

**Evaluative Review of the Development Account Project  
“Capacity Building in Trade and Environment”**

**Table of contents**

<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>I. INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>3</b>
Background.....	3
Purpose and objectives .....	5
Scope of the evaluation.....	5
Methodology.....	6
<b>PROJECT DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION.....</b>	<b>6</b>
Planning and Formulation.....	6
Management Arrangements.....	6
Partnership Arrangements .....	7
<b>PROJECT PERFORMANCE .....</b>	<b>7</b>
Relevance.....	8
Efficiency.....	9
Effectiveness.....	11
Sustainability .....	13
Positive results .....	14
<b>LESSONS LEARNED .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>MANAGEMENT RESPONSE .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>ANNEX: DELIVERABLES.....</b>	<b>19</b>
Table 1 Studies .....	19
Table 2 Workshops, seminars organized by regional commissions .....	20
Table 3 List of countries that participated in workshops organized by the regional commissions ..	21

**ACRONYMS**

CAMRE	Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment
CBTF	UNEP-UNCTAD Capacity Building Task Force
DA	Development Account
EA	Expected accomplishment
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECESA	Executive Committee of Economic and Social Affairs
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ESCAP	Environmental and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESCWA	Environmental and Social Commission for Western Asia
LAS	League of Arab States
ROWA	UNEP Regional Office for West Asia
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
WTO	World Trade Organization

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

1. The cooperation in the evaluation of project focal points and some of their colleagues in the UN regional commissions and partner institutions, in particular Carol Chouchani Cherfane (ESCWA); Marianne Schaper (ECLAC); Lorenzo Santucci (UNESCAP); Kwadwo Tutu (ECA); Hussein Abaza and Benjamin Simmons (UNEP); Ulrich Hoffmann (UNCTAD) and Marie-Isabelle Pellan (WTO) is greatly acknowledged. Special thanks go to Lorenzo Santucci for his very efficient and transparent support.

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **Background**

2. The Development Account (DA) project “Capacity Building in Trade and Environment” (04/05F), hereafter called “the project”, was approved for funding with a total budget of US\$ 1,025,000 and an initial timeframe of two years (2005-2006), subsequently extended to the end of 2007. The project has been implemented by four UN regional economic and social commissions (ECA, ECLAC, ESCAP and ESCWA), in partnership with UNCTAD, UNEP and WTO.

3. The design and implementation of the project aimed at responding adequately to the purpose and objectives of this particular project, taking into account the criteria/guidelines for the operation of DA projects in general.

4. In accordance with the project document, the objectives of the project were to assist beneficiary developing countries in: (i) improving access to developed country markets by enhancing capacities to respond to environmental standards (ii) managing the pressures on the local environment arising from certain imports into developing countries.

5. The project aimed to help address a number of constraints often faced by developing countries in addressing issues at the interface of trade and environment, in particular:

- Limited awareness of the issues
- Limited resources available for policy analysis to support policy formulation
- Problems associated with lack of policy coordination between trade and environment institutions at national and international levels

6. In line with criteria/objectives set up to guide the operations of the DA projects, the project was expected to be:

- Of relatively short duration;
- Intended to benefit multiple developing countries;
- Encourage cooperative efforts between UN entities;
- Innovative while resulting in sustainable impact;
- Based mainly on the technical, human and other resources available in developing countries;
- Implemented using the existing resources of the implementing entities, without the payment of overhead costs and with only limited use of external consultants

7. One important characteristic that was envisaged for this project – and is encouraged by the criteria/objectives for DA projects – is its focus on regional activities and on interregional joint activities.

8. The planned project outputs consisted of: (i) capacity building workshops at the regional and national levels; (ii) analytical work and related studies; and (iii) networking. Overall, around two-thirds of total project funds were allocated for workshops and around 15 per cent for consultants.

9. The project has produced a large range of outputs. The operations of the project have been largely in accordance with the criteria/objectives set up to guide the operations of the DA projects (see paragraph 5).

10. The project has organized and/or supported a large number of workshops with a total of around 700 participants (table 2), mostly policy makers in trade and environment ministries, from around 100 countries (table 3). The project has also produced a large number of documents and provided opportunities for networking. Project outputs can be accessed through a one-stop website put into operation towards the end of the project.

11. Project activities have had a strong regional focus, involving the majority of countries in each region. The context in which project activities were planned and implemented varied from one commission to the other. Whereas ECA and ESCAP were not carrying out capacity building activities on trade and environment at the time the project was launched, ECLAC and ESCWA had already been implementing capacity building activities over several years. In the latter two commissions, DA project activities were, to a considerable extent, linked with ongoing capacity building activities of these regional commissions.

12. Project activities in all four regions tried to alleviate the above-mentioned constraints faced by developing countries (paragraph 5). Whereas these constraints exist in all regions, there may be differences in progress made so far by individual countries/regions in enhancing understanding of trade and environment issues. Therefore, there have been some differences in the approaches of each commission. The ECA secretariat, for example, attached priority to awareness raising, the identification of key trade and environment issues, and increasing the amount of relevant information and analysis to policy makers, in particular through training workshops. In the ESCWA region, however, five out of thirteen ESCWA Member States had already established national trade and environment committees.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, the DA project provided ESCWA with an opportunity to build upon previous work on trade and environment capacity building in the region by strengthening these committees and offering tailored assistance on specific trade and environment topics of priority interest to ESCWA Member States. ECLAC also had already been carrying out capacity building activities on trade and environment for many years as part of its training courses.

