealalliance.org.

ITC has also reproduced a document prepared by JCDCMAS (www.jcdcmas.net) on Building corresponding technical infrastructures to support sustainable development and trade, which can be downloaded from the same web page. JCDCMAS is the Joint Committee on Co-ordination of Assistance to Developing Countries in Metrology, Accreditation and Standardization and it was established by the principal organizations that have mandates to strengthen technical infrastructures and deliver capacity building in metrology, standardization and conformity assessment (including accreditation). Its members are BIPM, IAF, IEC, ILAC, ISO, ITC, ITU, OIML and UNIDO.

46. ITC is developing, jointly with ISO, a diagnostic tool to be used by enterprises, regarding their readiness to implement ISO 22000:2005, Food safety management systems – Requirements for any organization in the food chain. It would be available soon, in hard copy and as a CD-ROM.

47. An interactive workshop on “Influencing and Meeting International Standards: Challenges for developing countries”, was organized by ITC, jointly with the Commonwealth Secretariat, in June 2005 in Geneva. The publication, with the same name and based on case studies on TBT and SPS issues in six countries, was used as background material for the workshop. The meeting reviewed the recommendations for technical assistance contained in the joint ComSec/ITC publication and will lead to the development of project proposals for provision of assistance to requesting countries to influence proposed international standards and meet international standards.

48. ITC has prepared a document entitled ITC’s Strategy for Trade and the Environment (April 2005). It contains a list of potential project ideas that could be designed and implemented by ITC within its mandate and competence.

UNCTAD/FAO/IFOAM International Task Force (ITF) on Harmonization and Equivalence in Organic Agriculture and UNEP-UNCTAD Capacity-building Task Force (CBTF) on Trade, Environment and Development

49. The ITF is a public-private platform for dialogue founded in 2003 to help remove technical barriers to organic trade, including facilitating exports of organic produce from developing countries. The ITF has commissioned many papers and adopted a common strategy for solutions, whereby organic production takes place in accordance with local conditions and international trade takes place based on the international standard. The 5th ITF meeting will take place in Stockholm, Sweden in October 2006. More information on the analytical work of ITF and the policy discussions can be obtained from the ITF website at www.unctad.org/trade_env/ITF-organic/welcome1.asp.

50. The UNEP-UNCTAD Capacity Building Task Force on Trade, Environment and Development has a project "Promoting Production and Trading Opportunities for Organic Agriculture Products from East Africa", benefiting Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. The project has commissioned a number of background studies, including on best practices for governments wishing to support their organic sectors. National teams are undertaking integrated assessments of organic agriculture in the three countries. Regional cooperation is

also key. The CBTF has joined forces with the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) to support the development of an East African Organic Standard, the second draft of which is available for public comment. The EAOS was developed by a private-public sector working group comprising members from the three countries.

FAO

Recent FAO activities

51. Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) is a multidisciplinary area of work in FAO, which is attracting significant and growing demand for assistance from members. Activities focus on the provision of information, technical assistance and capacity building to help developing countries cope with changing and globalizing food systems and the proliferation of GAP standards over recent years while not compromising their sustainable development objectives.

52. Recent GAP-related activities have included a 'FAO-Thailand Workshop on GAP for Fresh Fruit and Vegetables (FFV)', September 2005, to take stock of progress and lessons learned in the implementation of the Thailand GAP FFV program, and identify issues and priorities for improvement. A Technical Cooperation Project (TCP) for strengthening compliance of the SPS requirements for expanded exports of fresh and processed fruits and vegetables in Thailand was executed, and a TCP in Colombia is ongoing to increase productivity, competitiveness and management capacity of communities by implementing GAP. A cross-country study on investment and capacity building for GAP implementation systems in the export FFV sector in Kenya, Chile, Malaysia and South Africa is being completed. A new, updated FAO GAP website is under preparation, and will be accessible in autumn 2006, outlining the many resource materials, activities and workshops on-going in all regions across the world.

Co-operation with UNCTAD

53. UNCTAD participated in the FAO-Thailand workshop, September 2005, and the FAO in turn provided advisory support to the UNCTAD/PHILEXPORT Sub-regional Stakeholder Consultation on Potential and Challenges of EurepGAP in Asia, Manila, December 2005. The FAO-Regional Office in Latin America also participated in the UNCTAD/INMETRO Sub regional workshop on Potential and Challenges of EurepGAP in Central and South America, December 2005, aiming at opening sub-regional dialogue between government, private sector and academia representatives. The Chilean case on investment and capacity building for GAP implementation systems in the export FFV sector was presented.

