

# ***SUSTAINABILITY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRY TRADE AND THE ROLE OF AFRICAN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION***

*E.J. van Rooyen  
University of Pretoria*

*M.A. Peet  
University of Pretoria*

## **ABSTRACT**

**T**o address the many and varied problems that still face African economies it is now generally accepted that they need greater access to international markets to grow in a sustainable way through trade rather than the current dependence in many cases on aid. This increased access would allow them the opportunity to develop strong and sustainable private sector enterprises that could compete effectively in world markets. It is also expected that such increased market activity would enable them to enjoy a fuller share of the myriad of benefits of globalisation. However, before this can become a reality African governments and related public administered infrastructures have to ensure that domestic manufacturers and agricultural produce providers have appropriate and affordable access to the sophisticated technical infrastructure that is required for to prove compliance to the increasingly stringent technical demands of developed country markets. Given the continuous call by developed nations for greater access to developing country markets in organisations such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO), while simultaneously setting increasingly demanding technical requirements in both the public and private sector for granting similar access to their own, it is vital that a role for African public administration be clearly enunciated. In this article the above issue is deliberated and particular proposals are made, which may assist African governments to impose public administrative measures to facilitate processes to improve trade access and sustainability in general. Specifically, aspects relating to compliance to international standards, policy formulation and implementation and capacity building are investigated.

# Article

## INTRODUCTION

To address the many and varied problems that still face African economies it is now generally accepted that they need greater access to international markets in order to grow in a sustainable way through trade rather than the current dependence in many cases on aid. This increased access would also allow them the opportunity to develop strong and sustainable private sector enterprises that could compete effectively in world markets. The encouragement of such private sector development is seen as many as one of the keys to Africa's future. It is also expected that such increased market activity would enable the wider population to also enjoy a much fuller share of the myriad benefits of globalisation.

However, before this can become a reality, African governments and related public administered infrastructures have to ensure that domestic manufacturers and agricultural produce providers have appropriate and affordable access to the sophisticated technical infrastructure that is required to prove compliance to the increasingly stringent technical demands of developed country markets. The domestic markets of developed nations increasingly expect proven compliance of imported agricultural products and manufactured goods, against sophisticated technical requirements, before allowing access. These are normally contained in technical regulations intended to protect the health and safety of their citizens. Due to the inherent difficulties caused by each country defining its own individual regulatory requirements there are increasing moves internationally towards referencing internationally harmonised standards in national regulations. This in turn has led to a demand for appropriate mechanisms that allow for independent proof of the competence of both local conformity assessment bodies and the integrity of the associated national support infrastructure. This article expands on this reality by reflecting on the aspects associated with creating sustainable developing country trade and the public administrative aspects associated therewith.

## MOVING FROM STRATEGY THROUGH POLICY TO IMPLEMENTATION

Across the world, students of economics and development share the opinion that economic growth and sustainable development go hand in hand. For instance, Hopward *et. al.*, (2005:42) mention that the United Kingdom Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions declare that "to move towards more sustainable development, we need more growth not less". The argument is based on the belief that "business is the driver towards sustainability. Increased information, changing values, improved management techniques and new technology all operating through the markets are the best means to achieve sustainable development" (Hopward *et. al.*, 2005:42). With the appropriate checks and balances in place this view is tantalising. Lall (2004:189) has also identified the same sentiments in what he calls "one strand of globalisation advocacy argues that this is done best by neo-liberal policies, a withdrawal of the state from all economic activity apart from the fundamental provision of...basic public goods". Lall also notes the existence of a *more moderate version* which apparently "admits a larger

role for the government, but a *market-friendly* one". As Lall explains, the philosophical foundation for all of these approaches is based on assumptions that "markets are efficient and governments inefficient and that technology flows across countries most rapidly and effectively via free market channels". According to the same author "neither assumption is justified" (Lall, 2004:189).

