ECO-LABELLING AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Eco-Labelling and International Trade

Edited by

Simonetta Zarrilli, Veena Jha and René Vossenaar

Foreword by

Rubens Ricupero

Secretary General of UNCTAD

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Foreword

In June 1994 the UNCTAD Secretariat organised a workshop on "Eco-Labeling and International Trade". The workshop was chaired by H. E. Antti Hynninen and H. E. Aaron Siraj, Ambassadors to the United Nations Office at Geneva of Finland and Malaysia respectively and was attended by approximately 100 people, including eco-labeling practitioners, researchers from developing and developed countries, representatives from the business community, NGOs, international organisations and Geneva-based delegates.

The purpose of the workshop was to examine the possible effects of eco-labeling on export competitiveness and market access of firms in developing countries and countries in transition, to consider possibilities for strengthening international cooperation, and to discuss ways of moving towards greater compatibility between the environmental objectives of eco-labeling and the trade and sustainable development interests of developing countries.

This book brings together the papers presented at the workshop, which contain the results of conceptual and analytical work, as well as a great amount of practical information on existing or planned eco-labeling programmes. The added value of this book arises from the wealth of empirical details and viewpoints which are presented, from the expertise of the authors, most of whom are leading experts on this issue, and last but not the least, from the fact that it offers a development perspective. The workshop was organised under the aegis of a project funded by the International Development Research Center (IDRC) in Canada. Funds made available under the same project made it possible for several research teams in developing countries to carry out their studies and present them at the workshop. The IDRC's contribution is gratefully acknowledged.

Thanks are also due to the people whose work was vital to the publication of this book. These include the authors of the papers, the editor – Mr Udaya Kumar – and all the members of the Trade and Environment Section of the International Trade Division.

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Environmental Choice Program: understanding that Canadians had a high set of environmental values, Environment Canada decided to direct this market force toward environmental improvement. Accordingly, the Environmental Choice Programme was created in 1988 by Environment Canada to help Canadians make more environmentally informed decisions in their day-to-day purchasing. The Program invites companies which manufacture or provide products and services that are less stressful on the environment to apply for certification. After testing

and verification that various environmental leadership criteria are met, companies are invited to contract with the program which allows them to use the Program's official mark, the EcoLogo (three doves intertwined to form a maple leaf) on their products or with their services.

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