



United Nations

Department of Economic and Social Affairs

# Virtual Expert Group Meeting on Institutions and Governance for Accelerating Sustainable Public Procurement

CEPA Working Group on Sustainable Public Procurement

24 November 2020 | 9:30 to 11:30 am (EST)

## Introduction: Institutions and Governance for Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP)

Dr. Louis Meuleman

- Visiting professor public governance KU Leuven, Belgium;
- Vice chair United Nations Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA)





## Objective of this webinar:

- Discussion of experts and practitioners on **institutional arrangements and governance mechanisms** that could help accelerate adoption of sustainable public procurement practices
- **CEPA will consider issues** pertaining to sustainable public procurement in the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development **at its 20th session in April 2021.**





**UN Under-Secretary-General Liu Zhenmin:**

“The **Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA)** is the only body in the ECOSOC system dedicated to institution building in its many forms. Progress in this area is a foundation of progress on all the Sustainable Development Goals.”

 USA	 Belgium	 India	 France	 Cabo Verde	 South Africa
 Malaysia	 UK	 Ghana	 Kenya	 China	 Netherlands
 Jamaica	 Lebanon	 Cameroon	 Dominican Republic	 Slovakia	 Croatia
 Brazil	 Venezuela	 Thailand	 Bangladesh	 Algeria	 Russian Federation



- CEPA's focus is on **quality of institutions and governance** for implementing the SDGs
- One annual one-week session/y at the UN HQ in New York (April)
- Conclusions go to the **UN ECOSOC Council** and to the **HLPF** (both in July)
- April 2021: 20th CEPA Session, with SPP on the agenda:

5. Strengthening the analytical basis for reform policies based on the principles of effective governance for sustainable development.

6. Integrating the Sustainable Development Goals into national and subnational budgeting and financial management.

→ 7. Sustainable public procurement in the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development.

8. Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on essential workers in the public sector.

9. Building strong institutions for sustainable development in conflict-affected countries.



- **SPP is a crucial enabler and multiplier of sustainability.** Public procurement represents on average of 13 to 20 per cent of GDP.
- But: according to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), 10 to 25 per cent of a public contract's overall value may be lost due to **corruption**.
- SPP is progressively embraced by countries as a **strategic tool to drive sustainability and transform markets**

## Scaling up Voluntary Sustainability Standards through Sustainable Public Procurement and Trade Policy





# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



SDG 12.7: promoting public procurement practices that are sustainable, in accordance with national policies and priorities



- **SDG 12.7.1 indicator: “Degree of SPP policies and action plan implementation”**
- Composite indicator with 8 sub-indicators, coordinated by UNEP.
- Febr 2020: Inter Agency Expert Group on SDG Indicators -> agree to **Tier 2 level**

A: Existence of a SPP **action plan/policy/national programme**, and/or regulation mandating the implementation of SPP.

B: SPP **regulatory framework** and practice.

C: **Number of staff** dedicated to supporting the implementation of SPP policy or SPP practitioners.

D: **Training/Capacity-building** of public procurement practitioners on SPP.

E: **Practical support** delivered to public procurement practitioners for the implementation of SPP.

F: SPP **purchasing criteria/ buying standards** / requirements identified.

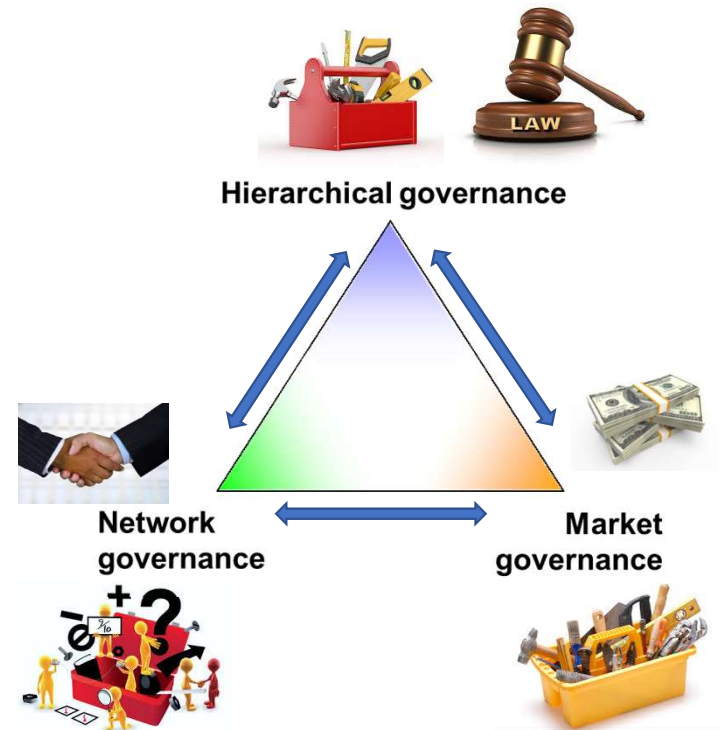
G: Existence of an **SPP monitoring system**.

H: **Percentage of sustainable purchase** of priority products/services.



- There are **different institutional and governance approaches to SPP in different countries**, all with their specific advantages and disadvantages

- Current approaches vary between **voluntary** and **obligatory** schemes, and as regards the **level of detail** of product group specifications







- As generally with governance for the SDGs: We should look at various models, because **there is no one-size-fits-all solution**
- **Peer learning** between countries can be an important accelerator of SPP and should be stimulated





## **Some guiding questions for the webinar:**

- How to improve collaboration and exchange of product group specifications?
- How to use digital tools to support SPP?
- How to strengthen legal frameworks?
- How to scale up peer learning?
- Is there a match between SPP institutions/governance, and the dominant (sub)national governance style (hierarchical, network or market governance)?
- Where there are mismatches, is this because of low political priority or for other reasons?
- Is low political priority linked to lack of knowledge?
- Even if there is a mismatch, there may be unexpected and underused opportunities. What are they? What institutional and governance interventions could support SPP under which typical conditions?



## **9 Short contributions (7 min.):**

1. SPP as accelerator of the SDGs – also under instable circumstances?
2. SPP as a modern financial/fiscal tool, creating new markets for sustainable products & jobs, improving competitiveness
3. SPP & new markets for sustainable products & jobs, improving competitiveness (tbc)
4. SPP challenges and solutions at local level
5. Concrete SPP example from The Netherlands
6. Concrete SPP example from Southern Africa
7. Concrete SPP example from Asia-Pacific
8. Concrete SPP example from Costa Rica
9. SPP & new markets for sustainable products & jobs, improving competitiveness (EU example)



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