The cut throat competition in the one market, for instance Europe, is causing multi-nationals to exploit developing country farmers in an unsustainable way while simultaneously conveying a very different pro-environment message to the sophisticated purchasers of the produce. According to Thoburn (2000:3), "any comparative advantage for African countries, therefore, almost inevitably lies in agro-related industries: industries using either agricultural products as their main raw material, or those producing agricultural inputs". There is no evidence that the supermarkets intend to alter their current strategy. There is no reason why they should, with such huge mark-ups and the producer carrying all of the risk, be tempted perhaps by exchange rate advantages as one of the few incentives. It reminds one of the well publicised case of Nike in the United States, which used sweat shop labour to produce goods for the US market until there was a public outcry. Given that this practise has been going on for over twenty years, and the European consumer is perhaps less likely to react in a similar fashion, there is perhaps a need for more formal public interventions in the name of *sustainable development*?

Research by Najam and Robins (2001:66), Luken and Hesp, (2006:12) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), quoted by Luken (2006:47), has identified particular key characteristics of an *effective strategy* for sustainable development. All three sources agree on the following issues;

- *Sustainable development is not an overnight activity.* Ultimate success will depend initially on a thorough and integrated evaluation of the industrial sector's potential to make a positive contribution to socio-economic growth that is realistically balanced with the negative environmental impacts. Understanding will also be required of what is actually and realistically possible given the means that are available. All of which should be captured in a suitably integrated, industrial development and environmental policy.
- *Sustainable development is based on partnership and ownership.* It is imperative that all stakeholders have a voice and shared ownership in the vision, strategy and implementation. This should include aspects such as assisting civil society to actively participate in trade policy issues while simultaneously encouraging the private sector to assist in shaping the *emerging rules of the market*.
- *Sustainable development requires strong implementation capability and capacity.* Domestic institutions will need a strong enabling environment including appropriate direction, capacity building and feedback / evaluation mechanisms. They in turn should play a leading role in setting an appropriate stage for industry with the selective use of incentives and consequences to guide the desired behaviour. The outputs from such institutions should not only positively contribute to improving the domestic situation, but also assist Government as it engages in international negotiations in related areas.

All of the above key characteristics point to the need for strong public leadership and implementation with appropriate governance. Given the focus of the private sector there is no doubt that, although they might be willing to participate in certain activities and roles, the overall leadership would have to be provided by the public sector beginning with a suitable and co-ordinated public policy or policies. Boron and Murray (2004:67) point out that [private sector] "management has to be guided by a clear description of the salient features of sustainability and of the defining features of sustainable development so that proper objectives can be set". Brown and Sander (2007:12) have firm views on what such policies should address and note for instance the need for public policy to *promote good business practices* and *support smallholder cooperatives*. In addressing the supermarket issue they also note a role for these private companies in "simplifying their codes, being flexible, agreeing on reasonable time frames, providing technical and financial support, reviewing buying practices, supporting the harmonisation of codes and treating producers and exporters in the developing world as equal partners" (Brown & Sander, 2007:12). Can the market just be left to encourage them to do this? One doubts it, which suggests at least that some sort of intergovernmental agreement is required that both sets out criteria for the future relationships between developed country buyer and developing country seller and also has a built in monitoring element. The role of individual African governments will now be addressed.

## THE NEED FOR AFRICAN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION INITIATIVES

### Policy formulation and integration

Kennedy and Hobohm (1999:4) declare that

*African economies need to open themselves more fully to the international markets in order to be able to enjoy their full share of the benefits of globalisation, and to develop strong private sector enterprises that can compete effectively in world markets.*

With specific reference to cross border trade in Africa, Leshaba (2004:4) states that "there is a high level of unrecorded trade between ordinary citizens of the continent". Cross border trading activities in the African region will obviously continue. At issue is the role that African governments and related public administered infrastructures might play in ensuring that manufacturers and service providers from the region also gain a bigger share in future from the fruits of globalisation rather than the consequences of marginalisation. In the African context, the issue is particularly relevant if research by Nwafor (2003) is considered. Quoting Mbaku (1997), Nwafor (2003:3) states that "It was generally believed that after independence, the apparatus of state would be used to eliminate mass poverty and deprivation and generally improve the quality of life of Africans". Birkland (2005:49) points out that "structural and historic factors influence the making of public policy and constitute, in part, the environment in which public policy is made". This is critical given the African context of this article. Legislation, policies and public infrastructure created

under colonial rule for specific purposes such as facilitating export of primary resources will obviously not assist African states in the new global paradigm that they now face. Given the expectation already mentioned coupled to continued calls by developed nations for greater access to developing country markets in organisations such as the WTO, it is vital that a co-ordinated role for African public administration be clearly enunciated.

