



Sixth Stakeholders Steering Committee Meeting for BioTrade



26 and 30 June 2023
Online, Zoom



UNITED NATIONS
UNCTAD



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

Federal Department of Economic Affairs,
Education and Research EAER
State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO

Introduction: circular bioeconomy

Marianne Kettunen

Senior policy expert and advisor

UNCTAD BioTrade (external)

marianne.kettunen@unctad.org

What is UNCTAD doing?

- **UNCTAD key activities:**

- **UNCTAD [circular economy](#)** (2015 – ongoing), e.g. Sustainable Manufacturing and Environmental Pollution ([SMEP](#)) programme covering also waste generation in some bio-based sectors (textiles etc.)
- **UNCTAD biodiversity and trade:** Briefing study on circular bioeconomy and trade-related aspects (ongoing), to assess state of play, map key actors & potential partners, and identify possible areas for work.

- **International key insights (e.g.):**

- *“Very relevant cross-policy area of work – but everyone seems to still try to figure it out.”*
- There is no common / agreed definition of “circular bioeconomy” – but FAO / ISBWG has published “[Aspirational principles and criteria for a sustainable bioeconomy](#)” (2021).
- Rich pool of voluntary and mandatory standards for bio-based products, but no clear understanding yet how / if they integrate circular criteria.
- Some promising databases and tools (e.g. [UNCTAD TraBio](#) and Chatham House [Circular Economy Earth](#)), however none (yet) capable of capturing circular bioeconomy trade flows.

- **Regional key insights (e.g.):**

- APEC [Bio-Circular-Green \(BCG\) Economy](#) concept (2022), inc. taken up by Thailand
- [East African Community Bioeconomy Strategy](#) (2021)
- Science Panel for the Amazon (SPA) exploring the concept for [a “new” bioeconomy in the Amazon](#) (2021)

- **National key insights:**

- Countries have developed / are developing both bioeconomy and circular strategies / roadmaps
- However, unclear how integrated these are, and whether they make clear strategic links to trade policy and measures for support

Forward looking insights from ongoing work

Possible future areas of work:

- Improving understanding on what circular economy “looks like” across different bioeconomy sectors in global supply chains
- Improving understanding on how circular bioeconomy supports sustainable food systems, nationally and internationally
- Improving understanding on circular bioeconomy trade flows
- Improving understanding on circularity as part of existing standards
- Supporting national bio- and/or circular economy strategies, to improve integration and help explore trade-related needs and opportunities

Mapping active organisations (*ongoing*):

- **IGOs:** UNCTAD (BioTrade, circular economy, oceans / blue economy), FAO (sustainable circular bioeconomy), UNEP (sustainable food systems), ITC (sust. standards), UNECE (e.g. regulatory frameworks, regional and national strategies), OECD (e.g. regional and national strategies) etc.
- **Research:** Chatham House and UNEP WCMC (e.g. trade flows), Finnish Innovation Fund SITRA (reducing biodiversity footprint via CE), Ellen MacArthur Foundation (CE and regenerative agriculture) etc.
- **BioTrade partnership ... ?!**

