

PART III. NATIONAL REPORTING GUIDELINES FOR CSD-14/15 THEMATIC AREAS

C. INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

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Industrial Development – International Cooperation

Programmes to promote international cooperation in the development and diffusion of cleaner technologies:

The promotion of the transfer of more environmentally sustainable technologies and the strengthening of local capacities is a central issue not only in Agenda 21 but also in all international conventions relating to the environment. That is why Switzerland set out to develop a comprehensive and coherent instrument to promote the transfer of more environmentally supportive technologies and to strengthen the capacities of developing and transition countries. This has resulted in the establishment of National Cleaner Production Centers or environment technology centers for the implementation of international environment conventions.

In the 10 years since Rio, Switzerland has participated bilaterally, with other donors or in cooperation with the United Nations Organization for Industrial Development (UNIDO), in the establishment of several such centers: Colombia (1998), Costa Rica, Guatemala, El Salvador (1999), Morocco (2000), Brazil (2001), Peru (2001), South Africa (2002). Also in 2002, two so-called Cleaner Technology Promotion Centers (CTPCs) have been opened in India and China. These centers build on already existing structures, but give even greater importance to technology transfers, international environment conventions and social themes than is the case with NCPCs.

What are NCPCs ?

National Cleaner Production Centers (NCPCs) provide consultancy services for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in developing and transitional countries in all matters relating to ecological efficiency with the aim of making the best use of resources such as raw materials, energy and water and in this way cutting production costs. The NCPCs thus contribute to improving the competitiveness of these companies. As so-called one-stop shops, the NCPCs offer, in return for a payment to defray costs and expenses, an array of services including information, the transfer of knowledge, political dialogue, management and financial consulting and evaluations regarding the most appropriate technologies.

The organization of NCPCs takes place in close cooperation with the private sector and, where appropriate, with government offices in developing and transitional countries. Each center has a technical partner in Switzerland. This so-called reference center supports the NCPC throughout the development phase with responsibility for technical consultations and relations with industry and service providers.

Achievements so far

The results of an external evaluation of several centers clearly show the huge potential of cleaner production (CP) in the sustainable development of developing and transitional countries. The most important of these results can be summed up as follows:

- The NCPCs are recognized as the main contacts in the country for questions regarding the improvement of ecological efficiency.
- They take an active part in political dialogue and are closely involved in the development of environmental legislation in the industrial sector. Vietnam's official environment strategy includes cleaner production as one of its main instruments.
- NCPC services are demand-oriented and generate income. In Colombia, customer revenue covers around 40% of expenditures.
- With the support of the Swiss reference centers, local capacities can be developed and knowledge through "train the trainers" programs can be passed on to interested circles.
- In individual cases, the NCPCs could advise the sub-suppliers of large export-oriented operations. For example in Vietnam the NCPC has helped the sub-supplier of IKEA optimise its production and in this way has contributed to "supply-chain greening".
- Finally, the work of the NCPCs have had an effect on the bottom line. In Vietnam 15 companies were able to report annual cost reductions of more than USD 1,2 million or around USD 17'000 per company.

Future orientation

Up until now the NCPCs have been focusing on the ecological and economic aspects of sustainability. In the future however they are going to have to concentrate more on social issues, in particular labor standards, through close cooperation with the International Labor Organization (ILO) with the aim of turning the NCPCs into so-called "Sustainable Production Centers". To this end, a program has been worked out with the ILO to help develop the capacities of the centers in the sphere of labor standards. At the World Summit for Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg (2002) Switzerland and the ILO, UNIDO and the United Nation Environment Program (UNEP) signed an agreement on this subject.

In future, attempts will also be made to forge closer ties between the activities of the NCPCs and various international environmental conventions because in the medium term it is expected that additional financial resources will be made available for concrete projects relating to some of these conventions, particularly the Climate Convention and the Stockholm Convention on the Reduction and Elimination of Persistent Organic Pollutants.

Programmes to facilitate contact and information sharing between domestic and industrial enterprises: Swiss Organisation for Facilitating Investments (SOFI) and seco Start-up Fund (SSF)

Background

SOFI was created in 1997 on a joint initiative of the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (seco) and KPMG Switzerland. The company was conceived as a "one-stop-shop" for entrepreneurs requiring consulting services to support the selection, preparation and implementation of investment projects in countries with economies in development or transition.

Duration

Open

Project Budget paid by seco

Investment promotion mandate; credit line

Beneficiaries

- Promoters of investment projects and investment
- related service providers
- Swiss companies that receive loans to facilitate start-ups, including in China

Project Partners

SOFI's project sponsors in the partner country

Implementing Agencies

SOFI Consultants

Overall Goal

SOFI's purpose is to encourage, facilitate and contribute to the effective implementation of investment projects in countries with economies in development or transition. To this end, seco has given SOFI a mandate to provide such public services to promote investment in a number of countries.

Services

- Promoting the idea of investing in economies in development or transition.
- Disseminating information on investment conditions and opportunities.
- Conducting partner searches for Swiss companies and counterparts in target countries.
- Providing consulting services in investment strategy, business planning, financial structuring, access to financing, and support for clients during the project implementation phase.

In line with the "one-stop-shop" concept, seco has also mandated SOFI to administer a credit line, the seco Start-up Fund (SSF). This fund finances up to 50 percent of costs incurred by Swiss companies during the preparation or start-up phases (first 3 years) of new investment projects in a number of countries.