WORLD TRADE ORGANISATION SYSTEM: SYNCHRONIZATION OF THE LEGAL NEXUS BETWEEN MARKET TRADE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Sistema de organização mundial do comércio: sincronização do nexo jurídico entre comércio mercantil e proteção ambiental

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ABSTRACT

In today’s world, sustainable development has become the consensus of the international community. With the development and progress of the world economy and the launch of the wave of environmental protection in the world, market trade and environmental protection issues have gradually gained the full attention of government departments and people in many countries around the world, and gradually developed into one of the core issues in the global political, economic and multi-industry fields. The laws and regulations on environmental protection adopted by international organizations and countries and the basic rules of market trade constitute the basis for applying environmental control supervision. The researchers adopted a systematic online search to identify journal articles, reports, and other relevant documents related to the market trade and environmental protection. The online search was done mainly on Google, Google Scholar and Bing to retrieve related documents on market trade and environmental protection. The study unravelled a complex relationship between market trade and environmental protection, and the international community has paid too much attention. Foreign trade policy aims to avoid the development of a new market trade restriction and implementation program, protect market trade, eliminate the existing barriers to the market trade, restrict market trade laws and regulations, and finally achieve the way to increase the effectiveness of market trade. Therefore, environmental protection and market trade are two systems, and it is a core contradiction to abide by which fundamental principles are observed. To solve and deal with the relationship between market trade and the environment, it must redefine the relevant influencing factors in these two systems. The researchers suggested that through the coordination of management, there should be a careful study from the experience of relevant organizations, such as the European Union, NAFTA, OECD and then put forward specific ideas for coordinated management.

Keywords: World Trade Organization, trade, environment, coordination

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RESUMO
No mundo de hoje, o desenvolvimento sustentável se tornou o consenso da comunidade internacional. Com o desenvolvimento e o progresso da economia mundial e o lançamento da onda de proteção ambiental no mundo, o comércio de mercado e as questões de proteção ambiental ganharam gradualmente a atenção total de departamentos governamentais e pessoas em muitos países ao redor do mundo, e gradualmente evoluíram para uma das questões centrais nos campos político, econômico e multisectorial globais. As leis e regulamentos sobre proteção ambiental adotados por organizações internacionais e países e as regras básicas do comércio de mercado constituem a base para a aplicação da supervisão de controle ambiental. Os pesquisadores adotaram uma busca sistemática online para identificar artigos de periódicos, relatórios e outros documentos relevantes relacionados ao comércio de mercado e proteção ambiental. A busca online foi feita principalmente no Google, Google Scholar e Bing para recuperar documentos relacionados ao comércio de mercado e proteção ambiental. O estudo desvendou uma relação complexa entre o comércio de mercado e a proteção ambiental, e a comunidade internacional tem prestado muita atenção. A política de comércio exterior visa evitar o desenvolvimento de um novo programa de implementação e restrição ao comércio de mercado, proteger o comércio de mercado, eliminar as barreiras existentes ao comércio de mercado, restringir as leis e regulamentos de comércio de mercado e, finalmente, alcançar a maneira de aumentar a eficácia do comércio de mercado. Portanto, a proteção ambiental e o comércio de mercado são dois sistemas, e é uma contradição central obedecer aos quais os princípios fundamentais são observados. Para resolver e lidar com a relação entre o comércio de mercado e o meio ambiente, ele deve redefinir os fatores de influência relevantes nesses dois sistemas. Os pesquisadores sugeriram que, por meio da coordenação da gestão, deveria haver um estudo cuidadoso da experiência de organizações relevantes, como a União Europeia, NAFTA, OCDE e, em seguida, apresentar ideias específicas para a gestão coordenada.

Palavras-chave: Organização Mundial do Comércio, comércio, meio ambiente, coordenação
INTRODUCTION

The development of trade has contributed to people’s progress, but its damage to the environment is also significant and cannot be overlooked (Alola, 2019). Many environmental problems, such as the destruction of the ozone layer, rise in sea levels, floods, and many environmental problems, are closely associated with trade globalization. Humans have foregone the environment to survive, develop and get out of poverty (Nwokoro & Chima, 2017). In the 21st century, there are more civilized environment requirements, highlighting environmental issues and people increasingly understand the importance of protecting the environment (Martine, 2015). Severe haze and progressively blue skies constantly call on people to protect the environment (Zhang et al., 2019). There is no contradicting fact on the conflict between free trade and environmental protection. This kind of conflict is not permanent; it can be both based on synchronization and continue to make significant contributions to the progress of society.

