

Addressing Non Tariff Barriers On Regional Trade In

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ABBEY ANTONIO

Technical and Sanitary Aspects CreateSpace

The goal of this first edition of the Assessing Arab Economic Integration Report is to provide a quantitative assessment of regional economic integration efforts, and generate practical and implementable policy advice for Member States. Following a concise review of the potential impact and channels of economic integration, a system of indexes has been developed for performance evaluation, monitoring and comparison of integration at the global, regional, and bilateral levels. This report shows that Arab countries' abilities to unlock the potential for further intra-regional integration rely partly on their capacity to address a number of cross-cutting structural features that act as facilitators and condition their performances. It makes a clear argument that economic integration is a means by which Arab countries can ensure their growth and diversification, thus bringing both individual country-level and communal regional-level benefits.

Navigating Non-Tariff Measures United Nations

The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) entered into force on January 1, 1994, establishing a free trade area as part of a comprehensive economic and trade agreement among the United States, Canada, and Mexico. President Trump has repeatedly stated that he intends to either renegotiate or withdraw from NAFTA. In May 2017, the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) formally notified Congress of the Administration's intent to renegotiate NAFTA. Reactions to the announcement have been mixed, with some industries supporting NAFTA "modernization" as a way to address a range of trade concerns, while others are urging the need to proceed more cautiously so as to not destabilize current U.S. export markets. Canada and Mexico are key U.S. agricultural trading partners. Since NAFTA was implemented, the value of U.S. agricultural trade with its NAFTA partners has increased sharply. Agricultural exports rose from \$8.7 billion in 1992 to \$38.1 billion in 2016, while imports rose from \$6.5 billion to \$44.5 billion. As a share of U.S. agricultural trade, Canada and Mexico rank second and third (after China) as leading U.S. export markets. Leading NAFTA-traded agricultural products were meat and dairy products; grains; fruits, tree nuts, and vegetables; oilseeds; and sweeteners. In general, NAFTA is considered to have benefitted the United States both economically and strategically in terms of North American relations. Many U.S. food and agricultural industry groups claim that NAFTA has been positive for their industries. As part of its 2015 retrospective analysis of the impacts of NAFTA, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) concluded in a 2015 report that "NAFTA has had a profound effect on many aspects of North American agriculture over the past two decades," contributing to increased market integration and cross-border investment and resulting in "important changes in consumption and production." Although NAFTA resulted in tariff elimination for most agricultural products and redefined import quotas for some commodities as tariff-rate quotas (TRQs), some products—such as U.S. exports to Canada of dairy and poultry products—are still subject to high above-quota tariffs. In addition to tariffs and quotas, NAFTA addressed sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures and other types of non-tariff barriers that may limit agricultural trade. SPS regulations are often regarded by agricultural exporters as one of the greatest challenges in trade, often resulting in increased costs and product loss and disrupting integrated supply chains. Renegotiating NAFTA could provide an opportunity to "modernize" certain issues affecting U.S. agricultural exporters. Potential options could include the following: Improving agricultural market access. Liberalize remaining dutiable agricultural products that are still subject to TRQs and high out-of-quota tariff rates. Updating NAFTA's SPS provisions. Address SPS concerns in agricultural trade by "going beyond" existing World Trade Organization (WTO) rights and obligations by addressing certain requirements including risk assessment, transparency, and notification, as well

as building in additional rapid response mechanism and enforcement. Addressing other trade concerns. Address concerns raised in outstanding disputes between the United States and its NAFTA partners, as well as geographical indications (GIs) or place names that identify products based on their reputation or origin. A number of these types of trade concerns were addressed in recent U.S. trade negotiations under the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement, and some farm interest groups claim that the TPP could provide a blueprint for NAFTA renegotiations involving U.S. agricultural trade concerns.

Towards the Arab Customs Union United Nations

A Practical Guide to the Economic Analysis of Non-Tariff Measures is a joint-publication by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the World Trade Organization.

