



Asia-Pacific Research and Training Network on Trade Newsletter



Volume 1, Issue 3 / September - December 2005

ARTNeT: One Year Old Already!

ARTNeT turned one year old on 27 October 2005. Eleven research institutions in 10 countries in the region were involved in implementing its demand-driven research programme approved by policy makers in 2004. The specialized regional trade research network now comprises 15 member institutions in 13 countries of the Asia-Pacific region. It also comprises a number of active core and associate partners, among which IDRC, OECD, UNCTAD, WTO, and now UNDP APTII.

Following the second annual ARTNeT Consultative Meeting, the UNESCAP intergovernmental Committee, during its second session (12-14 October 2005), expressed its continuous support for ARTNeT, as follows:

"The Committee expressed its strong support to the objectives of the Asia-Pacific Research and Training Network on Trade (ARTNeT) and expressed appreciation to the secretariat and IDRC, Canada for this useful initiative. ARTNeT responded to a growing need of developing countries to build capacity on specialized studies on trade policy and facilitation issues. It requested that the secretariat continue to develop the network in collaboration with ESCAP members and associate members and relevant international organization and agencies. The secretariat was also requested to encourage the participation of the business sector in ARTNeT, so as to encourage tripartite discussions and partnerships and strengthen the linkages between trade research, policy makers and practitioners" [para. 80, E/ESCAP/CMG(2)].

2nd ARTNeT Consultative Meeting of Policy Makers and Research Institutions

On 6-7 October 2005, the 2nd ARTNeT Consultative Meeting of Policy Makers and Research Institutions was held at and hosted by the University of Macau, Macao, China, back-to-back with a Regional Policy Dialogue "Delivering on the WTO Round: A High-level Government-Business Dialogue for Development" (4-6 October 2005) organized by UNESCAP and ITC, in which ARTNeT members also participated as discussants. Ongoing research studies were presented and discussed, and the ARTNeT Research Programme 2005-06 was finalized [continued on page 2].



ARTNeT Policy Makers, Researchers and Secretariat in Macao, China

Welcome to UNDP Asia-Pacific Trade and Investment Initiative as a Core ARTNeT Partner

Following its participation in the Second ARTNeT Consultative Meeting of Research Institutions and Policy Makers, the UNDP Asia-Pacific Trade and Investment Initiative (APTII), based at the UNDP Regional Office in Colombo, Sri Lanka, joined ARTNeT as a core partner. UNDP APTII will contribute to the implementation of the ARTNeT research programme 2006 through funding of research studies in the areas of trade facilitation. A preliminary regional research team is being assembled so that work on trade facilitation can begin early in 2006 [continued on page 4].

2nd ARTNeT Consultative Meeting of Policy Makers and Research Institutions

Session 1 of the meeting focused on the results of a survey on the capacity-building needs for trade research in developing countries of Asia and the Pacific which has been conducted by a team of the Cambodia Development Resource Institute (CDRI, Cambodia), consisting of its Director and a junior researcher. Access to trade research training programmes, particularly on quantitative analysis skills to assess impact of trade policies, and easier access to trade data collected by international organizations and governmental statistical offices were highlighted as two of the most important needs among research institutions surveyed. The full study has since been published in the ARTNeT Working Paper Series [Ref.: **Hing Vutha, Larry Strange, and K.A.S Murshid, (CDRI, Cambodia) "Trade Research Institutions in Asia-Pacific: Capacity-Building Needs in Developing Countries", ARTNeT Working Paper No.1, November 2005, www.artnetontrade.org**].

Preliminary results of a study on supply-side constraints to export-led development were presented by the University of South Pacific during session 2. The study used linear programming to explore the effect on export receipts of removing existing supply-side constraints in four Pacific island economies. The need to include in the model constraints / factors that were more specific (such as the quality of the infrastructure or the openness to FDI) was recognized, so that the relative importance of each of these constraints could be evaluated. The preliminary study is also available online for comments [Ref.: **Yenteshwar Ram, Biman Prasad, and Ron Duncan, (USP, Fiji) "Explaining the Supply-side Constraints to Export-led Growth in Selected Pacific Island Countries", ARTNeT Working Paper No.1, November 2005, www.artnetontrade.org**].