Future planned activities

54. The FAO is currently implementing a project 'Capacity building and awareness-raising on Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development and GAP to contribute to food

safety and quality and integrated natural resources management in Kenya and Uganda'. The project activities will centre on a sub-regional workshop in Kenya, national workshop in Uganda, (early 2007), as well as a training programme on GAP to be organised in cooperation with Wageningen University in the Netherlands and Makerere University in Uganda. Consultations for jointly organising the sub-regional African workshop with UNCTAD are ongoing.

55. Other FAO future activities include an International Workshop on GAP being organised in conjunction with the University of Talca (Chile) and the Instituto de Desarrollo Agropecuario (INDAP), October 2006, to create a regional GAP exchange network, analyse studies and tools needed for GAP policy design and promote consensus for a regional GAP project taking into account the specific country realities.

OECD

56. In 2001, the Joint Working Party on Trade and Environment (JWPTE) embarked upon a project "Environmental requirements and market access" to better understand the trade effects of environmental regulations and other technical measures taken by governments of OECD members and private bodies on developing country exports. 21 case studies have been examined to identify specific market access difficulties arising from a variety of environmental/health requirements ranging from limits on pesticide residues in snow peas and tea to standards for organic foods and beverages. It also covers private industry and NGO initiatives such as eco-labels for cut flowers, the international fruit container organisation (IFCO)'s returnable packaging initiative.

57. The scope of the study goes beyond identifying problems facing exporters in developing countries by exploring practices that have contributed to solving the problems. The major market access problems identified in the study include: (1) access to information; (2) conflicting national requirements in the absence of international standards; and (3) inadequate means to meet new requirements. Each case study also explored what responses have been taken to address these problems. For instance, several initiatives have been made to improve access to information, develop international standards at the global level and build capacity for research in developing countries. The case studies also provide examples of how exporter's concern have been taken into account in developing and implementing standards and regulations at the national level. The case studies have been published as a monograph in the OECD Trade Policy Studies series, entitled "Environmental requirements and market access". It is also available at <http://webdomino1.oecd.org/comnet/ech/tradeandenv.nsf>

SUSTAINABLE TRADE AND INNOVATION CENTRE (STIC)

58. The Sustainable Trade and Innovation Centre was launched at the 2002 WSSD as a Type II Partnership. It is chaired by Dr. Ben Ngubane, Ambassador of South Africa in Japan, former Minister of Science and Technology. Since its launch, STIC's network intends to facilitate public-private partnerships to assist developing country exporters to respond, anticipate and ultimately shape the environmental and social dimensions of international trade, thereby capturing a greater share of the value-added. STICs are in place in Europe,

Indonesia, Japan, and are under development in India, the Philippines, Laos and the Republic of South Africa. STIC-Japan, STIC-Indonesia and STIC-Europe have signed a joint memorandum of understanding open to other STICs.

59. The STICs congratulate UNCTAD for its excellent Trade and Environment Review 2006. The STICs are offering to facilitate by 2007 a series of multi-stakeholders roundtables to present and debate UNCTAD's Review, encouraging the roundtables to adopt a roadmap. Delegates of the Asian STICs would be pleased to have a meeting with UNCTAD on the side of the planned UN ESCAP-UNCTAD Conference in Bangkok in mid-October 2006 to have a first discussion on the findings of the UNCTAD Trade and Environment Review 2006.

60. STIC-Indonesia has just completed, in the framework of a contract between STIC-Indonesia, STIC-Europe and EuropeAid a report on sustainable trade and the agro-food (on the agenda of the UN ESCAP-UNCTAD Conference), aquaculture and textile sectors: opportunities for Indonesia.

