

Sustainability Impact Assessment of WTO Negotiations: Final Global Overview SIA and Sector Study for Fisheries

Notes on Public Meeting to Discuss the Project Inception Reports Centre Borschette, Brussels, 15th February 2006

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Civil Society European Commission's Data base

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The following issues were discussed at the meeting:

General

1. The studies should give careful consideration to the labour market impacts of liberalisation scenarios, in terms of both quantity and quality of employment. In the developing country context it is important to acknowledge the existence of the 'working poor'.
2. Consideration should be given to the effective presentation and dissemination of the reports' findings.
3. The need to continue with strengthening consultation procedures with stakeholders in developing countries was highlighted
4. The studies should reflect the Hong-Kong Ministerial Conference results

Overall SIA

1. The intentions for undertaking further detailed sectoral studies as part of the Final Overview SIA needed to be clarified
2. How detailed will the assessment of EU impacts be?
3. Is the water sector covered?
4. Need to consider the impact of MFA removal on developing country textile and clothing producers. This could provide a valuable source of evidence for the ex ante assessment of NAMA trade liberalisation component of DDA

Fisheries

- FAO production figures are often unreliable, partly because data on China are often too high. As a result, it is often better to use data excluding China or present that country separately.
- As part of Causal Chain Analysis, it was suggested that other sub-sectors that are related to fisheries trade (e.g. livestock feed, soya) are also investigated.
- It was suggested that in addition to partial liberalisation (i.e. tariff reductions) it would be interesting to also have an analysis of a full liberalisation scenario. It was pointed out that the results from a partial liberalisation scenario could be extrapolated to a zero-for-zero scenario (i.e. full liberalisation).
[The team have subsequently agreed that the focus of the study should be on partial liberalisation, which is also the most likely outcome of the WTO negotiations, but country case study implementers will be asked if a zero duty scenario can be included in the on-going assessment, time permitting].
- The importance of the issue of preference erosion was highlighted.
- It was suggested that countries such as Pakistan, which is not a very big player in fisheries terms but has many livelihoods depending on the sector, should not be overlooked in the analysis. These countries also face difficulties e.g. in maintaining sustainable fisheries and in developing capacity to meet trade requirements (e.g. Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures).

- The importance of the consultation process was stressed. The team pointed out that case studies have been initiated in six countries and that consultation was taking place with key stakeholders such as public sector decision makers, representatives of private sector associations, NGOs etc.
- Aquaculture production requires substantial protein inputs (e.g. fishmeal), where carnivorous species are produced which can have negative knock-on effects for other eco-systems (e.g. small pelagics). Better management of eco-systems is required in order to increase long-term productivity of fisheries and trade. The livestock feed sector faces similar problems. Mitigation measures are likely to be important in this context.
- It was suggested that ecosystem analysis and the assessment of trophic levels was a more effective approach than using fish stock levels.
- The importance of analysing fisheries subsidies and their reduction was pointed out. At the same time it was acknowledged that subsidies are a controversial topic.