

The Finnish NGDO Platform to the EU, Kehys

Kehys offers services to NGOs on EU development policy issues. The Platform actively engages in the debate on EU development policy and supports NGOs in understanding and influencing the EU by distributing information and facilitating policy activities.

Kehys focuses especially on **policy coherence for development**. It aims to stimulate public debate on the issue and it strives to increase the political will to make changes and to ensure that the actions match the commitments.

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Kehys' Members:

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Kehys is the Finnish national platform within the European NGO confederation for relief and development, CONCORD.

Policy Coherence for Development and the European Union

Political Will

One of the main threats to development is the amount of European policies that negatively affect developing countries. If we want to increase the effectiveness of the European development cooperation policy and eradicate poverty, it is necessary to place policy coherence for development (PCD) higher on the agenda of European decision-makers.

Common sense

Because decisions in one policy area are not made in a vacuum, they are bound to have an influence on other policy sectors too. Policy coherence simply means that these impacts are taken into consideration at the different stages of decision-making. It is not just a question of fairness but also of efficiency and common sense. Development aid alone is not enough if, at the same time, contradictory policies weaken the position of developing countries.

It is important to identify the mechanisms that connect different policies with poverty. We need research to show the extent to which decisions in different policy sectors in rich countries practically affect the position of developing countries. It is important to spread information, point out incoherencies and prompt discussion about them.

The EU Commitments: The Gap between Theory and Practise

The European Union is legally obligated to take account the objectives of development cooperation in the policies that it implements, which are likely to affect developing countries (Art. 178 of the Treaty establishing the European Community).

Most recently this has been reaffirmed in the European Consensus on Development, a policy statement jointly adopted by the European Parliament, European Commission and the Council in 2005. The European Consensus states that the EU will strengthen policy coherence for development procedures, instruments and mechanisms at all levels, and secure adequate resources and share best practice to further these aims.

The European Union is the world's largest donor of official development aid. It is a powerful global actor that has the opportunity to act effectively against poverty and inequality. The EU has shown interest in improving policy coherence for development. As a next step, these objectives have to be transformed into reality.



Fishy business – Market Access for ACP fisheries products

● For a great number of African, Caribbean and Pacific group of States (ACP), trade in fish and fisheries products constitutes a vital source of income, and provides employment in local fisheries communities. Approximately 37 per cent of all worldwide catches are traded internationally¹; nearly half originates in developing countries and 85% of the total is destined for developed countries².

However, there are severe restrictions on market access for developing countries' fisheries products. One example of this is the fact that the ACP countries' exports to the EU have to comply with the **Rules of Origin (RoO)** and stringent **sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) standards**.

In practice, Rules of Origin mean that the fisheries products have to be 'wholly obtained' in the ACP country (art. 3, Cotonou Agreement, Protocol I, Annexe V). The main criteria for 'originating products' are registration and flag of origin, ownership and crewing arrangements onboard fishing vessels.³

The rules of origin have led to friction in ACP-EU fisheries relations, because of the way these rules are defined and applied. ACP countries often simply do not have the means to acquire and support their own industrial tuna fleets, for example. ACP however, cannot afford to subsidise their fishing industry, like the EU and other distant water fishing nations.

As a consequence, the strict application of the Rules of Origin effectively forces the ACP tuna processors to purchase tuna from high-priced EU suppliers⁴ and prevents them from purchasing fish from other countries' vessels that may be licensed to fish in their waters.

This creates an incentive for ACP countries to grant EU vessels preferential access to their Exclusive Economic Zone to ensure that their tuna canneries are supplied with 'originating' tuna. The tuna is caught by European vessels, and sold to local, ACP



processors and factories. Subsequently, the processed and canned tuna is exported to the EU.

This leads to a remarkable situation: the preferential access offered to the ACP countries for the processed and canned tuna they export to the EU can be considered as a form of upstream subsidy to EU vessels rather than a trade concession to ACP countries.⁵

Another example of stringent EU standards that results in a situation which impacts negatively on developing countries is the sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) agreement established by the WTO. The EU has derived strict food-safety standards from this agreement.

The compliance with this complex set of regulations presents a huge challenge to fish-exporting ACP countries. As most producers in the ACP are small- and medium-scale producers and artisan fishermen, the costs of compliance with these sets of standards are too high.

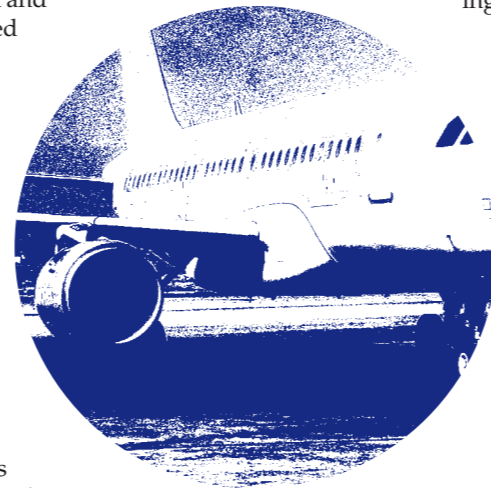
Third-country imports are checked at the EU's external borders. The EU regulates the certification and identification measures. Member states are responsible for border inspections.

