Seminar on Trade in Central Asia and meeting of the SPECA Working Group on Trade: *Integrating Central Asia into the World Economy through Sustainable Trade and Transport Facilitation*
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Trade as an Engine for Sustainable and Inclusive Growth in Central Asia

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Trade and sustainability

- Work on SDGs in the UN and member States concentrates on ensuring that economic growth is inclusive and sustainable.
- Switching to trade aligned with Sustainable Development can be even profitable for SPECA economies.
- SPECA countries' contributions to global value chains - still dominated by natural-resource-based products and raw materials.
- Diversification of production and trade is needed to secure long-term growth and sustainable development.

Possible principles of sustainable trade

1. Mainstream trade into national and sector strategies to achieve SDGs, and SDGs into trade development strategies;
2. Align productive capacities and innovation to sustainable development;
3. Adopt regulation to encourage sustainable growth, environmentally friendly trade;
4. Reduce inequality, give people access to markets, investment, and new technologies to get high working and living standards;
5. Identify and harness trade opportunities associated with a transition to green economy;
6. Eliminate trade subsidies that negatively affect the environment and employment;
7. Invest in food security;

Possible principles of sustainable trade

8. Promote regional trade governance frameworks that foster sustainability and decent jobs for all;
9. Promote the multilateral trading system in the subregion;
10. Ensure non-tariff measures do not become trade barriers;
11. Develop national sustainability standards for trade, related to international standards and best practices;
12. Encourage new forms of public-private partnerships to support trade and sustainable development;
13. Further women's empowerment;
14. Help develop financing mechanisms to shift to green trade;
15. Cultivate a new ethics in the trading community for the SDGs
16. Make e-commerce a force for inclusion; and
17. Support MSMEs to engage in international trade

Areas for further work
Trade Facilitation impacts on green trade

- Increase efficiency and reduce costs and waste to save resources for better use by society;
- Streamline border control procedures to reduce delays, waste of gasoline, pollution from idling trucks, and rejections of goods at the border;
- Streamline documentary procedures to avoid wasted paper and inputs;
- Facilitate trade in environmental goods, services and technology in compliance with the 2030 Agenda for better deployment of renewable energy technologies.

Areas for further work
Production and trading patterns & diversification

Encourage patterns with positive impact on tackling environmental problems, innovative diversification of production and trade, including through integration into regional and global supply chains and focusing on environmental goods (e.g. solar panels, etc.)

An inclusive and sustainable growth strategy must prioritize growth that creates jobs for the majority of the work-force.

Women and minorities should get more access to the management of international trade and the gains of development.

Policy measures must address the inequality of both opportunities and outcomes.

SPECA countries, trade and the green economy

Areas of possible cooperation that affect trade:

- Trade facilitation to cut waste.
- Build trust in cross-border trade to optimize water management; food security; regional supply chain development; creating better jobs – encourage principles of environmentally sound production and trade.
- Promote diversification of the economy and trade, circular economy, creation of better and more decent jobs through coordination of planning.
- Cooperate on financing green trade; managing risks and building resilience to crises.
- Combat deforestation through introducing new ecological policies

Regional trade growth and sustainable development SDG 17:10

SPECA region made progress in achieving SDG 17.10 (international rules-based trading system under the WTO).

Now: 4 countries are full members of the WTO;
2 are observers in the process of accession.
We hope that the seminars at the biannual WTO AfT reviews help

SPECA countries can collaborate to achieve SDG 17.11 (increasing the share of developing countries in world exports)

Conclusions

Sub-regional cooperation on principles for the parallel advancement of trade and sustainable development will help achieve SDGs.

SPECA countries may consider including these principles in their policy planning for achieving the SDGs.

The SPECA framework may serve as a platform to analyze and advance intra-regional trade that is aligned to sustainable development.

Recommendations on using such principles for sustainable trade:

1. Input into policy planning in SPECA countries' to achieve the SDGs.
2. Identification of next steps (input to sustainable development plans, work programmes, cooperation plans, exchange of best practices; develop standards and tools for sustainable trade with linkages to water management, food security, etc.)
3. Definition of subregional projects on sustainable trade to attract funding (e.g. a UNDA project).

Thank you !

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