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Policy Paper | 02.05.2022

Review of the 15-point action plan

INTA Working Group Policy paper

INTRODUCTION

As demonstrated in the European Sustainable Development Report 2021, *"European countries generate sizeable negative spillovers outside the region – with serious environmental and socio-economic consequences for the rest of the world. (...) Decoupling socio-economic progressfrom negative domestic and imported impacts on climate and biodiversity requires further effort, through domestic actions and international cooperation".*

The Greens consider that an overhauled trade policy with a review of the TSD chapters at its core should combine rather than juxtapose the goal of optimizing market opportunities with scaling up sustainability practices across the board in conformity with the Sustainable Development Goals. In our view, instead of a trade-off, win-win situations can arise from a fruitful reform widely reflected in all existing and future trade deals. Trade agreements have to be designed as a partnership of equals striking a balance between more trade and more sustainability. This should participate to enhanced ownership and legitimacy of trade deals, increasingly scrutinised and criticised by EU citizens.

In order to achieve this, the EU should review its premise that trade's primary objective is to increase trade volumes and support economic growth, while environmental, social and human rights considerations are side-effects to be mitigated. A shift is therefore needed in order to make sustainable development a genuine primary goal of EU trade agreements in line with the European Green Deal, the Communication "Decent Work Worldwide", the EU Action Plan on Promotion of Human Rights and Democracy in the World, the EU Gender Action Plan III to name a few. In that sense, we consider that sustainability is a transversal concern to pull all provisions in the same direction, avoiding diverging, even contradictory effects.

[...]

- READ THE FULL POLICY PAPER (pdf)

This policy paper was supported by a report conducted by IEEP, supervised by MEP Saskia Bricmont and sponsored by the International Cluster of the Greens/EFA Group in the European Parliament.

- Download the IEEP report *'Enhancing sustainability in EU Free Trade Agreements. The case for a holistic approach (IEEP, 2022)'*

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Responsible MEPs



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Attached documents

Review of the 15-point action plan
Enhancing sustainability in EU Free Trade Agreements. The case for a holistic approach (IEEP, 2022)

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