

Information Resources

Trade and the Environment

WTO agreements

The World Trade Organization (WTO) has no specific agreement dealing with the environment. However, a number of the WTO agreements include provisions dealing with environmental concerns. The increased emphasis on environmental policies is relatively recent. At the end of the Uruguay Round in 1994, trade ministers from participating countries decided to begin a comprehensive work programme on trade and environment in the WTO. They created the WTO Committee on Trade and Environment. This is the main committee that discusses trade implications of national environmental measures. Issues addressed include:

1. Environmental measures with significant effects on trade and WTO provisions:
 - Use of process and production methods in environmental regulations
 - Packaging requirements
 - Environmental labelling
 - Consumption and other taxes imposed for environmental purposes
2. Trade provisions in multilateral environmental agreements
3. Environmental benefits of trade liberalization.

For more information, start with two sources.

- ▶ ITC's *Business Guide to the World Trading System* contains a chapter on "Trade and the Environment" which provides an overview of the trends and issues covered in WTO agreements.
- ▶ WTO's web site (<http://www.wto.org>), which has a section on trade and the environment (http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/envir_e/envir_e.htm). It provides answers to frequently asked questions, such as "WTO and environmental agreements — how are they related?", "Disputes — where should they be handled?", "If one country believes another country's trade damages the environment, what can it do?"

Web sites

International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements <http://www.ifoam.org>
 Rural and Agricultural Income with a Sustainable Environment, USAID <http://www.raise.org>
 Max Havelaar Foundation (fair trade) <http://www.maxhavelaar.org>
 Fairtrade Labelling Organizations International <http://www.fairtrade.net>
 The Rainforest Alliance <http://www.rainforest-alliance.org>
 International Plant Genetic Resource Institute <http://www.ipgri.cgiar.org>
 United States Environmental Protection Agency <http://www.epa.gov>
 United Nations Environment Programme <http://www.unep.org>
 United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development, Agenda 21 <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/agenda21.htm>
 New Agriculturist (magazine) <http://www.new-agri.co.uk>

Source: Web bookmark from ITC's publication, *Cocoa: A Guide to Trade Practices*

ITC publications on environmental issues

The following are relevant books and technical papers, issued since 1995. Some have a specific environmental theme; others touch on environmental issues as part of a market study, business overview or trade services manual.

International organizations in Geneva

If you are seeking an overview of environmental activities conducted by international organizations, there is a new publication that covers activities in the Geneva area, one of the world's environmental centres. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has just issued its first "Green Guide", a handbook on Geneva-based environment and sustainable development organizations. It contains a short summary of each organization's work on environmental issues, relevant publications and contact information. For more information, contact Sam Pickens, Geneva Environment Network, UNEP at sam.pickens@unep.ch

Books

Packaging Design (2000)
 Business Guide to the World Trading System (2nd ed. 1999)
 Dried Herbs and Spices: A Packaging Manual (1999)
 Food Packaging: A Reference Book for Trainers (1998)
 Manual on the Packaging of Furniture (1995)
 Cocoa: A Guide to Trade Practices (2001)
 Oilcakes and Meals: Market Challenges for Developing Countries (2000)
 Organic Food and Beverages: World Supply and Major European Markets (1999)
 HPS Groundnuts: A Survey of Selected European Markets (1998)
 Environmental Engineering and Support Services: A Handbook for Exporters from Developing Countries (1997)
 Rubber Products: An Overview of Major Markets (1995)

Technical materials

Guidelines for Safe and Environmentally Acceptable Export Packaging (2001)
 World Directory of Organizations Dealing with Standards, Technical Regulations, Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, Eco-labelling, Quality Management and Accreditation (2001)
 Major Markets for Cotton T-shirts (2001)
 Fibres and Textile Industries at the Turn of the Century (2000)
 Implications of World Trade Organization Agreements for International Trade in Environmental Industries (1999)
 The North American Market for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables: Import Regulations and Quality Requirements (CD-ROM, 1999)
 Export Development of Artisanal Products (1998)
 The European Community Market for Cotton Yarns and Cotton Grey Cloths (1997)
 Eco-labelling and Other Environmental Quality Requirements in Textiles and Clothing (1996) ▶

Compiled by N. Domeisen and P. de Sousa.