Can international market trade and environmental protection be managed in a coordinated way? Can there be an established legal and regulatory mechanism to promote trade and environmental protection development and progress internationally? In the nexus between international market trade and environmental protection, there is a conflicting side. If managed in agreement, they can progressively develop into partners in sustainable development. The existing conflicts of contradiction, especially the differences in ideas between developed and underdeveloped countries, directly affect such conflicts (Keef, 2018). Consequently, if the economic development, social income benefits, environmental protection and sustainable development as stated in the Rio Declaration, are attained, then the contradictions that have been created between the laws on the international market trade and environmental protection will not become the focus of people’s attention (Aseeva, 2018).

Some researchers (Hoch et al., 2019) conclude that trade and environmental management of the development and progress of the two development paths - multilateral market trade organizations and multilateral environmental services agreements. Accordingly, these two development paths will encounter various problems, not only the differences in business ideas caused by the resistance but also various institutional contradictions and conflicts that formed obstacles (Stafford-smith et al., 2016). Other researchers (Mupangavanhu, 2018; Garnett et al., 2018) analyzed many strategies and models for improving its existing mechanism. At the same time, they have also studied and analyzed the shortcomings and incompleteness of the improvements mentioned above. The reform mentioned above and innovation from many shortcomings can be divided into the following two difficulties.

Though numerous researches have explored international market trade and environmental protection (Huang, 2016; Khan & Chang, 2018; Stavropoulos et al., 2018), countries and stakeholders have contributed significantly to attaining the target set. Yet, the issue of the legal relationship that exists between international market trade and environmental protection has not been extensively discussed. This has been due to the variations in the laws and regulations passed to regulate each of these systems. In this vein, this study adds up to literature by unraveling the legal relationship between international market trade and environmental protection through the World Trade Organization (WTO) lens. To the best of the authors’ knowledge, only few researchers have examined the legal relationship between international market trade and environmental protection through the World Trade Organization (WTO) lens. It is important to Clarifying the environmental protection system in WTO.

1.METHODOLOGY

The researchers adopted a literature review method to realize the aims of this research. Based on the extensive review conducted, important information was retrieved (Creswell & Zhang, 2009) concerning market trade and environmental protection. The first online search was international market trade and environmental protection on Google and Google Scholar. The results obtained from the search were grouped into difficulties in coordinating market trade and environmental protection. The information retrieved was carefully studied and surveyed to understand its contents (Tuffour, 2017). The themes from the studied documents were then summarized (van Hoecke & Mary, 2016). The researchers presented the findings of this paper through an interpretative documents analysis that directed the careful but thorough
study of international market trade and environmental protection. This analysis method confirmed the reliability and validity of the information studied and interpreted (Hefferman, 2013).

2. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

2.1 Difficulties in synchronizing trade and environmental protection under the WTO System

From a legal point of view, the conflict between international market trade and environmental protection has been discussed and compared with essential legal attributes of trade and the environment, which makes it challenging to be synchronized.

(a) Trade law has different attributes from environmental law

The laws in international trade and the laws in the international environment are reached through international negotiations between countries or regions in terms of conventions, laws and other means (Khan, 2016; Correa & Yusuf, 2016). However, from the legal and regulatory amendments to the nature of the assigned service objects, market trade law should have the characteristics of private law because profit-oriented, autonomous business management actors carry out market trade behavior activities (Jackson, 2018).

Individuals who operate in the market trade industry will extensively advocate the social position of the subject of their rights and obligations and neglect the social status of their moral subject as much as possible (Khan & Chang, 2018). However, the environmental protection industry is different; in this industry, people should take moral behavior as the main body to protect the environment as their responsibility (Khan, 2016). This is to possibly abandon the material resources and other essential elements of the rights and obligations to enjoy and assume the legal responsibility of protecting the environment.