A complication is mentioned by Bhalla (2002:46) who argues that *there may also be a negative relationship between technology and sustainable development as certain patterns of growth and technological progress deplete natural resources more rapidly than others.*

All of which points, initially, to a considerable amount of highly specialised ground work by experts either directly employed by the public sector or the use of private sector experts that are contracted and managed by public sector managers. Given the many other and more immediate concerns that usually confront African governments it is not surprising that the management of sustainable development is not seen as a major priority in many African states.

If there is any hope for substantial progress to be made in this area there is a need for a much greater co-operative effort. That the benefits of globalisation are not being distributed equitably is no longer questioned. What is lacking is that the almost obscene wealth being generated by a current global minority is somehow put to use in constructive ways for a larger, future generation. This will also need a fundamental shift in the current view of what constitutes *needs* both now and in the future. It is, however, evident that policy integration is no longer a national issue, but must also be addressed internationally. Fortunately there are already examples of this that can be used for direction. As Cooper (2004:27) perhaps irreverently points out “the European Union is a highly developed system for mutual interference in each others domestic affairs, right down to beer and sausages”. This *interference* should be expanded for the benefit, rather than the exclusion, of developing countries gaining from the fruits of globalisation in general and sustainable development in particular. All of which points to the need for research based policy directed at industrial growth but not at the expense of the environment. As Schoeman (2004:14) points out, with Africa in mind, “new innovative policy will be required, focused especially on investment in human capital”.

With the focus on building greater industrial capacity in Africa, Thoburn (2000:3) argues that “further processing of agricultural products can also make an important contribution to the efficient replacement of imports”. The latter choice is obviously dependent on having the appropriate domestic support infra structure in place and appropriately maintained. An issue that is obviously, as previously explained, predicated by Government policy or perhaps more correctly, suitable aligned policies. This leads to the topic of appropriate policy integration. As already stated, the policies of industrial development and environmental policies need, according to many, closer alignment while also considering their combined role in encouraging sustainable development. Luken

and Hesp (2006:3) argue that “the most basic level of policy integration for sustainable development is a requirement, often specified in legislation, for coordination between different policy domains”. These authors provide two examples of such co-ordination. The *first* example they give is that

*industrial development policy can be coordinated with environmental policy to minimise or prevent the impact of industrial activity on environmentally sensitive geographic locations and to accelerate the adoption of environmentally sound technology.*

The *second* example comes from the other direction, in that

*environmental policy can be coordinated with industrial development policy to minimise the economic impact of regulatory requirements on industrial competitiveness and to encourage the utilisation of advanced process technologies rather than pollution control equipment for complying with environmental regulations.*

The initial and ongoing role of both private and public funded conformity assessment activity, and supporting technical infrastructure, is an important component in creating holistic solutions for addressing the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBTs) that will be faced by the fledgling industrial output of developing countries. There are important consequences regarding both provision and non provision of conformity assessment services for countries, especially the developing countries of Africa, as they try to become integrated into the wider, and brutally competitive, global economy. In facing this challenge there are several issues. One is how should a country migrate from donor or government driven creation of publicly administered service capacity and delivery to encouraging an appropriate mix of public / private institutional capacity? A related issue is how to address sustainable private sector conformity assessment service provision in such a highly technical field? These questions logically lead to the issue of what is driving the need for conformity assessment. As Rotherham (2003:4) reports “Although they may also happen to facilitate trade, many other standards and technical regulations are primarily intended to achieve a broader public policy objective, such as environmental protection or safeguarding human health and safety”. Is it the protection of health and safety normally addressed by mandatory compliance with technical regulations or environmental concerns and / or trade related issues that are usually addressed in voluntary standards? Due to the direct involvement of Government in the former, the issue of technical regulations will be dealt with first.

