

CONSULTATION APPROACHES PROJECT MEETING

TELE CONFERENCE MEETING

14 JUNE 2013

Attendance

Present:

Josephine BAIAMONTE, CBP (US)
Johan PONTÉN, National Board of Trade (SE)
Arantzazu SÁNCHEZ BELASTEGUI, UNCTAD
Bismark SITORUS, UNCTAD
Paloma Bernal TURNES, Georgetown Univ (US)

Excused:

Lance Thompson, CONEX (FR)
Maria-Teresa Pisani, UNECE
Birgit Viohl, (DE)

General:

- Overall, positive comments regarding the proposed revisions; we are headed in the right direction.

Introduction:

- Concerns were raised regarding the definition of the term “transparency.” This term needs to be further explored and re-examined within the context of existing definitions. A solution may be to include reference to an existing definition of transparency while also including some of the proposed new language.
- Similarly, further thought should be given to the term “permanent” in the second to last sentence. Should this instead, refer to an “iterative” process or an “established” process?
- In the second and third sentence, concerns were expressed regarding the reference to a specific “framework” as well as direct reference to “policy making.” What is being proposed should be fairly low impact without inferring that legislation would be a pre-requisite to a consultative process. It might be better to keep the previous draft language in this section.
- There was agreement that the following sentence should be reworked and included in the document- *“Although the importance of consultation has long been recognized, experience show that concrete methodologies and best practices are needed to ensure real consultation. Even when consultative structures and the laws providing for participation are put in place, measures have to be taken to ensure a transparent and accountable dialogue, a change of mindset / culture and strengthening of the capacity of public agencies and private sector to participate.”*
- Additional introductory language should be included pertaining to trade benefits. This language should be coordinated with any language added to the **Benefits** section.

Purpose:

- There was consensus that the purpose of the recommendation is to advise.
- There was concern regarding using terms such as “desired outcomes”- how will this be defined?
- Follow up is required with Birgit regarding her comment (4).
- It may be best to revert to the previous draft language while also working in the concept of “trust based dialogue.”

Scope:

- Further clarification is required to reflect that consultation is not just a specific tool or set up- it is a process using a variety of approaches.

Benefits:

- The first sentence should remain as previously drafted, that is, *“Consultation will provide stakeholders the means by which to voice their viewpoints, clarify issues, and engage in meaningful dialogue.”*
- We need to strike a better balance between government and trade.
- Agreement to keep suggested revised language regarding government and public agencies but additional language should be added referencing the trade benefits to a consultative approach (in addition to what is already laid out for government).
- Benefits should not be tied to policy making- benefits are much bigger than that.

Recommendation:

- The third recommendation should be moved to the guidelines as a checklist.

Actions- Next Steps:

- Johan and Josephine will collaborate on updating text with new language.
- Josephine will continue to work with the group on recommended language for the guidelines via email.
- Targeting the week of August 12th as potential date for next conference call (Johan and Josephine to touch base on the Monday of that week, and the group on Thursday or Friday).