The WTO and the Sustainable Development Goals

Karsten Steinfatt
Trade and Environment Division
Workshop on the Sustainable Development Goals, Addis Action Agenda and the Aid for Trade Initiative
29 October 2015
Agenda 2030

Key features

- **Adopted by UN General Assembly at a leaders summit**
  (25 to 27 September 2015)
  - Some 160 heads of state and government in attendance
  - WTO represented by DG Azevêdo

- **New global development agenda for the next 15 years**
  - Result of nearly 3 years of negotiations and open global consultations

- Overarching goal is to **end poverty** by 2030
- Seeks to **build on the MDGs**
- Calls for “**universal**” and “**integrated**” action
- **Multi-stakeholder** involvement
Some background

Rio+20 conference (June 2012)

- Original proposal for SDGs by Colombia and Guatemala
- Consensus on “importance” and “utility” of SDGs
- Agreement on:
  - **Criteria** for SDGs (e.g., action oriented, universally applicable, aspirational, easy to communicate)
  - “Inclusive” and “transparent” **intergovernmental process** led by an Open Working Group composed of 30 seats (shared by UN member states)
Agenda 2030
Main elements

- Preamble and Declaration
- SDGs (17 goals and 169 targets)
- Means of Implementation
- Follow-up and Review
Agenda 2030
Declaration and Means of Implementation

Declaration
• Action plan for **people, planet, prosperity** and **peace**
  implemented through **collaborative partnership**
• **Poverty** eradication is greatest global challenge

Means of Implementation
• Need for revitalized “**Global Partnership**”
• **Trade**
  – Engine for inclusive economic growth, poverty reduction
  – Call on WTO members to conclude Doha negotiations
  – Importance of trade-related capacity building
Agenda 2030
SDGs

1. No Poverty
2. No Hunger
3. Good Health
4. Quality Education
5. Gender Equality
6. Clean Water and Sanitation
7. Clean Energy
8. Good Jobs and Economic Growth
9. Innovation and Infrastructure
10. Reduced Inequalities
11. Sustainable Cities and Communities
12. Responsible Consumption
13. Protect the Planet
14. Life Below Water
15. Life on Land
16. Peace and Justice
17. Partnerships for the Goals
Priority attention must be given to the trade needs of the poorest countries

Multilateral cooperation under the WTO is the preeminent channel to ensure that trade plays its full part in sustainable development

Aligning trade policies and other SD policies offers win-win opportunities
Agenda 2030 focuses on helping the poorest countries benefit from trade...

- Enhance market access (DFQF)
- Implement S&D
- Increase exports
- Increase Aid-for-Trade support

Promote the multilateral trading system
... and on aligning specific trade policies with sustainable development

- Trade restrictions and distortions affecting world agricultural markets
  (SDG target 2.b)
- Fisheries subsidies that contribute to overfishing
  (SDG target 14.6)
- Use of flexibilities in support of public health (Doha Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health)
  (SDG target 3.b)
Agenda 2030

Trade policy is relevant to many other SDG targets

• Water and sanitation related activities (water desalination, water efficiency, wastewater management)
• Energy technologies
• Financial services
• Trans-border and other infrastructure
• Increase economic productivity through diversification
Agenda 2030

Follow-up and review

Work is under way to define a framework of indicators to measure progress towards SDG targets by March 2016.
AfT is a key tool to maximize the contribution of trade to the achievement of the SDGs

- Measuring progress towards AfT target (and the contribution of AfT to sustainable development)
- Fostering two-way communication between review mechanisms in Agenda 2030 (national, regional, global) and trade and development community

Global Review of Aid for Trade