Laws and regulations can not set up everyone as a person of moral literacy, so environmental protection law reflects the characteristics of public law. The world environmental protection laws and regulations need to go through the various States parties to negotiate, make enforcement requirements to ensure implementation (Kostka, 2016). Therefore, if we maintain the current attributes of the two types of legal and regulatory management systems, the synchronized management of market trade and environmental law can only be carried out in the industry areas where they intersect. There is no way to design a broad category of a comprehensive combination of laws and regulations management system.

(b) Conflicts of fundamental principles

The two types of mechanisms are challenging to manage in a coordinated way, both at fundamental requirements and principles. The most fundamental requirements and principles of the multilateral market trading mechanism are the fundamental principles of non-discrimination. This is reflected in national action, and a critical fundamental principle in multilateral environmental service agreements is the fundamental principle of “common but differentiated” (Tian & Xiang, 2019). Developed countries have already obtained too many material resources from the environment. They have already obtained significant environmental rights and interests, so they should bear more legal responsibility for environmental protection (Grubb et al., 2019). The fundamental principle of non-discrimination and the principle of “common but differentiated” are challenging to integrate. Developed countries have always been in the leading position in the negotiations of multilateral market trade organizations. They have the level to apply the fundamental principles of non-discrimination to the fullest (Kostka, 2016). In the multilateral environmental services agreement negotiations, developed countries also have very high advantages. Underdeveloped countries can not compete with it. This is also a fundamental reason why many underdeveloped countries are reluctant to enter multilateral environmental services agreements (Kanie, 2018).

In terms of specific requirements, such conflicts are also significant, for instance, the implementation program of international market trade in wildlife as required by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. It is usually achieved through the export of various relevant certificates, multiple licenses, with specific conditions of use, which require the above-mentioned multifaceted conditions of use to be able to circulate normally in the global trading market, which is in marked
violation of the fundamental principle of the multilateral market trade mechanism limit. More so, on contradictions in the transfer of technology by profession, the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity requires developed countries to transfer environmental protection expertise to underdeveloped countries on preferential terms (Bowling et al., 2016). Still, the provisions of the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) are stringent and promote multilateral market trade agreements set the expertise to produce; the coordination between the two is complicated (Forman & Macnaughton, 2015).

(c) Differences in values between the two

The values contained in the multilateral market trade mechanism and the multilateral environmental mechanism are inconsistently different (Araujo, 2016). The fundamental values in multilateral market trading mechanisms should be equity and freedom (Trachtman, 2016). No matter how the multilateral market trading system discusses its “exceptional right” development and progress, it is essential to protect free-market trade. However, the principle of internalization of environmental costs is extensively applied in this. However, because of the multi-dimensional factors, it is still determined by the actual interests of the social economy. In the multilateral trading system, it is difficult to coordinate the conflicts among different subjects because of their different interest demands, especially in environmental protection. Such as Multinational companies in pursuit of higher profits(Schimanski 2018).

On the other hand, international environmental groups make environmental protection their primary goal, possibly ignoring the realities of cross-border trade to the detriment of economic value(Gulliver et al. 2020). Countries participating in the trading system pay more attention to environmental protection in their interests and voice (Wilkinson 2016). The values in multilateral market trade mechanisms establish that such mechanisms should be based on the principle of “empowerment”. Active efforts should be made to establish a fair system of market trade rights and obligations. Mechanisms such as multilateral environmental service agreements that aim to protect the environment and prevent ecological degradation are essential services (Mackey, 2014).

2.2 Relevant experience of other international organizations

The conflict between environmental protection and free trade becomes evident with the progressively close relationship between environment and trade. The current rules of the multilateral trading system cannot effectively synchronize the management of the interrelationship between market trade freedom and environmental protection (Mupangavanhu, 2018). So how to synchronize the relationship between environment and trade self-reliance and establish a scientific, environmental trade synchronization mechanism in the new multilateral trade discussions has become an urgent question to be solved. From the practice of international trade, regional organizations such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the European Union (EU) and the North American Free Market Trade Zone have many practical experiences in the synchronized management of environmental protection and market trade contradictions (Mykhnenko & Wolff, 2018). They have specific clarification and references on synchronizing environmental protection and market trade contradictions in multilateral trade mechanisms.

