

Is the GATT Compatible with Environmental Protection?

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This Comment discusses the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in light of its environmental implications. The Author proceeds from the observation that many environmental organizations see the GATT and its trade principles as threats to national environmental laws and international accords. The environmentalist thus will say that the GATT is not compatible with environmental protection. This is allegedly because the GATT deters imposition of environmental standards through trade sanctions. For one, GATT does not allow an import ban on a party whose production processes do not meet environmental protection. If at all, it bans these on very narrow terms. The Comment mainly discusses along the lines of the exceptions which allow trade sanctions to protect the environment. The Author concludes in the end that consumer choice may be an alternative to trade sanctions.