



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Environment and Natural Resources
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MEMORANDUM

FOR : **The Directors**
Climate Change Service
Forest Management Bureau
Environmental Management Bureau
Mines and Geosciences Bureau
Legislative Liaison Office

FROM : **The Director**
Policy and Planning Service

SUBJECT : **REQUEST FOR UPDATES ON EU GSP+ ISSUES FOR THE HIGH-LEVEL MISSION IN JUNE 2023**

DATE : **01 JUN 2023**

This has reference to the letter from Assistant Secretary Allan B. Gepty of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) dated 30 May 2023, requesting the Department to provide **positive updates** on the implementation of the Philippine commitments under the European Union Generalized Scheme of Preference-Plus (EU GSP+), particularly the conventions on environmental protection.

Following the submission of the DENR's inputs on the GSP+ country's report and the supplementary inputs last year, please be informed that the GSP+ country report and the new GSP regulation, which will outline the application process for the scheme in 2023-2032 are yet to be released.

Relatedly, as part of the continued efforts to lobby for the retention of the country's EU-GSP+ status and the resumption of the Philippines-EU Free Trade Agreement (PH-EU FTA), the DTI will conduct a high-level outbound mission to Brussels, Belgium in June 2023.

In this regard, we would like to request your office to provide updates on the following concerns:

Areas of Concern	Concerned Bureaus
Updates on DENR's priority legislative agenda	LLO
Updates on the Alternative Minerals Management Act and the Mining Act Amendment Bill	MGB
Updates on National Land Use Bill and the Sustainable Forest Management Bill	LLO and FMB

Updates on the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol	EMB
Updates on the reports under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), such as: a) First Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC); b) Third National Communication (TNC); c) First Biennial Update Report; d) National Adaptation Plan (NAP); e) National Climate Change Action Plan; and f) Long-Term Strategy and NDC Implementation Plan	CCS
Updates on the implementation of the Resolution on Plastic Pollution	EMB

We would appreciate receiving an advance copy of your inputs on or before **08 June 2023, Friday** through this email address: psddivision@gmail.com.

For your preferential action, please.


CHERYL LOISE T. LEAL

30 May 2023

Please see the distribution list.

Dear Sirs and Mesdames:

The Department conveys our appreciation for your agency's full cooperation in ensuring the retention of the Philippines' beneficiary status under the EU Generalized Scheme of Preference-Plus (EU GSP+). The Department would like to inform the inter-agency of an upcoming high-level outbound mission to Brussels, Belgium in June 2023 relative to our continued efforts to lobby for the retention of the country's EU-GSP+ status and the resumption of the Philippines-EU Free Trade Agreement (PH-EU FTA). The mission builds on the momentum set by previous undertakings including the 4th GSP+ monitoring mission, technical and high-level missions, and interparliamentary meetings in 2022 as well as the 2nd Sub-Committee Meeting on Trade, Investment, and Economic Cooperation. This also follows the recent visit to Manila of some EU parliamentarians from the European Parliament's Sub-Committee on Human Rights in February this year.

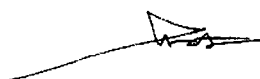
In this regard, the Department respectfully requests the inter-agency for inputs, particularly on **positive updates** in relation to the Philippines' implementation of the 27 core conventions on human rights, good governance, labor, and environmental protection. We acknowledge the inputs received from the cluster leads and other agencies last October 2022 for the Philippines' additional supplementary submission to the GSP+ country report. Currently, we are still awaiting the release of the GSP+ country report as well as the release of the new GSP regulation which will outline the application process for the scheme in 2023-2032.

The Department would highly appreciate receiving the inter-agency's written inputs via email on or before **13 June 2023, Tuesday**. For the inter-agency's guidance, please see the attached matrix of topics wherein inputs are highly requested. Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact any of the following staff of the Bureau of International Trade Relations – Bilateral Relations Division.

