

FOR IMMEDIATE REPORTING

**THIRD MEETING OF THE EUROPEAN UNION-SINGAPORE
FREE TRADE AGREEMENT (EUSFTA) TRADE AND
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (TSD) BOARD**

1. On 14 April 2025, Singapore and the EU convened the third meeting of the European Union-Singapore Free Trade Agreement (EUSFTA) Trade and Sustainable Development (TSD) Board. Officials from the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI), Ministry of Manpower (MOM), Ministry of Sustainability and the Environment (MSE), National Environment Agency (NEA), Singapore's National Water Agency (PUB), as well as their EU counterparts attended the meeting in Singapore.
2. The Singapore and EU officials welcomed the smooth implementation of the EUSFTA, including for the TSD Chapter. Both sides reaffirmed Singapore and the EU's shared commitment towards upholding the open and rules-based multilateral system, amidst a more volatile international trade environment. They exchanged updates on Singapore's and the EU's ambitious agendas for trade and sustainable development, including approaches to international carbon pricing, trade-related climate measures, resource circularity, as well as enhancements to labour policies such as stronger protections for platform workers. To further strengthen trade linkages, both sides also discussed possible areas to expand future economic exchanges and collaborations, including bilateral trade partnerships in the green economy and water cooperation.
3. Alongside the TSD board meeting, Singapore and the EU organised the third TSD Public Stakeholders' Forum on 15 April 2025. Chaired jointly by Singapore and EU officials, the Forum was attended by Singapore and EU businesses, labour and environmental stakeholders. Singapore and EU stakeholders had good exchanges on possible areas of cooperation between the Singapore and EU governments and civil society, and shared insightful perspectives on trade, digital environment, and labour issues.
4. The joint statement of the third EU-Singapore TSD Board Meeting can be found in [Annex A](#). An overview of the TSD Chapter can be found in [Annex B](#).

MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY
15 APRIL 2025

Annex A – Joint Statement of the third EU-Singapore TSD Board Meeting
Annex B – Background on the EU-Singapore Free Trade Agreement and the Trade and Sustainable Development Chapter

For media enquiries, please contact:

Pakhrin Tan
Senior Assistant Director
Communications and Engagement Division
Ministry of Trade and Industry
E-mail: Pakhrin_TAN@mti.gov.sg

JOINT STATEMENT OF THE THIRD EU-SINGAPORE TRADE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (TSD) BOARD MEETING

On 14 April 2025, European Commission and Singapore officials held the third European Union-Singapore Free Trade Agreement (EUSFTA) Trade and Sustainable Development (TSD) Board via a hybrid (in-person and online) format in Singapore. The meeting was co-chaired by Ms. Lai Shu Ying, Director, Europe and Central Asia Division in the Singapore Ministry of Trade and Industry and Mr. Sergio Balibrea, Senior Adviser (Sustainable Development), European Commission Directorate General for Trade and Economic Security (DG TRADE). From the EU side, representatives from DG TRADE with support from DG ENV, CLIMA, EMPL, and the EU Delegation to Singapore participated. For Singapore, representatives from the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI), Ministry of Manpower (MOM), the Ministry of Sustainability and the Environment (MSE), National Environment Agency (NEA) and Singapore's National Water Agency (PUB) participated.

Establishment of TSD Board

2 The meeting agenda was adopted by the board.

3 The TSD Board recognised the EU and Singapore's commitment towards upholding the open and rules-based multilateral system. Amidst a more fragmented international environment, the EU and Singapore remain like-minded partners in deepening our economic linkages and encouraging the growth of trade flows. The EUSFTA continues to serve as a strong foundation for our economic partnership, and contributes towards both sides' economic growth and sustainable development. The EUSFTA also builds on our longstanding cooperation at the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and other international fora, reaffirming our shared commitment to the rules-based multilateral trading order and strong stand against protectionism. The EU and Singapore reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening collaboration on trade and sustainable development.

Updates on the Institutional Setup

4 The EU and Singapore updated each other on their respective ongoing processes regarding the institutional setup of the TSD Board. The TSD Board welcomed the progress in both sides' efforts towards establishing the rules of procedure for the TSD Panel of Experts, and a list of individuals who would be willing and able to serve on the Panel of Experts, as envisioned in Article 12.17 of the EUSFTA. Both sides will continue to work towards the formal establishment of the rules of procedure and list of individuals for the Panel of Experts.

Trade, Environment and Climate

5 The EU and Singapore welcomed continued discussions on trade, environment and climate issues and presented updates on trade-related aspects of their environment and climate policies since the last TSD Board meeting in 2023.

6 Both sides had an exploratory discussion on the potential for bilateral trade partnerships in the green economy, with Singapore providing an overview of its approach to green economy cooperation including its network of Green Economy Agreements (GEAs) and frameworks. The EU also shared about its ambition to promote new investments and trade flows in support of decarbonisation objectives, in that respect the EU introduced its Clean Trade and Investment Partnerships (CTIPs). Both sides welcomed further opportunities to explore possible areas and modalities of cooperation in the green economy between the EU and Singapore.

