BUSINESS AND GREEN TRADE

The green economy presents a major opportunity for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in developing countries to accelerate sustainable economic growth, reduce environmental risks and promote inclusive development.

At the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (i.e. Rio+20 Conference), world leaders highlighted the positive links between trade and sustainable development. The UN Sustainable Development Goals specifically recognize trade as a ‘means for implementation’ for sustainable development.

In alignment with this principle, the Trade and Environment Programme (TEP) of the International Trade Centre (ITC) works directly with SMEs, Trade and Investment Support Institutions (TISIs) and policymakers to strengthen the competitiveness of exporters in green economy markets and thereby supports a transition to a more climate-resilient economy.

TRADE AND ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

The Trade and Environment Programme strengthens the competitiveness and sustainability practices of SMEs in developing countries. Its work helps expand trade that is climate-smart, sustainable and benefits local livelihoods.

Approach

In collaboration with its partners, TEP identifies market opportunities for developing countries in the green economy market and delivers technical assistance, capacity building and trade and market intelligence through the provision of:

Advisory services
- Stakeholder consultation
- Supply chain assessment
- Support for policy and strategy development

Capacity building
- Training and seminars
- Technical manuals and guides
- Provision of tools to access new markets

Market studies
- Publications on market barriers and opportunities, and livelihood impacts

TEP’S CONTRIBUTION TO THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Goal 1: No poverty
TEP promotes sustainable international trade as an engine of development and poverty reduction, contributing to economic growth, job creation and entrepreneurial opportunities.

Goal 5: Gender equality
TEP empowers women to increase their participation in green economy markets.

Goal 6: Clean water and sanitation
TEP facilitates access to and implementation of innovative solutions to guarantee affordable and clean water.

Goal 7: Affordable and clean energy
TEP promotes access to and implementation of innovative solutions to ensure energy is affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern.

Goal 8: Decent work and economic growth
TEP promotes decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourages the formalization and growth of SMEs in the green economy market.

Goal 10: Reduced inequalities
TEP ensures that the benefits of trade reach vulnerable groups through prioritizing value chains with high participation of marginalized communities.

Goal 12: Responsible consumption and production
TEP promotes resource and energy efficiency, and provides access to basic services, green and decent jobs and a better quality of life for all.

Goal 13: Climate action
TEP aims at enhancing climate resilience in natural resource-based sectors most affected by climate change, in particular agriculture.

Goal 15: Life on land
TEP leverages trade opportunities for SMEs which sustainably use terrestrial ecosystems and sustainably manage forests to halt and reverse land degradation and biodiversity loss.

Goal 17: Partnerships for the goals
TEP engages in innovative partnerships with the private sector and international organizations in order to enable a highly effective provision of technical assistance to its clients.

The programme works on the following levels in client countries:
- Policymakers including ministries of Trade, Environment and Agriculture and related ministries;
- Trade and Investment Support Institutions (TISIs); and
- Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), cooperatives and smallholder farmers.

TEP’s projects

In collaboration with its local partners, TEP is implementing the following projects:

Promoting climate resilient exports from:
- Kenya – tea and coffee sectors

Promoting biodiversity-based exports from:
- Peru – Andean grains and cocoa sectors
- Madagascar – raffia palm and crocodile skin sectors
- South East Asia – python skin sector

FOCUS AREAS OF WORK

The Trade and Environment Programme delivers technical assistance to overcome trade-related challenges for developing countries in the following key areas:

1. Sustainable and climate-smart export sectors

Many developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing states, are among the most vulnerable to climate change. In addition to the adverse impacts of climate change, exporters face new market requirements such as regulations and private voluntary standards.

TEP provides support to supply chains that are vulnerable to climate change, by promoting:
- The development of strategies with policymakers and TISIs to promote climate-smart export sectors;
- Training on emissions mitigation practices that result in greater energy efficiency and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in the supply chain;
- Training on climate change adaptation practices to reduce climate risks and ensure greater long-term productivity; and
- Development of export capacity of SMEs by supporting them to comply with international regulations and standards.
"Developing a sustainable green economy — and increasingly moving towards a blue economy — is a priority of all countries and above all those that are more vulnerable to the effects of climate change."

Arancha González, Executive Director

2. Conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity

TEP seeks to increase developing countries’ productivity, competitiveness and biological diversity by promoting sustainable use and conservation of resources. The programme provides assistance to SMEs in sectors of biodiversity-based products and governments in highly biodiverse developing countries by supporting:

- Sustainable sourcing, use and management practices of biodiversity-based products to ensure long-term profitability and competitiveness;
- Compliance with obligations under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES);
- Economic analysis of markets for biodiversity-based products and livelihood impacts of trade;
- Fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources in accordance with the Nagoya Protocol to ensure long-term profitability;
- Development and implementation of eco-tourism strategies; and
- Development of export capacity of SMEs producing biodiversity-based products.

ABOUT ITC

The International Trade Centre (ITC) is the joint agency of the World Trade Organization and the United Nations. ITC assists small and medium-sized enterprises in developing and least developed countries to become more competitive in global markets, thereby contributing to sustainable economic development.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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