Desk Officer	Email Address	Mobile Number
Irish Tongohan	IrishCassandraTongohan@dti.gov.ph	0935-241-9236
Lattice Andriano	LatticeAngeliqueAndriano@dti.gov.ph	0995-650-7045

Thank you very much for your continued cooperation in our GSP+ undertakings.

Very truly yours,



Digitally signed by Gepty
Allan Batarra
Date: 2023.05.30 22:48:06
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ATTY. ALLAN B. GEPTY
Assistant Secretary

Enclosures: as stated

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE POLICY GROUP

Labor Cluster

No.	Document Title	Source
Freedom of Association		
1.	Outcomes of the High-Level Tripartite Mission held in January 2023. Updates on the tripartite roadmap and action plan, among others.	- DOLE
2.	Updates on the Regional Tripartite Industrial Peace Council report.	- DOLE
3.	Updates on the Regional Tripartite Monitoring Body report. Interventions provided to resolve issues of red-tagging	- DOLE
4.	Police investigation reports on alleged red-tagging/harassment of labor unions/associations. Include statements from these unions/associations, or any other proof of involvement of these groups during investigations	- DOLE - PNP
5.	Statistics on trade-union-related cases of harassment. Indicate the following from 2016 to 2023: - Total reported cases - Status of the case - Number of resolved cases - Number of pending cases - Action taken	- DOLE
6.	Government measures to address red-tagging. Provide the following: - List of measures or actions taken to address red-tagging of labor groups undertaken. - List of programs and accountability mechanisms that were promoted and implemented to mitigate red-tagging. - (Only if available) Provide examples as proof of effectiveness in reducing red-tagging	- DOJ - DOLE - PHRCS
7.	Statistics on trade union organizations registered online	- DOLE
8.	Information on the operationalization of Executive Order No. 23 which creates the Inter-Agency Committee for the Protection of the Freedom of Association and Right to Organize of Workers	- DOLE
Operationalization of Eco-Zone Guidelines		
9.	Updates on the operationalization of the memorandum of agreement forming the Tripartite Advisory Council (TAC)	- PEZA - DOLE - DTI
10.	Under the DOLE Department Order No. 183, Revised Rules on the Administration and Enforcement of Labor Laws Pursuant of Article 128 of Labor Code, provide the following: - Statistics of labor inspections conducted in eco-zones - Statistics of complaint inspection with status and actions taken - Reports of compliance by the employers	- DOLE
Forced Labor and Child Labor		
11.	Update on the development of the Philippine Program Against Child Labor (PPACL) Strategic Framework for the period 2023-2028.	- DOLE

For the inter-agency's inputs

12.	Updates on the implementation of the Republic Act (RA) 11930, also known as the "Anti-Online Sexual Abuse or Exploitation of Children (OSAEC) and Anti-Child Sexual Abuse or Exploitation Materials (CSAEM)."	- DSWD - DOJ
Labour Inspection		
13.	Update on the Philippines' ratification of ILO Convention No. 81 (Labour Inspection)	- DFA - DOLE

Human Rights

No.	Document Title	Source
Accountability Measures		
Human Rights policy in the PH		
14.	Updates on the implementation of the Philippine Human Rights Plan (PHRP) for 2018-2022, including the release of the next PHRP	- PHRCS - DOJ
15.	Updates on the Human Rights Defenders Protection Bill (including proposed revisions highlighting the bills overlap with existing laws)	- PHRCS
16.	Highlights of the recent human rights dialogues participated in by the Philippines, including but not limited to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Universal Periodic Review (UPR) - 52nd Regular Session of the United Nations (UN) Human Rights Council (HRC) - Dialogue with the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) - Dialogue with the UN Human Rights Committee for the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights - Dialogue with the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination 	- PHRCS - DOJ - DFA - CWC
17.	Information on the Philippines' National Recommendations Tracking Database (PH-NRTD)	- PHRCS
18.	Updates on the following proposed legislative initiatives: lowering of minimum age of criminal responsibility, imposition of capital punishment/death penalty	- PHRCS - DOJ - JJWC
19.	Updates on the following specific cases: a.) Maria Ressa, b.) former Senator De Lima, c.) Percy Lapid	- DOJ - PHRCS - PTOFMS
20.	Updated responses on the alleged extra-judicial killings and enforced disappearances, including ICC investigation	- PHRCS - DOJ
Anti-Terrorism Act of 2020 (ATA of 2020)		
21.	Updates on the implementation of the IRR of RA No. 11479 or ATA of 2020	- DOJ - ATC
22.	Reports on the activation of existing safeguards under the ATA of 2020	- DOJ - ATC
23.	Reports/Statistics on the existing cases filed since 2016 to 2023	- DOJ - ATC

