

# The World Trade Organization and Less-Developed Countries

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## Outlines

The lecture covers the following points:

1. Introduction to the WTO and Its Role in Development:
  - Brief overview of the WTO's mission and functions.
  - How the WTO influences global trade policies affecting less-developed countries.
2. Special and Differential Treatment:
  - Explanation of SDT provisions in WTO agreements.
  - How SDT aims to assist less-developed countries in integrating into the global trading system.
  - Critiques and discussions on the effectiveness of SDT.
3. Generalized System of Preferences (GSP):
  - Overview of the GSP and its significance for less-developed countries.
  - Impact of GSP on the economies of less-developed countries.
4. Aid for Trade Initiative:
  - Explanation of Aid for Trade:
  - Origins and objectives of the Aid for Trade initiative.
  - How it addresses the trade-related constraints of less-developed countries.
  - Implementation and Impact
  - Challenges and Critiques
5. New Developments in WTO Agreements:
  - Investment Facilitation Agreement:
    - Objectives and key features.
    - Potential benefits and drawbacks for less-developed countries.
  - Fisheries Subsidies Agreement:
    - Goals in relation to sustainable development.

- Implications for less-developed countries dependent on fisheries.

6. Conclusion:

- Summarizing the WTO's role in supporting or challenging the development objectives of less-developed countries.
- Open questions and areas for future policy development.

### Reading Materials:

1. Skim through the discussion on Special and Differential Treatment and GSP (in particular, Chapter 9, pages 369 to 388) Raj Bhala, *International Trade Law: A Comprehensive E-Textbook (6th Edition) Volume VIII: Growth, Development, and Poverty*, (2024),  
<https://kuscholarworks.ku.edu/server/api/core/bitstreams/3365981a-dd4a-4392-837d-d082315c001a/content>; or,  
<https://kuscholarworks.ku.edu/entities/publication/188ed998-937c-4f3d-9f98-991a0f5b2f3c>. This is a long textbook and is included for reference only.
2. Bernard Hoekman, *Operationalizing the Concept of Policy Space in the WTO: Beyond Special and Differential Treatment*, 8 Journal of International Economic Law 405 (2005), document attached with the course note. Relevant links:  
<https://academic.oup.com/jiel/article-abstract/8/2/405/920857>; available at:  
<https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/document?repid=rep1&type=pdf&doi=30fb0920fb7869c54db231f5bfb5216ba4fa00d4>
3. Investment Facilitation Agreement Toolkit:  
[https://www.wto.org/english/tratop\\_e/invfac\\_public\\_e/ifd\\_toolkit\\_e.pdf](https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/invfac_public_e/ifd_toolkit_e.pdf)
4. The WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies: What it does and what comes next:  
[https://www.wto.org/english/tratop\\_e/rulesneg\\_e/fish\\_e/fish\\_factsheet\\_e.pdf](https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/rulesneg_e/fish_e/fish_factsheet_e.pdf)
5. Aid for Trade at a Glance 2024:  
[https://www.wto.org/english/res\\_e/booksp\\_e/a4tatglance2024\\_e.pdf](https://www.wto.org/english/res_e/booksp_e/a4tatglance2024_e.pdf)