UNESCAP

61. UN ESCAP is coordinating the implementation of the Development Account Project "Capacity Building in Trade and Environment", a joint project of 4 UN Regional Commissions (UNECA, UNECLAC, UNESCWA and UNESCAP) in partnership with UNCTAD, UNEP and the WTO. The two-year project, which started in 2005, aims to enhance the capacity of developing countries to formulate coherent trade and environment policies that address both export competitiveness and domestic environmental concerns, thereby increasing market access for products in international markets while enhancing environmental sustainability. In each of the four regional components, the project has commissioned regional studies and is organizing regional and sub-regional capacity building workshops. In the Asia-Pacific region, activities focus on the food and food processing sector. Activities are implemented in coordination with the work of the CTF on horticulture, to ensure synergies. Subregional workshops are being organized for the Pacific (7-8 June 2006), South-East Asia (26-27 July 2006) and South Asia (6-7 September 2006), to present and discuss the findings of the regional study. Country-case studies have been prepared also for China, Fiji, Indonesia, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Viet Nam. A concluding regional workshop is scheduled to take place on 16-18 October 2006 in Bangkok.

CONCLUSIONS AND PLANS FOR FUTURE CTF ACTIVITIES

62. The meeting confirmed and further clarified the important role of the CTF. The meeting also recognized the important contribution made through sector-specific activities under the umbrella of the CTF.

63. Based on the suggestions for future CTF activities as summarized above and further discussions with key partners, the UNCTAD secretariat will prepare a detailed work plan for

activities to be carried out until the next CTF meeting. It is envisaged that the work plan, which will be presented by September 2006, will by and large be drawn up as follows:

- (a) Sector-specific activities will initially continue to focus on EEE and horticulture, taking into account the suggestions summarized above. Preliminary elements of the work plan for each sector are presented below. The UNCTAD secretariat will also explore with interested partners analytical and capacity-building activities on the impact of and adjustment to new chemical safety requirements on developing countries.
- (b) The above-mentioned study on the CTF online portal on environmental requirements will be completed and discussed with members of the working group and other interested parties.

EEE

The following activities are envisaged:

- (a) Policy dialogues may be facilitated in a small number of interested developing countries on: conceptual approaches to the design and implementation of adjustment strategies to help the EEE sector in meeting environmental requirements. Such dialogues may include a number of issues highlighted in the breakout group discussions (see above), such as methodologies for studies on the costs and benefits of alternative adjustment strategies.
- (b) In co-operation with other partners, CTF could play a role in holding capacity-building seminars on environmental (and social) issues important for local suppliers in the supply chain, drawing on in-house expertise in environmental management of TNCs.
- (c) CTF, in cooperation with the European Commission, may organize (a) stakeholder dialogue(s) to analyse the implications of the EuP and REACH directives for the EEE sector in developing countries.
- (d) CTF, in cooperation with other initiatives, could explore how it could provide a platform for coordination and exchange of national experiences.

Horticulture

The following activities are envisaged:

- (a) The results of country studies prepared as part of the CTF project on “Reflecting National Circumstances and Development Priorities in National Codes on Good Agricultural Practices that can be benchmarked to EurepGAP” (see annex I) will be published. The priorities for further empirical and conceptual studies will be assessed and studies will be commissioned, as appropriate.
- (b) A sub-regional workshop will be held to discuss the results of studies on national experiences of Ghana, Kenya and Uganda. This meeting will be jointly organized with FAO (venue and dates yet to be decided).

- (c) Possibilities will be explored of holding regional dialogues on the role of mandatory and voluntary standards and conceptual issues of adjustment strategies, involving Government and private-sector standard bodies, producer/exporter organizations in developing countries, and other stakeholders.
- (d) CTF will (continue to) facilitate national policy dialogues in a small but representative set of interested developing countries (perhaps one or two countries per region), with a view to, *inter alia*:
 - Clarifying conceptual and policy issues on the most appropriate ways of adjusting to public and private-sector standards
 - Assisting interested Governments, farmer organizations and other stakeholders in exploring different options for EurepGAP certification.
- (e) Consultations will be held with EurepGAP and other interested institutions (in particular FAO, the World Bank and GTZ) and stakeholders, on *inter alia*:
 - Possible cooperation on regional meetings, as appropriate
 - Possible cooperation on product categories other than fruits and vegetables
- (f) UNCTAD will actively participate in the seminar on EurepGAP issues, planned to be held on the fringes of the October meeting of the WTO SPS Committee.