For the inter-agency's inputs

24.	Updates on the formulation of the Special Rules of Procedure on Anti-Terrorism Cases	- DOJ - ATC
Human Rights-based Approach to the Anti-Illegal Drug Campaign		
25.	Updates on the implementation of the Philippine Anti-Illegal Drug Strategy.	- DDB - PDEA - PNP
26.	Updates on the Implementation United Nations Joint Programme (including updates on the technical working group on drug component)	- DOJ - DDB - PDEA - PHRCS - DFA
27.	Updates on the Philippines' submission regarding the data on the investigation of the anti-illegal drug campaign to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court.	- DOJ
28.	Updates on the new administration's Anti-Illegal Drug Campaign, 'Buhay Ingatan, Droga'y Ayawan (BIDA)'	- DILG - DDB - PDEA - PNP
29.	List of DOH Accredited Treatment and Rehabilitation Center	- DOH - DDB
30.	Programs aligned under drug rehabilitation (e.g., livelihood assistance)	- DSWD
31.	Updates on the implementation of programs under the Community-Based Drug Rehabilitation Program (CBDRP).	- DILG - PNP - PDEA
32.	Statistics/Report of drug personalities or persons who use drugs (PWUD) who surrendered under the CBDRP.	- DILG - PDEA
33.	Statistics on the number of drug-cleared barangays	- PDEA
34.	Statistics on the number of drug offenders that have been rehabilitated/reformed	- PDEA
Decongestion of Jail Facilities		
35.	Updates on the measures of decongesting jail facilities	- BJMP - DOJ
36.	Data on expanded and constructed jail facilities	- BJMP
Freedom of Opinion		
37.	Updates on Press Freedom initiatives, as well as on Media Workers Welfare Bill	- PTFoMS
38.	Statistics on the killings of media workers (including status of their investigations)	- PTFoMS
Gender Inequality		
39.	Updates on initiatives for the prevention of gender-based violence	- PCW - JJWC - PNP
40.	Updates on the enactment of RA No. 11313 or Safe Spaces Act	- PCW

For the inter-agency's inputs

41.	Updates on Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, or Sex Characteristics (SOGIEC) Equality Bill	- PCW
42.	Updates on the implementation of the Enhanced Gender Mainstreaming Evaluation Framework (GMEF)	- PCW
43.	Updates on the implementation of the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act of 2012	- DOH - PCW - POPCOM
44.	Updates on the Comprehensive Local Juvenile Intervention Program (CLJIP)	- JJWC
45.	Updates on RA No. 11596 or An Act Prohibiting the Practice of Child Marriage and Imposing Penalties	- DSWD
46.	Statistics on cases of violence against women and girls	- PCW - PNP
47.	Statistics on trafficking cases of women and children	- PNP

