

## **INTER-AGENCY CONSULTATION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE STATISTICS**

(Note by the World Bank submitted on 26. February 2009)

Information regarding a new partnership among some agencies (ITC, UNCTAD, and the WB) to modernize the WITS trade data analysis system.

### Goal of the initiative:

The World Bank will collaborate with ITC and UNCTAD for modernizing WITS, the existing trade system. WITS is over 8 years old and needs to be upgraded to a new technology. The goal is for WITS and ITC's Market Access Map to be closely coupled as they have some common as well as complementary features. This integrated system will provide a richer suite of trade tools for users.

The benefits are not only on the tools side, but also on the data side. WITS will access ITC's comprehensive Common Analytical Market Access Database (CAMAD), being developed by ITC, UNCTAD and WTO. This collaboration marks an important achievement, as this is the first time that such a collaborative approach is being undertaken for development of a common database and trade software tool.

Time Table: the project is currently underway and aims to produce a version of the new WITS for testing by December 2009.

### Governance of the modernization project:

Steering Group: Made up of senior level managers to determine short and long-term course of the future modernized WITS, including funding matters.

Advisory Group: Consisting of key trade experts from the three Geneva organizations and other users and data suppliers to determine WITS feature sets, as well as to advise on training;

Development and Operations Group: Consisting of mostly technical, systems experts to undertake design and development of the modernized WITS.

### New Features:

The new WITS will be Web based, thus eliminating the existing problems of installation and opening of non-standard server ports for WITS to function, thus making it easier to use and more secure;

The new system will be closely coupled with ITC's Market Access Map tool to give users more capabilities and leverage its ITC's graphical features;

Modernized WITS will have an improved User Interface as well as user help features to make WITS easier to use;

The new system will be fed from a single validated tariff data source, the Common Analytical Market Access Database (CAMAD), thus eliminating the need to choose from multiple data sources like UNCTAD TRAINS or WTO IDB;

The new system will continue to provide access to COMTRADE.

The new WITS will be providing access to additional useful information like Non Tariff Measures (NTM), Tariff Rate Quotas, and Anti Dumping Duties.