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Chaire de recherche sur
les nouveaux enjeux de la
mondialisation économique

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Free trade for a green future: promoting sustainability through the export of European geographical indications

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The benefits of geographical indications

- Interaction of natural factors with human practices
- Protection of traditional knowledge
- Protection of cultural heritage
- Sociocultural development
- Rural poverty reduction
- Economic benefits
- Conservation of biodiversity, environment, and landscape



Could the incorporation of the European GI model into trade agreements serve as an effective tool for preserving biodiversity?

01 GIs as tools for the preservation of biodiversity

02 Benefits of their export by the EU

03 Conclusion



1.1 The fundamental role of specifications in implementing environmentally-friendly practices

Specifications :

- Name
- Description
- Definition of a geographical area
- Proof of origin
- Description of production method
- Packaging information

Link between the product's qualities and its geographical origin.

1.2 The fundamental role of specifications in implementing environmentally-friendly practices

Article 7 Regulation (EU) 2024/1143 :

A producer group [...] may agree on sustainable practices to be adhered to in the production of the product designated by a geographical indication or in carrying out other activities subject to one or more obligations provided for in the product specification

2.1 The EU's general willingness to export GIs in regional trade agreements

Since 2009 : **systematic protection** of European geographical indications abroad to preserve the reputation and quality of EU products.

Ex: South Korea, Canada, Singapore, Japan, Vietnam, New Zealand, etc.



2.2 Expanding biodiversity protection through trade agreements.

Examples of non-timber forest products protected in :

EU-Vietnam Agreement: Lychees, aniseed, mangoes, bananas, cinnamon, chestnuts, honey, coffee, and tea.

EU-Japan Agreement: Blackcurrants and chestnuts.

EU-South Korea Agreement: Ginseng, mushrooms, chestnuts, ferns, berries, maple sap.

2.3 International examples of biodiversity preservation requirements in specifications



Moroccan argan oil

Specifications:

Planting new argan trees as a measure to combat desertification



South-African Rooibos

Environmental protection as a key product characteristic



3. The maple syrup paradox

Impossible to register Quebec maple syrup as a GI under **federal** law and due to **internal constraints** (a Quebec collective agreement).

- **Mandatory harmonization** of production and marketing conditions among producers.
- The **differentiation** of maple syrup by producers is **prohibited**, even when the harvesting of maple water is artisanal and environmentally friendly.
- Interested consumers: **unlawful direct sales**



Personal photos, traditional sugar shack in Beauce (Quebec, Canada)

Conclusion



- The specifications can **impose environmentally friendly practices**.
- The need to comply with specifications in order to maintain the GI, which **adds value, encourages producers to preserve the ecosystem** of their production area.
- Contributes to the **fight** against **deforestation** and **desertification**.
- The protection of biodiversity is an **indirect effect** of the export.
- Emphasizing these benefits in **trade negotiations** could encourage like-minded countries to adopt a similar approach.
- **One** tool among others for preserving biodiversity.



Thank you!

I would be delighted to answer any questions you may have.

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