

## Committee on Trade and Environment

### REPORT (1997) OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND ENVIRONMENT

1. As directed by the Singapore Ministerial Declaration (WT/MIN(96)/DEC), the Committee on Trade and Environment (CTE) continued to work with the mandate and terms of reference contained in the Marrakesh Ministerial Decision on Trade and Environment under the Chairmanship of Ambassador Björn Ekblom (Finland). At its first meeting, the CTE adopted a schedule of meetings and programme of work for 1997 (see the attached Annex).
2. All Items of the work programme set out in the Ministerial Decision on Trade and Environment were on the agenda of the CTE in accordance with the recommendations contained in the 1996 Report of the CTE to the Singapore Ministerial Conference (WT/CTE/1). In order to broaden and deepen the discussions, a thematic approach was followed so as to allow all Items to be addressed in a systematic manner.
3. The CTE held three meetings in 1997. As set out in the Annex to this Report, the focus of the meeting held on 21-22 May was those Items on the work programme related to market access, including Items 2, 3, 4, and 6. At the 22-24 September meeting, the CTE addressed those Items which are relevant to the linkages between the multilateral environment and trade agendas, including Items 1, 5, 7 and 8. The 24-26 November meeting focused on Items 9 and 10 and adopted this report of the CTE to the General Council.
4. A Symposium with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) was organized by the Secretariat, on its own responsibility, on 20-21 May 1997.<sup>1</sup> Approximately 70 NGOs participated in the Symposium representing a wide spectrum of environment, development, consumer and industry interests and research organizations from developing and developed countries. The Symposium continued the ongoing and valuable exchange of views with NGOs on matters related to WTO work on trade, environment and sustainable development.
5. In order to contribute to the discussions in the CTE on the linkages between the environmental and trade agendas, an information session with representatives from the Secretariats of seven multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and two environmental financial mechanisms was held on 22 September 1997. The information gained from the presentations and the background papers prepared by the MEA Secretariats was considered useful and further sessions of this nature were encouraged.
6. The CTE extended observer status to the following international intergovernmental organisations in 1997: the UN Framework Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES), and the Latin American Economic System (SELA).
7. The CTE agreed to hold its first meeting on 19-20 March 1998 and to continue to broaden and deepen the analysis of the Items on its work programme based on the "cluster approach" under the themes of market access and the linkages between the multilateral environment and trade agendas.  
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<sup>1</sup>As mandated by the 1996 Report of the CTE to the Singapore Ministerial Conference and pursuant to the 1996 Decision of the WTO General Council on "Guidelines for Arrangements on Relations with Non-Governmental Organizations".

ANNEX

COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND ENVIRONMENT

Work Programme and Schedule of Meetings for 1997

All Items of the work programme set out in the Ministerial Decision on Trade and Environment are on the agenda of the Committee on Trade and Environment (CTE) this year in accordance with the recommendations contained in the 1996 Report of the CTE to the Singapore Ministerial Conference (WT/CTE/1). In order to advance the CTE's discussions in 1997, a thematic approach will be followed so as to allow all Items of the work programme to be addressed in a systematic manner.

At the CTE's meeting on 21-22 May those Items relevant to the theme of market access will be discussed, including:

- Item 2: the relationship between environmental policies relevant to trade and environmental measures with significant trade effects and the provisions of the multilateral trading system;
- Item 3: the relationship between the provisions of the multilateral trading system and:
  - (a) charges and taxes for environmental purposes;
  - (b) requirements for environmental purposes relating to products, including standards and technical regulations, packaging, labelling and recycling;
- Item 4: the provisions of the multilateral trading system with respect to the transparency of trade measures used for environmental purposes and environmental measures and requirements which have significant trade effects; and
- Item 6: the effect of environmental measures on market access, especially in relation to developing countries, in particular to the least developed among them, and environmental benefits of removing trade restrictions and distortions.

On 22-24 September, the CTE will hold a meeting to discuss the Items related to the linkages between the multilateral environment agenda and the multilateral trade agenda, including:

- Item 1: the relationship between the provisions of the multilateral trading system and trade measures for environmental purposes, including those pursuant to multilateral environmental agreements;
- Item 5: the relationship between the dispute settlement mechanisms in the multilateral trading system and those found in multilateral environmental agreements;
- Item 7: the issue of exports of domestically prohibited goods; and
- Item 8: the relevant provisions of the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights.

At a meeting to be held from 24-26 November, the CTE will address:

- Item 9: the work programme envisaged in the Decision on Trade in Services and the Environment;
  - Item 10: input to the relevant bodies in respect of appropriate arrangements for relations with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations referred to in Article V of the WTO; and
- prepare a brief factual report for submission to the General Council at the end of 1997.