



# RIS Diary

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## Environmental Requirements and Developing-Country Exports: RIS/OECD International Workshop

The developed and developing countries have divergent views on the issue of environmental requirements and their adverse effects on developing country export. In order to raise the trade concerns related to environment-related non-tariff barriers of developing countries, RIS, jointly with the OECD Trade Directorate, Paris, organized the "International Workshop on Environmental Requirements and Market Access: Addressing Developing-Country Concerns" in New Delhi on November 27-28, 2002. Along with 30 OECD members, 14 developing countries participated in the Workshop. The prominent developing countries included China, Sri Lanka, The Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, Fiji, Ghana, Kenya, Uganda and Senegal.

RIS had hosted the Workshop in collaboration with the Ministry of Commerce, Government of India. Shri K. C. Pant, Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission and Chairman, RIS, inaugurated the conference. Mr. Jean-Marie Metzger, Director, OECD Trade Directorate; Shri S. N. Menon, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Commerce, Government of India; and Dr. Nagesh Kumar, Director-General, RIS also addressed the inaugural session. Hon'ble Minister of Commerce and Industry of India, Shri Rajiv Pratap Rudy, delivered the Valedictory Address at the Workshop.

Dr. Jurgen Wiemann, Deputy Director of the German Development Institute, delivered the keynote speech on "Environmental Measures and Market Access: Impacts and Opportunities" at the inaugural session. The other sessions addressed Market Access Effects of Environmental Measures: Developing-Country and OECD-Country Environmental Agency Experience;



From left: Shri K.C. Pant, Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission and Chairman, RIS; Dr. Nagesh Kumar, Director General, RIS; Dr. Jurgen Wiemann, Deputy Director, German Development Institute; Mr. Enrique Lendo Fuentes, Director General Adjunto, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, Mexico and Co-chairperson of the OECD Working Party on Trade and Environment; Mr. Jean-Marie Metzger, Director, OECD, Trade Directorate, France; and Mr. S.N. Menon, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Govt. of India, at the Inaugural Session of the Workshop.

Organics Trade: Realizing the Market Opportunities – EU, US and Japanese Schemes; and Capacity Building: Assessing Developing – Country Needs in Meeting Environmental Standards to Improve Market Access.

The event, which was also supported by UNCTAD, provided an excellent opportunity to India and other developing countries to put forth their concerns effectively before the OECD countries. From India, RIS had arranged key presentations by, among others, Shri S.T. Devare, Vice-Chairman, RIS, Mr. A.K. Thakur, Ministry of Commerce, (session chairs), Ms. Shashi Sareen, Director, Exports Inspection Council, Mr. R. Gopalan, Mr. Manoj Joshi, and Mr. R.S. Ratna, from Ministry of Commerce and Dr. Sachin Chaturvedi, RIS. At the Workshop, in the presentations and during interventions, India could effectively raise the points about the urgency of technical and financial assistance for meeting the emerging environmental standards. It

was also pointed out that though some standards are *de jure* voluntary, in practice they are mandatory. In this regard, the experience of textile sector with eco-labelling schemes was pointed out. Among the possible solution to these problems it was suggested that, at the outset, there should be transparency and time lag in setting and implementation of environmental standards. All these concerns have been incorporated in the Report of the Workshop issued by OECD Secretariat.

More details of the workshop, including most of the presentations, are available at [www.ris.org.in](http://www.ris.org.in). RIS and OECD are also publishing all the documentation of the workshop in the form of a CD-ROM for further dissemination.

The further work on the issues discussed at the Workshop is continuing especially in context of forthcoming WTO Ministerial Meeting in Mexico. Details can be had from Dr. Sachin Chaturvedi, Research Associate, RIS ([sachin@ris.org.in](mailto:sachin@ris.org.in)).