

# CUTS CITEE in Action

October-December 2012

## Events

### Dynamics of Eco-labelling and the Need for Compliance

CUTS is implementing a project 'A Study of Environmental Standards and their Trade Impact: Case of India' is supported by Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) through Royal Norwegian Embassy, New Delhi, India.

Keeping in mind the growing importance of eco-labels in textiles & clothing (T&C) sector, the challenges posed by their compliance/non-compliance and their possible impact on the export interests of the sector, CUTS along



with its knowledge partner Nimkar Tek Services Pvt Ltd undertook five capacity building programmes for Indian T&C firms in five major textile centres in India, viz. in Delhi on September 25, 2012; in Mumbai on October 20, 2012; in Ahmedabad on November 27, 2012; in Tirupur on November 29, 2012; and in Ludhiana on December 14, 2012 respectively. The first meeting was held in New Delhi in collaboration with the Textile Committee of the Ministry of Textiles, Government of India.

The objectives were to strengthen the capacity of T&C exporters/producers in their understanding on environmental standards and eco-labels; promote sustainable production and consumption among the Indian textiles companies by encouraging them to increase the amount of eco-labelled textiles exports from India which leads to a greater penetration in other markets; and create awareness among the T&C supply chain in India on issues related to environmental standards and eco – labels so as to adopt sustainable practices and increase net welfare to consumers as such and increase producer profitability.

A training module entitled, 'Dynamics of Eco-labelling and the Need for Compliance' was also disseminated to the participants during the meetings.

### Promoting Participatory Approaches for Removing Regional Trade Barriers in South Asia

To take forward the agenda of regional economic cooperation in South Asia, CUTS with the support from The Asia Foundation and in partnership with a group of like-minded organisations has initiated a project entitled 'Promoting Participatory Approaches for Removing Regional Trade Barriers in South Asia (COENCOSA Phase II)'. The duration of this project is 10 months, i.e. June 2012-March 2013.



A half-day Stakeholder Consultation was organised in Chandigarh on December 14, 2012. The objective of the consultation was to elicit the views and concerns of business community about non-tariff barriers (including procedural NTBs) hindering intra-regional trade and how to overcome them and prepare an advocacy agenda for the removal/harmonisation of non-tariff barriers between South Asian countries.

## Upcoming Events

### Government Procurement - National Consultation

CUTS International with support from British High Commission will organise a National Consultation Meeting on Government Procurement - Opportunities and Challenges for India within the WTO GPA Framework in New Delhi on January 31, 2013.

The objective of the meeting is to share the findings of the subject mentioned study with the relevant stakeholders and discuss future course of action based on its recommendations and to explore more efficient government procurement system in India with greater transparency, efficiency and good governance which will help domestic as well as foreign enterprises.

### COENCOSA Phase II Consultation Meetings

CUTS International in partnership with support from The Asia Foundation will be organising three Stakeholder Consultations on Promoting Participatory Approaches for Removing Regional Trade Barriers in South Asia in Chandigarh in January-February 2013.

The objective of the mentioned consultation is to elicit the views and concerns of business community about non-tariff barriers (including procedural NTBs) hindering intra-regional trade and how to overcome them and prepare an advocacy agenda for the removal/harmonisation of non-tariff barriers between South Asian countries.

The final meeting of COENCOSA Phase-II will be held at New Delhi on April 12-13, 2013.

## New Projects

### Indo-Pak Trade: Moving Forward with Changing Dimensions and Emerging Scenarios



In partnership with the Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Pakistan, CUTS International is carrying out a project on barriers affecting bilateral trade between India and Pakistan. This project is focused on identifying non-tariff barriers and exploring policy options for bringing about appropriate reforms so as to benefit trade community in both countries. The study aims to support initiatives at the governmental level by facilitating business-to-business interaction and building synergies. A web portal specifically designed for outreach and providing a platform for raising and discussing bilateral trade issues will be created as part of this project.

### Addressing Barriers to Rice Seeds Trade Between India and Bangladesh

Small farmers in both India and Bangladesh suffer from low agricultural productivity. Increasing crop productivity is, therefore, one of the major challenges faced by these farmers. It is in this context, with the support of Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation CUTS has undertaken the above mentioned project. The project makes an attempt to understand the factors which lead to: low productivity of rice in the identified regions; low rice seed trade between India and Bangladesh; and how can the situation improve? It also seeks to provide answer to some important questions: what would be the potential gains to Bangladesh from substantially larger capacity of India to produce rice seeds, if they are imported? What would be the likely gains for Indian farmers from the use of some of the varieties developed by Bangladesh, if formal trade in seeds develops?



## Participation

- Saurabh Kumar presented a paper entitled “The European Monetary Fund and Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralisation: New Approaches to Regional Monetary Cooperation” at the “International Conference on Banking and Finance 2012” organised by International Management Institute, New Delhi and ESCP Europe in New Delhi on December 13, 2012.
- Bipul Chatterjee participated in FICCI’S Annual General Meeting in New Delhi on December 15, 2012 and in a meeting on regional economic cooperation in South Asia organised by Confederation of Indian Industry in New Delhi on December 17, 2012.
- Suresh Prasad Singh participated as a discussant in the session on “Adapting to climate change: Issues for South Asia” in a regional consultation on ‘Trade, Climate Change and Food Security’ organised by SAWTEE at Kathmandu on December 20-21, 2012.
- Vinayak Kant Mishra participated in a Capacity Building Workshop on “Project Cycle Management for Non Profits” organised by the Socio Research & Reform Foundation, New Delhi on November 06-08, 2012.