

The Feasibility of Effectively Avoiding Green Trade Barriers

-- Taking Heilongjiang's Export of Pork as An Example

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Abstract: With the increasingly active global economic and trade activities, some international trade issues are gradually emerging. At the same time, some countries led by the United States vigorously promote unilateral trade, which has led to the emergence of traditional trade protectionism. Some developed countries, citing the protection of their own trade, set high standards and thresholds for imported products. Furthermore, green trade barriers have emerged in the process of international trade. This article explores the example of Heilongjiang exporting pork, explains and analyzes the connotation and characteristics of green trade barriers, and proposes some suggestions and countermeasures to deal with green trade barriers based on the current status of green trade barriers.

Keywords: Import and export trade, Green trade barriers, Trade protectionism.

1. Introduction

After World War II, the global industrialization process accelerated, and with the overall level of science and technology in the world increasing, the economic connections between countries became increasingly close, thereby promoting the formation of economic globalization. At the same time, due to differences in geographical location and resources among countries, the level of economic development varies to some extent. Therefore, some countries often restrict imports by setting higher threshold requirements for developing or trading countries in order to better protect their own trade and achieve the set trade volume. In addition, the continuous deterioration of the global ecological environment also makes some developed countries pay more attention to the concept of green products, and prefer to import and consume green products. Thus, the phenomenon of importing countries formulating strict import policies frequently occurs in the international trade market. Therefore, in this context, it promoted the emergence of green trade barriers.

2. The Connotation and Characteristics of Green Trade Barriers

2.1. The connotation of green trade barriers

Green trade barriers, also known as environmental trade barriers or technical trade barriers, typically refer to various import thresholds and measures set by importing countries to protect their own product markets, as well as the activity and enthusiasm of enterprises, and maintain their own good ecological environment. Specifically, it can be divided into two types based on subjective and objective criteria: broad and narrow green trade barriers. From the subjective motives of a country, it can be broadly divided into goodwill and malice. If a country sets green barriers related to trade, the purpose is to protect its ecological environment and market economic and trade activities, while ensuring the life and

health of its citizens, animals and plants[1]. To achieve and maintain the sustainable development of the domestic economy, then it is a friendly green barrier; On the contrary, if a country advocates unilateral trade only to resist foreign products, it is a malicious barrier, while narrow green trade barriers are often malicious. In addition, objective standards mainly refer to whether the trade barrier violates the non-discrimination principle of the WTO. If a country does not adhere to the principle of non-discrimination in order to reach a consensus that all members are treated equally, then it is malicious. Otherwise, the green trade barrier is goodwill[2].

Among them, the green trade barrier referred to in this article refers to the measures taken by a country to restrict or prohibit product imports for the purpose of protecting the sustainable development of its own economy in good faith[3], both are broad and friendly green trade barriers. It is usually reflected in Import by setting strict product green technology standards and market access systems, and setting strict requirements for product marks and packaging.

2.2. Characteristics of Green Trade Barriers

2.2.1. Concealment

The traditional form of non-tariff barriers is mainly to limit the quantity of imported products, so as to reduce import. Green trade barriers often restrict imports as a potential regulatory requirement, which is not only different from directly implementing quota systems to restrict the quantity of imports, but also from requiring imported products to have licenses and other obvious unfair and discriminatory trade distribution requirements. This reduces the international trade friction caused by restricting or prohibiting product imports to a certain extent, and green trade barriers are based on the continuous progress and development of technology. The inspection of imported products is not only strict and precise, but also cumbersome and complex, causing exporting countries to reduce exports due to their inability to meet product requirements in a short period of time[4].

2.2.2. Extensiveness

Green trade barriers are mainly derived from the concept of green environmental protection. Therefore, they mainly

involve the life and health of humans, animals and plants, the overall ecological environment of the country, and the effective environmental decomposition of product packaging. These requirements are very important for some industrial finished product industries that need to meet certain standards, such as environmental protection, safety, hygiene, and pollutant emissions. Therefore, it has caused enormous production and export pressure on the manufacturing industry in developing countries. Meanwhile, due to the virtual and plastic nature of green trade barriers, if the importing country is subjectively unwilling to import the product in a specific export trade environment, even if the product meets the import requirements, it may not be able to proceed with trade smoothly.

2.2.3. Rationality

From the meaning of green trade barriers, it can be seen that their recognized main purpose is to protect the good ecological environment of importing countries, ensure the health level of animals and plants, and people. Especially in the context of increasingly strong global awareness of green environmental protection, people prefer products with labels such as "green, safety, and environmental protection". Therefore, some countries impose trade sanctions, restrict or prohibit the trade of imported products on the grounds of protecting the health of their own residents, making trade protection nominally equivalent to green trade barriers.

