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Consideration of the future focus of the trade and investment subprogramme

Proposed strategic framework for 2016-2017 for the subprogramme on trade and investment

Note by the secretariat

Summary

The present document contains an introduction to the first draft of the strategic framework of the subprogramme on trade and investment for the 2016-2017 biennium. The objective of the subprogramme for 2016-2017 is “To enhance trade, investment, enterprise development, innovation and technology transfer for inclusive and sustainable development in the Asia-Pacific region.” Taking into account the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), the expected accomplishments and strategy set out for the subprogramme in 2016-2017 further emphasize the need to focus on trade and investment policies, together with other related policies and measures, that will contribute to inclusive and sustainable development of the Asia-Pacific region.

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I. Introduction

1. Trade and investment are expected to remain the key drivers of economic growth and development for the foreseeable future. Taking into account the outcome of the Rio+20 Conference, it is particularly important that the secretariat continues to support trade, investment, enterprise development, innovation, and technology transfer policies and initiatives that will contribute to inclusive and sustainable development of the Asia-Pacific region. It is proposed that the objective and expected accomplishments of the

* E/ESCAP/CTI(3)/L.1.

strategic framework for 2016-2017 remain virtually the same as those endorsed by the Commission for the 2014-2015 biennium, in particular in light of the time frame that should, realistically speaking, be longer than two years in order to meet the objectives and expected accomplishments of the 2014-2015 strategic framework. A complete draft strategic framework for the 2016-2017 biennium is presented in chapter II, while issues for consideration by the Committee are outlined in chapter III.

II. Draft strategic framework 2016-2017

2. The draft strategic framework 2016-2017 for the subprogramme on trade and investment is presented below; it is based on the same format in which the 2014-2015 strategic framework was presented and endorsed by the Commission.¹

3. Following the approach adopted by the Commission for the strategic framework 2014-2015, both the Trade and Investment Division of ESCAP and two specialized institutions of ESCAP, namely the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology and the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization, will contribute to all three expected accomplishments.

Subprogramme on trade and investment

Objective of the Organization: to enhance trade, investment, enterprise development, innovation and technology transfer for inclusive and sustainable development of the Asia-Pacific region

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat	Indicators of achievement
(a) Enhanced knowledge among ESCAP member States of trends, emerging issues and evidence-based policy options in the area of trade, investment, enterprise development, and technological innovation and transfer for inclusive and sustainable development	(a) (i) Number of references to ESCAP publications, related materials and activities, in the area of trade and investment, in policy-related literature and key media outlets (ii) Number of references to ESCAP publications, related materials and activities on innovation, technology transfer and agricultural mechanization in policy-related literature and key media outlets
(b) Strengthened regional cooperation in trade, investment, enterprise development, innovation and the development and transfer of technology for inclusive and sustainable development	(b) (i) Number of ESCAP member States participating in or indicating that they find the regional cooperation mechanisms fostered by ESCAP in trade, investment, and technological innovation and transfer useful for their country (ii) Number of ESCAP member States participating in or indicating that they find regional cooperation mechanisms promoted by the Asian

¹ This draft is presented for consideration and review by the Committee only. It may undergo additional changes, pending instructions from United Nations Headquarters, and should therefore be considered as a tentative draft only.

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat	Indicators of achievement
(c) Increased capacity of ESCAP member States to formulate and implement more effective and coherent policies on trade, investment, innovation, enterprise development and technology transfer for inclusive and sustainable development	<p>and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology and the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization to foster innovation, and to develop and transfer technology, including in the area of agricultural mechanization, useful for their country</p> <p>(iii) Coverage and depth of commitment under the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement and/or the expansion of membership within the Agreement</p> <p>(c) (i) Percentage of participants in ESCAP activities and initiatives indicating that they have increased their capacity to formulate or implement more effective and coherent policies on trade, investment and enterprise development</p> <p>(ii) Percentage of those participating in the activities of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology and the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization indicating that they have increased their capacity to formulate or implement more effective and coherent policies to foster innovation, and to develop and transfer technology, including in the area of agricultural mechanization</p>

Strategy

The substantive responsibility for the subprogramme will lie with the Trade and Investment Division, with support from the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology and the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization. The strategic direction of the subprogramme is derived mainly from the internationally agreed development goals, including: sustainable development goals;² 2005 World Summit Outcome;³ the outcome document of the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, “The future we want”;⁴ Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked

² A 30-member Open Working Group was established on 22 January 2013 by decision of the General Assembly to prepare a proposal on sustainable development goals for consideration during its 68th session (GA/11339, ENV/DEV/1334, 22 January 2013).

