



UNECE

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Trade as an Engine for Sustainable and Inclusive Growth in Central Asia

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The political economy of trade and sustainability

- The UN and its member States work on SDGs to ensure that economic growth is inclusive and sustainable.
- Yet politicians mobilize for trade facilitation or war more than sustainable trade. Why? No immediate reward or threat.
- Switching to sustainable development trade can be profitable: advantage for employment in sustainable and ecological work.
- Yet, limited thinking. Sustainable development values should overarch exchange, labour, use and function values
- SPECA countries' contributions to global value chains - still dominated by natural-resource-based products and raw materials: need to change that to a more sustainable model.
- Diversification of production and trade needed to secure long-term growth, sustainable development, more and better jobs.



Principles of sustainable trade

1. Mainstream trade into national strategies to achieve SDGs;
2. Align production and innovation to sustainable development
3. Adopt regulation to encourage sustainable growth and trade;
4. Reduce inequality, give people access to markets, investment, and new technologies to raise living standards;
5. Harness trade opportunities related to the green economy;
6. Eliminate trade subsidies negatively affecting environment;
7. Invest in food security; 8. Further women's empowerment;
9. Promote regional trade governance frameworks;
10. Promote the multilateral trading system in the subregion;
11. Ensure non-tariff measures do not become trade barriers;
12. Develop sustainability standards for trade; Support MSMEs
13. Encourage new forms of PPPs to support sustainable trade;
14. Help develop financing mechanisms to shift to green trade;





Areas for further work

Trade Facilitation impacts on green trade

- Increase efficiency and reduce costs and waste to save resources for better use by society;
- Streamline border control procedures to reduce delays, waste of gasoline, pollution from idling trucks, and rejections of goods at the border;
- Streamline documentary procedures to avoid wasted paper and inputs;
- Facilitate trade in environmental goods, services and technology in compliance with the 2030 Agenda for better deployment of renewable energy technologies.





Project on Trade and Sustainability

- Project proposal: *Building Cross-border Cooperation for Sustainable Trade in the SPECA Subregion: Using innovative approaches for the advancement of regional trade.*
- Agencies: UNECE plus ESCAP, UN Resident Coordinators, UNEP...
- Objective: raise the understanding and capacity of the SPECA countries on the national and sub-regional levels to develop a sustainable and green economy by finding synergies between trade, water and agricultural policies with a focus on trade-policy cooperation among the countries.



Capacity-building and policy development to

- promote professional understanding of sustainable development of cross-border trade, green economy & decent jobs for all;
- review food-security policies a sustainable development and regional cooperation perspective;
- help eliminate barriers to trade that twist economic incentives and impede the shift to sustainable and inclusive growth;
- optimize transport, trade and Customs procedures & connectivity;
- promote a regional market and cross-border supply chains, including in agricultural products;
- trade facilitation to cut the waste of precious resources;
- establish partnerships for trade in high-value agricultural products, including organic products, which use water and other resources more efficiently and add to the effectiveness of supply chains in the subregion.



Activities to achieve the objective:

- analyze the situation & risks of inaction in the SPECA region;
- formulate strategic responses to improve sustainable trade, water efficiency, food security, energy intensity, transport infrastructure, environmental & employment impacts of trade;
- formulate concrete actions to raise the understanding of relevant SDGs and the capacity to implement them through cross-border cooperation among the SPECA countries;
- use the established SPECA structure;
- put forward innovative approaches to foster change in attitudes and practices: Innovation of products and trade processes in agricultural trade



Regional trade growth and sustainable development SDG 17:10

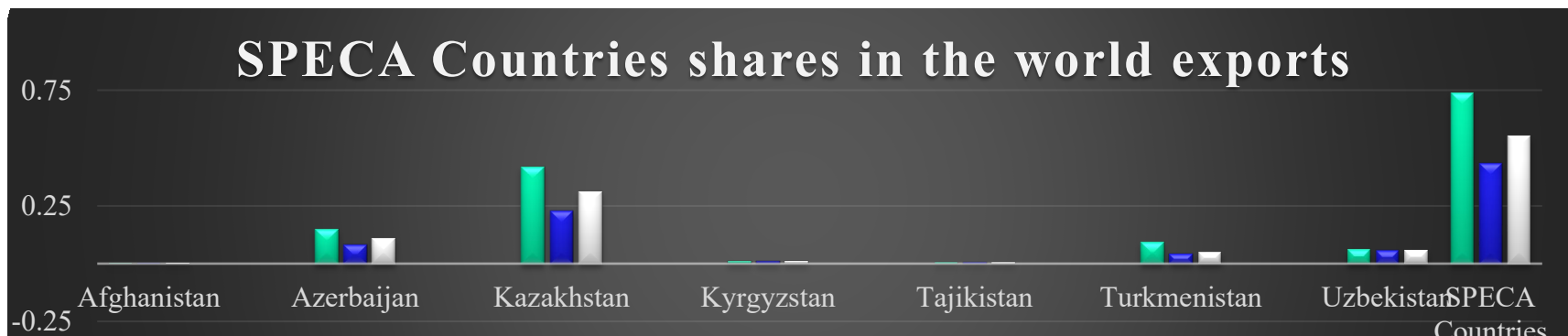
SPECA region made progress in achieving SDG 17.10 (international rules-based trading system under the WTO).

Now: 4 countries are full members of the WTO;
3 are observers in the process of accession.

We hope that the seminars at the biannual WTO AfT reviews help



SPECA countries can collaborate to achieve SDG 17.11 (increasing the share of developing countries in world exports)





Thank you !

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