7 The EU and Singapore continued their constructive discussions on international trade policies that serve climate objectives. This included discussions on the EU Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) and the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR). The EU also presented its Communication on the Clean and Industrial Deal (CID), the EU strategy to leverage decarbonisation and circularity which include an Action Plan on Affordable Energy aimed at reducing energy costs for households and business. Both sides acknowledged the role of these measures in driving climate action and encouraging the adoption of more sustainable practices. The EU and Singapore also reaffirmed the importance of ensuring that such measures are aligned with international agreements, do not hinder open trade flows, and consider the perspectives and concerns of industry stakeholders. Singapore welcomed the EU's Omnibus Package announced in March 2025, which is aimed at simplifying administrative and compliance requirements on businesses. The EU and Singapore discussed the possibility of sharing their experience in carbon pricing at the regional level, and the EU presented its intention to organise the first EU-ASEAN conference on carbon pricing. The EU will engage the ASEAN Chairmanship and country coordinator to advance on this initiative. Both sides look forward to further opportunities to exchange views on international trade policies that serve climate objectives and ensuring that the implementation of these policies advance both the trade and climate agenda.

8 Singapore provided an update on its strategies on circular economy and waste management under its Zero Waste Masterplan. The EU provided updates on the EU revised Waste Shipment Regulation, and the EU Circular Economy Action Plan (CEAP), which will facilitate the EU's transition to a circular economy.

9 The EU also provided an update on the latest developments in the water sector and shared that cooperation on water resources management is vital to securing sustainable development. Both sides provided updates on their ongoing efforts to ensure water sustainability amidst climate change and exchanged views on their respective priorities ahead of the 2026 UN Water Conference. Singapore also shared how it is supporting the global water agenda.

Trade and Labour

10 The EU and Singapore presented updates on their respective labour policies since the last TSD Board meeting in 2023. Singapore provided an update on its ongoing actions towards ratifying and effectively implementing the outstanding ILO fundamental conventions, namely C087 (freedom of association & right to organise), C111 (non-discrimination), and C105 (forced labour). Singapore had already ratified the newer ILO fundamental conventions, namely C155 and C187. Following from previous TSD Board discussions on both sides' approaches to improve labour protection of persons performing platform work, Singapore gave an update on the Platform Workers Act which was recently introduced in September 2024. The Act enables platform workers to benefit from improved housing and retirement adequacy, financial protection in the case of work injury and a legal framework for representation.

11 The EU presented an update to its labour policies notably on its Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work 2021-2027, and recent initiatives related to decent work, in particular the 2022 Communication Decent Work Worldwide. In that respect, the EU provided clarification on its Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD) as amended by the Omnibus simplification package in February 2025. The CSDDD establishes a corporate due diligence duty for large undertakings active across the EU. The EU also gave an update on the Forced Labour ban, adopted in 2024, which will start applying in December 2027. The Regulation prohibits economic operators from placing products made using forced labour on the EU market or exporting from them.

12 The EU and Singapore reaffirmed their commitment to take continued and sustained efforts towards the ratification and effective implementation of the remaining ILO Fundamental Conventions. Both sides agreed to continue to exchange information regarding trade and labour in future TSD Board meetings.

Conclusion

13 The third TSD Board meeting built on the constructive discussions of the previous two TSD Board meetings. It provided an opportunity to discuss recent developments and exchange perspectives on forward-looking initiatives, including exploring new areas of green economy cooperation between Singapore and the EU.

Both sides reaffirmed the shared goals of advancing environmental sustainability, improving labour standards, and ensuring that trade policies contribute to long-term, sustainable growth. The EU and Singapore agreed to reconvene at the next TSD Board meeting and continue their efforts towards the effective implementation of the EUSFTA Trade and Sustainable Development Chapter.

ANNEX B

BACKGROUND ON THE EU-SINGAPORE FREE TRADE AGREEMENT AND THE TRADE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT CHAPTER

EU-Singapore Free Trade Agreement (EUSFTA)

The EUSFTA, which entered into force on 21 November 2019, is the first free trade agreement (FTA) between the EU and an ASEAN Member State. As an ambitious and forward-looking agreement, it provides increased market access, addresses non-tariff barriers, and contains provisions on 21st century trade issues such as e-commerce, intellectual property, and sustainable development including renewable energy generation. As a pathfinder towards an eventual EU-ASEAN FTA, the EUSFTA also enhances region-to-region connectivity between the EU – the world's largest single market, and ASEAN – the fourth largest economic bloc by 2030.

Trade and Sustainable Development (TSD) and the EUSFTA

The EUSFTA contains strong rules on TSD, including the protection of labour rights and the environment. It reflects the EU and Singapore's shared belief that economic development, social development, and environmental protection are interdependent and mutually-reinforcing components of sustainable development.

Under the TSD Chapter, the EU and Singapore agreed to set up a Board on Trade and Sustainable Development (TSD Board), comprising EU and Singapore officials who are tasked with the effective implementation of the TSD Chapter. The EU and Singapore also agreed to establish new consultative mechanisms or make use of existing consultative mechanisms to seek advice from relevant domestic stakeholders on the implementation of the TSD Chapter.

Under the EUSFTA, the EU and Singapore committed to hold the first TSD Board meeting within two years of the agreement's entry into force, and thereafter as necessary, to oversee the implementation of the TSD Chapter. The inaugural TSD Board meeting was held via videoconference in November 2020, within one year of the EUSFTA's entry into force in 2019. The second TSD Board meeting was held in March 2023 in Brussels, Belgium.