2.2.4. Technical

The implementation of green trade barriers mainly relies on today's precise and strict science and technology, and one of the reasons why trade friction issues rarely occur between developed countries is that their technological levels are basically at the same level. However, due to the significant gap in scientific and technological levels between developed and developing countries, the high standard green trade barriers they establish are often insurmountable for some developing countries in a short period of time.

3. The Current Situation of Green Trade Barriers

3.1. Wide application range of green trade barriers

In recent years, due to the gradual formation of the value concept of green environmental protection in some developed countries, the scope of application of green trade barriers has become increasingly widespread, and the product fields involved have also increased. According to statistics, the application of green barriers has gradually expanded from industries such as agricultural and sideline products, food, and clothing to industries such as toys and furniture, and has shown an increasing trend year by year. At the same time, as people's awareness of green concepts such as environmental protection and safety increases, the requirements for product quality and green safety are gradually strict. In trade, this is mainly manifested in the green trade barrier policies formulated by some countries, which not only require high quality of imported domestic products and establish high standards, but also have high production cycles, production methods. The packaging and labeling of products have put forward restrictive requirements for green and environmental protection, which pose significant obstacles to the consumption of imported products and have a negative impact on some developing countries with lower levels of

technological and environmental protection.

3.2. Diversified manifestations of green trade barriers

Driven by economic globalization and the green wave, green trade barriers have also emerged in various forms. Among them, the common main forms are: firstly, the green tariff system. Its usual manifestation is that importing countries impose certain import Surtax on certain products that may pose a threat, damage and pollution to the environment, or impose trade sanctions on them by restricting and prohibiting the import of goods. However, there are often internal and external differences in the implementation of standards, and clearly discriminatory provisions are considered reasonable. Some countries even implement trade sanctions, restrict or prohibit the trade of imported products on the grounds of protecting the health of their own residents[5]. Next is the green technology standard system. By legislative means, strict mandatory technical standards are established to restrict the import of foreign goods. Developed countries, due to their advanced scientific and technological capabilities, do not consider or rarely consider the actual technological level of other developing countries, and adopt very strict technical standards for imported products regardless of country. In fact, this has led to the exclusion of developing country products from developed country markets, seriously affecting the foreign trade of developing countries[6]. Finally, there are "green countervailing measures" and "green anti-dumping measures". That is, if the exporting country exports at a low price, the importing country has the right to suspect that the product or enterprise has received some form of support or subsidies from the government, so the importing country will restrict or prohibit the import of the product by imposing green countervailing duties or green Dumping (pricing policy) Anti-dumping actions.

3.3. Targeted countries for setting green trade barriers

Due to the fact that emerging developing countries already have a certain economic foundation in the process of economic development, as well as a large amount of energy and labor resources required for product production, some developed countries will set stricter and stricter import product standards to prevent their exported products from posing a threat to their domestic market products and disrupting the order of the domestic market, And take certain measures to obstruct the trade of imported products.

3.4. The dynamic nature of green trade barrier measures

On the one hand, with the continuous development and changes of the global economic situation, the green trade barrier measures set by various countries, such as the content and methods of green barriers, will correspondingly change; On the other hand, due to the fact that a country's behavior of changing green trade barriers will affect neighboring countries and then spread to most countries, resulting in a linkage effect that causes countries to have effects, green barriers are to some extent unstable.

4. Case Analysis

4.1. Taking the Export of Pork from Heilongjiang Province as an Example

In September 2006, the Russian Veterinary and Phytosanitary Supervision Bureau (hereinafter referred to as the Agricultural Supervision Bureau) notified the relevant customs to ban the import of all Chinese cloven hoofed animals and Animal product on the grounds of the unknown animal epidemic situation in China. Since then, the trade of Chinese pork exports to Russia has stagnated. At the same time, the Chinese pork market has been in a relatively low state for a long time, which is reflected in the continuous decline of pork prices in the market and the successive closure of small and medium-sized farms. This phenomenon is particularly evident in Wangkui County, which is known as "the largest county of pig breeding in Heilongjiang Province".

Shao Jun, a farmer who has been engaged in aquaculture in Wangkui County since 1998, said to the reporter of Legal Daily that our psychology is the same as that of gamblers. The gamblers came out with bare arms overnight. We pig farmers spent three years, and the effect was the same as him. From these words alone, it can be seen that the green trade barriers implemented by Russia at that time had a very adverse impact on China's aquaculture exports, and also caused huge losses to farmers engaged in the aquaculture industry.