ANNEX I: CTF OUTPUTS IN 2005-2006

Studies and reports

64. The following studies have been prepared as part of the CTF project on “Reflecting National Circumstances and Development Priorities in National Codes on Good Agricultural Practices that can be benchmarked to EurepGAP”:

- Nigel Garbutt and Elomé Coetzer, FoodPlus, Options for the Development of National/sub-regional Codes of Good Agricultural Practice for Horticultural Products Benchmarked to EurepGAP, Consultation Draft, September 2005.
- A series of national studies have been prepared as follows:

Africa

Ghana	Co-ordinated by: Mr. Augustine Adongo, Chief Executive, Federation of Associations of Ghanaian Exporters (FAGE), still under preparation
Kenya	Ruth Nyagah, Managing Director, AfriCert LTD, Nairobi, Kenya, January 2006.
Uganda	Musa K. Muwanga, Coordinator, National Organic Agricultural Movement of Uganda (NOGAMU), Kampala, June 2006

Latin America

Argentina	Martin Babboni and Valeria Glusman (Argencert, Buenos Aires, Argentina) and Dr. Jochen Neuendorff (Gesellschaft für Ressourcenschutz, GfRS, Göttingen, Germany), Buenos Aires and Göttingen, November 2005.
Brazil	Paul Espanion (IBD/SBC), Daniela Mariuzzo (ECOLOG Consultoria), Juan Rojas (Serviço Brasileira de Certificações, SBC), Sergio Pimenta (Instituto de Ecologia Aplicada), Reinaldo Rodrigues (Instituto de Ecologia Aplicada) and Alexandre Harkaly (Instituto Biodinâmico, IBD)
Costa Rica	Bernard Kilian, Production and Research Manager, Sustainable Markets Intelligence Centre (CIMS), San José, Costa Rica, November 2005.

Asia

Malaysia	Christie Robert and Sathianathan Menon, qa plus asia - pacific sdn. Bhd, Kuala Lumpur, November 2005
Thailand	Vicha Sardud, Director, Postharvest Technology Institute, Chiang Mai University, Thailand (2005)
Viet Nam	Phan Thi Giac Tam (team leader), Le Thanh Loan, Trinh Thuc Hien and Hoang Thi Thuy, Nong Lam University, Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam, November 2005

National and sub-regional dialogues

65. Between May and December 2005, the CTF, in cooperation with partners, organized the following sub-regional and national CTF workshops:

25-26 May 2005 Bangkok, Thailand.	UNCTAD-UNESCAP Workshop, Exchanging National Experiences among the Principal Exporting Developing Countries - Environmental Requirements and Market Access for Electrical and Electronic Goods, CTF
25-26 November 2005 Bangkok, Thailand.	UNCTAD/ ITD National Workshop on Good Agricultural Practice and Benchmarking to EurepGAP
28 and 29 November 2005 Manila, Philippines	UNCTAD/PHILEXPORT Subregional Stakeholder Consultation on Potential and Challenges of EurepGAP in Asia
8 and 9 December 2005 Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	UNCTAD/ INMETRO Sub-regional Stakeholder Meeting on EurepGAP: Opportunities and Challenges for Central and Southern America

66. The draft versions of the above-mentioned country-case studies and all documents of the national and sub-regional workshops are on-line accessible through the CTF website at www.unctad.org/trade_env/test1/projects/taskforce.htm.

ANNEX II: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**BANGLADESH****Mr. Akmal HOSSAIN**

Managing Director
Hortex Foundation
House #126, Apt. #6C
Road #9A, Dhanmondi R/A
Dhaka 1209
Bangladesh
Tel: +88 20 91 29 804 (Private)
+88 20 91 25 181 (Prof.)
E-mail: akmal@bangla.net

BRAZIL**Ms. Annalina CAMBOIM DE AZEVEDO**

Brazilian TBT/WTO Enquiry Point - International Affairs Inmetro - T Ministry
Of Development, Industry and Foreign Trade
National Institute of Metrology, Standardization and Industrial Quality
Rua Santa Alexandrina 416/9 andar
Rio Comprido
20261-232 Rio de Janeiro, RJ
Tel: +55 21 2563 2824
Fax: +55 21 2502 6542
E-mail: acamboim@inmetro.gov.br

Mr. Eduardo GADRET

Brazilian TBT/WTO Enquiry Point -
International Affairs Inmetro - T Ministry
Of Development, Industry and Foreign Trade
National Institute of Metrology,
Standardization and Industrial Quality
Rua Santa Alexandrina 416/5 andar
Rio Comprido
20261-232 Rio de Janeiro, RJ
Tel: +55 21 2563 2765
Fax: +55 21 2502 6542
E-mail: etgadret@inmetro.gov.br

