

SUSTAINABLE TRADE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

TOWARDS GREEN ECONOMIES



GLOBAL CONTEXT



Programmes and initiatives on sustainable trade and the environment aim to strengthen the capacity of developing countries in designing and implementing mutually supportive trade, environment, climate change and sustainable development strategies while integrating sustainable development objectives at all levels. UNCTAD work explores the trade opportunities arising from multilateral environmental agreements, as well as trade and environment-related negotiations. It promotes sustainable trade in sectors that contribute to further economic growth, job creation and opportunities for social inclusion.

UNCTAD work is based on requests from developing countries to examine the development impact and economic repercussions of existing and potential multilateral environmental agreements, as well as trade and environment negotiations and how best to address the challenges and seize the opportunities related to trade. Guided by the Sustainable Development Goals and the principles under the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, UNCTAD facilitates multilateral and expert processes in areas in which the environmental aspect is central to trade. Making economic growth compatible with sustainable development requires adequate policies and mechanisms, and UNCTAD programmes and initiatives on sustainable trade and the environment work towards stimulating economic diversification, creating jobs, raising income levels and fostering environmental protection, thereby improving living standards.



PROGRAMMES AT A GLANCE

- The Climate Change Programme brings Governments, industry and civil society together to address the economic aspects of climate change and its trade and sustainable development implications in several sectors of the economy, such as transportation, energy use, electricity generation and agriculture.
- The BioTrade Initiative works at the national, regional and global levels with partners along the following three strategic lines: enabling a policy framework for biotrade; value chain enhancement; and market creation and development for biodiversity products and services. As one means of enhancing the value chain, UNCTAD has developed a biotrade value chain methodology to support the growth of biodiversity-based sectors. The aim is to enhance the production of value added products and services derived from biodiversity, for both domestic and international markets.
- National Green Export Reviews assist developing countries and countries with economies in transition to implement green economy policies and establish regulatory and institutional frameworks and cooperative mechanisms to strengthen the capacity, efficiency and competitiveness of their green export sectors. The Reviews respond to an emerging demand from developing countries to assess national potential to advance the development of national green sectors, generate new employment and increased export opportunities and advance sustainable development.



PROGRAMME FACTS AND FIGURES

Scope: All regions

Start date: 1997

Collaborative arrangements:
25+ programme partners

**National Green Export Reviews
completed:** 8

Website: unctad.org/environment

**Sustainable Development
Goals addressed:**

Directly: 8 and 17
Indirectly: 12 and 13



- The Oceans Economy Programme supports developing countries in seizing economic benefits from the sustainable use of marine resources. It promotes the sustainable trade of products and services in ocean-based economic sectors through analysing, developing and adopting evidence-based and policy-coherent oceans economy and trade strategies and enhancing national implementation capacities. With the support of the United Nations Development Account, in 2018, UNCTAD will launch an evidence-based and policy-coherent oceans economy and trade strategies programme, initially involving Barbados, Belize and Costa Rica.
- The Circular Economy Programme contributes to protecting the environment while providing an opportunity to save resources, develop new sectors, create jobs, generate income, decrease waste disposal costs and develop new capabilities. UNCTAD is working in this new area to assist developing countries in changing their trade patterns and improving the utilization of idle resources by developing and testing the application of technology-based solutions and cleaner production methods that will reduce the levels of environmental pollution generated by manufacturing activities. Underlying research activities target specific manufacturing sectors that are prevalent in developing countries and involve several types of commodities, such as textiles, clothing and leather, light manufacturing, household products, chemicals and petrochemicals, rubber and plastics.



RESULTS AND IMPACT AT A GLANCE

- UNCTAD is currently working closely with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to address countries' concerns about the negative effects of climate change response measures, as well as to explore ways to enable trade to be part of the global solution to address climate change.
- In the last two decades, BioTrade Initiative activities have benefited approximately 5 million farmers, producers and workers, creating jobs and generating additional income opportunities for rural and marginal communities, as well as other actors in the value chain. Sales revenues of BioTrade Initiative beneficiary organizations, working with small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), community-based associations and multinational companies, amounted to €4.3 billion in 2015, compared with €35.3 million (\$40 million) in 2003.
- The National Green Export Reviews, through which national Governments and stakeholders prioritize sectors for deeper analysis, have assisted in the identification of dozens of new export products in 10 countries, namely Armenia, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Lebanon, Madagascar, Morocco, Oman, the Republic of Moldova, Senegal and Vanuatu.



DONORS/ FUNDING SOURCE

Current: Sweden, Switzerland (State Secretariat for Economic Affairs) and United Nations Development Account

Past: Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain and United Nations Foundation/United Nations Fund for International Partnerships

