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THEMATIC HIGHLIGHT

High-level ACP-UNCTAD event at UNCTAD 14 Nairobi: Harnessing the Blue Economy for Sustainable Economic Growth and Development



In the framework of the quadrennial UNCTAD Ministerial Conference, the ACP Secretariat in collaboration with the ACP-EU TBT Programme, ACP-EU TradeCom II Programme and the CTA organised a side-event on the blue economy and its prospects for the ACP.

H.E. Dr Patrick I. Gomes, Secretary-General of the ACP Group of States, moderated the discussions with the high-level panel of speakers including Mr. Guillermo Valles, Director of the Division on International Trade in Goods, Services, and Commodities, UNCTAD; Mr. Faiyaz Siddiq Koya, Minister for Industry, Trade and Tourism of the Government of Fiji; Mr. Stephen Karingi, Director of Regional Integration and Trade Division, UN ECA. (...)

[Read more](#)

[Read the UNCTAD 14 brochure](#)



PROJECTS' HIGHLIGHTS

IVORY COAST: The VAGNY-LAB laboratory accredited ISO/CEI 17025!



The VAGNY-LAB Managing Director Mr Atta Kouadio, recently announced to the TBT Programme the accreditation of the microbiology laboratory. The laboratory has been accredited according to ISO/IEC 17025:2005 standard by the international accreditation body TUNAC in August 2016.

“This newly accomplished accreditation is a great recognition of the VAGNY-LAB constant pursuit of quality with the objective to increase the daily level of satisfaction” said Mr Atta Kouadio.

The VAGNY-LAB team recognised the great support provided by the TBT Programme throughout the accreditation process. This important step would have

never been reached without such a support and the VAGNY-LAB team expressed its deepest appreciation all concerned with the TBT Programme.

[Read the French version of the article here](#)



PROJECTS' HIGHLIGHTS

Capacity Building in Strengthening Product Testing Laboratories, Nigeria



Project final workshop, Nigeria, June 2016

Agriculture and its associated value chains have been identified as a significant opportunity to spur Nigeria's economic growth, employment and reduce the country's reliance on oil exports. This project focussed specifically on how the Standards Organisation of Nigeria (SON) can support this national objective. Rather than focussing on controlling the entry of sub-standard goods into Nigeria, the focus has been shifted towards assisting industries to deliver products that comply with international performance and safety standards. In pursuit of this aim, the TBT Programme-funded project focussed on assisting SON to revise its approach to standards development by involving stakeholders in the development of more relevant standards; developing guides to assist suppliers to deliver products that conform to international standards and expectations, and supporting the improvement in testing capacity to provide assurance needed to access competitive international markets.

As a result of this project, SON's capacity to manage these different issues was enhanced along with an increase in Nigeria's trade competitiveness. The project also improved SON's staff capacity to deliver improved service to the business community.

Since the beginning of 2016, this project has delivered a number of tangible results: the standards development staff received training; codes of practice and implementation guidance were developed to support five key agricultural industries; laboratories were assisted and lab personnel trained. SON's management recognised for its willingness to embrace this slate of remedial measures with the results being well received at all levels with SON as well as by affected industries.

[Read more](#)



NEWS & EVENTS

European Development Days 2016: Joint action in favour of ACP countries



During the 2016 European Development Days (EDD2016), the EU-ACP Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), the ACP-EU Technical Barriers to Trade Programme (TBT Programme) and the ACP-EU TradeCom II Programme (TradeCom II) jointly organised two debates on development issues pertinent to the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of countries (ACP). The first debate on: ***“Developments in agricultural trade and the Sustainable Development Goals in African, Caribbean and Pacific countries”*** brought insight from experts on the impact of current and future trends on ACP agricultural trade and investment, and manners in which enhanced public-private partnerships can support development in ACP countries.

Read [here](#) the key points, synopsis and insight of the first debate.

The second debate on ***“The Treatment of Food Standards in Mega-RTAs Policy Implications for ACP Countries”*** tackled the rules governing global trade defined by mega-RTAs such TTIP, TTP and RCEP, with important development implications for the ACP in terms of full integration into global value chains, capacity to negotiate regulatory frameworks, and ACP producers’ ability to meet compliance costs, including tighter food standards.

Read [here](#) the key points, synopsis and insight of the second debate.



NEWS & EVENTS

TBT Programme participation in the 10th AFRIMETS General Assembly



10th AFRIMETS General Assembly, Egypt, July 2016

The Intra-Africa Metrology System (AFRIMETS) invited the TBT Programme to AFRIMETS' 10th General Assembly and Meetings, held in July 2016 in Cairo, Egypt.

The event comprised a number of workshops on different subjects, including one on AFRIMETS sustainability. A number of working groups were also organized including on scientific and industrial inter-comparison technical committees as well as legal metrology groups. A meeting of the AFRIMETS Executive Committee was also held within the ambit of the 10th AFRIMETS General Assembly.