## **A supportive regulatory environment**

Research by Bayliss and Hall (2002:4) has found that “without appropriate government stewardship and regulation there is a risk that informal private markets may provide low-quality services”. They conclude that by implication “private sector options should not be pursued where government stewardship is not able to enforce quality levels”. All of which

points to the careful balancing act required of African governments between opening markets, providing appropriate publicly funded technical infrastructure and encouraging the private sector to take an active and increasing role in service delivery, while remaining ultimately accountable to the larger electorate. Halachmi (2005:314) argues that

*Governments need to use the mechanisms of governance (i.e. partnerships, coordination, collaboration, and persuasion) as the means for accomplishing what it used to do by regulation and central enforcement.*

Given the problems in many African states with both capacity and funding, this new development is to be welcomed although the greater oversight role will need a very different skill set from public officials than was required when the focus was *regulation and central enforcement*. That the outcomes of the previous approach were not successful is discussed by Cosbey (2004:27) who found that “existing standards – which were in some cases well below world standards – were routinely flouted”. The long term impact of such behaviour is probably not immediately realised in the new global environment that all are subject to. The dramatic, negative and largely unintended consequences for domestic industries who take such a short sighted view are also mentioned by Cosbey (2004:27) “firms lagged far behind foreign standards levels, missing the chance to find synergy between foreign and domestic standards”. Such companies would rapidly go out of business once the Government of such a country either decided, or more probably was pressured from outside, to open its domestic markets to foreign competition.

## **Building an appropriate supportive technical infrastructure**

The explosive growth in global trade and the increasing need to adhere to a set of uniform / common rules of trade places enormous pressures on governments, especially those of developing countries. As parties to international conventions and treaties, they need to prove intelligently participation and effective implementation of these agreements. The increased participation of developing countries in global trade depends therefore on the ability of the signatory countries to fully satisfy increasingly sophisticated technical requirements. For this they need the adequate physical and institutional infrastructure as well as the scientific and technological skills and capabilities (UNIDO, 2002:2). Fox and Maas (1997) emphasise the need for a clearly defined goal for any public service delivery activity. They remind us that “the delivery of public goods and services, notwithstanding their efficient and responsive delivery, is of no value if it does not benefit the individual, the community and society at large” (Fox & Maas, 1997:3). There are important consequences regarding both provision and non provision of conformity assessment services for countries, especially developing ones, as they try to better integrate into the wider, and brutally competitive, global economy. In facing this challenge, there are several issues. One is: how should a country migrate from donor or government driven creation of public service capacity and delivery to encouraging an appropriate mix of public / private institutional capacity? A related issue is how to address sustainable private sector conformity assessment service provision, especially Small Medium and Micro Enterprises,

in such a highly technical field? The public sector obviously has a key role in creating initial technical capability and capacity. As has been identified by Thoburn (2000:8)

*The composition of government expenditure is as important as its level. Public expenditure programmes should be designed with a view to enhancing the technological and human resource capabilities of the economy that will enable it to compete.*

The creation of appropriate public policy is an important first step but it is also vital that this is backed by detailed implementation plans, including the role of the private sector with appropriate initial public funding if required. The same sentiments are evident in the speech of the South African Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry, (2006) who stated

*Among the themes which we will be emphasising in our new approach to industrial policy, will be the need for government to facilitate and encourage all stakeholders to engage in a process of self discovery. Self discovery needs to ...lead to the identification of key action plans needed to take our sectors from where they are to where we need them to be.*

Such action plans will obviously need to consider the issue of TBTs facing the various targeted industrial sectors. Once the issues have been clearly identified, a detailed plan can be formulated to address them. This would include the use of existing conformity assessment capacity, the strengthening of such, where appropriate, as well as the creation of new capability where required.

## **The impact of government intervention and incentives**

It is suggested among others, by Jabbra and Dwivedi (2004:1106) that public administration should provide “the framework of rules, institutions and practices, set limits and provide incentives for individuals, organisations and businesses” (Jabbra & Dwivedi, 2004:1106). Unfortunately there is much evidence that the area of government that provides incentives in the form of state subsidies, is a major obstacle in the way of developing countries accessing the developed markets of the North. Cosby (2004) alerts us to three sets of obstacles that will need to be addressed if any progress is to be made. These are “difficulties associated with differing standards in different markets; costs and difficulties in conformity assessment; and government support offered to competitors in export market countries” (Cosbey, 2004:26).