CHINA**Ms. LIU Lijuan**

First Secretary

Commercial and Economic Affairs

Permanent Mission of China to the UN and other International Organizations in Geneva

Chemin de Surville 11

P.O. Box 85

1213 Petit-Lancy 2 (Geneva)

Tel: +41 22 9097693

Fax: +41 22 9097699

E-mail: liulijuan@mofcom.gov.cn

CUBA**Mr. Raúl GARRIDO VARQUER**

Ministry of Science, Technology and the Environment

Delegate to the CTE

CITMA

La Havana - CUBA

Tel: +53-7-8670598

Fax: +53-7-8670600 / 53-7-6493585

E-mail: raul@citma.cu**Ms. Rebeca GONZALEZ**

Counsellor

Permanent Mission of Cuba

Chemin de Valerie 100

1292 Chambesy (Geneva)

Switzerland

Tel: +41 22 7589430

Fax: +41 22 7589431

E-mail: rebeca.gonzalez@bluewin.ch**DOMINICAN REPUBLIC****Ms. Carmen MIRANDA LEVY**

Counsellor

Permanent Mission of the Dominican Republic

Rue de Lausanne 63

1202 Genève

Tel: +41 22 715 39 10

E-mail: carmen.mirandalevy@rep-dominicana.ch**Ms. Soraya RIB-BEJARAN**

Agro business Specialist in the Competitiveness National Council (CNC)

Ave. John F. Kennedy, #16
Edificio Empresarial, Primer Piso
Ensanche Miraflores, Santo Domingo
Dominican Republic
Tel.: +809 476-7262, ext. 319
Fax: +809 563-0014
E-mail: smrib@yahoo.com

INDIA

Mr. Rajoo GOEL

Secretary General
ELCINA ELECTRONIC INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION OF INDIA
422 Okhla Industrial Estate, Phase III
New Delhi - 110020 INDIA
Phone: +91-11-26928053, 26924597
Fax: +91-11-26923440
E-mail: rajoo@elcina.com
Website: www.elcina.com

Mr. Sanjay KUMAR

Director, Trade Policy Division,
Department of Commerce,
Ministry of Commerce & Industry,
Room No. 279, Udyog Bhawan,
New Delhi - 110 011.
India
Phone: +91 11 2306 3400
E-mail: s.kumar@nic.in

JAPAN

Mr N. HIRATSUKA

Secretary General Japan Business Council in Europe a.l.s.b.l.
Rue Montoyer 40
B-1000 Brussels - Belgium
Phone: +32-2-286-5330
Fax: +32-2-230-5485
E-mail: hiratsuka@jbce.org

KENYA

Ms. Ruth NYAGAH

Managing Director
AfriCert LTD

P.O. Box 74696 , Nairobi
Tel: +25420828857
Fax: +25420828858
E-mail: rnyagah@africert.co.ke

MALAYSIA

Mr. Sathianathan MENON
qa plus asia - pacific sdn. bhd.
no. 132A, Jalan Kasah
Medan Damansara
50490 Kuala Lumpur
Tel: +603 20936195
Fax: +603 20942920
E-mail: qaplus@consultant.com

MALI

Mr. Coulibaly HOUNAIZATOU
Nyeta- Sira
Presidente
Rue 249 Porte 07
Bamako - Mali
Tel: (223)6724716
Fax: (223)2214205
Email: nyeta@cooperation.net

NICARAGUA

Mr. Silvio ZAMBRANA
Addifian
Agregado Comercial
Mission Permanente de Nicaragua
Rue de Vermont 37-39
1202 Ceiuela, Suiza.