If one takes into consideration that catches by European fishermen *are not even considered to be imports* (meaning that the fish caught by a European vessel are *presumed* to comply with European standards) one can only conclude that there is direct proof of discrimination against third-country imports.

Rules of Origin and SPS-measures are incoherent with development policy objectives. On the one hand, development policy aims to strengthen the local economies of fishing communities, but these efforts are being undermined by these serious restrictions to EU market access for ACP fishery products exports.

*A case study by Evert Vermeer
Foundation for the EU Coherence
Programme.*

⁵ Ibidem.



Climate Change and Aviation

● The world's poor and most vulnerable are the worst hit by climate change. The richest countries, such as the EU Member States and the US and emerging economies like China emit the largest proportion of greenhouse gases, but the developing countries suffer the largest proportion of the negative impacts.

Air travel is the fastest growing source of the greenhouse gases that cause climate change. Climate Action Network Europe and European Federation for Transport and Environment have been analyzing the connections between aviation and the climate change in their publication *Clearing the Air: The myth and Reality of Aviation and Climate Change* (2006).

According to the publication, aviation has by far the greatest climate impact of any form of transport, whether measured per passenger kilometre, per euro spent or per hour spent. However, aviation is not subject to the same taxes as other forms of transport. Every segment of the aviation industry including manufacturers, airlines and airports is subsidised and enjoys major tax exemptions.

Even if the EU is committed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, no measures have been taken to reduce the aviation emissions or stop the support of the aviation sector. Yet the European Commission stresses that fast and significant emission cut-backs are the most important means to restrain climate change.

The Commission did propose last year that all airlines would be included in the European Union's emissions trading scheme by 2012, but the negotiations are still underway. There are also doubts that the current response to the threat that the growth in aviation emissions poses to efforts to tackle climate change is not adequate.

In the European Consensus on Development (2006), the European Commission states: 'It is important that non-development policies assist developing countries' efforts in achieving the Millennium Goals. The EU shall take account of the objectives of development cooperation in all policies that it implements which are likely to affect developing countries'.

Climate change is closely intertwined with development issues. Those who have done least to pollute the atmosphere, by flying or by other means, will suffer most as the planet heats up. Climate change has a severe impact on people's lives in developing countries, in those who are least able to adapt.

More information:
Clearing the Air: The Myth and Reality of Aviation and Climate Change. Climate Action Network Europe and European Federation for Transport and Environment. 2006. (<http://www.transportenvironment.org/Article201.html>)

The Congo and the Coltan Trade

● The devastating first and second Congo wars (1996-2002) have had a huge impact on the development of the whole country. The related fighting and human rights abuses still continue.

The UN Security Council pointed out already in 2001 that the exploitation of natural resources was sustaining the situation and making it possible for government officials, rebels and foreign investors to gather as much wealth as possible.

Different parties have had an interest in the destabilisation of the region so as to earn more from the plunder of the raw materials. The fighting has mostly been financed with the exploitation and trade of gold, tin, copper, diamonds and coltan, a component for the electronic chips in our mobile phones.

The interest in coltan has gotten foreign traders to the Congo hoping to earn from the trade and processing of coltan into tantalum powder. Tantalum powder is widely used in the production of our everyday equipment such as mobile phones, laptops and play station consoles.

The price of coltan rose enormously during the high tech boom of the 1990s. Coltan mining has increased, and this has also had a destructive impact on the environment and biodiversity in the region.

European companies are involved and benefiting from the trade in coltan and other raw materials. The biggest coltan traders in the region sell tantalum to European firms.

For example, Nokia announced in November 2006 that they request their suppliers to avoid raw material procurements from an origin where there are clear human or animal rights abuses, or the method of procurement or distribution is illegal.

However, huge amounts of coltan and other natural resources have been moved to neighbouring countries and sold from there to Western companies, to avoid the reputation of "blood diamonds" and "blood coltan".

After over five years of fighting, the European Union started its first independent European military operation in Congo (2003-2006). Still, the European Union has not set any conditions on the coltan trade from Congo and neighbouring countries nor has it made any real effort to block the use of "blood coltan".

In the European Consensus on Development and the Millennium Goals the EU emphasizes the importance of sustainable development and poverty eradication. This can only be achieved if there is peace and security in a country.

More information:
UN News focus: DR of Congo: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/infocusRel.asp?infocusID=120&Body=Democratic&Body1=Congo>



¹ Marc Allain, *Trading away our oceans - report*, Greenpeace, January 2007

² DFID

³ *Paper on sanitary measures, trade barriers and market access to the EU for fishery products*, Netherlands Ministry for Foreign Affairs, April 2005, and Górez, Béatrice, *Fisheries Executive brief 'Market access; tariff and non-tariff aspects*, source: CFA

⁴ Block, Lindsey and Roman Grynberg, 'EU Rules of Origin for ACP Tuna Products (HS Chapter 16.04)', mimeo prepared for the Commonwealth Secretariat (London, 2004)