During session 3, the concept and rationale of the study on regional preferential trade liberalization in agricultural goods was presented by the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS, Sri Lanka), followed by a presentation of a paper on "Effects of Preferential Trade Agreements on Agricultural Trade Liberalization" providing insights on quantitative analysis of the regional trade liberalization in South-East and East Asia by the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS, the Philippines).

Session 4 showed all five research institutions involved in the ARTNeT trade facilitation research effort (Year 1) presenting the preliminary findings of their case studies on the need for and cost of trade facilitation measures relevant to the WTO negotiations in their respective countries (i.e., Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia and Nepal). Three of five institutions also presented preliminary survey results on trade facilitation needs and priorities based on private sector surveys in their respective countries. Preliminary findings have since been presented at the OECD Global Forum on Trade Facilitation held in Colombo, Sri Lanka (18-19 October 2005) and published in ARTNeT Policy Brief No.6. The survey instrument developed by the team was also published on the Global Facilitation Partnership for Trade and Transport (www.gttfp.org).

The last session was dedicated to the ARTNeT Research Programme 2005-06, which was finalized and approved (see box below).

ARTNeT Trade Research Priority Survey and Research Programme 2005-06

A survey of ARTNeT Government focal points and research institutions was conducted in September 2005 in order to determine the trade research priority areas to be included in the ARTNeT research programme. The following areas were identified as the top 5 (of 13) priority areas for trade research in the region: (1) preferential trade agreements and regional integration, (2) trade facilitation, (3) trade in services, (4) trade in agriculture, and (5) Doha round development issues, in this order.

On that basis, the Second ARTNeT Consultative Meeting agreed to continue the 3-year ARTNeT thematic research project on trade facilitation, and to conduct a regional study on trade liberalization in services to complement the ongoing regional study in agriculture trade liberalization, with both regional studies geared toward assessing the impact and implications of the proliferation of PTAs on regional trade and welfare. Doha round development issues will also be addressed directly through ad-hoc short-term research papers, policy briefs, and additional chapters in the regional and trade facilitation studies. In addition, support will be provided for individual short-term studies and/or research papers pertaining to the above 5 priority areas - **The detailed research programme and the related calls for proposals are available at www.artnetontrade.org.**

www.artnetontrade.org:
New Developments

Since our last issue, the ARTNeT website has benefited from numerous upgrades and additions of new content / features.



The New "Resources for Researchers" Page

First, the "Resources for Researcher" page (cf. picture below), has been further developed to include selected online resources and literature review snapshots in 7 major focus areas of trade research:

- ✓ export competitiveness (supply-side),
- ✓ intellectual property,
- ✓ regional integration,
- ✓ trade facilitation,
- ✓ trade in agriculture,
- ✓ trade in services, and
- ✓ WTO agreements and negotiations.

These tools are designed to facilitate the work of researchers interested in conducting research on these issues. Other focus areas will be added, with updates planned every three months or so – **Junior researchers specializing in a particular trade focus area are encouraged to volunteer to maintain the literature review snapshot in that area (due credit will be given).**

Second, "Resources for Policy Makers" are now available, including all the ARTNeT Policy Briefs and working papers have been uploaded, along with relevant policy briefs from ARTNeT members – **If your institution has recently released a policy brief or a publication on trade issues and you would like to maximize dissemination to policy makers, please send its full title and web link to the Secretariat so that it may be added to the ARTNeT website and publication database.**

Third, a "Feedback" page has now been added to the site, allowing visitors to easily send messages to the Secretariat. Comments/recommendations may also be sent directly by email (artnetontrade@un.org).

To enhance communication and exchange of information between researchers and policy makers, the ARTNeT Virtual Meeting Room has been created.