(a). Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

In the early 1960s, the OECD did not initially pay attention to the market trade and environmental protection (Meyer, 2017). Until the early 1920s, the contradictions between market trade and environmental protection were formally classified as OECD structures. The scope of regulations was very narrow, mainly in environmental management policies and market trade contradictions, especially related to environmental pollution and destruction of national regulatory policies (Dechezleprêtre & Sato, 2017). The OECD Committee on Markets and Trade and the newly established Environmental Protection Committee has done a lot of work on these contradictory issues and passed the Guiding Principles on International Environmental Policy and Trade on behalf of the OECD Committee on 26 May 1972 (Faces, 2016).
The basic principle of subsidiarity consists of four fundamental requirements and principles: the fundamental principle of paying environmental polluters, the fundamental principle of synchronized management, the fundamental principle of national treatment and non-discrimination, the fundamental principle of not allowing the implementation of economic compensatory import taxes and economic subsidies for exports. Even though the fundamental principles mentioned above are debated in the international community, they have been examined and discussed internally within the OECD. The impact of these fundamental principles on international environmental protection has gradually developed into an essential national regulatory policy program within the OECD to deal with and resolve the contradictions between environmental protection and market trade (Ahmed & Mustofa, 2016). OECD agencies in the conflict over the coordination of market trade liberalization and environmental protection rely primarily on the following four fundamental principles to resolve and deal with:

(i) The Polluter-Pays Principle

Environmental polluters-pays refer to the payment of environmental pollution control management costs should not obtain environmental protection economic subsidies or distort global market trade (Barrett et al., 2019). Its development objectives are two: first, the cost of environmental protection intrinsic, and second, to prevent the improper implementation of environmental protection programs to distort global market trade. The OECD made a few exceptions to the requirements of the OECD on November 14, 1974; that is, government administrations were able to grant environmental and economic subsidies for environmental management (Sovacool, 2017). Under the following practical circumstances: first, to grant certain environmental management economic subsidies during the interim transition period when implementing stringent environmental pollution laws and regulations. The above-mentioned economic subsidies require certain time constraints and cannot cause severe distortions in global market trade.

To create and protect an international market trading environment in which fair market competition is conducted, the WTO has emphasized the non-implementation of market trade strategies with economic subsidies by all groups (Borowy, 2017). In the Uruguay Round, the Consultative Working Group on the Implementation Programme of Economic Subsidies and Anti-Economic Subsidies pointed out that countries could implement environmental, economic supplements conditionally and stipulated conditions similar to those of the OECD. Thus, government administrations granted environmental, economic subsidies that were unsuitable for improving existing facilities to meet new environmental protection laws and regulations or develop new environmental expertise and facilities; many countries opposed such proposals (Feng & Liao, 2015). Many researchers suggested that environmental and economic subsidies would distort the industry and that such severe impacts would be more severe than those caused by direct environmental pollution control subsidies (Li et al., 2019). The Consultative Group removed the environmental and economic supplement from the non-indictable subsidy. But the WTO was influenced by the OECD, which re-considered economic subsidies arising from environmental protection. Finally, a relative compromise approach was chosen in the official text, that is, to leave the provision of environmental, economic subsidies. Still, the application of environmental, economic subsidies requires more stringent conditions.

(ii) The principle of coordination

The fundamental principle of coordinated management is that national government administrations should coordinate their environmental management policies without a justification for maintaining differential environmental reference standards. This prevents inappropriate interference in global market trade patterns and global resource allocation because of differences in national environmental reference standards (Garnett et al., 2018). Those mentioned above national regulatory policies mainly include: environmental pollution finished product reference standards and designated finished product laws and regulations constraints management, role, scope, timing, etc. The application of environmental protection implementation programs should be as far as possible to prevent the manufacture of non-tariff barriers.

At the same time, the OECD argues that countries differ in the digestion level of environmental pollution, the degree of modern industrialization and population density, social development goals, and environmental protection programs priorities. Countries can apply different environmental reference
standards to ensure socio-economic development progress and green ecological environment protection (Tien et al., 2019). Coordinated management does not mean that each country chooses a unified environmental reference standard to harm the actual interests of the world and distort global market trade. Still, each country in selecting the above reference standards needs to make a statement. OECD, from the practical level, coordinated management is to gradually enhance the national government management departments of environmental management policy compatibility.