13. Activities in ESCAP remained closely linked to efforts aimed at improving market access by enhancing capacities to respond to environmental standards (as was envisaged in the project design) and also followed the planned focus on a specific sector, i.e. food and food processing. Some ECLAC activities (in particular on small and medium sized

---

<sup>1</sup> At the start of the project, these countries were Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the Syrian Arab Republic; Yemen established a committee during the course of the project. All countries in the region had already benefited from workshops organized by ESCWA in coordination with UNCTAD, UNEP, WTO, the League of Arab States and the World Bank.

enterprises) and a good part of the activities carried out by ESCWA were also closely linked to the original key theme of the project. However, the range of issues addressed with support of the project has evolved over time. This seems acceptable, as activities of all commissions undoubtedly contributed to the overall trade and environment capacity building objectives of the project and to the achievement of Millennium Development Goal 7. Flexibility to address a larger range of key issues may have allowed commissions to better respond to emerging needs of governments, e.g. in the context of WTO negotiations, and to regional priorities. In general, however, less focus on a well-defined common theme - where commissions can complement each others activities – seems to weaken the interregional or joint character of a project involving different parts of the UN.

14. Coordination among the regional commissions and partner institutions was carried out primarily through e-mail contact, three video conferences and one end-of-project meeting to disseminate and assess the results of the project (Geneva, 29 and 30 November 2007). Project managers have monitored project implementation focusing largely on outputs and expected accomplishments (EA) through video conferences and annual progress reports. A template prepared by ESCAP to obtain feedback from workshop participants was also used by ECA to monitor progress against relevant EA; ESCWA used their in-house evaluation form.

### **Purpose and objectives**

15. The objectives of the project were:

- Enhancing the capacity of Governments (and producers) in beneficiary developing countries to appropriately respond to the environmental standards of developed countries thereby improving market access to developed country markets.
- Enhancing the capacities in beneficiary developing countries to better manage the pressures on the local environment arising from imports of hazardous products and or used products as well as certain export-oriented production.

16. To help achieve the overall purpose of the project, the immediate objectives of the project were:

- Providing beneficiaries with relevant information and analysis
- Facilitating continuing training opportunities
- Offering tools that facilitate coherent domestic policies
- Providing beneficiaries with opportunities for building networks (inter and intraregional) to allow exchange of information.

17. Project activities have aimed at achieving these immediate objectives (paragraph 15) in a broader context of the trade, environment and development linkages (beyond market access and trade-related pressures on the domestic environment).

### **Scope of the evaluation**

18. The main purpose of the evaluation is to: (i) assess the performance of the project; and to (ii) derive lessons from implementation and to put forward related recommendations.

19. The evaluation has the following objectives:

- To assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the project as a whole;
- To make recommendations, relating to the evaluation's findings, for improving the design and management of projects funded by the Development Account;
- To formulate recommendations, relating to the findings of the evaluation, on possible follow-on activities to be undertaken by the implementing agencies and their partners.

### **Methodology**

20. The evaluation was based mainly on: (a) e-mail exchanges and telephone discussions with focal points in regional commissions; (b) desk-review of available documents related to the project, including progress reports, minutes of video conferences and workshop assessments; (c) interviews with project partners (UNCTAD, UNEP and WTO); and (d) an in-person meeting with regional focal points (Geneva, 30 November 2007). The evaluation did not include interviews with beneficiary countries. However, the focal point in ESCWA carried out a survey among beneficiaries.

## **PROJECT DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION**

### **Planning and Formulation**

21. The project was proposed by ESCAP in 2003, following discussions with the other three UN Regional Commissions in developing regions (ECA, ECLAC and ESCWA), UNCTAD and UNEP, which were initiated at the World Summit for Sustainable Development. The WTO was later invited to join the project. The final version of logical framework of the project was completed in November 2004.

### **Management Arrangements**

22. The project has been implemented jointly by the four regional commissions, with ESCAP acting as the lead agency responsible for overseeing the design and implementation of the project. The other regional commissions have been responsible for implementing project activities in their respective regions.

23. The project received in-kind support from UNCTAD, UNEP and the WTO (for example through assistance in the identification of resource persons and the provision of more analytical material and background information). It was envisaged that ECE would act as an observer to the project and participate should opportunities for cooperation with ESCAP arise, in particular in the context of possible project activities in Central Asia. However, due to budgetary constraints this region was not covered and ECE has not been much involved.

24. Due to the interregional nature of this project, coordination between the regional commissions and partners was necessary. This coordination was carried out primarily through e-mail contact, three video conferences and one end-of-project meeting to disseminate and assess the results of the project (Geneva, 29 and 30 November 2007).

25. With regard to financial management, the four commissions agreed on an allocation of project funds for activities in each region. Amounts allocated to each region differed taking into account, among other things, differences in the costs of workshops as a function of the number of countries in each region. Based on these budget allocations, the project funds were allotted to each commission, but financially managed by the ESCAP administration.

26. ESCAP also conducted the discussions on the project budget and its allocation to budget items (in line with the overall guidelines for DA projects, see above). ESCAP was also responsible for reporting to DESA and for discussion on project revisions, on behalf of the commissions based on substantive and financial progress reports submitted by each commission.

27. In each commission, a project focal point was responsible for implementation of activities in the region. In general, focal points were staff of divisions responsible for sustainable development and natural resource management:

- In ECA: Sustainable Development Division
- In ECLAC: Sustainable Development and Human Settlements Division
- In ESCAP: Environment and Sustainable Development Division
- In ESCWA: Sustainable Development and Productivity Division: Technology and Enterprise Development Team.

