

DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AS STANDARDS TAKERS – WHY THEIR INVOLVEMENT SHOULD INCREASE

Presented by

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Presentation outline

- Introduction
- Trade issues
- Impact of climate change
- Developing countries as standards takers
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INTRODUCTION

- The interface between trade, environment and development can have major impacts to the developing world
- Exporting to the international market demands a number of requirements, including to meet the corresponding standards
- The WTO provides rights and obligations which may assist developing countries in dealing with environment related trade issues.

INTRODUCTION

- Financial assistance, access to environmentally sound technologies, capacity building and market-based instruments are but some of the possible measures that can help developing countries.
- Issues of particular concern to the developing countries include aggravated poverty due to climate change, deforestation, land degradation, desertification, loss of wildlife and other biodiversity resources, dumping of wastes and the transfer of obsolete technologies

INTRODUCTION

- Limited financial and technical capacities hinder many developing countries from actively participating in the international debate on trade and environment
- Irrespective of whether developing countries participated in international negotiations or not, they are eventually compelled to abide to the decisions made in international forums on trade and related standards

DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, TRADE AND STANDARDS

- For purposes of business, it is easier and less expensive to meet a single standard in all markets than meeting multiple requirements
- But are the standards truly international in nature if the involvement of developing countries is minimum?
- New requirements in standards can make trading with the developed countries increasingly difficult

DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, TRADE AND STANDARDS

- WTO calls for measures “to ensure that international standardization bodies and international systems for conformity assessment are organised and operated in a way which facilitates active and representative participation of relevant bodies in all Members, taking into account the special problems of developing countries members” (Article 12.5)

DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, TRADE AND STANDARDS

- Enhancing effective participation of developing countries in ISO standard setting remains a priority and a condition for the development of truly international standards.
- ISO programme for Developing countries (DEVCO), as well as some financial assistance provided by some developed countries can play a very important role in ensuring developed countries participation

IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

- Developing countries are by far more affected by climate change than the developed countries.
- Climate change is bound to aggravate the state of poverty of these countries.
- Impacts on farming and hence reduction of agricultural yield is obvious.
- Climate change threatens food security
- More widespread of diseases, like malaria
- Drop in tourism due to loss of biodiversity
- Hurricanes, Floods

DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AS STANDARD TAKERS

- Once standards are established they are implemented by the different countries, irrespective of whether the country is developed, developing or least developed.
- WTO refers to international standards as a fair criteria for trading purposes, so that countries don't impose unnecessary barriers to trade
- The best way therefore is to be a part to the negotiations during the preparation of these

Developing countries should be involved

- For greatest effectiveness, international standards should be designed through processes which are transparent, open, and impartial while basing on consensus procedures.
- International standards are also a vehicle for transfer of technology
- In the ISO procedure, a standard will only be adopted as an international standard only if 66% of the members vote for it.

Developing countries should be involved

- Because of their number, if developing countries do not want certain requirements in standards they can easily block the standard from becoming an international standard
- However, this is only possible if they act by actually participating in the process of developing the standards

SCOPE OF ACTIVITIES OF THE DCCG

- This is a group that represents technical aspects of ISO/TC 207 from Developing Countries
- ISO /TC 207 leadership established this group within the committee so as to assist the developing countries to collectively have a forum of consolidating their participation
- This goes well with the importance of the environment to the developing countries

SCOPE OF ACTIVITIES OF THE DCCG

- Provides a forum for communication between the ISO/TC207 secretariat and DCCG member countries.
- Represents the interests of developing countries to the ISO/TC 207 leadership
Represents
- Finds ways to maximize developing countries representation on ISO/TC 207 and its SC's working groups.

SCOPE OF ACTIVITIES OF THE DCCG

- Encourage that ISO tools are translated and implemented (through NSBs) so that the developing countries become more competitive in the trade business.
- Provides information on experiences, on ISO tools and others.
- Organizes participation through Regional Associations to increase national interest representation and provide a special link with Regional Associations

THE DCCG REGIONAL GROUPINGS (Africa)

- Botswana
- Ghana
- Egypt
- Kenya
- Mauritius
- Tanzania
- Uganda
- SouthAfrica
- Zimbabwe

THE DCCG REGIONAL GROUPINGS

(Continental America)

- Argentina
- Brazil
- Chile
- Colombia
- Costa Rica
- Mexico
- Uruguay
- Venezuela

THE DCCG REGIONAL GROUPINGS (Asia)

- China
- India
- Indonesia
- Malaysia
- Philippines
- Vietnam

THE DCCG REGIONAL GROUPINGS

Europe

- Yugoslavia

Caribbean

- Jamaica
- Trinidad & Tobago
- Cuba

WHAT CAN BE DONE

- Because of limited resources and capacity, developing countries should strive to actively and jointly participate in the areas where they relatively have technical capacity.
- Equally important, priority should be given in areas that may adversely affect them if they don't take part in the negotiations.
- Capacity building should therefore be a priority

WHAT CAN BE DONE

- Apart from capacity building, there is need for awareness building
- ISO DEVCO can have a major role to play
- Assistance should be solicited from different sources (developed countries, international and regional organizations).
- Upgrading/establishment of IT facility and marketing facility for NSBs
- Twinning

CONCLUSION

- Globalization of trade has resulted in the importance and need for international standards.
- International standards can be seen as truly international when developing countries are involved.
- Staying out of the process will have far reaching adverse consequences for developing countries.

CONCLUSION

- Developed countries should support the efforts of developing countries in helping them develop their capacity, and to participate effectively.
- The initiatives of some developed countries, such as Sweden in providing assistance through SIS must be appreciated and emulated.

**THANK YOU
FOR YOUR ATTENTION!!**