The government with appropriate public sector support obviously needs to address the issues of differing standards and support offered to competitors in the appropriate international forums like the WTO. It also has to ensure that it has the appropriate domestic systems in place to back its international negotiating position. It certainly cannot be seen to be asking others to act in one way while applying different norms domestically. Government, through the public sector, also has a key role in creating initial domestic technical capability and capacity. Increasingly direct foreign and local investment is predicated on issues such as the availability of a sound conformity

assessment infrastructure. It is vital that production facilities located in Africa can cost effectively prove compliance with international requirements, especially in respect of environmental and social issues. This trend in turn can be expected to boost the demand for more sophisticated conformity assessment capability and services.

## **The role of trade related technical assistance**

If African goods are to be exported in any significant way beyond the region, it is important to note that developed nations expect proven compliance of imported agricultural products and manufactured goods, against increasingly sophisticated technical requirements, before allowing access to their markets. This expectation by developed nations that are members of the WTO is supported by an undertaking, in theory anyway, to provide appropriate assistance. According to Smaller (2006:3) "WTO members have increasingly accepted the need for trade-related technical assistance to help developing countries with the implementation of WTO commitments and associated adjustment costs". Unfortunately this acceptance has not led to any dramatic improvements. The same author notes that "To date, however, the various initiatives have had limited success and insufficient funds" (Smaller, 2006:3).

Given the current thrust by the WTO and others, donor related activities in the area of technical capacity building will continue, but tangible benefits will remain variable. Mathiasen (2005) offers a clue as to why this will be the case. He mentions that "Western technical assistance practitioners working at the ground level refer to the need to understand and take into account the social and political context of the countries in which they are working" (Mathiasen, 2005:667). This contextual sensitisation obviously takes time if done properly. A commodity that is unfortunately not in abundant supply given the very real needs facing the region. As Ngema (2005:11) has pointed out "what is... troubling is... that lack of capacity not only has local or national consequences, it has regional, continental and global consequences as well. It is not possible to withdraw from such processes until we have built the capacity for effective engagement". Experience has shown that technical infrastructure capacity building and strengthening projects are by no means short term in nature and require large amounts of ongoing capital and operational expenditure.

Article 11 of the WTO TBT Agreement states that "Members shall, if requested, advise other Members, especially the developing country Members, and shall grant them technical assistance on mutually-agreed terms and conditions regarding", *inter alia*:

- the preparation of and information on how to implement technical regulations;
- the establishment of bodies for the assessment of conformity with standards adopted within the territory of the requesting member and;
- the establishment of the institutions and legal framework that would enable them to fulfil the obligations of membership or participation in regional or international systems of conformity assessment.

According to Cosby (2004:41) "No country yet has made such a request". The same author notes that this non application leads to "a number of uncertainties about how

the obligations would be fulfilled" one of the major ones being "how to interpret the obligation to provide technical assistance on mutually-agreeable terms and conditions" (Cosbey, 2004:41). Research by UNIDO claims that "the focus of the international dialogue is still almost exclusively on capacity building related to the negotiating and trade information aspects. Insufficient attention is paid to the technical infrastructure and capacities required" (UNIDO, 2002:4). A possible reason for the reluctance by developing countries to ask for help is provided by Smaller (2006). This author asserts that "developed countries consistently use their aid budgets to pressure developing countries to move closer to developed countries" trade negotiating positions" (Smaller, 2006:7). All of which underpins the need for coordinating national strategies, policies and implementation with a national view that is used in international negotiations. This is addressed in the next section.

## INTEGRATING NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Findings from Bhalla (2002:46) clearly indicate that

*there is a close relationship between technology, sustainability and globalisation. The use of modern technology enables the achievement of sustainability by raising productivity and incomes. To reinforce the point, the same author asserts that low sustainability results, inter alia, from a lack of technological progress, serious demographic pressures and a low level of development.*

This view is echoed by Boron and Murray (2004:72) who contend that "Sustainability in practice resides in the economic/business/processing domain and the unsustainability of this domain manifests itself in the ecological and social resources. This is the basic and correct inter-relationship of the three domains".