28. Activities were coordinated with other substantive divisions in some commissions. In ESCAP, the project was implemented in coordination with the Trade and Investment Division. Coordination between commissions took place largely through video conferences (every four months) and progress reports prepared by the focal points in the regional commissions. In practice, the commissions had quite some autonomy in deciding on regional activities, within budgetary constraints.

### **Partnership Arrangements**

29. As envisaged, certain project activities have benefited from the assistance of the partner institutions (UNCTAD, UNEP and WTO). At regional level, commissions have worked with a large number of partners, including research institutes and NGOs. Additionally, in the ESCWA region the project was conducted as part of a Program on Trade and Environment Capacity Building in the Arab Region, which is implemented in partnership with the League of Arab States (LAS) and the UNEP Regional Office for West Asia (UNEP/ROWA) and in coordination with UNCTAD, UNEP Economic and Trade Branch (UNEP/ETB) and regional organizations representing civil society.

### **PROJECT PERFORMANCE**

30. As proposed by the ESCAP secretariat, the evaluation of the performance of the project is largely based on the following four criteria: (i) relevance; (ii) efficiency; (iii) effectiveness; and (iv) sustainability. Some questions were formulated to help assess the project performance against these criteria.

## Relevance

### Were project objectives and outcomes relevant for target beneficiaries?

31. The project activities have been relevant for target beneficiaries. In all four regions, the main target beneficiaries have been government officials from both trade and environment ministries, although other stakeholders also benefited.

32. A first step to ensure relevant project outcomes was to select specific issues to be addressed in the project. In ESCAP, the food and food processing sector was chosen because, among the key sectors in terms of contribution to exports and GDP, it was the only sector of relevance to *all* beneficiary countries in the region. Possible synergies with the work of partners (e.g. UNCTAD and its Consultative Task Force on Environmental Requirements and Market Access for Developing Countries (CTF) were also considered in the selection of this sector. In the ESCWA region, the regional commission implemented certain key project activities (e.g., a regional workshop and regional seminar) in cooperation with the LAS and UNEP/ROWA. Activities were conducted partially in response to resolutions by the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment (CAMRE) requesting assistance on certain trade and environment topics.<sup>2</sup> In Africa, the ECA secretariat commissioned a study on “Trade and environment: selected issues of concern for Africa” which was discussed at a regional workshop (Addis Ababa, February 2006). These discussions were useful for identifying issues to be addressed in two sub-regional capacity building workshops, one for English-speaking countries and one for French-speaking countries. In the case of ECLAC, a meeting held in Buenos Aires in December 2004 provided an opportunity to identify priority issues to be addressed as part of the project.

33. In addition to issues selected at the beginning of the project, cooperation with the partner institutions have contributed to enhanced understanding of other key trade and environment issues, for example issues included in the Doha work programme of the WTO and priority areas addressed by the UNEP-UNCTAD Capacity Building Task Force (CBTF) on Trade, Environment and Development. These issues include, for example, environmental goods and services, trade measures in Multilateral Environmental Agreements, fisheries, organic agriculture and integrated assessments of trade-related policies.

34. Questionnaire-based feedback from workshop participants obtained by ESCAP, ECA and ECLAC indicates that the choice of issues and content/quality of presentations workshops were considered relevant for beneficiary countries and the work of participants (between 94 and 100 per cent of respondents considered issues relevant).

### Has the *joint* character of the project enhanced the quality of project?

35. The joint character of the project has had little impact on the planning and implementation of project activities and outputs (workshops, studies) by each commission. However, it has contributed to the dissemination of the results of the project. Some commissions have closely coordinated certain project activities with one or more of the partner organizations and this has enhanced the quality of the project. Coordination between ESCWA, UNEP (apart from UNEP/ROWA also involving the Environment and Trade

---

<sup>2</sup> CAMRE Resolution 273 on “Follow-up on the implementation of the recommendations of the WSSD and the Sustainable Development Initiative in the Arab Region” in 4.2 “Thanks ESCWA on the attention given in its programs for promoting and building Arab capacities in the area of trade and environment.”

Branch in Geneva) and UNCTAD and between ESCAP and UNCTAD has helped to enhance the quality of some project activities.

36. There has been some cooperation between ECA and ESCWA in the selection of resource persons for workshops, which has been facilitated by the fact that there is a certain overlap in beneficiary countries.

Have the inter-regional dimensions of the project added value to the regional components?

37. In each region, project activities have been relevant from a *regional* perspective. However, the inter-regional dimensions of the project have added less value to the regional components than expected, at least during the implementation phase of project activities. Commissions have made little use of building on activities of other regional commissions. By way of illustration: although project activities in ECLAC started only after work of ESCAP and ECA had been completed (for reasons outside the control of the project focal points), ECLAC activities did not or could not build on already-completed activities by the other commissions. In fact, it sometimes seems difficult to visualize what activities and outcomes would have been different if the project funds had been allocated directly to the commissions. This may in part be explained by the fact that the regional commissions have focused on a diversity of issues (the original approach of the project was to share expertise in particular sectors, in particular on the issue of environmental requirements and market access).

38. It should be noted, however, that the commissions have recognized the need to strengthen the interregional dimension of the project, in particular in the dissemination of project results and outreach activities. The interregional dimension of the project may play a useful role in helping to secure the sustainability of positive results of the project (see below).

39. Co-operation between individual regional commissions and partner organisations has in several cases played a role in adding value to regional project activities. For example, some regional workshops allowed linking the experiences in particular regions with key issues at the global level.

### **Efficiency**

Have human and financial resources been used efficiently to deliver activities and outputs?

