

TRANSITIONING TO THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY: THE ROLE OF TRADE AND INVESTMENT POLICIES

The International Trade Centre (ITC) is pleased to invite you to its webinar on 'Transitioning to the Circular Economy: The role of Trade and Investment Policies' on Wednesday, 13 July from 10 – 11.30am CET.

Register on https://intracen.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Qe7D29BLQ9eNVaYRle7Vow to receive the link to participate in the webinar.

ITC seeks to explore the interlinkages between international trade and the circular economy and demonstrate how trade policy instruments can be utilised to facilitate this transition and contribute to the overarching goals of strengthened economic resilience and sustainable development.

The gradual shift towards a green economy has important implications for industrial policy in developing countries. **Integrating climate change considerations will be a prerequisite for countries to strengthen competitiveness in decades to come, and leverage opportunities that arise in emerging green industries.** Governments are increasingly reviewing avenues through which to integrate green considerations into the industrial policy framework – including through greening existing industries, and accelerating growth and development in green products, services, and technologies.

Circular economy principles are integral to policy measures relating to greening. **The scope of the circular economy has evolved considerably over time** from its initial focus on minimizing waste generation to a wider approach on making resource use more sustainable through enhanced resource efficiency, and increased demand for related products and services such as recycling, refurbishing, and remanufacturing. **With increasing dependency on global value chains, the gradual uptake of circular economy principles will have an impact on trade patterns.** Impacts can include reduced trade in primary raw materials, increased trade in secondary materials, increased trade in waste for recycling and second-hand goods, as well as increased trade in products and services in emerging sectors such as waste management and refurbishment.

Forward looking industrial policies, accordingly, must be attuned with such predicted shifts in trade flows; and trade and investment policies need to be aligned to enable exporters to adapt to and leverage opportunities arising from the circular economy. Already efforts are underway at the regional levels to build in circular economy principles, such as through the European Union's Circular Economy Action Plan, the ASEAN Framework for Circular Economy, and the African Circular Economy Alliance; as well as efforts at the national level. Developing countries, however, may lack the technical, financial, and human capacity to effectively implement national plans and policies related to the circular economy and/or translate circular economy principles signed onto at the regional/global level into their national policy frameworks including on trade.

This webinar will:

- **Unpack how trade-related policy options and strategies can be effectively leveraged by developing countries to adopt and implement more circularity in their policy frameworks; and**
 - **Assess the constraints/challenges faced by developing countries in facilitating the required policy frameworks and effectively employing circular economy principles to set the foundation for more targeted dialogues and engagements to support developing countries embarking on these crucial reforms.**
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AGENDA

Moderator: Ms. Victoria Tuomisto, Programme Officer, Trade Facilitation and Policy for Business, International Trade Centre

Time (CET)	Agenda	Speaker(s)
10h00 –	Introductory Remarks	
10h05 –	<p>How can trade and investment policy instruments be utilized to transition to a circular economy?</p> <p><i>This session will introduce the concept of the ‘circular economy’ and its increasing relevance for facilitating economic resilience, sustainable production, and consumption; and discuss how trade-related and investment policies can be used as a tool to facilitate this transition to a circular economy.</i></p>	<p>Mr. Shunta Yamaguchi, Policy Analyst, OECD Environment Directorate</p>
10h20 –	<p>Commentary: What are the key take-aways for developing countries seeking to transition to a circular economy?</p>	<p>Dr. Patrick Low, Former Chief Economist at WTO</p>
10h25-	<p>How have trade policy instruments being utilised to meet objectives of the circular economy?</p> <p><i>This session will present two case-studies demonstrating how trade-related and investment policy instruments have been/are being used to facilitate (including by removing barriers) to the transition to a circular economy.</i></p>	<p>Ms. Bezawit Eshetu, Circular Economy Specialist, African Circular Economy Network</p> <p>Mr. Shikhar Jain, Deputy Head, Confederation of Indian Industry – Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Development</p>
10h45 –	<p>Commentary: How does ITC engage/support developing countries to align trade and investment policy instruments in this context?</p>	<p>Mr. Rajesh Aggarwal, Director (OIC), Division for Market Development, ITC</p>
10h50 –	Open Discussion	
11h30	Closing Remarks	

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The International Trade Centre (ITC) is a joint agency of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the United Nations (UN), seeks to foster inclusive and sustainable growth and development through trade and international business development. ITC’s technical assistance programmes contribute to the global efforts to achieve the UN Global Goals for Sustainable Development and the Aid for Trade Agenda.

For more enquiries about ITC’s webinars on the linkages between trade and the green initiatives – please contact: itctradepolicy@intracen.org

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