



Ninth Meeting of the UNCTAD Research Partnership Platform

Geneva, 11 July 2018 (10:00 - 13:00)

Palais des Nations, Room XVII

UNCTAD created the Research Partnership Platform (RPP) in 2010 in order to respond to current challenges in the area of competition and consumer protection through joint research and policy analysis. UNCTAD aims at strengthening competition and consumer protection regimes in developing countries and transition economies, and sharing best practices for effective law enforcement and policy design with a view to achieve sustainable development goals.

RPP is an initiative that brings together researchers from research institutions, universities, competition authorities and civil society. It provides a platform where researchers can undertake joint research with UNCTAD and share their findings with their peers and law enforcers in the area of competition and consumer protection. In the first part of 2018 RPP meeting, we will have presentation of the findings of three research projects undertaken by our partners on various issues related to competition and consumer protection.

In the second part, we will have a panel discussion on the role of competition law and policy in dealing with rising market concentration, particularly in agro-food industry. Agriculture is a crucial sector for sustainable and inclusive development of many developing countries. UNCTAD research shows a remarkable increase in market concentration in the non-financial sector between 1995 and 2015.¹ Findings of this research reveal that market capitalization of the top 100 firms amounted to 31 times that of the bottom 2,000 firms in 1995; whereas by 2015 top 100 firms were worth 7,000 times more than their smaller competitors. The situation is not very different, if not worse, in the agro-food industry. Within the agro-business value chain, top five firms control 84 per cent of the market for agrochemicals; and top 10 firms control 73 per cent of seeds market.² Both horizontal and vertical integration of large multinational firms has been transforming agriculture. Recent mega-mergers in the agro-food value chain might adversely affect the attainment of the SDG 2 on zero hunger.

Is there a role for competition law and policy to address these challenges? Could merger control regimes or other enforcement tools in competition law play a role in the oversight of big mergers in sectors that are crucial to achieving some of the SDGs, such as agriculture? The panellists will discuss the role of competition law and policy in addressing these challenges.

¹ UNCTAD, 2017, Trade and Development Report, Figure 6.2, p. 126.

<http://unctad.org/en/pages/PublicationWebflyer.aspx?publicationid=1852>

² International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems (IPES-Food). 2017. Too big to feed: Exploring the impacts of mega-mergers, concentration, concentration of power in the agri-food sector. www.ipes-food.org.

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WORK PROGRAMME

10:00 - 10:10	Opening of the Research Partnership Platform (RPP) meeting
	Opening remarks, Ms. Teresa Moreira , Head, Competition and Consumer Policies Branch (CCPB), UNCTAD Introduction, Ms. Ebru Gökçe Dessemond , RPP Coordinator, Legal Officer, CCPB, UNCTAD
10:10 - 11:30	Part I: Presentation of Research Findings in Ongoing Projects
	During this session, researchers will present the preliminary/final findings in their projects in both competition and consumer protection areas. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr. Fabio Babey, Zurich University <i>Class actions in competition law</i>• Dr. Marek Martyniszyn, Queen's University Belfast School of Law <i>Developing countries' experience with extraterritoriality in competition law</i>• Dr. Luis D. S. Morais, Lisbon Law University and Dr. Lúcio Féteira, New University of Lisbon <i>Competition law in developing countries – The case of Angola and Mozambique</i>• Dr. Janet Hui Xue, University of Sydney, School of Political and Social Sciences: and Dr. Alex Chung, University College London <i>Legal and regulatory challenges of the sharing economy</i> <p>Questions & Answers</p>
11:30 - 12:55	Part II: Panel Discussion - The role of competition law and policy in addressing rising market concentration: The case of agro-food industry
	<p>Panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prof. Eleanor Fox, Walter J. Derenberg Professor of Trade Regulation, New York University School of Law• Prof. William E. Kovacic, Global Competition Professor of Law and Policy, George Washington University <p>Questions & Answers</p>
12:55 - 13:00	Wrap-up and closing
	Closing remarks by Ms. Teresa Moreira