40. The administration of the project has been very well handled. In all commissions, project implementation and backstopping has been achieved with the in-house human resources that had been envisaged at the beginning of the project. Project activities have been completed largely on time. However, due to health problems of the focal point in ECLAC, this regional commission could carry out activities as part of the DA account only in 2007.

41. In a number of occasions, commissions took advantage of potential for cost-savings and synergies with other activities, for example by organizing workshops back-to-back with relevant meetings of the partner institutions. For example, a regional workshop organized by ESCWA (in cooperation with UNEP/ROWA and the LAS) in Muscat (25-27 March 2006) was held back-to-back with a WTO Regional Workshop on Trade and Environment for Arab and Middle East Countries (28-29 March 2006). Some commissions, in particular ESCAP, also co-hosted meetings which were directly relevant in the context of the DA project, but funded by projects implemented by UNCTAD and UNEP. Examples are a CTF workshop on environmental requirements in the electrical and electronics equipment sector (May 2005), an UNCTAD meeting on "Maximizing the Contribution of Organic Agriculture to Achievement

of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the Asia- Pacific Region" (18 October 2006),<sup>3</sup> an UNCTAD meeting on conceptual and practical issues related to the WTO negotiations on liberalization of international trade in environmental goods and services (18-19 October 2006), as well as and CBTF briefings on trade and environment. UNEP facilitated the participation of some participants in the "First International Review Meeting for the Country Projects on Integrated Assessment of Trade-related Policies and Biodiversity in the Agricultural Sector" in the DA project workshop in Geneva (29 November 2007)

Were the management arrangements, within and among implementing agencies, appropriate?

42. Management arrangements among and within the implementing agencies have generally been efficient. With regard to the administration and disbursement of project funds, after receiving the total allotments, the finance service in ESCAP issued financial authorizations (Miscellaneous Obligation Documents, OBMOs) to each regional commission for implementation of regional activities (valid on a biannual basis in accordance with the UN budget cycle). This has facilitated timely implementation of activities by each commission. However, several commissions have felt that problems in making adjustments in allotments to respond to unforeseen circumstances that exist on account of lack of flexibility in DA projects to move funds between budget lines are exacerbated in the case of *joint* projects. This is because, without a formal budget revision, adjustments required by one partner in the project have implications for the others and can therefore be implemented only after consultations between all involved.<sup>4</sup> Budgetary issues have required extensive coordination between ESCAP and the other commissions.

43. Some focal points in regional commissions argue that the current IMIS system does not facilitate coordination and reporting of expenditures among different implementing partners. This represented a significant challenge in terms of monitoring and reporting in the framework of inter-regional projects. Financial management of DA projects in IMIS is limited to the lead agency; as such the partner regional commissions had to manually monitor financial expenditures and invoicing to the lead agency, which was considered time consuming and inefficient.

44. The video conferences provided a useful, efficient and cost-effective channel for information sharing and the minutes of these meetings were quickly distributed among participants. Each video conference has been attended by all commissions,<sup>5</sup> UNCTAD, UNEP and WTO.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> The meeting was held as part of a Development Account project implemented by UNCTAD.

<sup>4</sup> In a couple of occasions, regional commissions required a modification of allotments to respond to changing circumstances. For example, in February 2006 ESCWA needed to shift US\$ 6,000 from "workshops" to "staff travel", because due to security problems in Beirut, a workshop that had been originally planned (and budgeted) to take place in Beirut had to be organized elsewhere in the region. To avoid the need to submit a budget revision request, ESCAP modified the distribution of allotments in these two budget lines to ESCAP and ESCWA for these items, which were rebalanced through a formal budget revision at the end of the project.

<sup>5</sup> With considerable sacrifice required from focal points in Bangkok and Santiago to bridge a 10 hour time difference.

<sup>6</sup> In one occasion UNEP could not be present, but circulated a brief update on recently completed and upcoming capacity building activities. WTO participated in two video conferences.

## Effectiveness

### Have the planned outputs of the project been achieved?

45. The planned project outputs have been largely achieved and in some cases exceeded. These outputs consist of (i) capacity building workshops, (ii) studies and (iii) networking. Overall, around two thirds of total project funds were used for workshops (not including the interregional workshop in Geneva, 29 November 2007) and around 15 per cent for consultants. From this perspective, workshops were the most important project output.

46. The project organized and/or supported a larger number of workshops than scheduled, within the allocation of funds allocated to such activities. In total, 16 workshops were held, 5 regional, 7 sub-regional and 4 national workshops. In total, some 700 persons from around 100 countries participated in at least one workshop. Feedback from participants shows a high level of appreciation for the content and organization of the workshops. Workshop costs per participant and per country have been extremely low, including in the case of regional workshops. In a number of cases, some participants were funded by their governments or institutions.

47. Workshops can sometimes be one-off events. However, the commissions seem to have introduced an element of sequencing of events. In ECA, for example, key issues were first identified and discussed at a regional meeting at ECA headquarters which was followed up by two subregional capacity building workshops. The results of the meetings were subsequently reported back to member states. In ESCAP and ECLAC regional meetings were preceded by meetings at sub-regional level. In the ESCWA region, regional meetings were coordinated with longer-term work on trade and environment. In general, the regional commissions also prepared papers to help participants prepare for the meetings and to guide the discussions. ECA and ESCAP encouraged participants in most workshops to prepare short papers setting out key trade and environment issues from the perspective of their own country, thereby encouraging participants to come more prepared.

