

## PRESENTATION

Speech  
Global Environment  
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# The Relationship between International Environmental and Trade Agreements

TimeLoc

10 April 2015

Hofgeismar

Germany

[Christiane Gerstetter](#) [1]



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On 10 April 2015, Christiane Gerstetter, Senior Fellow in Ecologic Institute's legal team, gave a presentation on the relationship between international trade and environmental agreements at a conference of the Protestant Academy Hofgeismar. The conference centered on the topic: "Natural enemies - Environmental protection and free global trade as a legal and political problem." The presentation slides are available for download.

The relationship between environmental and trade agreements has been a subject of political and legal discussions for quite some time, for example in the context of the foundation of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1995.

International trade agreements are primarily aimed at the removal of trade barriers. International environmental agreements, on the

other hand, partly contain obligations for countries to restrict the trade with certain dangerous goods (like chemicals or waste) or components of the natural environment (like protected species). This leads to a certain tension between trade and environmental agreements. There is also the risk that international trade agreements narrow the scope of states to establish environmental protection measures. This is especially discussed critically in the context of the negotiations about the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP).

In her presentation, Christiane Gerstetter gave an overview of trade-restricting measures in international environmental agreements and discussed their compatibility with WTO law. She described some of the cases the dispute settlement mechanism of the WTO has decided on and in which international environmental agreements played a role. The conclusion of her presentation was that such agreements do play a role when WTO cases are decided. There are, however, hardly any cases in which a WTO Member was sued for a measure that was allowed or required by an international environmental agreement. She also pointed to the problem that in the environmental field there is no international judicial institution which is similarly effective as the WTO dispute settlement.

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