



# UNCTAD XIII

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

DOHA - QATAR 21-26 APRIL 2012



SPECIAL EVENT

## PANEL DISCUSSION

### MAINSTREAMING SUSTAINABILITY INTO TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT POLICIES: TOWARDS RIO+20

25 APRIL 2012, 9 a.m.–12 noon

#### BACKGROUND

According to the United Nations Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Global Sustainability (2012), sustainable global performance during the past two decades has been suboptimal in many respects. In this context, 2012 will be a key year for assessing and confirming global commitments towards sustainable development. It is expected that the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development 2012, also known as Rio+20, will reaffirm and update the sustainable development agenda, adopt a set of sustainable development goals to complement the Millennium Development Goals and agree on an institutional framework for sustainable development. It is hoped that it will provide a new impetus to policies and national action towards human and economic development that is more inclusive and sustainable. Promising lessons already exist on ways this is being achieved, including through the involvement of new actors and improved technological and productive capacities.

The pressure on the environment will continue to increase, as the human population and its development needs require sound and inclusive economic growth. Current production and consumption models will face significant challenges, as most prices for goods and services fail today to incorporate their full environmental and social costs. These challenges affect the entire global economy and in particular, developing countries, as many of them still confront significant growth, competitiveness, technological and financial constraints.

Multilateral organizations have a fundamental role in facilitating the emergence of enabling policy and regulatory frameworks and streamlining lessons towards sustainable development action. Evidence of ongoing efforts include recent global policy outcomes such the expansion of market-incentive mechanisms under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol, and the adoption of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing. These outcomes emphasize the need to ensure the availability of funds for mitigation and adaptation purposes, the transfer of sound environmental technologies, benefit-sharing from research and development activities and the effectiveness of market-incentive mechanisms. Against this backdrop, setting sustainable development priorities, finding the appropriate policy and regulatory mix, and building suitable institutions are key aspects to be addressed in order to make a smoother transition towards more sustainable economic and business models.

One encouraging development has been the emergence of sustainable and more socially responsible businesses and models. Many small niche markets are now gradually maturing and leading to the creation of entire subsectors and economies of

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scale. The growing success of sustainable businesses, while not risk free, results from the introduction of innovative models based on broad sustainability criteria that are often supported by multilateral organizations, as well as national and international development agencies.

UNCTAD XIII and the Rio+20 Summit will offer a meaningful opportunity for assessing and identifying options to facilitate the transition towards economic models that are development-centred, less carbon-intensive, efficient in the use of natural resources and socially inclusive, yet competitive.

## PURPOSE

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This UNCTAD XIII expert panel discussion will provide an opportunity to disseminate analysis, share reflections and develop recommendations in the run-up to the Rio+20 Summit in June 2012. It is meant to frame discussions on the interface of trade and the green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty alleviation. The panel will analyse developing country prospects and conditions that would enable developing economies to move towards a greener and more equitable development. It will explore the idea of a trade and green economy forum that would serve as a platform of evidence-based discussion on the environmental, economic and trade effectiveness of proposed green economy policies. The panel will also introduce UNCTAD's methodologies to identify sectors (e.g. clean energy and ecotourism) and products (e.g. organic agriculture) in which developing countries can find trade opportunities and turn sustainability into a competitive advantage. Additionally, it will share experiences on how developed and developing countries have taken advantage of emerging trade opportunities and addressed main challenges under the UNCTAD BioTrade Programme.

## OUTCOME

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The panel will focus on how to address sustainable development considerations more effectively and comprehensively during the UNCTAD XIII and Rio+20 conferences. In particular, it will discuss how sustainable development goals reflect the needs of developing countries in their quest for a more sustainable and equitable economy. It will also provide an opportunity for UNCTAD to showcase its offerings, including trade policy discussion forums, the product space methodology and the facilitation process for public-private partnerships in technical cooperation programmes such as the BioTrade Programme.

## ORGANIZATION

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The panel discussion will be divided into two parts. Part I will deal with macro policy and regulatory challenges and opportunities; Part II will address lessons learned in building sustainable businesses in a developing country context. Participants in the discussion will include (a) delegates accredited to UNCTAD XIII; (b) beneficiary countries, national programmes and donors; (c) business and civil society groups; (d) representatives from intergovernmental organizations and (e) invited experts and academics.

## AGENDA

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### **Opening remarks: Key messages from UNCTAD XIII to the Rio+20 Conference (9 a.m. to 12 noon)**

Mr. Supachai Panitchpakdi, Secretary-General of UNCTAD

### **Part I: Seizing sustainable business opportunities in developing countries**

H.E. Paul Magnette, Minister for Development Cooperation, Kingdom of Belgium

Head of the Delegation of Turkey to UNCTAD XIII

Head of the Delegation of Peru to UNCTAD XIII

Mr. Werner Corrales, Director, ISDNet

### **Part II: Making sustainability a competitive advantage**

Mr. Hans-Peter Egler, Head of the Division for Trade Promotion of the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO)

Mr. Elmer Schialer, Director, International Economic Negotiations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Peru

Ms. Nuning Barwa, President of the Indonesian Cosmetic Association

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## DOCUMENTS

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- The green economy: Trade and sustainable development implications. Background note (UNCTAD/DITC/TED/2011/5) prepared by UNCTAD, 8–10 November 2011, and its final report;
- *The Road to Rio +20: For a Development-led Green Economy*, No. 2, 2011, UNCTAD;
- *State of South–South and triangular cooperation in the production, use and trade of sustainable biofuels* (UNCTAD/DITC/TED/2011/10), UNCTAD secretariat, January 2010;
- Trade and biodiversity: The biotrade experiences in Latin America (UNCTAD/DITC/TED/2010/3), 2012;
- *Best Practices for Organic Policy: What developing country governments can do to promote the organic agriculture sector*, UNCTAD and the United Nations Environment Programme, 2008.

Further information available from: <http://www.unctad.org/greeneconomy>

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