48. Questionnaire-based feedback from participants (conducted by ECA, ECLAC and ESCAP) shows a high level of satisfaction among participants. Interviews with UNEP, UNCTAD and WTO staff having participated as resource person in regional workshops conducted by ECA, ESCAP and ESCWA confirm the very good quality of these workshops, which compared well with other workshops they had attended. For example the workshops had rather well brought out the regional dimensions of the issues addressed and the interactive sessions had been highly appreciated. Resource persons had been very knowledgeable, delivering very good presentations. ESCAP and ESCWA workshop were found to have appropriately focused on specific issues.

49. The project also produced a large number of documents (table 1). In general the documentation is of good quality and several documents include case studies and/or policy recommendations (some documents seem too lengthy for policy makers). Project managers did not seek feedback on the quality and usefulness of documents among beneficiaries. A CD-ROM was prepared including all documents prepared for the project. In addition, all documents and workshop presentations are accessible at the project website. This may help to extent the use of these documents beyond particular regions (this does not seem to have happened during the project implementation phase), although language issues may be a limiting factor.

50. The project provided ample opportunities for networking at the national, regional and inter-regional levels. The impetus given to the national committees on trade and environment

in the ESCWA region is a good example of how the project has contributed to a more formalized form of networking.

51. ECA was the only commission to deliver activities according to the schedule envisaged in the implementation plan. The other commissions experienced differing degrees of delay, due to diverse reasons. ESCAP and ECLAC reported difficulties in identifying consultants for the preparation of studies. There were also a number of external factors. In the ESCWA region, the war that broke out in Lebanon in Summer 2006 required the relocation of staff away from headquarters, which complicated implementation of some project activities (credit should go to ESCWA staff for the effective and timely delivery of activities, despite this situation). A national roundtable planned in the occupied Palestinian territory could also not be conducted given the local security situation. In ECLAC, the principal focal point faced serious and prolonged health problems. Her sick leave caused serious delay in project implementation in the Latin American region making a project extension necessary. In general, the project has been able to absorb the adverse implications of external factors.

Did the project mainly use the technical, human and other resources available in developing countries?

52. All commissions used primarily research institutes, consultants and resource persons from developing countries. The large majority of research institutes and consultants recruited were from developing countries. For example, ECA recruited the Southern and Eastern African Trade Information and Negotiation Institute (SEATINI) to carry out and present a regional study; all consultants recruited by ECLAC and 10 out of 16 consultants recruited by ESCAP were from developing countries (in ESCAP international consultants were recruited only when very specific expertise was required, regardless of the nationality of the consultant). Most resource persons for workshops also were from developing countries.

To what extent have target groups made use of capabilities built under the project?

53. It is difficult to know the extent to which target groups have made use of capabilities developed under the project. ECA and ESCAP used questionnaires circulated to workshop participants in the final sessions of each workshop about the *likelihood* that they would use capabilities built under the project. Feedback was very positive. In the case of the two ECA capacity building workshops, for example, all respondents thought that their respective organization definitely or probably would make use of the newly acquired knowledge and improved analytical skills and that their personal capacity to develop effective and coherent trade and environment policies was strengthened. Whether or not target groups will use capabilities built under the project depend on many factors that the project cannot control. Therefore, seeking feedback about the *likelihood* that participants would use such capabilities seems justified. However, it would be useful to carry out a follow up survey, some time after completion of the workshops.

54. The ESCWA region provides a good example where project target groups have carried forward work initiated under the project. For example, the draft study on EGS was elaborated to examine the Arab Reference List (ARL) of environmental goods of interest to the region at the request of member countries. The list offers guidance to LAS Member States that are also WTO Member States (or in the process of acceding to the WTO) on a common regional approach for formulating national lists of environmental goods that could be proposed for liberalisation. The list was prepared by the Technical Secretariat of the League of Arab States

Council for Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment (CAMRE) and discussed at a regional seminar held at the League of Arab States in Cairo, Egypt in November 2006. During the second phase of the study (2006-2007), the Joint Committee for Environment and Development in the Arab Region (JCEDAR), which serves as an advisory body to CAMRE, requested ESCWA to further elaborate the study by including an economic assessment of ARL. The final report was submitted for consideration by LAS Member States during the Expert Meeting on Trade and Environment Priorities in the Arab Region, which was requested and funded by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in follow-up to DA project activities in November 2007. The Arabic language version of the EGS study will be attached as an annex to the LAS Arab Reference List guidelines, which will be submitted to heads of state at the Arab Summit in 2008.

Have partners fulfilled their commitments to the project in a timely manner?

55. It was envisaged that partner organizations (UNCTAD, UNEP and WTO) would assist interested commissions, for example in the identification of consultants and quality control of documents. Such assistance has been provided to some extent. In practice, however, partner institutions have contributed largely by making staff available as resource person for workshops and by coordinating activities (as explained in the section on efficiency above, a number of back-to-back meetings were organized to the benefit of partner organizations and their constituencies). As already mentioned, some commissions, in particular ESCAP and ESCWA, have cooperated closely with UNEP and UNCTAD, including through CBTF, including through jointly-implemented capacity building activities.

**Sustainability**

56. One criterion for this project evaluation is sustainability, which may be considered to mean continuity of positive effects after the project is completed. Although many project activities in three of the four commissions were already completed several months before this evaluation was carried out, it has not been possible to establish indicators concerning activities that were still ongoing. However, two aspects are considered: (i) feedback of participants concerning *intended* continuation of certain activities (e.g. training and networking) and (ii) steps taken to create favourable conditions for continuation of certain activities (e.g. to keep the website up and running and feeding into ongoing and planned activities of partner institutions).

What is the likelihood that the positive effects of the project will continue into the future?