Unfair Trade Practices CreateSpace

Gathering contributions from leading academics and international trade experts from South Asia, this book is dedicated to the late Dr. Saman Kelegma, whose untimely death in June 2017 left a huge void in the field of regional economic cooperation. Keeping in mind his enduring legacy regarding regional cooperation in South Asia, it covers issues related to the challenges of deeper regional integration in South Asia and proposes strategies to address these challenges. It also offers an up-to-date, rigorous academic analysis of various issues related to low intra-regional trade in South Asia; prevalence of tariff barriers; incidence of a range of non-tariff measures; challenges of weak-trade-related infrastructure and the need for trade facilitation; the political economics of regional integration, highlighting how bilateral political relations affect the integration process; low level of intra-regional investment; South Asia's pattern of integration with the global and regional value chains; pattern and dominance of informal trade; and alternative regional integration initiatives in South Asia, such as the bilateral, regional, and sub-regional trade agreements within and countries outside this region. Intended primarily for researchers and students of international trade, and policymakers from South Asia and beyond, the book is also a valuable supplementary reference resource for researchers and students. Furthermore, the pragmatic analysis of the policy options presented offers guidance for policymakers in South Asia wanting to implement effective policies and strategies for deeper regional integration.

The Role of Non-tariff Barriers in World Trade United Nations

"The sharp decline of tariff trade barriers has been one of the achievements of the world trading system. However, the reduction in tariffs has exposed the many non-tariff barriers that remain. As tariffs continue to fall, there seems to be a corresponding reliance on SPS measures as a source of protection for domestic producers. This underscores the need for a legal framework that can address the fundamental issue of whether a measure validly exists to protect consumers or is merely a 'sham' to protect domestic producers. This thesis argues that the protectionist use of SPS measures undermines the promised benefits of agricultural trade liberalization. Developing countries face numerous problems with regard to SPS measures. This thesis examines these problems and argues that there is a need to strengthen the capacity of developing countries to establish and implement SPS measures; meet the SPS requirements of trade partners; and participate fully in the work of standard setting organizations in the establishment of international standards, guidelines and recommendations. In addition, despite the proposed reductions in tariff barriers stipulated in the WTO Agreement on Agriculture, a lot remains to be done to fully liberalize trade in agriculture. Several issues still need to be addressed in order to enable developing countries to reap the benefits of trade liberalization in agriculture. These issues include market access, domestic and export support, food security and special and differential treatment." -- Streamlining Non-Tariff Measures United Nations

This book assesses the effectiveness of free trade agreements (FTAs) in unlocking international business opportunities in member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). It takes an

institutional perspective in explaining the existence and effects of non-tariff barriers and how FTAs can address these barriers to attract foreign investors.

Behind-the-Border Policies World Bank Publications

Addresses the obstacles -- arising from more traditional tariff & non-tariff barriers, to differences in the legal & regulatory systems, & absence or limitations of internationally agreed rules & disciplines -- that European Union exporters & investors encounter in the United States. Examines the subject from the perspectives of the New Transatlantic Agreement; general features of U.S. trade policy; tariff & non-tariff barriers; investment related measures; intellectual property rights; & business, communication, financial, & transport services.

Report on United States Barriers to Trade and Investment 1997 National Academies Press
This publication explores how India could boost its exports by addressing nontariff trade barriers. It focuses on sanitary and phytosanitary measures and technical barriers to trade, and on export products that have the potential to increase their market share in Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. It considers options including legal reforms, the upgrade of quality standards and laboratory equipment, and institution building of accrediting bodies and conformity assessment bodies. Practical recommendations suggest ways forward for both the public and private sectors.

Behind-the-border Policies Springer

India and Nepal have traditionally shared a unique relationship of friendship and economic cooperation. The relationship is characterized by an open and people-friendly border and is built on shared historical, cultural, linguistic, ethnic links between people residing in India and Nepal. With Nepal being a priority under India "Neighborhood First" policy, strengthening the economic relationship holds immense significance and potential for both the countries. India is Nepal's largest export market, the biggest source of its imports and the top investor of foreign capital stock. India also provides Nepal transit facility through its territory to access sea ports for trading with rest of the world. Given this, the main objective of this paper is to suggest policy measures which can increase bilateral trade and investment between India and Nepal. We analyse the bilateral trade patterns and estimate the maximum additional trade potential. We discuss a wide range of issues of importance pertaining to bilateral trade, including tariffs, levy of an agricultural reform fee, under-utilization of the tariff rate quota, non-tariff measures, issues related to ROO and physical barriers to cross-border movement of goods. We also analyse the trend and changing sectoral composition of India's investment in Nepal. We discuss barriers and opportunities for Indian investment in Nepal. The paper concludes by charting a way forward for bolstering economic cooperation between the two countries by listing down recommendations for enhancing trade, addressing non-tariff barriers, upgrading infrastructure to improve connectivity and enhancing Indian FDI in Nepal.

