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Paris (75016)

Biodiversité et Coopération européenne au Développement

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La plupart des personnes pauvres sont dépendantes des aliments, de l'énergie et de l'eau que la nature leur fournit. Les menaces qui pèsent sur la diversité biologique, d'où sont tirés ces biens et services, peuvent ainsi avoir un impact direct sur leurs conditions de vie. Par conséquent, dans certains cas, la conservation de la nature peut générer de plus grandes options pour améliorer leur existence.

14h-17h30 : Alain Lipietz préside le Workshop "Trade and Economic Cooperation".

Lieu

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19, avenue Kléber
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Biodiversity in European Development Cooperation

Workshop No 6
Biodiversity, Trade and Economic Cooperation

Introduction

Economic growth is the engine for development, with international trade as one of the main drivers. Trade is also closely linked to environmental quality. Improved coherence of trade and environmental policies is essential to ensure that investments in poverty reduction are sustainable.

Trade has long been recognized as a tool for development. Under the right conditions, economic growth through trade can make a major contribution to poverty reduction. Alternatively, the benefits of trade may be captured by a privileged minority and perpetuate social inequities.

Similarly, development through trade can be beneficial or harmful to the environment. In the best case, both the environment and the poor can benefit from trade based on the sustainable use of biological resources (e.g. 'green' trade). This ideal is expressed in the founding articles of the World Trade Organization, which call for 'the optimal use of the world's resources in accordance with the objective of sustainable development, seeking both to protect and preserve the environment.'

Conversely, environmental degradation in developing countries is often linked to the extraction of natural resources for export (e.g. fish, timber, minerals). While direct environmental impacts are most visible, in many cases the most significant and long-lasting impacts of trade are indirect, for example changes in land use and political relations due to large-scale immigration associated with natural resource booms.

The world's poorest people in developing countries are often least able to adjust to the changes arising from trade liberalization. All too often, growth in exports reduces the availability of natural resources to local populations, leaving the poor with fewer possibilities to earn a livelihood.

The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment states that 'any progress achieved in addressing the goals of poverty and hunger eradication, improved health, and environmental protection is unlikely to be sustained if most of the ecosystem 'services' on which humanity relies continue to be degraded.' Consequently, the promotion of trade as an instrument of development cooperation can only be effective if it is embedded within a broader strategy for sustainable development, including the conservation and sustainable use of biological resources. Such a strategy should also include provisions to ensure fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources, as called for by the Convention on Biological Diversity. The involvement and support of the private sector (exporters and importers) in both donor and partner countries will be critical to making such a strategy effective.

Workshop objectives, questions and expected outcomes

General Objective

Ensure coherence between trade, economic and development cooperation in support of sustainable development, with a focus on the conservation and sustainable use of biological resources.

Purpose of the Workshop

Identify opportunities for improving the coherence of development cooperation, trade and economic cooperation (based on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystem services);

Explore measures to increase the proportion of EU imports from partner countries based on natural and agricultural products derived from sustainable management systems;

Identify the roles and responsibilities of various actors (EC, partner states, private sector, NGOs) to reach these objectives; and

Develop specific recommendations (a road map) to optimize the impact of international trade on biodiversity.

Key Questions

What instruments are available or needed to improve the coherence of development cooperation, trade and economic cooperation, from the perspective of biodiversity conservation?

What instruments are available or needed to increase the proportion of EU imports of natural and agricultural products from partner countries that are derived from sustainable management systems?

What are the response options of the various actors (EC, member states, partner states, private sector, NGOs) to reach the objectives?

Expected Outcomes

Improved understanding of the impacts of bilateral trade agreements on biodiversity and livelihoods, such as EU-ACP Economic Partnership Agreements and existing or forthcoming agreements with Mercosur, Central America, the Andean Community and the Mediterranean region;

Enhanced dialogue between different stakeholders (governments, private sector, civil society) on EU trade, economic cooperation and development cooperation, with a focus on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystem services.