

The following are a list of the working committees set up in 2001. Some of these committees have been quite successful, others less so. While originally intended to be a “committee” the working committees which have been most successful have been those where a consortium member has had the desire to ensure that progress is made. As a result these working committees often reflect a commitment by the GTAP staff member and the consortium member to work together to improve an aspect of the GTAP data base and model. Given that a formal working committee does not need to be set up to ensure commitments between GTAP staff and individual board members, the working committees will not continue. Below is a summary of each of the working committee’s achievements since 2001 and any comments on future areas of potential collaboration.

Services

The terms of reference of this working committee on services set up in 2001 were to:

1. Oversee assembly of Services data on GTAP web site;
2. Evaluate alternative measures of protection;
3. Organize a special session at the Fifth Annual Conference in Taiwan.

Progress has been made on services by the Productivity Commission, Australia and the US ITC, USA. In 2003 a workshop sponsored by the APEC was held in Thailand on Non-tariff barriers. In the Seventh Annual Conference in Washington D.C this year, Michael Ferrantino of the US ITC has put together a special session in this area. In 2005, Terrie Walmsley and Philippa Dee plan to produce a technical paper using Philippa Dee’s research of the tariff equivalents for services in Russia to examine the impact of Russia’s accession to the WTO using the GTAP model modified to take a count of FDI. The bilateral FDI data base produced by Philippa Dee at the Productivity Commission will also be made available on the GTAP web site.

Technical Barriers to Trade

The terms of reference of this working committee on technical barriers to trade set up in 2001 were to:

1. Explore the possibility of using the Hummels method to identifying ad valorem tariff equivalents associated with TBTs;
2. Try to identify a graduate student or other researcher to implement this scheme on a prototype basis.

This was indeed undertaken and the Ph.D. student in question got as far as a prospectus seminar. However, in the end, this did not prove to be an operational approach and the work has now been discontinued.

Agricultural Support

The terms of reference of this working committee on agricultural support set up in 2001 were to:

1. Collect feedback on the treatment of agricultural support in the version 5 data base;

2. Explore alternative approaches to the measurement and incorporation of domestic support in the data base;
3. Identify links with primary factor splits in agriculture;
4. Propose a “patch” to version 5 designed to improve on this aspect of the data base.

In a pilot study reported in GTAP Working Paper #19, Dimaranan, Hertel and Keeney revised the treatment of agricultural support by fixing the historical payments paid to land to better reflect their decoupled nature. A similar approach has not yet been implemented on the GTAP data base because of the changes in the GTAP model that will be necessary in order to take advantage of the change in the data structure.

UN-SNA

The terms of reference of this working committee on UN-SNA set up in 2001 were to:

1. Explore possible links with the UN Statistical Office;
2. Advise GTAP staff on SNA guidelines that will improve quality of country submissions

Channing Arndt visited the UN; however, no progress was made in this activity. Scott McDonald presented a paper on this topic at the conference.

Russia/Eastern Europe

The terms of reference of this working committee on Russia and Eastern Europe set up in 2001 were to:

1. Initiate contacts with potential data base contributors for this region;
2. Explore funding possibilities with the US Dept. of Commerce for work on Eastern Europe;
3. Encourage increased collaboration in region.

This working committee has been very successful. Russia and Albania have been incorporated into the GTAP data base as a result of the efforts of Robert Koopman from the US ITC. The Center is also currently collaborating with the contributors of the Russian data in a project examining the impact of Russia’s accession to the WTO, funded by the OECD. This work was presented at the Seventh Annual Conference on Global Trade Analysis by Vitaly Kharitonov and by Terrie Walmsley in Kazakstan.

Baseline

The terms of reference of this working committee on the baseline set up in 2001 were to:

1. Update material presented by Terrie at 2001 board meeting to reflect most recent GEP forecasts;
2. Update baseline to reflect version 5 data base;

3. Post revised baseline inputs on website for 211 countries and 66 GTAP regions.

The GTAP baseline was updated to incorporate the latest GEP forecasts and to be consistent with version 5 prior to the last board meeting. Although the terms of reference set out at the 2001 board meeting have been successfully fulfilled there is still a great deal of work that can still be done to improve the GTAP baseline, including further revisions to the labor forecasts, updating to version 6, and incorporating more policy shocks into the baseline.

Energy

The terms of reference of this working committee on energy set up in 2001 were to:

1. Evaluate version 5 data base with respect to energy quality;
2. Explore links with IEA and US DOE for future supply of volume and price data.

The working committee on energy has been successful. In 2003, we continued on establishing contact with IEA for the acquisition of IEA energy volume and prices/taxes data. In January 2004, we formally obtained the official agreement from IEA on the use of the IEA Extended Energy Balances and prices/taxes data for the GTAP data base construction.

Primary Factor Splits

The terms of reference of this working committee on primary factor splits set up in 2001 were to:

1. Explore possibilities for removing self-employed labor payments from capital in contributed data bases;
2. Explore possibilities for improving the skilled/unskilled split within labor payments.

No progress has been made in this area. We need to re-activate the Working Committee on this topic and solicit more input from the Board members.

Open-sourcing

The terms of reference of this committee on Open-sourcing set up in 2001 were to:

1. Work with the GTAP board to identify potential funding sources for the open-source/free data idea.

No such sources have been identified; no activity in this area is currently proposed.