



UNCTAD Report to the GTAP Advisory Board Meeting
June 16-17, 2014, Senegal

1. UNCTAD Activities

a. Technical Assistance

UNCTAD provided developing countries with technical assistance in regional and multilateral negotiations. GTAP has been used for assessments of the impact of trade policy changes of various free trade agreements currently under negotiation. The focus has been on trade in goods. WTO accession have also been assessed and results used for technical cooperation work. Results also feed into UNCTADs parliamentary publications such as the Trade and Development Board report.

Extensive advisory service/training has been provided to one developing country regional secretariat.

UNCTADs Virtual Institute continued to support its member universities with technical support including related to CGE modeling. Such support is mainly based on the UNCTAD - WTO publication "A practical guide to trade policy analysis" (2012)

b. GTAP-related publications in 2013-2014

Non-tariff measures to trade: Economic and Policy issues for developing countries, by Alessandro Nicita et al. (coordinator, UNCTAD), UNCTAD/DITC/TAB/2012/1

The economics behind non-tariff measures: Theoretical insights and empirical evidence by Marco Fugazza (UNCTAD). UNCTAD/ITCD/TAB/58

Building a dataset for Bilateral Maritime Connectivity, by Marco Fugazza, Jan Hoffmann and Rado Razafinombana (UNCTAD). UNCTAD/ITCD/TAB/63

Can Mirror Data Help to Capture Informal International Trade?
UNCTAD/ITCD/TAB/65

Feasibility of Tunisia becoming a participant to WTO Agreement on Information Technology, by T. Mathew, M. Saygili and R. Peters, UNCTAD forthcoming

Can The Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA) deliver effective and real trade liberalization for economic growth? By Stefano Inama and Pramila Crivelli, UNCTAD forthcoming (presented at GTAP conference)

2. Capacity Building at UNCTAD

UNCTAD is attempting to increase the internal use as well as the number of users of GTAP utilities. The internal use of GTAP has been promoted through collaboration between users and non-users. This has been the case for all technical assistance activities.

3. Data Issues

Effort is made to increase the coverage of official NTM data. In 2013/14 data for some 20 countries have been collected, classified and published (in UNCTAD Trains data base accessible through Wits). The MAST NTM classification has widely been accepted internationally as the main NTM standard. UNCTAD works closely with its partners in the Transparency in Trade Initiative (TNT: African Development Bank, ITC, UNCTAD, World Bank). Ad valorem equivalents are being estimated and could contribute to a satellite for the GTAP model on NTM trade control measures.

UNCTAD contributed to the annual publication with the WTO and ITC of “World Tariff Profiles 2013,” which provides detailed data on bound and applied tariffs of the 158 WTO Members.

The Trade Analysis Information System (TRAINS) database (updated during the reporting period) is accessible for free and especially useful for researchers. It is accessible through World Integrated Trade Solution (wits.worldbank.org).

UNCTAD constructed a maritime connectivity index. It is a unique database reporting the shortest liner shipping routes between any pair of countries for a reference sample of 178 countries over the 2006-2012 period. Computed maritime distances are retrieved using an original database containing all existing direct liner shipping connections between pairs of countries and the corresponding sea distance. The number of transshipments necessary to connect any country pair to allow for containerizable trade is also retrieved. The contribution of this database is threefold. First, it is expected to be a useful tool for a better appreciation of transport costs and access to regular container shipping services and their impact on trade. (See related paper above)