Good Governance

No.	Document Title	Source
48.	Statistics on the cases received by the Task Force Against Corruption (including their economic value)	- DOJ
49.	Updates on the Statistics on the National Household Surveys on the Patterns and Trends of Drug Abuse	- DBB - PDEA
50.	Updates on current anti-corruption capacity building programs for investigators in the Anti-Money Laundering Council and prosecutors in the Office of the Ombudsman and in the Department of Justice dealing with high-level corruption cases	- AMLC - DOJ - CSC - OMB
51.	Information on future anti-corruption capacity building programs for investigators and prosecutors dealing with high-level corruption cases	- DOJ - CSC
52.	Updates on the Memorandum of Agreement between the Office of the Ombudsman and the Commission of Audit for their Joint Investigation Team and its implementation	- OMB
53.	Updates on the Witness Protection Program Bill and the Whistleblower Protection Bill	- OMB
54.	Updates on Executive Order No. 129 s. 2021, creating the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Streamlining of Government Processes (PASGP)	- ARTA - DOJ
55.	Updates on the implementation of guidelines of Body-Worn Camera during the Anti-Illegal Drug Operations.	- PNP - PDEA - DOJ
56.	Report on usage of body-worn cameras during anti-drug operations from 2016 to 2023	- PNP - PDEA
57.	Updates on the implementation of the Barangay Drug Clearing Program (BDCP).	- DSWD - PNP - DILG - DOH

For the inter-agency's inputs

58.	Statistics on cases under the Balay Silangan Program (including number of rehabilitation centers)	- PDEA
59.	List of seminars, lectures and multi-media activities initiated for demand reduction of illegal drugs	- PDEA
60.	Updates on the Integrated Drug Monitoring and Reporting System (IDMRIS)	- DDB - PDEA
61.	Updates on the visit of the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB)	- DDB
62.	Updated statistics on anti-drug operations conducted by the Philippine National Police	- PNP
63.	Statistics on automatic investigation cases following fatal casualties during anti-drug operations led by the Philippine National Police and by the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency	- PNP
64.	Statistics on non-automatic investigation cases following formal complaints against anti-drug operations led by the Philippine National Police and by the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency	- PNP
65.	Statistics on fatal casualties of uniformed personnel during anti-drug operations conducted by the Philippine National Police since 2018 (including their investigations and results)	- PNP
66.	Statistics on drug-related cases against Philippine National Police personnel that led to sanctions (including their results and a classification by their nature)	- PNP
67.	Statistics on patterns and trends of drug abuse	- DDB - PDEA
68.	Statistics on Human Rights Defenders (including the 2020 Inputs for the Data-Gathering by the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of the Human Rights Defenders in the Philippines, its cases, and its convictions)	- PHRCS

Environment

No.	Document Title	Source
69.	Updates on DENR's priority legislative agenda	- DENR ✓
70.	Updates on the Alternative Minerals Management Act and the Mining Act Amendment Bill	- DENR ✓
71.	Updates on National Land Use Bill and the Sustainable Forest Management Bill	- DENR ✓
72.	Updates on the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol	- DENR ✓

For the inter-agency's inputs

73.	Updates on the reports under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), such as: a) First Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC), b) Third National Communication (TNC), c) First Biennial Update Report, d) National Adaptation Plan (NAP), e) National Climate Change Action Plan, and f) Long-Term Strategy and NDC Implementation Plan	- DENR ✓ - CCC
74.	Updates on the implementation of the Resolution on Plastic Pollution	- DENR ✓
75.	Updates on the moratorium on new coal power plants	- DOE

**[Request] Updates on EU GSP+ Issues for the High-Level Mission in June 2023**

Lattice Angelique Andriano <LatticeAngeliqueAndriano@dti.gov.ph>

Wed, May 31, 2023 at 8:59 AM

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Sent on behalf of Assistant Secretary Allan B. Gepty.

Dear Sirs and Mesdames:

Please find enclosed the letter from DTI regarding the upcoming high-level outbound mission to Brussels, Belgium in June 2023 relative to our continued efforts to lobby for the retention of the country's EU Generalized Scheme of Preference-Plus (EU GSP+) status and the resumption of the Philippines-EU Free Trade Agreement (PH-EU FTA).