57. ECA and ESCAP used workshop evaluations to inquire whether participants would recommend their agencies to try to establish networks in the sub-region/region to allow policy makers to exchange information. In the Asian and Pacific region, almost 60 per cent of the participants in the final workshop (Bangkok, 16-18 October 2006) responded that would definitely or probably recommend the creation of such networks. However, no surveys were carried out after completion of the workshops to assess whether participants had effectively recommended actions that would contribute to the sustainability of positive effects of the project.

Has support (UN partners, donors or others) been obtained to take forward project outcomes?

58. The project manager and focal points have recognized the need to create conditions that increase the chances that positive outcomes will be sustained, in particular the wide dissemination of key findings and recommendations arising from the project. To achieve this, project managers have taken several initiatives: (i) making all information easily available through the web portal, (ii) organizing a meeting in Geneva to present findings and recommendations to permanent missions to the WTO and the UN as well as the WTO Committee on Trade and Environment (at its session on 30 November 2007), and (iii) engaging key partners in certain out-reach activities.

59. A meeting was organized in Geneva (30 November 2007) between the project focal points in the four regional commissions, UNCTAD and UNEP to discuss options to take project outcomes forward. The UNEP-UNCTAD CBTF could be a useful vehicle to help promote substantive linkages between trade and environment activities carried out by the commissions at the regional, sub-regional and national levels with the global level.

### **Positive results**

60. The project has had a number of positive results, for example:

- It has provided relevant information and analysis to policy makers and other stakeholders in many beneficiary countries through workshops and analytical studies.
- The project has helped to consolidate existing initiatives to promote multi-stakeholder discussions and policy coherence, in particular at the national and regional levels. For example, in the ESCWA region the project facilitated a number of national roundtables on trade and environment hosted by national trade and environment committees thereby strengthening these committees. The project also allowed the newly established National Committee on Environment and Trade in Yemen to successfully complete a significant share of its work programme during its first year (e.g., completing case study on the fisheries sector, incorporating trade and environment considerations into the National Strategy for Environmental Sustainability).<sup>7</sup>
- Information and analysis is being further disseminated to a much larger audience at regional and global levels, including through the production of a CD-ROM and the construction of a project website (<http://un-trade-environment.org/index.html>) bringing together outputs generated by the four regional commissions. The website and CD-ROM provide an excellent and easily-accessible resource for further capacity building in the area of trade and environment.
- Certain project activities have generated relevant policy recommendations.
- The project has provided many opportunities for networking at both regional and global levels. The project has also facilitated further networking. For example, ESCAP has facilitated further networking by involving ArtNet, a network of research and training institutions in Asia-Pacific set up by ESCAP in project implementation and by adding trade and environment as a research area of the network and its database.

---

<sup>7</sup> The National Committee on Environment and Trade (NCET) in Yemen was established in May 2006 following technical cooperation that ESCWA had been providing to Yemen in this area since the previous biennium; DA project provided resources to allow ESCWA to help the NCET to implement its work program.

61. In the session of WTO Committee on Trade and Environment (CTE) held on 30 November 2007, UNCTAD made a statement to brief WTO members on the project meeting held the day before in Geneva and the outcomes of the project. The CTE chairman requested that a short paper be circulated at the next session of the CTE.

62. Focal points in the four regional commissions met with the heads of the trade and environment units in UNEP and UNCTAD to discuss modalities for future cooperation on trade and environment. A decision was taken to develop a joint project on trade and sustainable development with a focus on cost-effective and politically viable options to address climate change.

### **LESSONS LEARNED**

63. Considering that this project involved four UN regional economic and social commissions and that a very large number of beneficiary countries were targeted, this project was clearly a small one. A total of 100 developing countries participated directly in project activities, largely through participation in workshops. Project funds per country were only \$10,000 on average. In this context and considering the complexity of the issues addressed, some of the expected achievements included in the project document (e.g. increasing the ability of beneficiaries to develop coherent policies in the area of trade and environment) seemed overly ambitious. However, the experience of ESCWA shows that even with limited extra-budgetary resources positive outcomes can be achieved, in particular at the national level, when certain conditions are met. These include: networking (e.g. through national committees on trade and environment), strong in-house capacity in the commissions to guide or undertake follow-up and support of beneficiary countries.

64. As a DA project, it has been implemented using the existing resources of the implementing entities, without project personnel and with only limited use of external consultants. Partnering with organizations helped to economize resources related to the implementation of workshops in the region and provide complementary venues for the benefit of meeting participants. A high level of valuable outputs has nevertheless been achieved. The project has been most effective at the regional levels. The interregional dimensions of the project have added little to the regional outputs, except for the final stages of the project involving through the construction of a project website, the production of a CD-ROM containing relevant project outputs and the organization of a final workshop in Geneva (29 November 2007).

65. It seems reasonable to assume that focal points in the regional commissions are the best placed to judge how DA funds can be most effectively employed at the regional level and that this can probably be achieved in the most efficient manner by linking DA activities as far as possible with relevant ongoing programmes of the regional commissions, where these exist. ESCWA has been a good example of this. It would not be reasonable to expect all or even most activities to have an interregional dimension. Coordination among regional commissions has transaction costs. There may be certain – real or perceived - trade-offs between maximizing regional impacts and bringing out some interregional dimensions of the project. Yet the overall impact of the project should be more of the sum of the regional components. In the case of this project, this has been achieved to some extent through a joint dissemination exercise and joint efforts in creating conditions that may contribute to the

sustainability of outcomes of the project by building a common website that may be kept up and running beyond the project's life time.

66. While the project has produced a remarkable volume of outputs, generally of good quality, one lesson learned is that activities that are focused on specific issues of interest to member states may have the largest impact. Also, there may be a need for more discussion on the demand-driven nature of project activities and their value added to the project as a whole, as in some cases these were not entirely clear to all involved.