(b). European Union (EU)

The European Union is the birthplace of the world’s second industrial revolution, the earliest to benefit from the secondary industry revolution and the earliest taste of the secondary industrial revolution by-products - the bitter fruit of environmental pollution. The world’s first Earth Day in 1970 stirred the tide of contemporary environmental protection movements. With the growing awareness of the need for environmental protection, the international community began to take concrete actions to practice environmental protection. In 1972, the European Community held a summit forum with heads of state to begin a comprehensive and large-scale environmental protection campaign. In terms of its experience, there are the following aspects:

(i) Correct adherence to the law of efficiency

Productivity is the consistent development goal pursued by all social and economic activities, the landing point for formulating all social and economic national regulatory policies, and the reference standard for evaluating and detecting each socio-economic activity (Samuel et al., 2016). Chasing efficiency meets the common practical interests of environmental protection, sustainable development progress and market trade and links the three (Knox, 2018). From the point of view of environmental protection, an efficient environmental protection control policy reduces the cost of maintaining a certain comprehensive quality of the environment. It promotes the full use of limited material resources. It can also improve the efficiency of social and economic activities, reduce the consumption of scarce material resources, such as raw materials and fossil energy, and reduce the working pressure of environmental regeneration levels. Pay special attention to preventing environmental consumption, which is often more efficient than after-the-fact remediation and recovery adjustments Glicksman et al., 2019).

The EU is a market trade liberalization region; it tries to remove market trade barriers, obtain comparative cost advantages, industrial scale, and socio-economic creation efficiency. The higher the efficiency of social and economic activities, the less environmental material resources will be used. The more socio-economic material resources are available, the more helpful the environmental protection will be.

(ii) An idea with environmental integrity

Paying full attention to the general nature of the environment is essential in paying full attention to various constraints on the level of regeneration of the green ecological system, preventing the formation of non-transformable behavior activities on plants and animals, and paying full attention to the protection of areas of practical value. According to Bennett (2016), environmental behavior activities are designed to “maintain, protect and improve the comprehensive quality of the environment”, including “thinking about the many types of high protection of the region”. The interlinks between the EU and the Central and Eastern European countries are evident through “European agreements”, including the environmental provisions and the fifth Environmental Action Plan. Even if a management system is not tailored to ensure that it works, it also demonstrates Europe’s efforts at the level of environmental protection in general.

2.3Coordination between market trade and environmental protection under the WTO system

Conflicts between environment and market trade originate from conflicts between the fundamental interests of developing and underdeveloped countries, and they do not disappear in the short term. The inconsistency between the apparent development purpose of environmental protection and market trade and the consistency of the essential development purpose, the indivisibility between environment and market trade, determine the intersection and contradiction between the two and finally coordinate into a whole
The WTO is a market trade organization that attaches great importance to the environment and is no more important than the United Nations ring UNEP attaches great importance to the market trade. More importantly, the functioning of WTO could only be restricted to the system, and economic subsidies to the environment were not provided for as substantive rights and obligations (Shaffer et al., 2015). As a result, the coordinated management development of market trade liberalization and environmental management policies in the WTO lies in the full attention given to environmental protection issues (Al-Fatlawi, 2018). At the same time, it is called for the reform and development of the current management system to promote the fairness and sustainable development of all groups’ social and economic development (Xu et al., 2020).

In the WTO, even though there are already a few major environmental-related elements, there are still some questions, mainly:

First of all, the emphasis is placed on the “environmental protection exception right”. Still, because of this right and obligation exercise, there is a lack of specific requirements, especially when contrary to other basic rules of market trade, how to coordinate the management of the main issues and contradictions, the requirements mentioned above are not mentioned. This will create new barriers to trade, especially for the export trade of underdeveloped countries, forming a new economic pressure.

Secondly, the requirements in the precise group members of the “environmental protection exception right” at the same time all provide for the implementation of this right and interest obligations constraints. Still, the meaning of the constraints mentioned above is not clear. For instance, “no discrimination against group members in the same situation” or “no hidden constraints on global market trade” are very vague and do not have detailed reference criteria.