Given this premise as the point of departure, the logical place therefore to begin to seek redress for developing countries is in the various and ongoing negotiations of the WTO. Vermeulen and Ras, (2006:246) are also of the opinion that "creating fairer trading relationships is one of the important issues on the global agenda for multilateral agreements between nations". Laird (2001:471) acknowledges that there is still a lot of work needed with respect to negotiations around "reducing or eliminating non-tariff measures" but maintains that "the main thrust may now be in the area of rules to ensure that such measures are being used for legitimate objectives and not merely for protectionist purposes" (Laird, 2001:471). This view is supported by a study by Najam and Robins (2001:65) that identifies the critical need to build "indigenous negotiating and institutional capacity within trade institutions...in developing countries". The same authors also note that such capacity should be created "not simply to understand what is happening in international policy, but to influence it" (Najam & Robins, 2001:65).

An important part of the work required in building trade negotiating capacity, according to Abbot *et al.* (1999:2) should be directed at developing a “a clearer demonstration of the links between trade, environment and development”. This is required initially due to a “fundamental lack of trust in the intentions that lie behind the trade and environment strategies of the industrialised world” (Abbot *et al.*, 1999:2). This suspicion is probably well founded if the study by Finger and Schuler (2000:524) is correct. According to these authors, “in the advanced countries, development ministries are junior partners in making trade policy”. The problem is compounded by the fact that “at the WTO, the least developed countries have little capacity to organise and to advance their own interests” (Finger & Schuler, 2000:524). Another factor that needs to be considered according to Luke (2005:236) is that “there are many centers of private, economically guided action in the economy...actively pursuing their own national, corporate and personal monetary interests in reproducing this unsustainably non-developmental material culture”. Such interests will have a well funded and coherent strategy to further these aims at every opportunity. That a suitable, well co-ordinated, strategy is required by developing countries not only for their own benefit, but for future generations is amplified by Tisdell, (2001:206) who claims that most goods are not priced to reflect full costs (the magnitude of the distortion will vary from case to case), due to such factors as unpaid environmental costs and price-distorting trade barriers. This is obviously not sustainable and needs appropriate correction through appropriate international intervention.

Such findings highlight the need not only for the necessary pre-meeting preparation within country by suitable trained public officials, but also networking in search of common objectives with their African peers once they all arrive in Geneva for the WTO meetings. The fact that the WTO operates by consensus makes this suggested *modus operandi* even more critical if progress is to be made on issues that are important to Africa as a whole. UNIDO (2002:2) states that Article 12.7 of the TBT agreement specifically states

*Members shall .... provide technical assistance to developing country Members to ensure that the preparation and application of technical regulations, standards and conformity assessment procedures do not create unnecessary obstacles to the expansion and diversification of exports from developing country Members.*

As seen previously, there have been no requests for such support which also would appear to confirm the current climate of suspicion that was alluded to earlier.

Certainly developing countries cannot continue to argue about the fairness of the international trading rules while simultaneously being further excluded and marginalised due to their effects. African countries need to make appropriate, substantial and ongoing investment in the public infrastructure, which they have in most cases already created to address domestic and foreign quality assurance requirements. If they continue to fail to do this, Rotherham (2003:24) warns that “not only will this reduce the trading opportunities of developing countries, it will also begin to discredit the kinds of policy tools that are increasingly being used to promote

sustainable development: eco-labels, certification programmes and other market-based tools". If individual African countries cannot afford to create and maintain appropriate national infrastructure, they need to find creative ways to investigate, fund, maintain and share such scarce technical resources for the benefit of the region.