The Economics of the World Trading System Cambridge University Press

Mandated standards used for vehicle airbags, International Organization for Standards (ISO) standards adopted for photographic film, de facto standards for computer software--however they arise, standards play a fundamental role in the global marketplace. Standards, Conformity Assessment, and Trade provides a comprehensive, up-to-date analysis of the link between standards, product testing and certification, and U.S. economic performance. The book includes recommendations for streamlining standards development, increasing the efficiency of product testing and certification, and promoting the success of U.S. exports in world markets. The volume offers a critical examination of organizations involved in standards and identifies the urgent improvements needed in the U.S. system for conformity assessment, in which adherence to standards is assessed and certified. Among other key issues, the book explores the role of government regulation, laboratory accreditation, and the overlapping of multiple quality standards

in product development and manufacturing. In one of the first treatments of this subject, Standards, Conformity Assessment, and Trade offers a unique and highly valuable analysis of the impact of standards and conformity assessment on global trade.

Address Delivered at Carpenters Hall, London, January 26, 1965 OECD

Trade and investment are engines of growth for the Asia and the Pacific and enabled them to significantly reduce poverty during the past two decades. However, the performance of the region would have been better if the high tariff and non-tariff barriers issues could have been addressed, with the non-tariff trade cost alone accounts for at least 90% of overall trade costs. With some of the world's most dynamic economies located in the region, there is large potential for an expansion of intraregional trade and investment in Asia and the Pacific, making the whole region more resilient to external shocks. Unfortunately, many barriers prevent intraregional movement of goods and investment, affecting in particular the opportunities for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to directly participate in international trade. Removal of those barriers and deepening regional connectivity can therefore be a strong driver of growth and poverty reduction. While sufficient literature exists with regard to establishing a direct and positive correlation between trade and poverty reduction, very little study has been done on the linkages between trade facilitation and poverty reduction. This book addresses this gap and features a compilation of specific case studies that explore the linkages between a number of trade facilitation measures and poverty reduction.

Reforming Non-Tariff Measures DIANE Publishing

This year the USTR publishes its fifth annual Report on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT Report). This report was created to respond to the concerns of U.S. companies, farmers, ranchers, and manufacturers, which increasingly encounter nontariff trade barriers in the form of product standards, testing requirements, and other technical requirements as they seek to sell products and services around the world. As tariff barriers to industrial and agricultural trade have fallen, some standards-related measures have emerged as a key concern. Governments, market participants, and other entities can use standards-related measures as an effective and efficient means of achieving legitimate commercial and policy objectives, such as protection of the environment, human health and safety. But when standards-related measures are outdated, overly burdensome, discriminatory, or otherwise inappropriate, these measures can reduce competition, stifle innovation, and create unnecessary technical barriers to trade. These kinds of measures can pose a particular problem for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), which often do not have the resources to address these problems on their own. USTR is committed to identifying and combating unwarranted technical barriers to U.S. exports, many of which are detailed in this report. Since the last TBT Report was released, the United States has significantly advanced its efforts to resolve concerns with standards-related measures that act as unjustifiable barriers to trade and to prevent their emergence. USTR will continue its work to resolve and prevent standards-related trade concerns through new and existing cooperative initiatives in the World Trade Organization (WTO), Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum (APEC), U.S. free trade agreements (FTAs), and other fora. In addition USTR will continue working to conclude on the negotiation of a modernized Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) chapter in the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) that builds on and strengthens TBT disciplines contained in the WTO Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT Agreement). In addition, in June 2013, President Obama and European Union (EU) leaders launched negotiations on a comprehensive trade and investment agreement, the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (T-TIP). As conveyed in the February 2013 United States-European Union High Level Working Group on Jobs and Growth (HLWG) Final Report, the United States and the EU are committed to working together to open markets in goods, services and investment, reduce nontariff barriers, and address global trade issues of common concern. Both parties seek to build on the horizontal disciplines of the WTO TBT Agreement, establish ongoing mechanisms for improved dialogue and cooperation for addressing bilateral technical barriers to trade (TBT) issues, and pursue opportunities for greater regulatory compatibility with the objective of reducing unnecessary costs stemming from regulatory differences in specific sectors. Again in 2014, USTR will engage vigorously with other agencies of the U.S. Government, as well as interested stakeholders, to press for tangible progress by U.S. trading partners in removing unwarranted or overly burdensome technical barriers. We will fully utilize our toolkit of bilateral, regional and multilateral agreements and mechanisms in order to dismantle unjustifiable barriers to safe, high quality U.S. industrial, consumer, and agricultural exports and strengthen the rules-based trading system. Recognizing that U.S. economic and

