



# Economic and Social Council

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## Economic Commission for Europe

### Committee on Trade

#### Fourth session

Geneva, 14-15 June 2011

Item 9 of the provisional agenda

#### Programme of work

### Changes to the 2010-2011 programme of work\*

#### Note by the secretariat

#### *Summary*

This document provides an overview of changes to the 2010-2011 programme of work carried out under the UNECE Subprogramme on Trade (ECE/TRADE/C/2009/10). The Committee is invited to endorse the changes to the programme of work.

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\* \* This document was submitted late due to delayed inputs.

## **I. Committee on Trade**

1. Following discussions among UNECE member States on the future direction of the Committee on Trade, the Executive Committee (EXCOM) recommended at its thirty-fourth meeting of February 2010 that the Committee should carry out three national needs assessments on the procedural and regulatory barriers to trade before 2013. These assessments are to inform policy discussions within the Committee, and its recommendations to: individual UNECE member countries and/or regions groupings on how to improve their trading environment; donors on where assistance is required; and, to UNECE subsidiary bodies on where additional work is required. To implement the EXCOM's recommendations, the following outputs need to be added to the 2010-2011 programme of work:

- A needs assessment methodology focusing on regulatory and procedural barriers to trade
- Two national needs assessment on procedural and regulatory barriers to trade
- A policy forum for deliberating the findings and recommendations emerging from the national needs assessments.

2. The UNECE has developed the needs assessment methodology, which was used for carrying out an assessment of regulatory and procedural barriers to trade in Belarus. A similar needs assessment is being carried out in Kazakhstan.

## **II. Agricultural quality standards**

3. The UNECE 2005 reform requested the concentration of activities on explanatory (interpretation) material for UNECE fruit and vegetable standards in the UNECE. Taking note of this request, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) decided in 2009 not to transfer activities from the "Scheme for the Application of International Standards for fruit and vegetables" to the UNECE "Specialized Section on Standardization of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables".

4. Having noted the OECD's decision, the WP.7 decided to continue producing explanatory materials for its standards. The first UNECE Explanatory Brochure for Sweet Peppers was published in 2010, and the secretariat is in the process of preparing an explanatory brochure for pineapples.

## **III. Regulatory cooperation and standardization policies**

5. At its 20th session of 2010, the Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies (WP.6) decided to establish a Group of Experts on Risk Management in Regulatory Systems (GRM). The Group will develop best practices and recommendations on how to use risk management tools in formulating, implementing and maintaining technical regulations, conformity-assessment procedures, and market-surveillance activities and inspections.

6. As a result, the below additional outputs have been added to the 2010-11 biennium:

- A panel session on Risk Management as part of the WP.6's Annual Session.
- Monthly GRM webinars.
- A wiki website for GRM members.

- A report on the results of the GRM work.

7. In addition, WP.6 decided, in its 19th (2009) and 20th sessions, that the below outputs should be included in the UNECE's programme of work on regulatory cooperation and standardization policies

- A quarterly newsletter on regulatory developments in UN Member States.
  - Publication of "Common definitions and terminology in market surveillance" in the form of a glossary (English-Russian)
  - A panel session on "Traceability as a risk management tool for regulators and business" back to back to the 21st session of the WP. 6.
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