The Department conveys our appreciation for your agency's full cooperation in ensuring the retention of the Philippines' beneficiary status under the EU GSP+. The upcoming mission builds on the momentum set by previous undertakings including the 4th GSP+ monitoring mission, technical and high-level missions, and interparliamentary meetings in 2022 as well as the 2nd Sub-Committee Meeting on Trade, Investment, and Economic Cooperation. This also follows the recent visit to Manila of some EU parliamentarians from the European Parliament's Sub-Committee on Human Rights in February this year.

In this regard, the Department respectfully requests the inter-agency for inputs, particularly on **positive updates** in relation to the Philippines' implementation of the 27 core conventions on human rights, good governance, labor, and environmental protection. For the inter-agency's guidance, please see the attached matrix of topics wherein inputs are highly requested. We would highly appreciate receiving the inter-agency's written inputs via email on or before **13 June 2023, Tuesday**.

We would also like to take this opportunity to request the agencies to submit the names of their new focal points or new email addresses to be included in the mailing list, if any. Should you have questions or concerns, please contact any of the following staff of the Bureau of International Trade Relations – Bilateral Relations Division.

Desk Officer	Email Address	Mobile Number
Irish Tongohan	IrishCassandraTongohan@dti.gov.ph	0935-241-9236
Lattice Andriano	LatticeAngeliqueAndriano@dti.gov.ph	0995-650-7045

Thank you very much for your continued cooperation in our GSP+ undertakings.

Very truly yours,

Lattice

Lattice Angelique A. Andriano

Bilateral Relations Division

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3 attachments

 **IN00276118_BRD_Request for Updates for the High-Level Mission on EU GSP+ on PH-EU**
FTA_Scanletter_05312023.pdf
1047K View as HTML Scan and download

 **DISTRIBUTION LIST_230531_Request for Updates for the High-Level Mission on EU GSP+ on PH-EU**
FTA.pdf
62K View as HTML Scan and download

 **MATRIX OF GSP+ TOPICS_ao 230531.pdf**
107K View as HTML Scan and download

Terms of Reference

Technical Working Group on Trade and Environment TRM-Technical Committee on WTO Matters Sub-Committee on Other Rules and Disciplines

Background

As the challenge of environmental degradation and climate change become more urgent and prominent, countries around the world are adopting policies and strategies to combat these issues and their impacts. Environmental topics relate to transcendental and inter-generational issues of great importance to the Philippines, which is among the most vulnerable to the global effects of climate change and environmental degradation.

Trade and environment issues are heavily discussed at the bilateral, regional and multilateral fora. A dedicated committee was established under the World Trade Organization (WTO) to facilitate dialogue between governments on the impact of trade policies on the environment, and of environment policies on trade. In the Doha Round, the WTO Members received a mandate to negotiate certain aspects of the link between trade and the environment, particularly the relationship between the WTO's agreements and those of other agencies, and market access for environmental goods and services. On another note, plurilateral discussions were launched in 2014 for an Environmental Goods Agreement (EGA) which seeks to reduce the costs and accelerate the adoption of green technologies through the reduction of tariffs on a wide range of imported products that can assist governments, companies and individuals to protect the environment. The development stemmed from the landmark agreement of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) where member economies agreed to reduce the applied tariffs on 54 environmental goods to five per cent or less by the end of 2015. However, it is worth noting that negotiations on the EGA have been stalled since its last negotiating round in December 2016 due to significant differences in the participating members' views.

At present, environment and sustainability objectives are mostly being pursued through targeted initiatives. Currently, there are three (3) initiatives on trade and sustainability at the WTO, namely: (1) Trade and Environmental Sustainability Structured Discussions (TESSD); (2) Dialogue on Plastics Pollution and Environmentally Sustainable Plastics Trade (DPP); and (3) Fossil Fuel Subsidy Reform (FFSR). Of these initiatives, the Philippines has conveyed support and participated in the DPP discussions since 2021. Concurrently, the country is co-facilitating the workstream on "Promoting Trade to Tackle Plastic Pollution". Additionally, the Philippines officially joined the Coalition of Trade Ministers on Climate in January 2023. The Coalition is a high-level political dialogue aimed at ensuring that trade and trade policies contribute to the response to the climate crisis and sustainable development.