Finally, it is not estimated that the distance between the underdeveloped countries in the level of environmental protection and the developed countries makes the underdeveloped countries in the market competition disadvantageous position. For instance, the Technical Barriers to Trade Agreement provides for States parties to implement special national enforcement programs if the indicators of globalization are not the integrated capacity of a country to achieve environmental protection, but the principles of transparency and notification need to be continuously strengthened (Al-Fatlawi, 2018). Since globalization indicators are not an enforceable requirement, developed countries are well placed on applying more stringent environmental reference standards than globalization indicators on national environmental protection needs, which is detrimental to the export of finished products from less developed countries (Lim et al., 2015). In the final information document of the Uruguay Round, the main content for the environmental level did not reflect on the late launch of the underdeveloped countries in environmental protection, scientific analysis has the actual situation of “North-South difference,” in the environmental reference standards, the developed countries and the underdeveloped countries treat the same, which is very disadvantageous to the underdeveloped countries.

Improving the existing environmental protection provisions requires adherence to the “Sustainable Development Progress” development goals. The first step should be to determine the provisions of GATT Article 20, which relates to “for the protection of people, animals, plants of life or health and hygiene,” “depleted natural resources.” The implementation of measures to restrict the use of production and processing and consumption in conjunction with” and other major content, so that open, can efficiently manage the WTO structure of environmental protection provisions, to prevent conflicts between the various provisions. The second step is to develop a defined and efficient regulatory requirement within the WTO structure, with a needle to each group member’s unilateral environmental market trade implementation plan (e.g., environmental reference standards, PPMs reference standards, etc.), thus avoiding the formation of new environmental and market trade barrier. At the same time, it is necessary to make full use of the WTO dispute settlement and settlement system to solve inadequate environmental protection provisions.
CONCLUSION

The collaborative development and progress of trade and environment is an important research topic facing the whole world and a unified development strategy and development goal for all countries in the world. It is not easy to manage the relationship between the two in harmony in a short period. The development goals of market trade are fundamentally different from environmental development goals. The development goal of the world environmental management policy is to carry out comprehensive management of the world’s environmental material resources, which requires sustainable development progress under the requirement of determining the limits of environmental material resources. The cohesion and attention of WTO enable the Committee on Market Trade and Environment and global environmental organizations to cooperate to coordinate the management of global environmental action in various countries, the main objectives of such a cooperation system. It promotes a comprehensive understanding of each other between the two organizations with different characteristics, identifies conflicts, and discusses the mode of coordinated management to promote the convergence of environmental legislation in various countries. Even if countries recognize the need for environmental protection and understand that the most appropriate channel of environmental protection is the intrinsic cost of environmental protection. However, due to the characteristics of environmental protection issues and the differences between countries’ development and progress periods and environmental endowments, it is difficult to implement national regulatory policies within countries that internalize environmental costs and costs in the absence of global cooperation. Therefore, in implementing environmental costs intrinsic level, we should follow the path of global cooperation.

The fundamental of modern global environmental protection is global cooperation, especially in solving and dealing with cross-border environmental protection issues. The WTO attaches importance only to the contradiction of market trade and lacks jurisdiction over a broader range of environmental and market trade. The purpose and scope of service of the global environmental organizations are relatively broad, especially a small number of non-governmental management organizations (NGOs), they have a wealth of expertise, practical experience and material resources in related industries, through their researchers to participate in the WTO dispute settlement and settlement applications, thereby promoting the full growth of WTO transparency, problem dispute settlement and settlement system is more democratized and open. Foreign trade policy aims to prevent the emergence of a new market trade restriction implementation program, protect market trade, eliminate the existing barriers to the market trade, restrict market trade laws and regulations, and finally achieve the way to increase the effectiveness of market trade. Therefore, environmental protection and self-market trade are two systems, and it is a core contradiction to abide by which fundamental principles are observed. From a long-term perspective, to solve and deal with the interrelationship between market trade and the environment, it must redefine the relevant influencing factors in these two systems. Finally, in a new system of integration, the two contradictory issues are combined with thinking.

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