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A Green perspective on international trade

Trade in which people and the environment matter

The Green strategy for a sustainable international trade policy is based on three basic principles which are entirely compatible with the present system of the World Trade Organisation (WTO):

- Strengthening domestic and regional markets - make global trade complementary to domestic economic development, rather than a replacement for it
- Setting global social and environmental standards for global trade
- Making the governance of global trade more democratic

These principles seem utopian - and, indeed, they are: they not only require a functioning multilateral trade system, but also the creation of much wider policy spaces at national level in which people can freely decide about their social and environmental development goals.

However, at the same time, each of these principles is realistic. The growingly widespread concern in most countries - including industrialised countries - that economic globalisation is 'out of control' and threatens their well-being, provides the basis for support for a Green policy which is both far-reaching and pragmatic.

For this Green policy to be successful, it particularly important to bolster support for a rule-based multilateral trading system, the reform of the WTO, the integration of the WTO in a coherent system of economic global governance and the defense of national exceptions to trade rules which the WTO allows for.

See document paper **Towards a Green Position on the Future of International Trade**

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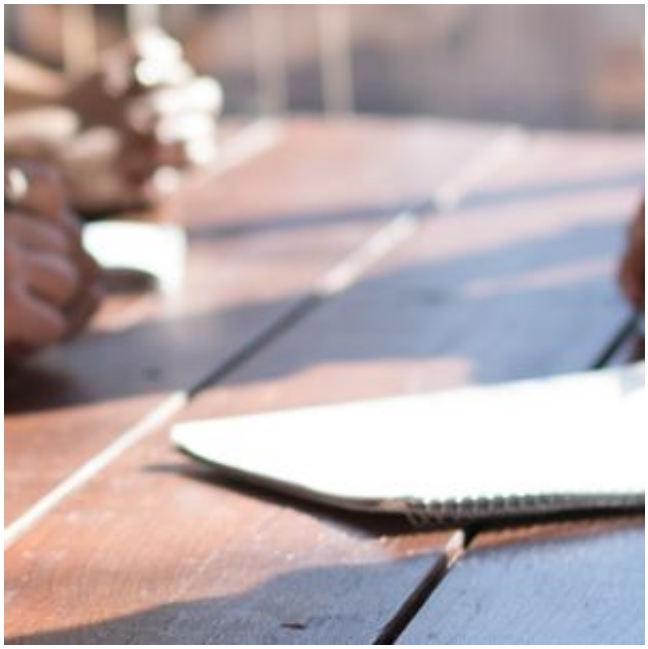

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Heads of national delegations in the GREENS/EFA Group

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