Expert reflections: circular bioeconomy

Patrick Schroeder

Senior Research Fellow

Chatham House

PSchroeder@chathamhouse.org

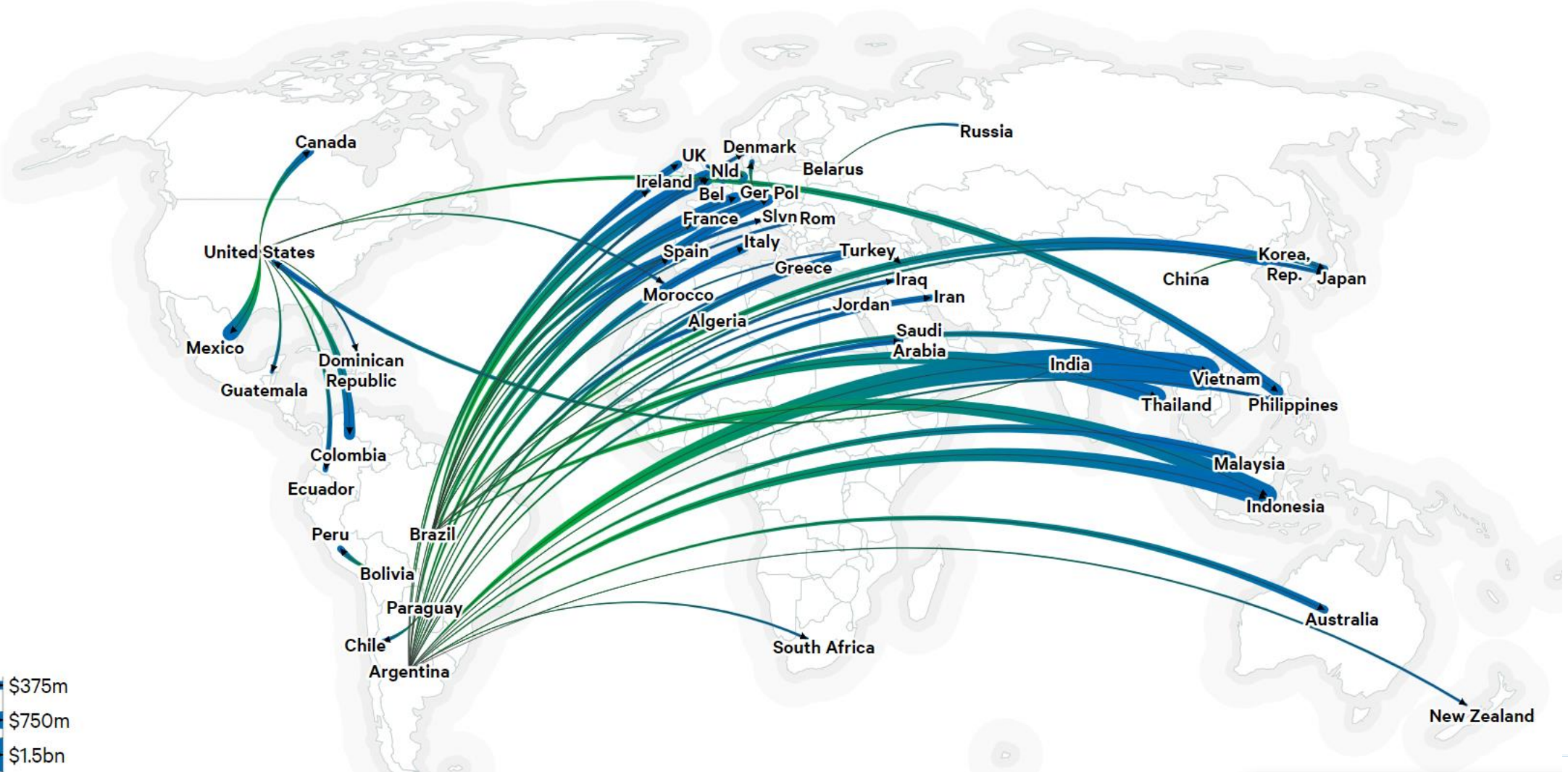
Exporter: **All countries** | Importer: **All countries** | Commodity: **Soya-bean oil-cake & other solid re...** | Year: **2020** | Auto zoom region

