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Press release | 03.02.2011

EU banana regime

EP votes against the interests of small banana producers by endorsing change in banana regime

The European Parliament today voted to endorse an agreement reached in the WTO aimed at ending the long-running dispute on the EU's banana regime. The Greens opposed the agreement, which is against the interests of small producers and developing countries. After the vote, Green MEP **Catherine Greze** said: ***"This agreement is a blow to developing countries and small banana producers and we seriously regret that the EP has voted to endorse the deal. In reality, the proposed changes to the EU's banana regime will really only benefit big US fruit exporters like Chiquita and have nothing to do with fair trade or development. "Given the EU has now reduced tariffs to even lower levels than those set out in the Geneva agreement for almost all Latin American countries via bilateral trade agreements, it is also a blow to Ecuador and its producers. It is being unfairly singled out for its refusal to accept a far-reaching free trade agreement with the EU. "The Greens are also concerned that the accompanying 'compensatory support' for the ACP developing countries, which the preferential trade scheme was designed to protect, is not sufficient to offset the negative impacts and could be financed by diverting funding from other areas of the EU's development budget. The compensatory support is based on the outdated tariff reductions in the Geneva agreement, rather than the terms of the more recent bilateral agreements.***

"The future for small banana producers and sustainable production is now even more uncertain."

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