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Trade and Development Board
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Multi-year Expert Meeting on Commodities and Development
Thirteenth session
Geneva, 10–12 October 2022
Item 2 of the provisional agenda
Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

Provisional agenda and annotations

I. Provisional agenda

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II. Annotations to the provisional agenda

Item 1 **Election of officers**

1. It is recommended that the Multi-year Expert Meeting on Commodities and Development elect a Chair and a Vice-Chair-cum-Rapporteur.



Item 2

Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

2. The provisional agenda for the thirteenth session of the Multi-year Expert Meeting is reproduced in chapter I above, in accordance with the decision of the Trade and Development Board at its seventy-first executive session on formal approval of the topics of the multi-year expert meetings and the single-year expert meeting.¹ The meeting will have three days, 10 to 12 October 2022, to complete its work. The provisional schedule of meetings for the three days is attached in the annex to this document. A detailed programme will be available at the latest one week before the start of the meeting.

Documentation

TD/B/C.I/MEM.2/52 Provisional agenda and annotations

Item 3

Recent developments, challenges and opportunities in commodity markets

3. The purpose of the Multi-year Expert Meeting is to monitor recent trends, major developments and challenges and opportunities in commodity markets, giving due attention to those commodity sectors that are relevant to commodity-dependent developing countries. Discussions on these topics, which will include presentations by national experts and experts from relevant international organizations and commodity bodies, as well as representatives from the private sector and civil society, will serve to inform member States of UNCTAD of important developments in key commodity sectors and markets from a development perspective.

4. To facilitate the discussion, the UNCTAD secretariat has prepared a note titled “Recent developments, challenges and opportunities in commodity markets”. The note contains a review of recent developments in key commodity markets and an analysis of factors that contributed to the trends in commodity prices observed in 2020 and 2021. Generally, price movements were driven by factors related to supply, demand, changing inventories and political uncertainties, as well as the pandemic and conflicts in various regions. Some policy issues are explored with regard to the large variations in prices observed in commodity markets and recommendations are made of policies that could help commodity-dependent developing countries mitigate exposure to price fluctuations and achieve sustainable development and inclusive growth.

5. As part of the deliberations on this agenda item, a commodities day will be held on 12 October 2022 and will feature the following two sessions: bamboo, 10 a.m.–1 p.m.; and phosphate, 3–5.30 p.m.

6. The first session will explore different aspects of the bamboo value chain important for development, including opportunities for value addition with regard to raw bamboo; challenges faced in the downstream processing of bamboo in developing countries; advantages of bamboo as a construction material; and bamboo in climate change mitigation. To inform policy options for developing the bamboo sector, different experiences and lessons learned will be shared. An interactive panel discussion will include participants from bamboo-producing and importing countries, including government officials from member States and stakeholders from the private sector and civil society.

¹ TD/B/EX(71)/3.

7. The second session will address different aspects of the relationship between phosphate and development. The session will start with a review of the outlook for phosphate production and consumption, then discuss some critical questions associated with the phosphate industry in developing countries, such as the challenges faced by farmers in accessing fertilizers in phosphate-producing countries in Africa; the challenges of scaling up phosphate production in developing countries; and the potential role of phosphate in the green energy transition. An interactive panel discussion will include participants from phosphate-producing countries and countries with limited access to fertilizers, including government officials from member States and stakeholders from the private sector and civil society.

Documentation

TD/B/C.I/MEM.2/54 Recent developments, challenges and opportunities in commodity markets

Item 4
Pathways to economic diversification in commodity-dependent developing countries

8. The thirteenth session of the Multi-year Expert Meeting will explore the key ingredients of a successful diversification strategy based on successful experiences in Costa Rica, Indonesia and Malaysia.

9. To facilitate the discussion, the UNCTAD secretariat has prepared a note titled “Pathways to economic diversification in commodity-dependent developing countries”. Few developing countries have managed to escape the commodity dependence trap and diversify their economies. An analysis of the key ingredients of a successful diversification strategy is provided in the note, based on experiences in some countries. Strong political leadership, regional integration and international cooperation are among the elements of a successful diversification strategy. In addition, a major impediment to economic diversification is highlighted in the note, namely, tariff escalation, which occurs when import tariffs are higher for processed goods than for the primary commodities that are the inputs of the production processes of these goods. Tariff escalation is more pervasive in manufacturing than in agriculture and is a feature of the trade regimes of both developed and developing countries.² Tariff escalation in manufacturing could be a contributing factor to the lack of industrialization, and poses an obstacle to export diversification. Tariff peaks that are often concentrated in agricultural goods such as food products can also limit scope for export diversification.

Documentation

TD/B/C.I/MEM.2/53 Pathways to economic diversification in commodity-dependent developing countries

Item 6
Adoption of the report of the meeting

10. The report of the Multi-year Expert Meeting will be submitted to the Trade and Development Commission at its next session. The meeting may wish to authorize the Vice-Chair-cum-Rapporteur, under the authority of the Chair, to prepare the final report after the conclusion of the meeting.

² UNCTAD, 2022, *Key Statistics and Trends in Trade Policy 2021* (Geneva).

Input from experts: Recent developments, challenges and opportunities in commodity markets

Experts nominated by member States are encouraged to submit brief papers (of approximately five pages) as contributions to the work of the Multi-year Expert Meeting. The papers should be submitted to the UNCTAD secretariat in advance of the meeting and will be made available at the meeting in the form and language in which they are received. Papers, which should draw on the experts' experiences, may address one or more of the following issues:

- (a) What have the drivers of price trends been in recent years in commodity markets, and what are the opportunities and challenges faced in commodity-dependent developing countries that stem from these trends?
- (b) How can trade in primary commodities make a positive contribution to development?
- (c) What mechanisms allow primary commodities to enhance trade and contribute to sustainable development?
- (d) What policy options do commodity-dependent developing countries have to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030?

For more information, please contact:

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Annex

Multi-year Expert Meeting on Commodities and Development, thirteenth session: Provisional schedule

	<i>Monday 10 October</i>	<i>Tuesday 11 October</i>	<i>Wednesday 12 October</i>
10 a.m.–1 p.m.	Opening plenary Opening statements Item 1. Election of officers Item 2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work Item 3. Recent developments, challenges and opportunities in commodity markets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food and agricultural commodities • Minerals, ores and metals • Energy: Crude oil, natural gas, coal and renewable energy 	Item 4. Pathways to economic diversification in commodity-dependent developing countries	Item 3, continued: Session on bamboo
3–5.30 p.m.	Item 3, continued	Item 4, continued	Item 3, continued: Session on phosphate
5.30–6 p.m.	Item 3, continued	Item 4, continued	Closing plenary Item 6. Adoption of the report of the meeting