At the same time, it is understood that after implementing trade barriers, Russia has also fallen into the dilemma of importing pork products. This is mainly because before 2016, due to the large market for pork production in the United States and the European Union, which is sufficient for foreign trade exports, and the high level of modern technology in both countries, the products have a price competitive advantage in the market. Therefore, Russia mainly purchases pork from the two countries. However, starting from the second half of 2016, due to the adverse impact and impact of the situation in Ukraine, Russia was also subject to foreign trade sanctions from the United States and the European Union. Therefore, from August 7, 2016, Russia comprehensively prohibited product trade with countries such as the United States and the European Union, and began to search for new foreign trade partners.

During the period when Heilongjiang was forced to stop its export trade with Russia, based on the severe foreign trade situation and strict green barrier requirements, relevant governments and departments around the country have taken measures and introduced export trade related policies to reduce production costs by strongly supporting enterprises in technological innovation. In addition, cooperation and exchange between customs and quarantine departments have been strengthened to improve logistics and transportation efficiency, Actively exploring a new path to achieve Sino Russian foreign trade.

At the same time, due to geographical reasons, in the negotiation with Russia, China handed over the task to Heilongjiang Provincial Inspection and Quarantine Bureau, and entrusted it to negotiate on behalf of the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine of the People's Republic of China and the agricultural supervision department in the Russian Far East. After 10 years of communication and negotiation between the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine of the People's Republic of China (AQSIQ) and the inspection and quarantine directors of various regions,

in September 2016, two Heilongjiang enterprises successfully passed the inspection of the Russian Agricultural Supervision Bureau. On November 20 of the same year, 125 tons of pork were successfully exported to the port of Vladivostok, Russia, becoming the first batch of Chinese export enterprises to Russia. Since then, Heilongjiang Province has become the only province in China that allows exports to Russia.

4.2. Adverse effects of green barriers on Heilongjiang Province

4.2.1. Green trade barriers cause a large number of export products to be stranded

Green trade barriers will lead to a sharp increase in China's pork production, leading to a phenomenon of oversupply in the domestic market, resulting in a decline in pork prices and causing huge losses to farmers who rely on the aquaculture industry for their livelihoods. The legal provisions and complex testing system developed by Russia to implement green trade barriers were issues that China could not solve in the short term at that time, resulting in a disadvantageous situation for the aquaculture industry. In this case, due to the green trade barrier threshold set by Russia being unable to be resolved at that time, there were consecutive failures of small and medium-sized farms in Heilongjiang Province, and at the same time, it brought significant losses to farmers such as Shao Jun.

4.2.2. Green trade barriers weaken the international competitiveness of pork

In order to meet the requirements of green trade barriers set by exporting countries and promote the export of Chinese pork products, enterprises in various regions must invest a large amount of funds internally for product testing, testing, certification and other expenses, resulting in an increase in the cost of exported products. To ensure a certain profit for enterprises, the price of pork meat will also rise accordingly. Based on this, compared to the export pork prices of other countries, China's advantage in this area has plummeted. In this case, after ten years of negotiations and communication with Russia, China was able to export pork from Heilongjiang Province to Russia. During this decade, China's pork export trade with Russia was in a stagnant stage, which to some extent had a negative impact on the market competitiveness of China's pork exports[7].

4.2.3. Green trade barriers constrain the growth of pork export trade

In recent years, the main trading countries for China's pork exports have been concentrated in some developed Western countries and regions. However, due to the wide range of green environmental protection concepts advocated by developed countries and strict environmental protection and safety policies, exporting countries need to vigorously increase production inputs, which greatly increases the export cost of pork products[8]. Seriously hindering the growth rate of China's pork export trade[9]. Based on this case, during the ten years of communication and negotiation on pork exports in Russia, enterprises from all over the country have invested a large amount of capital to conduct professional research on improving pork quality and production, which has increased the production cost of pork and restricted the growth of China's pork export trade.

4.3. The favorable impact of green barriers on Heilongjiang Province

4.3.1. Beneficial to promoting the improvement of pork product quality

Whether the green trade barriers set by importing countries on imported products are goodwill or malice, it is also necessary to improve the quality of food as people's living standards generally rise. In fact, the establishment of green trade barriers has given certain pressure and impetus to Chinese pork production enterprises, and to a certain extent, it has provided a force for protecting China's ecological environment, promoting enterprises to improve product quality[10],and providing society with healthier and greener products. In the case, two enterprises in Heilongjiang Province successfully passed layer by layer inspections by the Russian Agricultural Supervision Bureau, achieving the export of pork from Heilongjiang Province to Russia, both relying on the improvement of their pork quality.