## SYNTHESIS

The research has highlighted the need for African countries to reassess Industrial and environmental strategies and associated legislation and policies. It has also identified that the journey towards sustainable development will entail several key interventions. These were highlighted as:

- **A suitably integrated industrial development and environmental policy** that is based on;
  - a thorough and integrated evaluation of the industrial sectors potential to make a positive contribution to socio-economic growth that is realistically balanced with the negative environmental impacts and;
  - an understanding of what is actually and realistically possible given the means that are available.
- **Partnership and ownership** in the formulation and implementation of integrated policy and the associated strategy such that;
  - all stakeholders have a voice and shared ownership in the vision, strategy and implementation;
  - civil society is assisted to actively participate in trade policy issues and;
  - the private sector is actively encouraged to assist in shaping the *emerging rules of the market* both domestic and foreign and in both ISO and private sector standards activity where possible.
- **Strong implementation capability and capacity** including;
  - a strong and cohesive enabling environment for domestic regulatory, standards, metrology and accreditation institutions including appropriate direction, capacity building and feedback / evaluation mechanisms;
  - a leading role for these selected domestic trade facilitating institutions in setting an appropriate stage for industry with the selective use of incentives and consequences to guide the desired behaviour and;
  - outputs from these technical support institutions that not only positively contribute to improving the domestic situation but also assist Government as it engages in international negotiations in related areas.

The suggested policy and legislative reassessment is timely when one considers that much effort and donor funding, encouraged by the WTO, is currently being focused on creating such sustainable technical infrastructure in developing countries, particularly in Africa. Much of the current donor funded activity in this arena is aimed at creating or expanding public infrastructure but this could be broadened with reference to suitable self created

and managed domestic policy on industrialisation / environmental protection and the associated domestic implementation plans.

What is clear is that more of the same uncoordinated intervention such as presently occurs is not good enough. The slide to marginalisation will not be halted without decisive and well planned interventions based on a common African approach to these very difficult issues. As no other entities can fulfil this obligation, the responsibility for any progress that is directed towards benefiting Africa must fall squarely on the shoulders of the various African governments and the supporting public administration structures.

Another more recent development is the entry into the standards arena of private concerns. Due to dramatic improvements in transport and communication, African fresh produce producers now have the ability to sell their produce into Europe. European consumers of fresh fruit and vegetables are targeted to make purchasing decisions based on health and sustainability criteria, the quality of which is confirmed by sophisticated, and expensive, certification schemes. By dealing directly with producers based on the result of their successful certification, supermarkets are cutting out large elements of the supply chain, but in the end the producer takes the majority of the risk. The benefits of such rationalisation are not being distributed in an equitable way as the developing producers get little additional financial return. This is problematic as Governments currently have little input into such private contractual arrangements. A possible solution would be for the creation of trans-border trading rules and associated regulations to protect both the developed country consumer as well as the developing country provider. Although this suggestion is a clear interference in the principles of the free market, the report has shown that some intervention is required or the current inequalities will only get worse.

## CONCLUSION

The majority of countries in Africa have inherited the public administration systems created for them by former colonialists. These systems were not designed or implemented with industrial growth for the benefit of the specific country in mind but rather what could usefully be provided by the colony to the “mother country”. It is very doubtful that environmental issues figured anywhere in the minds of the original legislators as their home country was so far distant and in many cases have only just begun to have a deeper understanding of some of the unintended consequences that previously unfettered industrialisation has produced.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abbot, J., Roberts, S. & Robins, N. 1999. *Who Benefits? A social assessment of environmentally driven trade*. Retrieved April 13, 2007, from [http://www.iied.org/pubs/display.php?o=8858IIED&n=5&l=6&c=trade&g=\(Africa\)](http://www.iied.org/pubs/display.php?o=8858IIED&n=5&l=6&c=trade&g=(Africa)).
- Bayliss, K. & Hall, D. 2002. Glimpses of an alternative – the possibility of public ownership in the World Bank’s latest PSD strategy paper. Retrieved May 9, 2006, from <http://www.psisru.org/reports/2002-01-U-WB-PSDpwb.doc>.

