

Special and Differential Treatment in the WTO
Agriculture Negotiations

A Joint FAO-ICTSD Informal Expert Consultation

Agenda and Invited Participants

28 –29 September 2004
Room Inn
International Environment House-2 (MIE-2)
Geneva, Switzerland

Draft Agenda and Invited Participants

28 September

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| 9:00 – 9:30 | Welcoming Remarks by Organisers |
| 9:30 – 12:30 | <p>Special and Differential Treatment (S&DT): A Situational Analysis</p> <p>Annex A of the 1st August General Council Decision on the Doha Work Programme recognises the need to incorporate operationally effective and meaningful S&DT provisions and that developing countries “...must be able to pursue agricultural policies that are supportive of their development goals, poverty reduction strategies as well as food security and livelihood concerns.” Since structural economic and social conditions may vary widely across developing countries, different types of S&DT measures, tailored to specific circumstances, may be needed to effectively meet these development needs. This session will explore a number of these different “situations” – based upon economic and social criteria. It will then discuss the ways and means to craft needs-specific and context-specific S&DT provisions to take into account particular food security and rural development concerns associated with the different situations identified, without suggesting the creation of new country groupings.</p> <p><u>Discussion Opener:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Harmon Thomas (FAO) <p><u>Commentators:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Ricardo Meléndez-Ortiz (ICTSD)b) Dominique Njinkeu (ILEAP)c) Ambassador M. Supperamaniam (Former Ambassador of Malaysia to the WTO) <p><i>Open Discussion</i></p> |
| 12:30 –14:00 | Lunch Break |
| 14:00 - 17:00 | <p>S&DT under the Market Access Pillar</p> <p>The 1st August Decision makes an explicit reference to special products (SP) and a special safeguard mechanism (SSM). It particularly states that the criteria for special products should be based on food-security, livelihood security and rural development concerns. In the post framework phase developing countries face a major challenge in fleshing out these concepts in ways that are supportive of their needs while, at the same time, avoiding possible abuses to ensure acceptance by other WTO Members. This session will discuss possible selection criteria and modalities for the definition of SP/SSM, and will also focus on the implications of the tiered tariff reduction formulae for developing countries with different structural economic conditions and options to craft appropriate S&DT provisions. The issues of ‘proportionality’, liberalisation of trade in tropical agricultural products and ‘preferences’ contained in the 1st August Decision will also be discussed.</p> <p><u>Discussion Openers:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Luisa Bernal (South Centre)b) Mario Jales (ICONE) <p><u>Commentators:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Duncan Green (DFID)b) Byron Blake (Former Assistant Secretary-General, CARICOM Secretariat)c) Sheila Page (ODI) <p><i>Open Discussion</i></p> |

29 September**9:00 - 12:30****S&DT under the Domestic Support Pillar**

As illustrated in many developed countries, domestic support measures can be effective under certain circumstances in promoting agriculture-led development, or in transforming and diversifying agricultural production systems. Even though many developing countries currently lack the means to provide effective domestic support, it is important to ensure that future WTO rules will not unduly restrict the ability of developing countries to implement effective domestic support measures for agricultural development. This session will explore how and what type of S&DT can help safeguard such 'policy-spaces', with a particular focus on the implications of the S&DT framework elements in the Annex 'A' text such as continued access to the provisions under Article 6.2, longer implementation-periods, lower reduction coefficients for trade-distorting domestic support, methodology for capping product-specific supports and reductions in *de-minimis* levels including the exemption for subsistence and resource-poor farmers.

Discussion Openers:

- a) Anwarul Hoda (ICRIER)
- b) Chris Stevens (IDS)

Commentators:

- a) Jasper Okelo (University of Nairobi)
- b) Adriano Campolina (ActionAid)

*Open Discussion***12:30-14:00****Lunch Break****14:00-16:00****S&DT under the Export Competition Pillar**

Developing country governments, particularly those heavily dependent on a few commodities, may want to support the horizontal and vertical growth of new exports and diversify their agricultural production. These attempts at diversification should not be impeded by changes in the export competition pillar under the Doha Round. The 1st August Decision refers to longer implementation periods for the phase-out of export subsidies for developing countries, continued recourse to Article 9.4 of the AOA for a *reasonable* period as well as special consideration of monopoly statues for developing country State Trading Enterprises (STEs) with special privileges to preserve consumer price stability and ensure food-security. Do these provisions adequately respond to the need to ensure growth and export diversification in agriculture? The session will attempt to elicit some answers to this question as well as come up with possible ways and means by which S&DT can play an enabling role to preserve the necessary flexibilities or policy space to allow countries to promote agriculture diversification.

Discussion Opener:

- a) Jürgen Hoffmann (Agriculture Trade Forum of Namibia)

Commentators:

- a) Ann Tutwiler (International Food and Agricultural Trade Policy Council)
- b) Peter Naray (International Trade Centre)

*Open Discussion***16:00 – 18:00****Wrap-Up and Final Discussion**