employment recovery and growth continue to rely importantly on the strength of U.S. exports of goods, services, and agricultural products; we will be redoubling our efforts to ensure that the technical barriers that inhibit those exports are steadily diminished.

How to Encode Non-tariff Measures in Regional Trade Agreements? Springer Nature

The Bipartisan Congressional Trade Priorities and Accountability Act of 2015 (BCTPAA, title II of P.L. 114-26) renewed the "trade promotion authority" (TPA) under which implementing bills for trade agreements that address non-tariff barriers to trade (and certain levels of tariff reduction) are eligible for expedited (or "fast track") consideration by Congress under the "trade authorities procedures" established by the Trade Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-618). These expedited procedures provide for automatic introduction of the implementing bill submitted by the President, attempt to ensure that both chambers will consider and vote on it, prohibit amendment, and eliminate any need to resolve bicameral differences before sending the measure to the President. (In practice, each chamber has usually agreed to consider each implementing bill under terms that modify or override the statutory requirements, but that usually retain the prohibition on amendment.) These arrangements have been viewed as assuring negotiating partners that the United States will implement a trade agreement in the form negotiated; they also ensure that Congress will be able to conclude action within a delimited period of time. For these reasons, however, they also have often been seen as restricting Congress to approving or disapproving the terms of a trade agreement in the form negotiated by the President. The BCTPAA, however, also mitigates these restrictions in several ways. First, it establishes numerous requirements that a trade agreement must meet in order for the implementing bill to be eligible for expedited consideration. Second, the BCTPAA provides several means by which Congress can deny expedited consideration for a specific trade agreement and either decline to consider it or consider it under terms that would permit amendment and eliminate debate limits. Finally, the BCTPAA provides that any of the resolutions through which Congress can deny expedited consideration becomes available for floor consideration in either chamber only through action by the respective revenue committee.

Addressing Non-tariff Measures to Promote Pakistan's Textile Sector University of Michigan Press
Non-tariff measures (NTMs) in international trade continues to cause trade costs to be high and to impede the further growth of trade and the gains that can be derived from trade. This book discusses some of the analytical methods that can be used to estimate the impact of NTMs on international trade, and the possible gains from their reform.