Measure

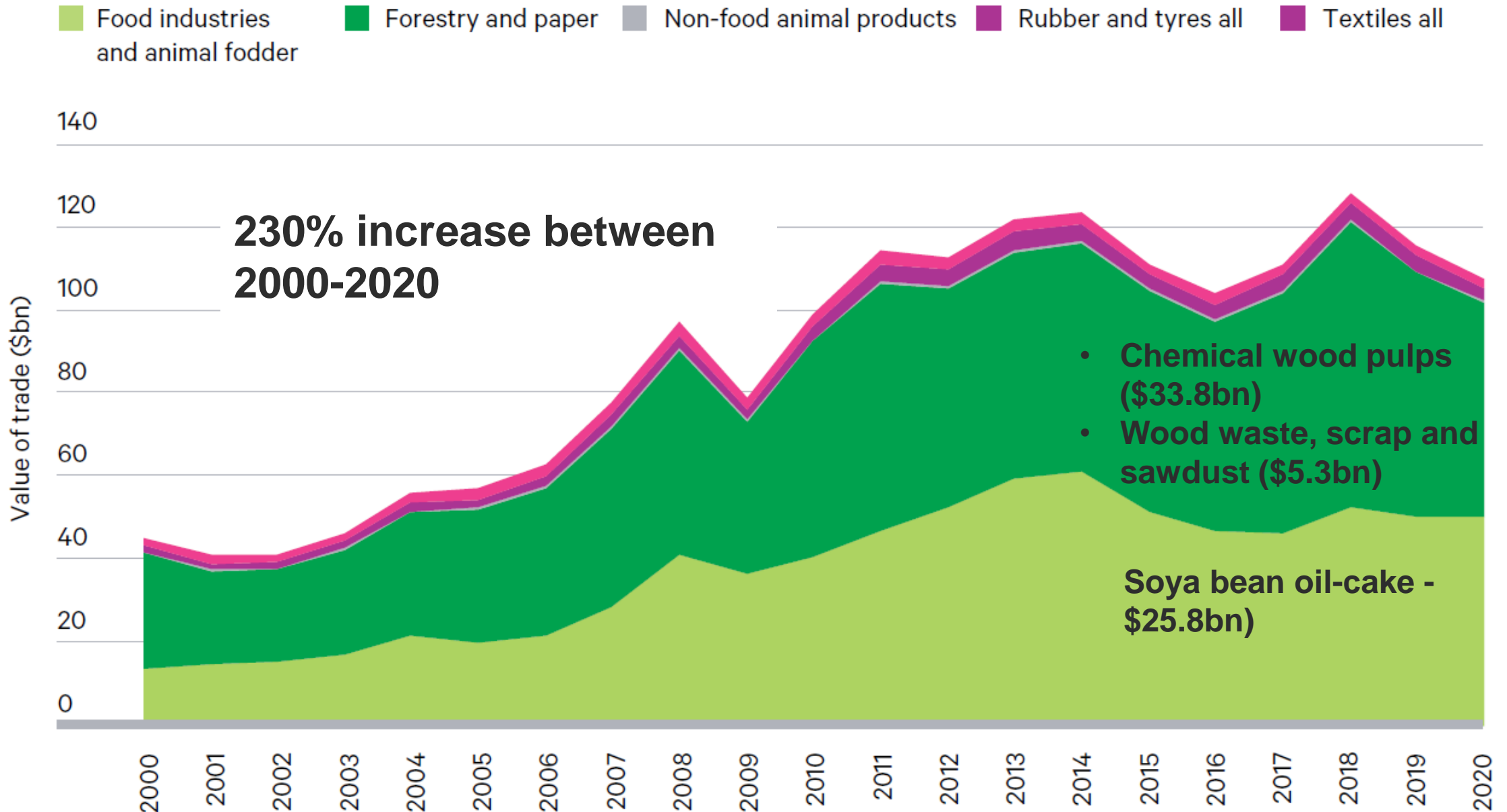
- Value
- Weight



Share of global food industries and animal fodder trade



Trade in bio-based waste and secondary raw materials



- 1. What types of bio-based trade flows should be facilitated?**
- 2. Development of shared definitions and standards**
- 3. Interface between national bioeconomy strategies and trade agendas**
- 4. Improving data collection and monitoring**