

SOMMET CLIMATE CHANCE EUROPE

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#SCCE2022



What strategy to reduce imported emissions?

Description :

While the European Union's territorial CO2 emissions have been decreasing for several years, imported emissions are constantly increasing. By imported emissions we mean greenhouse gases emitted on other continents for the manufacture and transport of products consumed in Europe. Today, imported emissions are little or poorly taken into account in strategies to combat climate change and can no longer be ignored in climate policies. But the subject is complex, between the refusal to change our lifestyles when it comes to importing food for our livestock and the difficulty of getting exporting countries to accept our own rules. How can we better calculate them? How can we set up alternative channels? What place for carbon legislation at the EU's borders? What are the possibilities of control?

Chair : Jérôme BOUTANG, Director General CITEPA (Centre d'Etudes de la Pollution Atmosphérique et Gaz à Effet de Serre)

Moderator : Bruno REBELLE, Managing Director of TRANSITIONS

Speakers :

- Sébastien SOLEILLE, Head of Energy and Environmental Transition, BNP Paribas
- Aurélien SAUTIERE, Executive Director, FSC France label
- Antoine MEUNIER, Agriculture and Food Advocacy Officer, WWF France

Summary of discussions :

The speakers and participants of the "Strategy to reduce imported emissions" workshop held on 8 March from 10 to 12 noon in the framework of the SCCE 2022 have retained the following recommendations:

Two major levers are identified to promote a reduction in imported emissions:

- The mobilization and equipping of consumers to make informed choices by favoring the purchase of products and/or services with a lower carbon content.

- The implementation of national and European strategies and regulations that contribute to changing trade patterns at the expense of imports of products and services that emit more than their European counterparts.



THEMATIC DRAFT PROPOSALS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL

N°	Topic	European policy	Proposal
1		European Border Carbon Adjustment Mechanism	<p>The activation of these two levers requires a better understanding and more robust measurement of the carbon content of products and services in general, and imported products and services in particular. The participants invite the European Union and the Member States to make a significant methodological leap forward in order to produce this information, which is essential for the development of measures based on sufficiently robust data.</p>
2			<p>In this deepening of the understanding of the carbon content of imported products and services, it will be particularly important to identify the induced effects of a possible reduction of imported emissions, which may result in a net increase of domestic emissions. Thus, the national accounting of the footprint (integrating imported emissions) should aim for a robustness and reliability comparable to that of the inventory, so that it can be taken into account in the National Low Carbon Strategy.</p>
3			<p>Concerning consumer mobilization. It is essential to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Provide a harmonized information system, allowing easy comparison of the carbon footprint of different products and services to guide consumer choice. b. Emphasize the fact that carbon cannot be the only indicator of the overall quality of a product or service, and that it is therefore essential to integrate data on other key impacts (on water, biodiversity, human rights, etc.) into consumer information. Only in this way will consumers be able to make a commitment without fearing that their choices to reduce their carbon footprint will result in the worsening of other effects that are detrimental to the environment or to social equity c. To formulate a new narrative on what responsible consumption should be in the face of climate change, biodiversity degradation and growing inequality.



4		<p>EU legal framework to halt and reverse EU-induced global deforestation</p>	<p>With regard to strategies to combat imported emissions, and in particular the European strategy to combat imported deforestation, there is an urgent need to supplement this mechanism by adopting the following measures</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Increasing the use of wood for construction, packaging, etc. to replace less carbon efficient products. b. Strengthen the requirement for guarantees on how forest products have been harvested to reduce the impact on biodiversity, humans and carbon. This requires consideration of the following criteria: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. The adoption of HCV (High Conservation Value) criteria in logging projects. ii. The prohibition of planting on peatlands without exception (especially as these particular ecosystems constitute colossal carbon stocks). iii. Rejecting the conversion of natural ecosystems. iv. Respecting the free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples potentially impacted by the exploitation of forest areas. v. Respect local labor laws and International Labor Organization regulations and standards. c. In addition, develop payment for environmental services schemes that allow forest operators, wherever they are, to implement truly sustainable management methods for forest areas. <p>These safeguards should be verified by independent auditing and evaluation mechanisms that cover the entire value chain and improve redress procedures, transparency and dispute resolution.</p>
5		<p>European Border Carbon Adjustment Mechanism</p>	<p>Concerning the European Border Carbon Adjustment Mechanism (ECAM). The participants recognised the interest, in principle, of this mechanism, but at the same time called for great caution in the development of implementation measures to avoid perverse effects. It is becoming imperative to have a reliable method for calculating the carbon content of the goods concerned by the MACF so that the mechanism taxes imported products as fairly as possible.</p>