NETHERLANDS

Mr. Tjalling DIJKSTRA
Policy Coherence Unit
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Fax: +31 70 3484881

E-mail: tjalling.dijkstra@minbuza.nl

Ms. Pabla VAN HECK

Senior Sustainability Officer
Corporate Sustainability Office (CSO)
Philips International B.V.
E-mail (ext): pabla.van.heck@philips.com

Ms. Ariane van BEUZEKOM

Programme Manager
Market Access
Centre for the Promotion of Imports from developing countries
Mail Address:
P.O.Box 30009
3001 DA Rotterdam
The Netherlands
Phone: +31 (0)10 2013432
Fax: +31 (0)10 4114081
E-mail: marketaccess@cbi.nl
abeuzekom@cbi.nl
Website: <http://www.cbi.nl/marketinfo>

PHILIPPINES

Mr. Miguel R. BAUTISTA

First Secretary (Economic and Environmental Affairs)
Philippine Mission to the United Nations
47 Avenue Blanc
1202 Geneva, Switzerland
Tel + 41 (22) 716-1930
Fax + 41 (22) 716-1932
e-mail: [mrbautista@bluewin.ch](mailto: mrbautista@bluewin.ch)

Mr. Roberto C. AMORES

President, Hi-Las Marketing Corporation
Trustee, Food Sector
Philippine Exporters Confederation
KKK Processing Plant Bldg.
CRB Road, FTI Complex
Taguig City
Tel: +632 8384941 to 42
Fax: +632 8384940
E-mail: [hilasmc@info.com.ph](mailto: hilasmc@info.com.ph)

SWEDEN**Ms. Marianne JÖNSSON**

Analyst

National Board of Trade

Kommerskollegium

Box 6803

S-11386 Stockholm

Tel: +46 8 6904884

Fax: +46 8 6904840

E-mail: marianne.jonsson@kommers.se**THAILAND****Mr. Charuek HENGRASMEE**

President, Electrical and Electronics Institute

6Fl. Department of Industrial Works Building

57 Prasumen Road, Pranakorn, Bangkok 10200

THAILAND

Tel. +662 280 7272 ext. 103

Fax. +662 280 7277

E-mail: charuek@thaieei.com**Ms. Dr. Chainarong RATTANAKREETAKUL .**

Cluster of Western GAP

3 Fl. University Center Building

Kasetsart University, Khampaengsaen

Nakompathom 73140

Tel/Fax: +66 34 352075

Mobile: +66 9 1105543

E-mail: crattan99@yahoo.com**Mr. Vicha SARDSUD**

132/50 Muban Chaopha,

Mu 7, Tumbon Nongkwai

Amphur Hangdong

Chiang Mai, Thailand

Tel.: 053 94 40 31 Ext. 115

Fax.: 053 94 14 26

E-mail: vicha_cmu@hotmail.com,
vicha_pht@yahoo.com**Ms. Upassri BAMRUNGWONG**

Environmental Official

Wastes and Hazardous Substances Management Bureau

Pollution Control Department
 92 Phaholyothin Soi 7
 Phaholyothin Rd., Samsen Nai
 Phyathai, Bangkok 10400
 Tel: +66 22982438
 Fax: +6622982425
 E-mail: upassri.s@pcd.go.th

UGANDA

Mr. Musa MUWANGA

Coordinator
 National Organic Agricultural Movement of Uganda (NOGAMU)
 Plot 268, Gaba Road ,Kabalagala.
 PO Box 70071, Kampala, Uganda.
 Tel: +256 41 269415, +256 31 264039
 Fax: +256 31 264040
 Direct line : +256 41 268707
 Mob: +256 77 448948
 E-Mail: mkmuwanga@nogamu.org.ug
m_muwanga@yahoo.co.uk

Ms. Florence KATA

Executive Director
 Uganda Export Promotion Board
 Plot 22 Entebbe Road
 Conrad Plaza, 5th Floor
 P.O. Box 5045
 Kampala - Uganda
 Tel: 256-41-230250 / 23 02 33
 Fax: 256 - 41- 259779
 E-mail: uepc@starcom.co.ug
florencekata@yahoo.com

EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES - EC

Ms. Marie-Hélène VAREILLE

DG Trade
 Market Access Unit
 Rue de la Loi, 170 k
 B - 1040 Brussels
 Tel: +32 2 299 21 25
 Fax: +32 2 296 73 93
 E-mail: Marie-Helene.VAREILLE@cec.eu.int

Mr. Sergio PAVON GONZALEZ

DG Trade

Unit 2 Agriculture, fisheries, sanitary and
phytosanitary measures, biotechnology.
Economic and Trade Affairs Manager - Administrator
European Commission
Tel.Brussels +(32) 2 2999022 \$
E-mail: Sergio.Pavon@cec.eu.int

