

# Trade and Africa: Achieving Food Security in Sub-Saharan Africa

Friday, October 3, 11:00 – 13:00  
WTO Public Forum, Room W

If it can be said that trade affects everyone, it is doubly true that agricultural trade rules affect every farmer and consumer in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). The region has enjoyed a real economic growth exceeding 5% since 2010. At the same time, its food trade deficit has jumped at the rate of 33% from 2000 to 2011, from a surplus of \$308 million in 2000 to a deficit of \$1.1 billion in 2011. Given the prospects of a population exceeding 2 billion in 2050, the session will explore the best ways to ensure SSA food security, while maximizing employment, benefitting poor consumers and mitigating the impact of climate change.

Among the questions to be addressed:

- What are the impacts of the current policies of agricultural production that have been promoted by national governments, funding and aid agencies and international institutions on farmers and consumers.
- In the recent context of a high volatility in agricultural prices denominated in dollars combined with that of exchange rates, would it not be advisable to use variable levies instead of ad valorem duties to stabilize farm prices at remunerative levels, fostering farmers' investments and access to agricultural loans? Indeed this instrument was largely at the basis of the EU formidable progress in agricultural production from 1962 to 1994. At the same time appropriate means should be used to ensure poor consumers access to food.
- How can countries maximize employment and mitigate climate change through increasing food production by small family farms and using agroecological production systems while fostering employment along the food value chains?
- What are the implications to SSA-EU trade relations if regional EPAs are signed? How would the signing of the potential Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) impact agricultural export preferences of SSA farmers?

Speakers:

Mamadou Cissokho, Honorary President, Le Réseau des organisations paysannes et de producteurs de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (ROPPA, Network of Farmers' and Agricultural Producers' Organisations of West Africa), Senegal

Martin Bwalyan, Head of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), NEPAD Agency, South Africa

Stevenson Nzaramba, Regional Trade & Agribusiness Advisor, Eastern Africa Farmers Federation (EAFF), Kenya

Aileen Kwa, Programme Coordinator, Trade and Development Program, South Centre, Geneva

Jacques Berthelot, representative, Solidarité, France

Background: There has been an ongoing agriculture crisis - also a crisis of poverty, livelihoods, and food production - across many African countries. Many have become more and more reliant on food imports in the last 2-3 decades and are increasingly losing their food production capacities. This has had deep ramifications for countries' food security, rural livelihoods, capacity to respond to climate change, and also countries' trade balance and budgets. This event will look at the direction and likely impacts of African countries' agricultural trade policies. Panelists will also examine the international trade environment, and particularly whether it is helping or hindering African agricultural production and food security, as well as the challenges of climate change and implications for Africa's food security. Finally, the panel will provide recommendations for agricultural policies and domestic as well as international trade policies that can support food security, rural livelihoods, employment and the sustainable use of environmental resources.