During the week, new and emerging topics were discussed and prioritised for implementation for the AFRIMETS' Agenda towards 2020. Specific work plans and partnerships were among the issues discussed. The event provided an opportunity for the TBT Programme to gain an overview of the trends in African metrology and to assess its past and ongoing support with all African partners in a continental, regional and national basis. (...)

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INSIGHT

POLICY OPTIONS FOR ACP COUNTRIES IN FACE OF MEGA REGIONALS, by Catherine Grant Makokera

In the May 2016 newsletter, Peter Draper outlined some of the impacts of the mega regional trade negotiations on ACP countries. He identified both potential challenges and opportunities from the expected convergence of TBTs and other regulatory standards among the members of mega regional agreements. In this article, I suggest some of the possible policy responses that could be considered by ACP countries in light of these global shifts.

To recap, the mega regional trade agreements (Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP), Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) and Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)) are expected to see a common regulatory framework achieved or at a minimum greater levels of regulatory convergence among members. This is in response to the rising importance of product and process standards in a world where trade is dominated by transactions made as part of global value chains. (...) [Read More](#)

POLICY OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO THE ACP COUNTRIES IN RESPONSE TO MEGA-RTAS TREATMENT OF FOOD STANDARDS AND TO SUPPORT PRODUCERS/EXPORTERS TO MOVE UP THE VALUE CHAIN, by Dr Donald Mmari

Regional trade agreements are growing in number and becoming more focused on subjects other than trade, such as competition policies, mutual recognition, movement of persons, investment and others. In light of that, the RTA dilemma and important question to consider – why are so many countries ready to accept the rules and disciplines at the bilateral level that they are not prepared to accept them at the multilateral level? For the ACP countries it is appropriate to consider policy options available in response to Mega-RTAs treatment of food standards and to support producers/exporters to move up the value chain. Indeed, these RTAs pose significant risks of further marginalization and exclusion from increasingly buyer-driven global commodity chains (tighter regulatory requirements and sanitary measures that increase costs to ACP producers, further reducing competitiveness already caused by low productivity, post-harvest losses, infrastructure gap, lack of skills and facilities). ACP countries may start to contemplate various policy options of negotiations for gradual upgrading of standards from ACP and preferential treatment. (...) [Read More](#)



36 ONGOING PROJECTS

ACP - Dissemination of TBT practices

ACP Geneva -Support to the ACP Group

AFRAC - Accreditation e -earning Programme

ARSO - Awareness on African Agricultural Standards

BARBADOS, JAMAICA, T&T - Training in writing Technical Regulations and Methods of Referencing of Standards

BURKINA FASO - Quality Management System

BURUNDI -Reinforcement des capacités BBN

CABA - Promotion of the Agro-Tourism sector in the Caribbean

CARIBBEAN EXPORT - Regional Market Access Programme

COMESA - Participation of SMEs and Tanners in trade

COMESA - SQAM Strategic Plan Re-Alignment and Refinement

IVORY COAST - Quality and ethical Label for SMEs

IVORY COAST - LANEMA Capacity Building

CROSQ & AFRIMETS - E-learning on Legal Metrology

CROSQ - Support for the formation of a new CARICOM Regional Organisation for Standards and Quality Special Committee

ETHIOPIA - Capacitating accreditation office, CA bodies

ETHIOPIA - Building the institutional capacity of ELA

ETHIOPIA - Strengthening the QI Institutions of Ethiopia

GABON – Capacity Building in TBT related issues

GHANA, SIERRA LEONE - Enhancing EU Market Access for Handicrafts from Ghana, Sierra Leone

GUYANA - Enhancing Market Access for Quality Origin Products through their protection of geographical indications

HAITI - Capacity building and upgrade quality of enterprises and national laboratories

JAMAICA, BELIZE, T&T - Enhancing Competitiveness via regional patent examination

KIRIBATI - Strengthening Kiribati's national quality infrastructure

MADAGASCAR – Support to QI

MALI - Standardization and promotion of Agri products and handicrafts

NAMIBIA - Implementation of the NSI Strategic objectives

NIGER - Support to QI

PACIFIC - Building the capacity of PIPSO

SADC - Undertaking an analysis of the TBT/SPS

SAMOA - Training of Fair Trading Officials of the MCIL

SENEGAL – Support to ASN

TANZANIA - Developing awareness and professional skills of IP tools in Tanzania

TOGO – Capacity Building in the agro sector

Trinidad and Tobago - Operation and Maintenance for Printing, Plastics and Packaging Machinery for International standards

UEMOA – Train the trainers in Quality management

UPCOMING TBT EVENTS

- **AFRAC's 7th GENERAL Assembly, Abuja, 25 -30 September 2016**
- **Atelier Régional de Formation en Métrologie, UNIDO-CEDEAO, Cotonou, 17-18 October 2016**
- **WTO Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade, Geneva, 10-11 November 2016**

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