This restricted space is used to post the latest available draft studies/papers of ARTNeT research teams for review and comments by policy makers and other authorized stakeholders – **Policy makers and government officials with an interest in trade research and analysis are encouraged to visit the room.**

ARTNeT Policy Briefs 2005

- Brief No. 6, by Florian Albuero - November 2005: **Implementation of Trade Facilitation Measures: Needs, Costs and Other Issues for the WTO Negotiations**
- Brief No. 5, by Monsung Kang, KIEP - September 2005: **Formulas for Industrial Tariff Reduction and Policy Implications**
- Brief No. 4, by Rahul Sen, ISEAS and Ramkishan Rajan, NUS - **September 2005: Liberalization of Market Access in GATS Mode 4 and Its Importance for Developing Countries**
- Brief No. 3, by Ramkishan Rajan and Sadhana Srivastava, NUS - September 2005: **An Overview of the Economics of Outsourcing**
- Brief No. 2, by Gloria Pasadilla, PIDS - August 2005: **Strengthening Trade Research Capacity for Policymaking and Negotiations**
- Brief No. 1, by Mustafizur Rahman, CPD - August 2005: **Ongoing WTO Negotiations and the Issue of Preference Erosion: Concerns of Asia-Pacific LDCs**

Coming soon...

The ARTNeT Secretariat is currently developing an online interface allowing visitors to search the ARTNeT Publication Database, already featuring over 800 records for the period 2003-05 with links to full text trade-related publications of ARTNeT members.

Release of ARTNeT Policy Brief No.6



The 6th and last ARTNeT policy brief of the year was issued just in time for the sixth WTO Ministerial Conference held in Honk Kong, China in early December.

Entitled “Implementation of Trade Facilitation Measures: Needs, Costs and Other Issues for the WTO Negotiations”, this brief by Florian Albuero, Professor at the University of the Philippines and ARTNeT Adviser on Trade Facilitation Research, summarizes some of the findings of the ARTNeT trade facilitation research team during the first year of research. Five other policy briefs and two working papers were also issued this year [see page 2 and Box on page 3 for details].

UNDP APTII as a New Partner - Trade Facilitation Research in 2006

[Continued from page 1] Based on the discussions that took place during the Second ARTNeT Consultative Meeting of Trade Policymakers and Research Institutions (6-7 October 2005), as well as the preliminary results of the 2004-05 research effort on trade facilitation, the following three issues have been identified for deepening UNDP APTII and ARTNeT’s work on trade facilitation:

I. Customs valuation in developing country members of the WTO: lessons learned from the implementation of the WTO Customs valuation agreement.

II. Liberalization in trade logistics services for trade facilitation.

III. Trade facilitation and regional integration: Impact and implications for regional and multilateral trade agreements.

For details, please visit artnetontrade.org

The Second ARTNeT Technical Training Workshop on Trade Research will be held on 17-21 April 2006 in Bangkok.

The workshop, to be co-organized by ESCAP and the WTO with the support of IDRC, Canada, will aim at improving the research capacity of junior researchers from LDCs and other developing countries in the region to conduct research on WTO and trade policy issues. The first part of the workshop is expected to focus on WTO agreements and negotiation issues. The second part will focus on gravity modeling and applications. More information on this event will be issued in early 2006.

News from Members and Partners

▪ **Access to ITC Trademaps and Marketaccess maps**

Trademaps and Marketmaps are online tools developed by the International Trade Center (ITC UNCTAD/WTO) in Geneva. They provide online access to up-to-date comprehensive trade databases and related analytical tools. Thanks to USAID and other donors/subscribers, these tools are freely accessible for selected developing countries of the region (www.trademap.org; www.macmap.org).

▪ **Job Opportunities at ICRIER**

ICRIER (Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations) is looking for Professors, Senior Fellows and Fellows, with a view to strengthen and expand its core team of professionals. Some of its major ongoing research areas are Foreign Trade, Foreign Investment, Economic Growth and Competitiveness, Macroeconomics Management, Industrial Restructuring and Financial Liberalization, WTO issues, South Asian Studies on Regional Cooperation, Globalization and critical economic reform and restructuring issues. (www.icrier.org/jobs.html)

▪ **RIS Programme on International Economic Issues and Development Policy: For Scholars and Official of Developing Countries, 20 February – 17 March, 2006**

RIS has been conducting a Programme on International Economic Issues and Development Policy (IEIDP) for participants from developing countries. The Programme is designed to expose the participants to the growing complexities of global economic issues and negotiations and build their analytical skills on them.

(<http://www.ris.org.in/itec%20brochure.pdf>)