With the renewed attention on trade-related environmental issues and the country's commitment to deliver on key climate actions, there is a need to actively assess, discuss and identify policy priorities at the intersection of trade and environment. The proposed Technical Working Group (TWG) under the TRM-Technical Committee on WTO Matters (TRM-TCWM) - Subcommittee on Other Rules and Disciplines aims to institutionalize the technical deliberations in light of the rapidly developing issues on trade and sustainability.

Objectives

The TWG aims to monitor and discuss the emerging trade and sustainability issues and initiatives at the WTO, including as to how they relate to similar discussions in the other fora.

Comments (Cairns Statement on Sustainability):

The achievement of sustainable and resilient agricultural food systems at the national level largely depends on self-sufficiency in food production. This point towards increasing reliance on locally produced food and gradual transition away from over dependence to international traded agri-food products produced from “business as usual” production systems. The call to action by the UN GBF advocates the rethinking of food systems that essentially encourages, local and context specific adaptation of sustainable agricultural practices which can improve food production while reducing vulnerability to climatic or economic shocks, driving positive change, including increasing socio-ecological resilience.

Self-sufficiency in food production, including the protection of agroecosystems requires nationally driven policy reforms which may not fit well, especially with the intention of the Cairns Group to ease up requirements which the later may view as to constitute “unjustified and excessive compliance measures” and thus hindrance to the free flow of goods.

While the Cairns Group Sustainability Statement echoes the principles of sustainable environment and food production systems as embodied under the CBD and the Philippine Development Plan and the Philippine Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, some statements (statement #4) seemed to be dissociated from the advocacy and science behind certain targets under the GBF (i.e. target 10 – sustainable management of Agriculture) which the Philippines is already committed to. A revised statement that is well aligned with our interests might warrant our support.

For consideration.

The TWG will come up with coherent Philippine negotiating positions on relevant issues taking into consideration the country's national laws/regulations/policies vis-à-vis its environmental sustainability and climate change priorities. Any decisions, discussions and recommendations which may arise in the TWG meetings will be reported to the TCWM for endorsement and consideration; and subsequently to the Committee on Tariff and Related Matters (CTRM) and NEDA Board, as appropriate.

Membership

The TWG will be composed of the following agencies:

1. Department of Trade and Industry – Chair
 - Bureau of International Trade Relations – TWG Secretariat
 - Bureau of Philippine Standards
 - Board of Investments
2. Department of Environment and Natural Resources – Vice Chair
 - Policy and Planning Services
 - Environment Management Bureau
 - Biodiversity Management Bureau
 - Forest Management Bureau
3. Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
4. Department of Agriculture
 - Policy Research Service
 - Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources
5. Department of Energy
6. Department of Finance
7. Department of Foreign Affairs
8. Department of Science and Technology
9. Department of Transportation
10. National Economic and Development Authority
 - Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Environment Staff
 - Trade, Services, and Industry Staff
11. Climate Change Commission
12. Tariff Commission

Other agencies/offices may be invited as resource persons, as necessary.

Functions and Responsibilities

The functions and responsibilities of the TWG include but are not limited to the following:

- Provide comments, inputs and recommendations on trade and environmental issues and topics for consideration for the development of the country's negotiating position;
- Part of the Philippine Delegation who will participate in the discussions and negotiations in the domestic and international fora;
- Convene meetings and consultations, as necessary, to update on developments and discuss pressing issues for decision, including new trends and issues emerging in the other fora (i.e., APEC, IPEF, ASEAN, Coalition of Trade Ministers on Climate); and
- TWG to provide technical inputs/comments on the negotiating drafts, position papers.