

The UN Economic Commission for Africa to Establish a Network of Trade and Environment Experts in North Africa

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Addis Ababa, 06 November (ECA) - The African Trade Policy Centre (ATPC) of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) is in the process of establishing a network of policy makers, researchers, academia, civil society and private sectors representatives dealing with trade and environment issues in North Africa Region.

The creation of this network was announced last week by Ms. Amal Nagah Elbeshbishi, Regional Adviser on Trade at ATPC, during the third edition of the Forum for Development in North Africa, which took place from 29 to 31 October 2009 in Rabat (Morocco).

The objective of the Trade and Environment Experts Network in North Africa is to build a critical mass of resource persons in the sub region and provide them with a framework for policy-oriented exchanges of views and information on linkages between environmental protection and trade barriers. The flow of information within the network is expected to enhance the proactive formulation of coherent trade and environment policies, by raising awareness on the environmental implications of global trade and the impact of trade liberalization on environment in the sub region.

A particular attention will be devoted to trade related environmental requirements for market access formulated in international agreements. In this regard, Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures as well as technical barriers will be carefully considered in view of their potential distorting effect on trade relations with developed countries.

The Network will also serve as a tool for capacity building. It is intended to address the lack of expertise and insufficient data and information required to support analysis and positions in the context of international negotiations establishing standards. The network will assist policy makers in North Africa Region to increase their understanding of relevant World Trade Organization's provisions on trade and environment.

The African Trade Policy Center will serve as catalyst for the future Network of Trade and Environment experts in North Africa. It will provide a technical support to the establishment of the network by setting up a platform for knowledge sharing among its members and organize trainings and workshops for the target audience, in collaboration with key constituencies including ECA's sub regional Office in North Africa, Regional economic communities and their member States.

Trade and Environment experts' networks already exist in other sub regions including Southern Africa and East Africa.

Experts interested in participating in the Trade and Environment Experts Network in North Africa are kindly requested [to register](#).

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