

OECD Workshop on Regional Trade Agreements and the Environment 10-11 June 2021, Virtual Meeting

Background

Environmental considerations are increasingly incorporated into regional trade agreements (RTAs) to promote a broad range of environmental objectives and to ensure the mutual supportiveness of trade and environmental policies between like-minded Parties. According to the TREND database,¹ 629 out of 730 agreements signed between 1947 and 2018 include some kind of reference to the environment. Parties aiming towards deeper economic integration increasingly include substantive environmental provisions in their RTAs to advance on a range of environmental policy goals.

Since 2005, the OECD Joint Working Party on Trade and Environment (JWPTE), has been investigating the trends of environmental provisions in RTAs and their effects on the environment.² As a parallel effort under the auspices of the JWPTE, the OECD has been organising a number of workshops on RTAs and the environment to establish dialogue on this issue by inviting participants from both OECD and non-OECD countries.³

The OECD Environment Work Programme for 2021-22 identifies *inter-alia* three substantial areas to better secure coherence of trade and environment policies, namely on: (i) regional trade agreements and the environment; (ii) international trade and the transition to a more resource efficient and circular economy; and (iii) the nexus of illegal trade and environmental crime. This workshop will provide an opportunity to draw experiences and insights together from the OECD and the global community to establish the current state of knowledge on how environmental objectives could be reflected in trade policies and trade agreements, with a specific focus on these three areas. The event aims to build on existing work at the OECD and in the international community to establish the knowledge base and inform forthcoming work on these topics.

Objectives

The objectives of the workshop are:

- to take stock of current experience and insights on RTAs and the environment from different stakeholders, and to establish a stakeholder dialogue on this topic;
- to investigate how RTAs can serve as a vehicle to advance a resource efficient and circular economy transition; and
- to explore the potential of RTAs in addressing the nexus of illegal trade and environmental crime.

Organiser

This OECD workshop is organised under the auspices of the Joint Working Party on Trade and Environment (JWPTE) with financial support from the European Union.

Format and participants

This multi-stakeholder event will bring together experts in the field of trade and environment from OECD and invited partner governments, international organisations, academia, the private sector and civil society. This virtual event will be organised under Chatham House Rule.

¹ See TREND database: <http://www.chaire-epi.ulaval.ca/en/trend>.

² The work has evolved from tracking the typology of environmental provisions, to assessing the implementation and effectiveness of environmental provisions on environmental outcomes, and then exploring further ways to secure policy coherence within these agreements under the “Greening RTA” project. See OECD trade and environment working papers, available at: <https://doi.org/10.1787/18166881>.

³ Seven OECD workshops on RTAs and the environment have been organised so far that were hosted in: Paris, France (2006, 2010, 2016); Tokyo, Japan (2007); Santiago, Chile (2008, 2018); and Hanoi, Vietnam (2014). See: <http://www.oecd.org/env/environment-and-regional-trade-agreements.htm>.

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Provisional Draft Agenda

(Please note timings are based on Paris time - CET time zone)

