

WTO Environment Initiatives Launch

Canada - Ministerial Remarks/Talking Points

Trade and Environmental Sustainability Structured Discussions Ministerial Statement

- Thank you Carolyn for the introduction. It's a pleasure to speak with you today as a co-convenor of the Trade and Environmental Sustainability Structured Discussions (TESSD) to discuss this important issue for WTO members
- Just a few weeks ago at COP26, world leaders agreed to accelerate action on climate change adaptation and mitigation.
- With the eyes of the world now turning to the WTO, it's time to show that this institution can meaningfully contribute to global efforts needed to respond to the many environmental sustainability challenges we face.
- TESSD was born out of the belief that international trade and trade policy can support our collective efforts to address these pressing challenges.
- The co-sponsors here today believe that sustainable development and protecting the environment are fundamental goals of the WTO. And we believe that sustainability should be a central issue for the WTO agenda.
- By adding an environmental angle into our trade discussions, we have the opportunity to push for inclusive and sustainable growth for ALL.
- During TESSD meetings this year, we heard from members about their priorities and hopes for the future.
- While holding discussions is easier to do in-person, we can be proud of what we have achieved despite the challenges during the pandemic.
- Today, we mark a year of our sustained efforts pushing for ambitious outcomes on this issue by launching our Ministerial Statement on Trade and Environmental Sustainability.
- This statement acts as both a reflection on the work we've done and a commitment to the actions we will take to advance environmental priorities at the WTO.

- We can create new opportunities for environmentally sustainable trade, notably by identifying challenges and ambitious goals, and examine the nexus between trade and the environment.
- We should also recognize the need for an inclusive approach that reflects the larger diversity of the WTO membership.
- The statement we're putting forward aims to reflect this diversity by addressing a variety of different topics, such as environmental goods and services, resource efficiency, capacity building, and technical assistance for developing and least developed members.
- By reflecting on a broad range of topics, we believe there will be room for all members to see their interests reflected in our discussions.
- Early next year, the co-sponsors will adopt a work plan to guide us as we advance our discussions.
- We hope that our efforts will result in tangible outcomes that will enhance and support the work on environmental issues that we've already started.
- We are pleased that the statement has attracted 71 endorsements, but there is always room to grow, as trade and environmental issues concern all WTO members around world.
- For that reason, Canada strongly encourages all WTO members to participate in the TESSD.
- As a co-convenor for these discussions, Canada sees the interest of members for ensuring that the WTO has the tools to tackle climate change, and we share the same determination to use everything we have in our power to address environmental and climate challenges.
- The statement we are launching today marks an important milestone – it's the beginning the next phase of our work on trade and the environment, one in which we intensify our work and consider concrete ways that we can advance our trade and environment goals within the WTO.
- I look forward to seeing what we can do to address these issues.

- Thank you for this opportunity to speak with you today about this important milestone.