R2 A4: Towards an agroecological Europe by 2030

Proposers DWARS, GroenLinkse Jongeren

Motion text

Insert from line 89 to 91:

- **At the EU level, we demand the taxation on imported commodities whose methods of production do not comply with the EU environmental and human rights standards. Determination of compliance with said standards is done by an independent body. Such an evaluation should be reassessed at least every 4 years. Where this especially harms smallholder producers, profits from such a taxation will be invested in initiatives that incentivise production meeting such standards. This is particularly important in the sector of protein crops, where the**

Reason

The amendment:

1. Includes compliance with human rights standards,
2. Specifies compliance with said standards are to be evaluated by an independent body, and adds a manner to do it.

Why:

1. We believe that environmental and human rights standards are inseparable and interconnected. Naturally, protection of the environment as a duty of care and the right to a clean one are human rights. But from a climate justice lens, it is vital to consider the intersectionality of the two and the ensuring of, for example, workers' rights, in the cultivation of sustainable produce.
2. We believe the evaluation of compliance with such standards in the matter of trade must be done by independent bodies to ensure impartiality and the minimisation of possible politicisation behind such decisions, further supported by a reviewal at least every 4 years. This is to prevent a situation, for example, where the EU, under the guise of environmental reasons, uses its power to exclude third states from its market.
    1. An example of which is the EU Renewable Energy Directive which completely banned the use of palm oil as a biofuel citing

deforestation, 85% of which is sourced from the two ASEAN states Indonesia and Malaysia. The use of biofuels notwithstanding, a ban was not proportional compared to the EU's continued production and import of gas and oil from regimes, nor was it fair compared to various other EU measures based on a case-by-case basis and that the ban only applied to the use of palm oil as a biofuel in which the EU has an interest in its own protection of rapeseed and sunflower oil, and no ban of other uses. It was further unfair as Malaysia over the past decade had become the largest producer of certified sustainable palm oil and has been significantly moving towards majority-RSPO-certified palm oil production. The biggest struggle it faces are the roughly 40% smallholder farmers that lack the education, income, and access to means to compete with the higher per hectare yield of large-scale commercial plantations, thus resorting to deforestation. The ban was thus essentially a form of "green neoimperialism" that did nothing to address deforestation but had devastating impacts on the at least 2 million smallholder Malaysian farmers.

2. Similarly, the EU must be careful to implement standards that make it impossible for smallholder producers to meet without a redistributive mechanism when its own production or exploitation of natural resources in North Africa have often amounted to extractivism, creating what Naomi Klein terms 'sacrifice zones': areas disproportionately ravaged by extraction and processing, inhabited by people whose bodies, health, land and water are sacrificed in order to maintain the accumulation of capital – where exploitation by the EU exacerbates the ecological crisis of North Africa and impacts disproportionately the rural working poor – farmers, workers, fisherfolk and the unemployed – devastating their agricultural and fishery industries. This includes olive oil exploitation in Tunisia, oil and gas extraction in Tunisia and Algeria, water grabbing and phosphate exploitation in Morocco and Tunisia, and even 'green' projects like TuNur in Tunisia.

3. Therefore any measures that disadvantage farmers in the Global South, for example on environmental or human rights standards, must be, firstly, evaluated non-politically, and secondly, where possible, include a redistributive mechanism to incentivise the affected smallholder farmers to meet those standards.