



**E15 – Midterm Review**  
**Dialogue on Regional Trade Agreements:**  
**Development Challenges and Policy Options**

**ICTSD-IDB Expert Group Meeting**

With the support of SECO

**11-12 June 2013**

World Meteorological Organization, 7bis, avenue de la Paix, 1211 Geneva, Switzerland

**Agenda**

**Tuesday 11 June**

9:00-12:30 **Session I: Regional Trade Agreements – Policy Options for MC9 and beyond**

Chair: Ricardo MELÉNDEZ-ORTIZ (ICTSD)

*The first meeting of the E15 Expert Group discussed the increased use of regional trade agreements following the impasse of the Doha negotiations. While acknowledging that RTAs can at times be more sophisticated and advanced than multilateral trade rules, the Expert Group debated how these RTAs can be an additive to the multilateral trading system and how this system can induce greater coherence across the “spaghetti bowl” of RTAs. During the meeting a variety of policy options emerged.*

*This session will provide the group with an overview of these policy options presented by the theme leader, Kati Suominen (IDB). The discussion will be enriched by short presentations by the authors of think pieces, which were drafted on the basis of issues which emerged after the first meeting – Kati Suominen (IDB), Andrew Stoler (International Consultant), Peter Draper (Tutwa Consulting), and Robert Lawrence (Harvard Kennedy School).*

*Open discussion.*

12:30-14:00 **Lunch break**

14:00-17:30 **Open discussion (Cont.)**

Chair: Toni ESTEVADEORDAL (IDB)

*In the afternoon participants will continue the discussions and agree on preliminary policy recommendations to be presented to the Open Plenary on the morning of 12 June.*

18:00 **Reception**

### Wednesday 12 June

9:30-10:00 **Open Plenary: Presentation of Main Findings**

Chair: Ricardo MELÉNDEZ-ORTIZ (ICTSD)

*The E15 Initiative – Strengthening the Multilateral Trading System: Process and Purpose*

10:00-11:00 *During this plenary session, the theme leaders will inform a targeted audience of policymakers, trade negotiators, representatives of intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations, academics, ambassadors and the private sector about the main findings of the E15 initiative and its (preliminary) policy recommendations on each respective topic. E15 experts and the audience will engage in substantive discussions in a non-negotiating context in order to transform the ideas and recommendations into action.*

- Global Value Chains - Sherry M. STEPHENSON (ICTSD)
- Agriculture and Food Security - Stefan TANGERMANN (University of Göttingen)
- Regional Trade Agreements - Kati SUOMINEN (IDB)
- Functioning of the WTO - Manfred ELSIG (WTI)

11:00-12:30 **Open Discussion**

12:30-14:30 **Lunch break**

14:30-15:00 **Presentation** by Anabel GONZALÉZ (Minister of Foreign Trade, Costa Rica)

*WEF Global Agenda Council on Trade and FDI report on “FDI as a Key Driver for Trade, Growth & Prosperity: The Case for a Multilateral Agreement on Investment”*

15:00-18:00 **Closed Plenary: Summary and the Way Forward**

Chair: Ricardo MELÉNDEZ-ORTIZ (ICTSD)

*In this closed plenary the theme leaders will summarize the discussions from the morning and engage all E15 experts in an open discussion about the policy recommendations as well as future steps. Possible proposals will be explored ensuring that the expert group process actively informs domestic and international policy-making, negotiations and decision-making on the respective topics of the E15 groups.*