Assessing Arab Economic Integration Report Routledge

This year the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) publishes its second annual Report on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT Report). This report was created to respond to the concerns of U.S. companies, farmers, ranchers and manufacturers, which increasingly encounter non-tariff trade barriers in the form of product standards, testing requirements, and other technical requirements as they seek to sell products and services around the world. As tariff barriers to industrial and agricultural trade have fallen, standards-related measures of this kind have emerged as a primary concern. Governments, market participants and other entities can use standards-related measures as an effective and efficient means of achieving legitimate commercial and policy objectives. But when standards-related measures are outdated, overly burdensome, discriminatory, or otherwise inappropriate, these measures can reduce competition, stifle innovation, and create unnecessary technical barriers to trade. These kinds of measures can pose a particular problem for SMEs, which often do not have the resources to address these problems on their own. USTR is committed to identifying and combating unwarranted technical barriers to U.S. exports, many of which are detailed in this report. USTR's efforts to prevent and remove foreign technical barriers serve the President's goal of doubling U.S. exports by the end of 2014 through the National Export Initiative. Since the last TBT Report was released, the United States has launched new initiatives to promote greater international cooperation among regulatory authorities, trade officials, and standards experts to prevent the emergence of unjustifiable barriers to U.S. exports. We have made progress, for example, in encouraging our trading partners to address unwarranted or burdensome technical regulations through the U.S.-EU High-Level Regulatory Cooperation Forum, the U.S.-Mexico High-Level Regulatory Cooperation Council, the U.S.-Canada Regulatory Cooperation Council, and other fora. We have also taken successful steps to eliminate or reduce specific foreign barriers to U.S. exports, such as Indonesias rules limiting U.S. poultry and meat imports and Mexicos nutrition labeling requirements that impeded exports of American pre-packaged foods, among others. This year, USTR will continue to work with other agencies of the U.S. Government, as well as interested stakeholders, to encourage U.S. trading

partners to remove their unwarranted or overly burdensome technical barriers. As always, we will engage all available bilateral, regional, and multilateral contexts in our efforts to dismantle unjustifiable barriers to safe, high-quality U.S. industrial, consumer, and agricultural exports and strengthen the rules-based trading system. For example, in our capacity as host of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum in 2011, the United States has made cross-border regulatory cooperation and convergence a top priority for action. We look forward to making further progress on behalf of American manufacturers, workers, farmers, ranchers, and service providers, as well as families who depend on trade-supported American jobs.

The Ashgate Research Companion to International Trade Policy World Scientific Publishing Company

This study analyses the relationship between non-tariff measures (NTMs) applicable in the agricultural sector of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan and the sustainable development goals (SDGs). Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, as newer members of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), first established by Belarus, Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation in 2010, have the intention of eliminating intra-block barriers in the trade of goods, services, capital and labour. Elimination of barriers, as envisaged by the EAEU Treaty, specifically includes non-tariff regulation. However, the scope of non-tariff regulation, as defined in the Treaty, only includes traditional commercial instruments, such as licencing and quotas. Other regulations which are considered as NTMs by WTO, UNCTAD and other international organizations, such as sanitary and phytosanitary measures and technical barriers to trade, are addressed by other chapters in the Treaty and are not subject to elimination. As such, there is sometimes confusion in discussions about NTMs within the scope of the EAEU due to such varying definitions. Many NTMs (in broader sense) in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan are found to have legitimate and necessary objectives, such as protection of human, animal and plant health or, protection of the environment. At the same time, there seems to have been instances in the region of NTMs being overtly used with a protectionist intent. The bulk of the measures examined affecting agricultural trade, however, showed that the most frequent NTMs might be addressing health-related Sustainable Development Goals. Data on NTMs remain incomplete in many countries of the region. This is evident by the varying level of completeness of measures notified by EAEU member States to the WTO that are based on ratified EAEU regulations. As such, further efforts are needed to increase transparency in this area to ensure the measures do not create unnecessary barriers to trade and sustainable development.

Case Studies from Asia Behind-the-border PoliciesAssessing and Addressing Non-tariff MeasuresBehind-the-Border PoliciesAssessing and Addressing Non-Tariff Measures

Nontariff Measures and International Trade includes 20 chapters authored by John Beghin and co-authors over the last 20 years on the economics of quality-standard like nontariff measures in the context of international trade. This book provides a coherent and comprehensive treatment of these nontariff measures, from their measurement to their effects on trade and welfare. In Part I, the authors use different perspectives to make the case that, unlike tariffs, quality-standard like nontariff measures are complex to measure and analyze and do not easily lead to general policy prescriptions. Then, Part II contains contributions on measurements of welfare and trade effects of nontariff measures, accounting for potential market imperfections. Part III presents chapters on the potential protectionism of nontariff measures when they are used to favor some economic agents over society. The last part presents cases studies of nontariff measures in different industries, markets, and countries.