- Bhalla, A.S. 2002. Globalisation and Sustainable Development: a Southern African Perspective. *International Journal of Technology Management and Sustainable Development*, 1 (1).
- Birkland, T.A. 2005. *An Introduction to the Policy Process Theories, Concepts, and Models of Public Policy Making*. London: M. E. Sharpe.
- Boron, S. & Murray, K. 2004. Bridging the Unsustainability Gap: A Framework for Sustainable Development. *Sustainable Development*, 12.
- Brown, O. & Sander, C. 2007. *Supermarket Buying Power Global Supply Chains and Smallholder Farmers*. Winnipeg: International Institute for Sustainable Development.
- Cooper, R. 2004. *The Breaking of Nations Order and Chaos in the Twenty – First Century*. London: Atlantic Books.
- Cosbey, A. 2004. *Lessons Learned on Trade and Sustainable Development*. Winnipeg: International Institute for Sustainable Development.
- Fox, H. & Maas, G. J. P. 1997. *Entrepreneurship and Public Management*. Kenwyn: Juta.
- Finger, J.M. & Schuler, P. 2000. Implementation of the Uruguay Round Commitments: The Development Challenge. *The World Economy*, 23 (4).
- Halachmi, A. 2005. Governance and risk management: challenges and public productivity. *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, 18 (4).
- Hopward, B., Mellor, M. & O'Brien, G. 2005. Sustainable Development: Mapping Different Approaches. *Sustainable Development*, 13.
- Jabbara, J.G. & Dwivedi, O.P. 2004. Globalisation, Governance, and Administrative Culture. *International Journal of Public Administration*, 27 (13 & 14).
- Kennedy, R.M. & Hobohm, S. 1999. *Capacity building for private sector development in Africa*. Vienna: United Nations Industrial Development Organization.
- Laird, S. 2001. Dolphins, Turtles, Mad Cows and Butterflies – A Look at the Multilateral Trading System in the 21st Century. *The World Economy*, 24(4).
- Lall, S. 2004. Industrial success and failure in a globalising world. *International Journal of Technology Management and Sustainable Development*, 3 (3).
- Leshaba, M. 2004. *A critical analysis of Africa's efforts at regional integration*. Centre for Policy Studies. Policy brief 30. Retrieved May 14, 2006, from [www.cps.org.za/pb2.htm#](http://www.cps.org.za/pb2.htm#).
- Low, W. & Davenport, E. 2005. Postcards from the Edge: Maintaining the "Alternative" Character of Fair Trade. *Sustainable Development*, 13.
- Luke, T.W. 2005. Neither Sustainable nor Development: Reconsidering Sustainability in Development. *Sustainable Development*, 13.
- Luken, R.A. 2006. Where is Developing Country Industry in Sustainable Development Planning? *Sustainable Development*, 14.
- Luken, R.A. & Hesp, P. 2006. The Contribution of Six Developing Countries Industry to Sustainable Development. *Sustainable Development* (in press).
- Mathiasen, D. 2005. International public management. In E. Ferlie, L.E. Lynn Jr. and C. Pollitt (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Public Management*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Najam, A. & Robins, N. 2001. Seizing the future: the South, sustainable development and international trade. *International Affairs*, 77 (1).
- Ngema, K. 2005. Service Delivery Imperative in the Growth and Development Trajectory. *Service Delivery Review*, 4 (2).
- Nwafor, F.C. 2003. Private Sector Development and Poverty Alleviation: The case of Sub – Saharan Africa. *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa*, 5 (2).
- Rotherham, T. 2003. *Implementing Environmental, Health and Safety (EH&S) Standards, and Technical Regulations*. The Developing Country Experience. Winnipeg: International Institute for Sustainable Development.
- Schoeman, N.J. 2004. Economic Growth and Development Constraints in Africa. In W. Fox and E. van Rooyen (Eds.) *The Quest for Sustainable Development*. Cape Town: Juta.
- Smaller, C. 2006. *Can Aid Fix Trade? Assessing the WTO's Aid for Trade Agenda*. Minnesota: The Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy.
- Thoburn, J. 2000. *Finding the Right Track for Industry in Africa – Some Policy Issues and Options*. Vienna: United Nations Industrial Development Organisation.
- UNIDO. 2002. *Enabling Developing Countries to Participate in International Trade Strengthening the supply capacity A UNIDO Strategy for capacity building*. Vienna: United Nations Industrial Development Organisation.
- Vermeulen, W.J.V. & Ras, P.J. 2006. The Challenge of Greening Global Product Chains: Meeting Both Ends. *Sustainable Development*, 14.