67. Coordination meetings need to give appropriate focus on substantive issues and the interregional dimensions of the project.

68. As a DA project, activities have been implemented using the existing staff resources of the regional commissions, without project personnel and only limited use of external consultants. Project focal points have put considerable efforts in implementing the project activities, also responding to the needs for coordination among the commissions. Future DA projects involving several parts of the UN and aiming at some inter-regional dimensions may have to better take into account the additional strains and transaction costs of coordination, particularly those related to financial monitoring in the absence of appropriate IMIS tools. Such projects may also need to allocate more resources to in-person coordination among the focal points in the implementing agencies starting at an early stage of project implementation (this implies that projects which an inter-regional dimensions may need to allocate a larger portion of resources to staff travel than projects without an inter-regional dimension).

69. Not all activities carried out in the context of DA projects involving several regional commissions need to have inter-regional dimensions. In the case of this project, the inter-regional dimensions were weak during the implementation stage of activities, although they were strengthened somewhat through a specific interregional activity at the end of the project. It would have been useful to set out from the beginning what activities would be particularly suitable for bringing out the inter-regional dimensions and seek to make optimal use of potential synergies. This could allow regional commissions to find a reasonable balance between activities with the largest regional impact and activities that may strengthen the inter-regional dimensions of the project, taking into account possible transaction costs of coordination. One way to strengthen the interregional of projects could be an exchange of information and analysis of successful experiences in promoting processes and institution building to facilitate multi-stakeholder dialogues and greater policy coherence (such as the creation of national trade and environment committees in the ESCWA region).

70. The involvement of partner institutions that work at the global level and have built up considerable experience and know-how in the issues addressed by the project has been useful. In addition, UNCTAD and UNEP have a key interest in incorporating positive outcomes of regional project components into their own work programmes, thus contributing to the sustainability of positive results of the project. Some commissions felt that WTO could have been more pro-active. Apart from intergovernmental organizations such as UNCTAD and UNEP, other institutions such as the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) and the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD) have also provided inputs to certain project activities.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

71. The positive outcomes of the project should continue. The commissions should encourage continuity of most relevant outcomes by institutions at national and regional levels, and, where appropriate, in their own activities.

72. Future DA project to be implemented jointly by the regional commissions should take into account that prior experiences and ongoing work programmes in the issues to be addressed may vary significantly from one commission to the other. Some commissions are already implementing work programmes in the areas concerned. Supposedly these commissions are already doing what is most relevant from a regional perspective. Deepening that work is likely to have the largest impact and may be the most effective use of DA project funds, in particular when relevant experience is shared with the other commissions. Since coordination involves transaction costs, there may at times be a trade-off between spending time and other resources on activities with the largest impact at the regional level and strengthening the interregional aspect. It seems important to clarify where there are potential synergies and where there are trade-offs so that these can be explicitly addressed and specific areas and activities be identified with strong potential to take advantage of the inter-regional dimension. There should be an appropriate balance between regional and global/interregional objectives of DA project to be implemented jointly by the regional commissions.

73. There should be continued coordination and cooperation with institutions that work at the global level, such as UNCTAD and UNEP. This could result in mutual benefits and, where relevant, contribute to strengthening interregional dimensions of activities and outputs from regional project components.

74. DA projects that are jointly implemented by different parts of the UN may need some greater flexibility to accommodate transaction costs of coordination required. The limitations experiences in using IMIS in the framework of an inter-regional DA projects should be taken into account in future system development. The need for appropriate coordination seems to apply that project DA projects which have an inter-regional dimension may need to allow more resources to be allocated to staff travel than projects without an inter-regional dimension.

## MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

75. ESCAP will seek to encourage continuity of the most relevant outcomes by institutions at national and regional level by means of further dissemination at relevant events, and by building on such outcomes in the development and implementation of future activities. In particular, the Environment and Sustainable Development Division and the Trade and Investment Division intend to build on project outcomes and further analyze the linkages between environmental requirements and competitiveness in close cooperation through their activities in the area of green business development and promotion of green trade. Conversely, ESCAP is keen on strengthening cooperation and coordination with institutions that work at the global level, such as UNCTAD and UNEP, as well as UNIDO and other partners. ESCAP will seek to coordinate with the said institutions through the communications channels established in the course of project implementation, and identify opportunities of collaboration as appropriate. Moreover, ESCAP will seek to reflect the recommendations pertaining to the design and implementation of DA projects in future

submissions of project proposals for funding under the DA. This has already been done for one of the projects submitted for funding under tranche 6.

## ANNEX: DELIVERABLES

**Table 1: Studies**

### ECA

- Trade and environment: selected issues of concern for Africa, regional report prepared by a team of consultants from the Southern and Eastern African Trade Information and Negotiation Institute (SEATINI).

