Sustainable trade: a driver of climate action, resilience and an inclusive green economy

Through research, capacity building and policy advisory services, UNEP’s environment and trade work provides tailored support to countries seeking to leverage trade and investment as vehicles for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda.

OBJECTIVES

• Enhance the capacity of countries to design and implement trade policies that foster environmental sustainability and society well-being.

• Assist countries in the realization of trade opportunities arising from a transition to greener economies.

• Strengthen the sustainability aspects of cross-border trade and investment agreements in bilateral, plurilateral and multilateral negotiations.

• Realize a shift of trade practices and trends to more sustainable patterns.

WORK STREAMS

• Trade in Environmentally Sound Technologies (ESTs): Supporting countries to engage in the production, deployment and trade in ESTs.

• Governance at the trade, investment, and environment nexus: Building the capacity of countries to pursue their environmental objectives through trade agreements.

• Green markets and global value chains: Enhancing the design and uptake of sustainability standards and facilitating market access for green goods.

• Reducing the footprint of trade: Supporting countries to make trade and investment activities more sustainable.

KEY PARTNERSHIPS IN ACTION

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Trade Organization announced that their organizations are joining forces to launch a new dialogue on promoting innovative ways of using trade. The two organizations already jointly published a report, Making Trade work for the Environment, Prosperity and Resilience.

UNEP is on the steering committee of the United Nations Forum on Sustainability Standards, which brings together the work and initiatives of five United Nations agencies: International Trade Centre, Industrial Development Organization, Food and Agriculture Organization and Conference on Trade and Development.

WORKING TO ACHIEVE SDGs

[SDG icons]

unep.org/green-economy/environment-and-trade
ENVIROMENT & TRADE

PARTNERSHIPS

UNEP’s work is closely coordinated with international and regional initiatives, including the Partnership Action on Green Economy (PAGE), the United Nations Forum on Sustainability Standards (UNFSS), the Inter-agency Plan of Action on sustainable oceans and trade, and the Friends Advancing Sustainable Trade Group.

UNEP is an official observer of the OECD Joint Working Party on Trade and Environment and the World Trade Organization (WTO) Committee on Trade and Environment (CTE). UNEP regularly engages WTO members to identify trade and Green Economy inter linkages and to bolster policy support.

KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS

• Trade in Environmentally Sound Technologies: Implications for Developing Countries (2019).
• International Investment Agreements and Sustainable Development: Safeguarding Policy Space & Mobilizing Investment for a Green Economy.

Practical Tools to Support Policy Makers and Negotiators:
• Sustainability Toolkit for Trade Negotiators
• Green Industrial Policy & Trade: A Tool-box
• Trade and Green Economy Handbook.

Training, capacity building and networking.

THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

UNEP is the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda, promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system, and serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment.

The Economy Division provides solutions for economic decision-makers and helps change the business environment by offering platforms for dialogue and cooperation, innovative policy options, pilot projects and creative market mechanisms.

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