Mr. Matti RAJALA

Minister Counsellor
European Commission
Permanent Delegation to the International Organisations in Geneva
66 Rue du Grand-Pré - CH 1211 Geneva
66, rue du Grand Pré
1211 Genève 7
Tel 022/918 22 75
Fax 022/734 22 36
E-mail: Matti.Rajala@cec.eu.int

IICA - Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture

Mr. Jaime FLORES

Sanidad Agropecuaria e Inocuidad de Alimentos
Instituto Interamericano de Cooperación
para la Agricultura
IICA-Sede Central
Tel (506) 216-0222 ext. 0647 / 0648
Fax (506) 216-0173
E-mail: jaime.flores@iica.int
Website: www.iica.int

ITC - INTERNATIONAL TRADE CENTRE (UNCTAD/WTO)

Mr. Roberto SMITH-GILLESPIE

Chief, International Purchasing & Supply Management Section
Division of Trade Support Services,
International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO
Palais des Nations
1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
Tel: +41 22 7300489
Fax: +41 22 7300328.
E-mail: SMITHGILLESPIE@intracen.org

Mr. Shyam Kumar GUJADHUR

Senior Adviser on Standards and Quality Management
International Trade Centre (UNCTAD/WTO)
54-56 rue de Montbrillant

1202 Geneva, Switzerland
 Tel: +41-22-730-0396
 Fax: +41-22-730-0576
 E-mail: gujadhur@intracen.org

Mr. Kasterine Alexander
 Senior Master Development Adviser
 International Trade Center
 Tel: 0227300292
 Fax: 0227300446
 Email: katerine@intracen.org

OECD

Ms. Joy A. KIM
 Senior Policy Analyst (Trade and Environment)
 Trade Policy Linkages Division
 OECD Trade Directorate (TE 1562)
 2, rue André-Pascal
 75775 Paris Cedex 16
 Tel: +33 1 45 24 95 29
 Fax: +33 1 44 30 61 63
 E-mail: Joy.KIM@oecd.org

UN ESCAP

Mr. Lorenzo SANTUCCI
 Associate Environmental Affairs Officer
 Environment and Sustainable Development Division
 United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN-ESCAP)
 Rajadamnern Nok Avenue, Bangkok 10200 - Thailand
 Tel: +66(0)2-288-1946
 Fax: +66(0)2-288-1059
 E-mail: santucci@un.org

UNEP

Ms. Maria Cecilia PINEDA
 Economic Affairs Officer
 Maria Cecilia Pineda
 Economic Affairs Officer
 Economics and Trade Branch
 Division of Technology, Industry and Economics
 United Nations Environment Programme
 Tel. + 41 22 917 8103

E-mail: MariaCecilia.Pineda@unep.ch

WTO

Ms. Vivien LIU

Counsellor
Trade and Environment Division
World Trade Organization
Rue de Lausanne 154
CH - 1211 Geneva 21
Switzerland
Tel. +41 22/739 54 55
Fax +41 22/739 56 20
E-mail: Vivien.Liu@wto.org

Ms Christiane WOLFF

Economics Affairs Officer
Agriculture and Commodities Division
World Trade Organization
Rue de Lausanne 154
CH - 1211 Geneva 21
Switzerland
Christiane.Wolff@wto.org

Ms. Barbara Oliveira

Institute of Training and Technical Cooperation
World Trade Organization
Rue de Lausanne, 154
Geneva 1202
Switzerland
Phone: +41 22 739-6348
Oliviera.barbara@yahoo.com.br

CIMS - INCAE

Mr Lloyd Rivera

Campus Incae Agarita Alajuel
Costa Rica
PO-BOX 960-4050
Alajuela, Cost Rica
Tel: (506) 4972294
Fax: (506)4339912
E-mail: lloyd@cims-la.com

EUREPGAP**Mr. Steve HOMER**

Corporate Responsibility Manager

FLAMINGO

9 Copes Close

Buckden

St. Neots PE19 5SD

United Kingdom

Tel: +44 1438 375107

Fax: +44 1438 375101

E-mail: steve.homer@f-h.biz**GTZ****Ms. Doris GUENTHER**

Project Officer

Sector Project "Agricultural Trade"

Division 45 "Agriculture, Fisheries and Food"