### ECLAC

- Pedro Roffe and Maximiliano Santa Cruz, *Intellectual property rights and sustainable development: A survey of major issues*. Santiago de Chile, October 2007.
- Marco Luraschi, *Análisis de la cadena productiva de la celulosa y el papel a la luz de los objetivos de desarrollo sostenible: Estudio de Caso Chile*.
- Werner Corrales Leal, *Discusión conceptual sobre las Estrategias de Desarrollo Sostenible apoyadas en el Comercio (EDSAC)*. Santiago de Chile, September 2007.
- Werner Corrales Leal Felipe Barrito. *Aplicaciones e ilustraciones de casos para América Latina y El Caribe empleando Estrategias de Desarrollo Sostenible apoyadas en el Comercio*. Santiago de Chile, September 2007.
- Werner Corrales Leal, *Una perspectiva de América Latina y el Caribe sobre los Espacios para Políticas en las Estrategias de Desarrollo Sostenible apoyadas en el Comercio*.
- Marco Luraschi, *"Análisis de la cadena productiva de la celulosa y el papel en países de ALC a la luz de los objetivos de desarrollo sostenible, su relación con los compromisos comerciales (OMC y TLCs) y ambientales (AMUMAs). Estudio de Caso Chile"*

### ESCAP

- A Regional Study on *Trade and Environment Dimensions in the Food and Food Processing Industries in Asia and the Pacific* was prepared for the project by S K Mohanty, Research and Information System for Developing Countries, New Delhi, India.
- National case studies on Trade and Environment Dimensions in the Food and Food Processing Industries in China, Fiji, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Viet Nam.

### ESCWA

- The liberalization of trade in environmental goods and services in the ESCWA and Arab regions (E/ESCWA/SDPD/2007/WP.1). New York, 22 October 2007; available in English and Arabic.
- Trade and Environment dimensions of the fisheries sector in the Arab countries the case of Yemen and Oman (E/ESCWA/SDPD/2007/WP.2). New York, 30 October 2007.
- Environmental Considerations Affecting Arab Region Trade in Agricultural and Agro-industrial Goods (E/ESCWA/SDPD/2007/WP.3). New York, December 2007.

**Table 2: Workshops, seminars organized by regional commissions**

RC	Event	Participants
ECA	Regional workshop (Addis Ababa, 15-17 February 2006)	47
ECA	Training workshop for English-speaking countries (Addis Ababa, 5 to 9 June 2006)	25
ECA	Training workshop for French-speaking countries (Dakar, 26-28 June 2006)	25
ECLAC	Sub-regional Capacity Building Workshop on Sustainable Development and International Trade Rules for SMEs in Mercosur countries (Montevideo, Uruguay, 26-30 March 2007)	33
ECLAC	Sub-regional Capacity Building Workshop on Sustainable development, international trade, investment and intellectual property rights for Central America and the Caribbean (Costa Rica, 23-25 May, 2007)	33
ECLAC	Regional Capacity Building Workshop on Sustainable Development in the context of the new Trade Rules (Santiago de Chile, 18 – 20 July, 2007)	40
ESCAP	Sub-regional workshop for the Pacific (Suva, Fiji, 7-8 June 2006)	48
ESCAP	Sub-regional workshop for South-East and North- East Asia (Jakarta, Indonesia, 27-28 July 2006)	48
ESCAP	Sub-regional workshop for South Asia (Colombo, Sri Lanka, 6-7 Sep 2006)	46
ESCAP	Regional workshop (Bangkok, Thailand, 16-18 October 2006)	82
ESCWA	Regional Workshop on Trade and Environment Capacity Building (Muscat, Oman, 25-27 March 2006),	57
ESCWA	Regional Seminar on Trade and Environment (Cairo, Egypt, 20 November 2006)	48
ESCWA	National Roundtable on Trade and Environment (Amman, Jordan, 11 December 2006)	20
ESCWA	National Roundtable on Trade and Environment (Damascus, Syria, 14 December 2006)	30
ESCWA	National Roundtable on Trade, Environment and the Competitiveness of SMEs (Beirut, Lebanon, 15 December 2006)	21
ESCWA	“Arab CSOs Consultation on the Follow Up the Arab Initiative for Sustainable Development” (Algiers, Algeria, 17-18 December 2006)*	50
ESCWA	Workshop on Trade-Related Multilateral Environmental Agreements (Sana’a, Yemen; 10-11 February 2007)	52
Total		705

\*The consultation with civil society organizations was organized with several regional partners as a pre-event to the 18<sup>th</sup> Session of the CAMRE, during which ESCWA was invited to discuss regional trade and environment issues. The consultation included a half-day session by ESCWA on trade and environment.

**Table 3: List of countries that participated in workshops organized by the regional commissions**

<b>ECA</b>	<b>ECLAC</b>	<b>ESCAP</b>	<b>ESCWA</b>
Algeria	Argentina	Afghanistan	Algeria
Burkina Faso	Barbados	Bangladesh	Bahrain
Burundi	Belize	Bhutan	Djibouti
Cameroun	Bolivia	Cambodia	Egypt
Comoros	Brazil	China	Iraq
Congo	Chile	Fiji	Jordan
Egypt	Colombia	India	Kuwait
Ethiopia	Costa Rica	Indonesia	Lebanon
Ghana	Cuba	Iran	Libya
Kenya	Dominican Republic	Kiribati	Mauritania
Madagascar	Ecuador	Lao PDR	Morocco
Malawi	El Salvador	Maldives	Oman
Mauritania	Guatemala	Malaysia	Palestine
Mauritius	Guyana	Mongolia	Qatar
Morocco	Honduras	Myanmar	Saudi Arabia
Niger	Jamaica	Nepal	Somalia
Nigeria	Mexico	Pakistan	Sudan
Sao Tome and Principe	Netherlands Antilles	Papua New Guinea	Syrian Arab Republic
Senegal	Nicaragua	Philippines	Tunis
Sierra Leone	Panama	Samoa	United Arab Emirates
Swaziland	Paraguay	Sri Lanka	Yemen
Tanzania	Peru	Thailand	
The Gambia	Trinidad and Tobago	Timor Leste	
Togo	Uruguay	Tonga	
Tunisia	Venezuela	Turkey	
Zambia		Tuvalu	
Zimbabwe		Vanuatu	
		Viet Nam	