Day 1: Thursday, 10 June 2021	
12:30	<i>REGISTRATION</i>
13:00	<p>Opening remarks and introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rodolfo Lacy, OECD Environment Directorate Alejandra Aguilar, JWPT Co-Chair
13:10	<p>Session 1: Overview and recent developments on regional trade agreements and the environment</p> <p>Key questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What kind of environmental provisions are frequently included in RTAs and how do they intersect with environmental policies? ○ What are the more recent developments regarding environmental provisions in RTAs? ○ What do we know about the implementation and effectiveness of environmental provisions on environmental outcomes? <p>Moderator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joe Ferrante, US Environmental Protection Agency and JWPT Vice Chair <p>Speakers (10 min each):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jean-Frédéric Morin, Laval University (insights from the TREND database) Rob Dellink, OECD Environment Directorate (Insights from work on RTAs and the environment) <p>Discussion (25 mins)</p>
13:55	<p>Session 2: RTAs as a vehicle to advance a resource efficient and circular economy transition</p> <p>Session 2.1: Reflecting resource efficiency and circular economy objectives in regional trade agreements</p> <p>Key questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What are the interlinkages between international trade and a resource efficient and circular economy? ○ In what ways can RTAs serve as a vehicle to foster co-operation on resource efficiency and circular economy objectives? ○ Are there any priority issues that could be addressed between likeminded Parties? <p>Moderator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shardul Agrawala, OECD Environment Directorate <p>Speakers (10 mins each):</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aik Hoe Lim, WTO Trade and Environment Division (insights based on WTO notifications report) • Shunta Yamaguchi (insights based on T&CE reports) • Christophe Bellmann, IISD and Malena Sell, SITRA (insights from the newly released SITRA-IISD report on Incorporating Circular Economy Provisions in Regional Trade Agreements) <p>Discussion (25 mins)</p>
14:50	BREAK
15:05	<p>Session 2: Continued</p> <p>Session 2.2: Regional perspectives and insights</p> <p>Key questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How are different regions moving towards a circular economy transition? ○ What are the opportunities and challenges for trade to scale up a resource efficient and circular economy transition, in particular in emerging economies? ○ In what ways can international co-operation help cross-border flows of goods and services that contribute to a circular economy? <p>Moderator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mari Carlson, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland <p>Speakers (10 mins each)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nanno Mulder, International Trade and Integration Division, UN ECLAC (insights from a report on T&CE in LAC countries) • Rachna Arora, EU-REI Team Leader, GIZ India (insights from international cooperation on circular economy in India) • Bezawit Eshetu, Executive Team Member and Country Representative for Ethiopia, African Circular Economy Network (insights from circular economy initiatives in the African region) <p>Discussion (25 mins)</p>
16:00	END OF DAY 1

Day 2: Friday, 11 June 2021

13:00	<p>Session 3: Potential of RTAs in addressing the nexus of illegal trade and environmental crime</p> <p>Session 3.1: The nexus of Illegal trade and environmental crime – state of play</p> <p>Key questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What is the scope, trends and drivers of cross-border environmental crime? ○ What are the recent developments and challenges in tackling cross-border environmental crime? ○ What kind of initiatives are necessary beyond efforts at the national level? <p>Moderator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Louis Marechal, Directorate for Financial and Enterprise Affairs, OECD
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	<p>Speakers (10 mins each):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aphrodite Smagadi and Jackline Wanjiru, National Environmental Law Unit, Law Division, United Nations Environment Programme (insights from recent reports) • Rory Corcoran, Illicit Markets Organized & Emerging Crime Directorate, Interpol (insights from World Atlas of Illicit Flows and Emerging criminal trends in the global plastic waste market) • Roux Raath, World Customs Organization (insights from the 2019 Illicit Trade Report and the WCO flagship Operations DEMTER) <p>Discussants (5 mins each):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ben van Rensburg, CITES Secretariat (updates from the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)) • Leon Van Der Wal, OECD Environment Directorate, and Clara Frezal, Trade and Agriculture Directorate (related OECD work on illegal trade in pesticides) <p>Discussion (35 mins)</p>
14:15	BREAK
14:30	<p>Session 3: <i>continued</i></p> <p>Session 3.2: Possibilities to use RTAs in addressing the nexus of illegal trade and environmental crime</p> <p>○ What kinds of commitments are included in RTAs to combat cross-border environmental crime?</p> <p>○ Are there any successful examples in implementing such commitments?</p> <p>○ What kinds of issues could be further addressed in RTAs to help address the nexus of illegal trade and environmental crime?</p> <p>Moderator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Xavier Jardi, Ministry of the Economy and Finance, France <p>Speakers (10 mins each):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Katy Sater, U.S. Trade Representative and Tiffany Prather, U.S. Department of State (Experience from US FTAs in tackling illegal trade and environmental crime) • Jorge Guzmán, CAFTA-DR Secretariat for Environment Matters, Guatemala (Experience of CAFTA-DR and public submissions) • Piotr Stryszowski, Senior Project Manager, Task Force on Countering Illicit Trade, Public Governance Directorate OECD (insights from the OECD Task Force on Countering Illicit Trade). <p>Discussant (5 mins):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Javier Arribas-Quintana, DG Environment, European Commission (insights on regional initiatives to secure sustainable supply chains) <p>Discussion (40 mins)</p>
15:45	<p>Summing up and next steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shardul Agrawala, OECD Environment Directorate • Brett Longley, JWPTE Co-Chair
16:00	END OF WORKSHOP