Deutsche Gesellschaft fuer

Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH

PO Box 5180

65726 Eschborn, Germany

Phone +49 (0) 6196-79-1478

Fax +49 (0) 6196-79-7180

Email Doris.Guenther@gtz.deInternet <http://www.gtz.de/trade>**ICTSD****Mr. Mahesh SUGATHAN**

Programme Coordinator - Economics & Trade Policy Analysis

International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development

7, chemin de Balexert

CH-1219 Geneva

Switzerland

Phone: +41 22 917-8351

E-mail: smahesh@ictsd.ch**IISD****Ms. Oshani PERERA**

Sustainability Specialist/Consultant IISD

Harmenkoks Laan 49a
2611 TP Delft, The Netherlands
Phone: +31 15 215 8929
Mobile: +31 6 41469235
E-mail: Oshani@wanadoo.nl

ISEAL Alliance

Ms. Sasha COURVILLE
Executive Director
ISEAL Alliance
43 St. Giles, Oxford, OX1 3LW
United Kingdom
Tel/fax: +44 1865 516695
E-mail: sasha@isealalliance.org

Natural Resources Institute, UK

Mr. Andrew GRAFFHAM
Biochemist & Microbiologist
Natural Resources Institute
University of Greenwich at Medway
Central Avenue
Chatham Maritime
Chatham
Kent ME4 4TB
United Kingdom
Tel: +44 1634883741
Fax: +44 (1634) 880077 / 883386
E-mail: a.j.graffham@gre.ac.uk

STIC – Sustainable Trade and Innovation Centre

Mr. Raymon VAN ERMEN
Sustainable Trade and Innovation Centre/ STIC-Europe program manager.
Executive Director European Partners for the Environment.
Tel + 32 2 771 15 34
Fax +032 2 539 48 15
E-mail: raymond.vanermen@epe.be

SOUTH CENTRE

Mr. Samuel G. ASFAHA
Programme Officer
Trade for Development Programme
Phone: +41 22 791 8050
E-mail: asfaha@southcentre.org

TERI - Europe

Ms. Ritu KUMAR
Director
TERI-Europe
27, Albert Grove
London SW20 8PZ, UK
Tel: +44 20 89479145
E-mail: ritukumar@aol.com

THE CENTRE FOR SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

Mr. Martin CHARTER
Professor and Director
The Centre for Sustainable Design
University College for the Creative Arts
Falkner Road, Farnham
Surrey, GU9 7DS
United Kingdom
Tel: +44 1252 892772
Fax: +44 1252 892747
E-mail: mcharter@surrey.ac.uk or
martincharter@compuserve.com

WWF

Ms. Aimee GONZALES
Policy Analyst
Trade and Sustainable Development
WWF International
CH 1196, Gland
Switzerland
E-mail: AGonzales@wwfint.org

OTHER EXPERTS

Mr. Erwin ROSE

Consultant
Institute for Governance and Sustainable Development
(former senior negotiator, US Department of State)
23, avenue de Champel
1206 Geneva
Switzerland
Tel.: +41 22 347-2005
E-mail: erwindrose@hotmail.com

Mr. Rene VOSSENAAR

Consultant
(former Head, Trade, Environment and Development Branch, UNCTAD secretariat)
E-mail: rjjvossenaar@yahoo.com

UNCTAD***Mrs. Lakshmi PURI***

Director
Division on International Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities
UNCTAD secretariat
Office E.8048-50
Palais des Nations
1211 Geneva
Tel: +41 22 9075176
Fax: +41 22 9170044
E-mail: lakshmi.puri@unctad.org

Staff of the Trade and Sustainable Development Section

Mr. Ulrich HOFFMANN
Ms. Sophia TWAROG
Ms. Nuria CASTELLS
Mr. Alexey VIKHLYAEV
Mr. Andrew STEVENSON
Mr. Rafe DENT

Mr. Olivier MATRINGE

Economic Affairs Officer
Commodities Branch
Division on International Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities
Office E.9007
Palais des Nations
14-18 Avenue de la Paix
CH-1211 Geneva 10
E-mail: Olivier.matringe@unctad.org

Mr. Olivier COMBE

Associate Economic Affairs Officer

Commodities Branch

Division on International Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities

Office E.9025

Palais des Nations

CH-1211 Geneva 10

E-mail: olivier.combe@unctad.org