³ General Assembly resolution 60/1.

⁴ General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex.

and Transit Developing Countries;⁵ Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020;⁶ Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States;⁷ relevant General Assembly resolutions; Commission resolutions 62/6 on managing globalization through strengthened regional cooperation in trade and investment, and 68/3 on enabling paperless trade and the cross-border recognition of electronic data and documents for inclusive and sustainable intraregional trade facilitation; and any other resolution member States may propose in the area of trade and investment or related areas prior to the biennium 2016-2017.

To meet its objectives, the subprogramme will be implemented through a combination of analytical and capacity-building work on trade, investment, enterprise development, sustainable agricultural mechanization, innovation and technology transfer, with a particular view to enhancing the contribution of trade and investment in meeting the goals outlined in the outcome document of the Rio+20 Conference (“The future we want”), and the forthcoming sustainable development goals and objectives outlined in the development agenda beyond 2015. The strategy may undergo amendment prior to its implementation in response to emerging global and regional trends in trade and investment, including the conclusion of major global and regional agreements in this area, for instance a conclusion of the Doha Round of multilateral trade negotiations. The focus of the analytical work is to provide inputs for evidence-based policymaking and the sharing of experiences on related policy reforms.

In achieving the expected accomplishments, special attention will be accorded to addressing the following issues: (a) strengthening the capacity of policymakers and practitioners in trade, investment, enterprise development and technology transfer, particularly their ability to effectively negotiate, conclude and implement multilateral and other trade and investment agreements that contribute, either directly or indirectly, to inclusive and sustainable development of the region; (b) formulation and implementation of coherent policies in support of enhanced intraregional and interregional trade and investment for inclusive and sustainable development; (c) design and implementation of more inclusive and sustainable trade facilitation policies and measures, including paperless trade systems; (d) formulation and implementation of effective policy measures to strengthen responsible business conduct and practices, including corporate social responsibility and adoption of the principles of the United Nations Global Compact, with a view to enhancing the contribution of the private sector, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises and agro-based enterprises, to inclusive and sustainable development; (e) development of productive capacity and competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises, including agro-based enterprises, and enhancing their effective integration into global and regional value chains; (f) promotion of foreign direct investment in support of inclusive and

⁵ *Report of the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation, Almaty, Kazakhstan, 28 and 29 August 2003 (A/CONF.202/3), annex I.*

⁶ *Report of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, Istanbul, Turkey, 9-13 May 2011 (A/CONF.219/7), chap. I.*

⁷ *Report of the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Port Louis, Mauritius, 10-14 January 2005 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.05.II.A.4 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.*

sustainable development; (g) promotion of technological innovation and transfer for inclusive and sustainable development; and (h) establishment and strengthening of common frameworks and mechanisms in support of regional economic integration and strengthening regional cooperation in trade, investment, technology transfer and the development of small and medium-sized enterprises, including agricultural enterprises.

With regard to regional cooperation, the subprogramme will support and strengthen existing arrangements. Further development of the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement will be pursued, taking into account the growing number of overlapping free trade agreements. Regional cooperation among research institutions and think tanks will continue to be fostered through the Asia-Pacific Research and Training Network on Trade, which operates as a regional knowledge platform for trade and investment reform. The Asian and Pacific network for testing of agricultural machinery will play an important role in promoting and facilitating trade of sustainable and safe agricultural machinery. The Asia-Pacific Business Forum and the ESCAP Business Advisory Council, including its Sustainable Business Network, will be the principal mechanisms for engaging the private sector and exploring the establishment of public-private partnerships to pursue inclusive and sustainable development. The United Nations Network of Experts for Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific will provide the regional community with the knowledge needed to achieve concrete progress on trade facilitation and paperless trade. Mechanisms such as the Renewable Energy Cooperation-Network for the Asia-Pacific, the Renewable Energy Technology Bank and the Regional Network for Strengthening R&D Management Capacity in New and Emerging Areas of Technology will be further developed as important mechanisms for regional cooperation on technology transfer.

Synergies between this subprogramme and other subprogrammes of the Commission will be maximized. The Commission will collaborate at the subregional, regional and national levels with all relevant agencies of the United Nations system and with other bilateral and multilateral agencies as is necessary and feasible.

III. Issues for consideration by the Committee

4. The Committee is invited to deliberate on the following issues:

(a) The relevance and adequacy of the overall objective and the three expected accomplishments of the subprogramme proposed for 2016-2017;

(b) The suitability and coverage of the indicators of achievements proposed for each of the expected accomplishments;

(c) The expected effectiveness of the proposed strategy and ways to further improve it.