Nontariff Measures and International Trade Wto/Unctad Practical Guides to

This work examines how non-tariff measures (NTMs) applied by the European Union's major trading partners impacts EU exporters of goods—results are based on a survey of 8,100 companies from across 26 sectors in the EU's 28 member states—describes the survey methodology; presents the main results obtained in terms of impact on EU companies, by type of NTM, effects on companies of different sizes, particularly micro, small and medium-sized enterprises; draws conclusions on the importance of the role of the EU's negotiating agenda and implementation work to facilitate international trade. It includes survey data statistics and bibliographical references.
Comparison of European and Us Food Law Regulations in the Context of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership Asian Development Bank
Behind-the-border PoliciesAssessing and Addressing Non-tariff MeasuresBehind-the-Border PoliciesAssessing and Addressing Non-Tariff MeasuresCambridge University Press
A Toolkit for Policy Makers Createspace Independent Publishing Platform

' As tariffs have fallen worldwide, the increasing importance of non-tariff policies for further trade

liberalization has become widely recognized. The methods for assessing the potential effects of such liberalization have lagged significantly behind those available for analyzing tariffs. This book is the first volume that comprehensively addresses this gap. It has been designed to be useful for both economists and policymakers, especially for those involved in communicating ideas and results between economists and policymakers. This indispensable book contains cutting-edge discussions of the full range of methodologies used in this area, including business surveys, summary statistics such as effective rates of protection and price gaps, time-series and panel econometrics, and simulation methods such as computable general equilibrium. It covers the entire spectrum of policies under discussion in current trade negotiations, including trade facilitation, services policies, quantitative measures, customs procedures, standards, movement of natural persons, and anti-dumping. Some prominent contributors to this book are Bijit Bora (World Trade Organization), John Wilson, Tsunehiro Otsuki and Vlad Manole (World Bank), Catherine Mann (Institute of International Economics), Alan Deardorff and Robert Stern (University of Michigan), Joe Francois (Erasmus University), Dean Spinanger (University of Kiel), Antoni Estevadeordal and Kati

Suominen (Inter-American Development Bank), Thomas Prusa (Rutgers University), Thomas Hertel and Terrie Walmsley (Purdue University), Scott Bradford (Brigham Young University), Judith Dean, Robert Feinberg, Soamiely Andriamananjara and Marinos Tsigas (US International Trade Commission). Contents: Obtaining Data on the Incidence of NTMs The Effects of Services-Type Measures Trade Facilitation The Effects of Quota-Type and Standards-Type Measures Estimating Tariff Equivalents of NTMs Without Simulation The Effects of Other Policies Using Estimates of NTM Impacts in Simulations Methodological Aids Readership: Economists and quantitative practitioners involved in trade policy analysis; policymakers with responsibility in non-tariff measures and trade facilitation; graduates in international economics. Keywords: Non-Tariff Measures; Non-Tariff Barriers; Trade Policy; Commercial Policy; International Economics; Trade Facilitation Key Features: The first book to address the importance of non-tariff policies for further trade liberalization For the policymaker, it brings together a wide selection of the most recent findings of the potential effects of liberalizing non-tariff measures and improving trade facilitation For the empirical practitioner, in-depth discussions are provided of issues often covered lightly elsewhere,

such as data sources, construction of indices, and neglected microeconomic foundations of liberalization Reviews: "As tariffs have declined, non-tariff barriers have become increasingly important in merchandise trade, and they remain the central concern in services. Yet our measures of these barriers are appallingly weak. This volume plays a vitally important role in focussing attention on non-tariff barriers and their assessment. It brings together top scholars working in this dynamic area, who offer sophisticated techniques grounded in real world data. This volume is a must-read for anyone working on the analysis of trade policies." Will Martin Lead Economist World Bank "Trade policy in the real world has moved far beyond the familiar tariffs of textbook economics. Comprehending the impact of non-tariff barriers and trade facilitation measures on international trade is among the most important, and analytically difficult, challenges confronting economists and policy makers. This outstanding volume brings together state-of-the-art treatments of these critical issues and should be essential reading for both researchers and practitioners interested in understanding trade policy as it is really practiced today." Marcus Noland Senior Fellow Institute for International Economics '