4.3.2. Beneficial to promoting technological progress and innovation

Essentially, on the one hand, green trade barriers will indeed cause a decrease in China's export trade volume and slow sales of exported products, but on the other hand, green barriers will also drive enterprises to increase investment in research and development, improve internal management and collaboration methods, and achieve reasonable allocation of internal resources within enterprises, At the same time, it will also promote continuous innovation and progress in product production technology[11-12].When a country advances in product production technology, the production efficiency of its products will also increase, thereby achieving updates in the production processes, processes, and methods of the original products, thereby enhancing the international competitiveness of China's pork and other export products. For this case, although Russia has established green trade barriers to Chinese pork exports for a decade, it has ultimately promoted innovation in production technology and significant improvements in production efficiency and quality for enterprises.

4.3.3. Establishing a sound standard system for the food industry

The reason why China is hindered by green trade barriers from importing countries is that each country's product industry standards are different, while developed Western countries have increasingly high food standards due to their pursuit of green products in recent years. Therefore, in order to meet the high standards of green products in developed Western countries, China has gradually raised the production standards of the food industry. As a result, relevant departments have begun to protect the ecological environment, achieve sustainable development of the global economy, and gradually improve the food industry standard system[13].

5. Countermeasures and Suggestions for Dealing with Green Trade Barriers

In recent years, China has experienced frequent trade frictions caused by green trade barriers, which have had a significant impact on China's product trade exports. Taking the export of pork in Heilongjiang Province as an example, this shows that there are still shortcomings and loopholes in

the environmental protection and safety standards of China Foods Limited's food, which provides an excuse for trading countries to set up green trade barriers on China's export products. To address this issue, China should continuously strengthen its management of the food safety standard system and establish relevant regulations and laws. At the same time, relevant departments and enterprises should also strictly manage the production of products, so as to ensure that exported products are not hindered by green trade barriers in the international trade market. In view of this, the following suggestions are proposed:

Firstly, enhance environmental awareness and actively respond to green trade barriers. Nowadays, the world's ecological environment is deteriorating, and the awareness of environmental protection is gradually rooted in the hearts of the people. Countries have proposed and formulated carbon reduction plans, and China has also proposed the development concept of "Clear waters and green mountains". Therefore, for enterprises, in order to successfully overcome the green trade barriers set by Western countries, they must first raise their environmental awareness [14], establish a concept of green product production, actively respond to green trade barriers[15],and fully realize that only by following the trend of the times, referring to the high environmental standards of developed countries, can their product production awareness be consistent with the international market, Only then can it be possible to produce high-quality products that meet the requirements. In addition, enterprises can also understand and familiarize themselves with the content of green trade barriers in some major export countries, grasp their development trends and characteristics, timely collect, organize, and track relevant relationships, and establish specialized information centers and databases[16-17],and improve and promote their own products based on their shortcomings and advantages, in order to better align with the international market, Promote export trade of products.

Secondly, change the export trade model and develop multi-level markets. The international environment in today's world is constantly changing, with significant increases in instability and uncertainty. Especially in the period of frequent COVID-19 epidemic, China's total foreign trade volume has a significant downward trend compared with that before the epidemic, and the international trade situation is not optimistic. Therefore, in order to ensure a healthy economic and trade environment, enterprises should improve their business models, abandon the previous regional concentrated export model, and reduce the dependence of export products on a certain country or region. At the same time, a multi-level market should also be established, by continuously improving the level of specialization in product production, expanding the international market for product trade, and enhancing one's ability to resist risks. This can effectively avoid the risk of sudden export reductions caused by instability in the international market and high green trade barriers in a country or region.

Thirdly, establish relevant legal measures to address green trade barriers[18-19].It is necessary for China to break the barriers of green trade barriers to export trade products and establish a sound legal and regulatory system for environmental protection[20-21].On the one hand, from international experience, formulating strict environmental regulations can effectively advocate for people to live and produce in a green and environmentally friendly way,

promote enterprises to establish a green production concept, accelerate the optimization and transformation of industrial structure[22], and promote the transformation of export products to high-quality products. At the same time, relevant departments should strictly enforce the law and strengthen supervision of product production processes. On the other hand, formulating relevant laws and regulations can compensate for the shortcomings of national legislation in this area, improve China's legal system in environmental protection, product production, and other aspects[23], and also provide relevant law enforcement departments with a legal basis for regulating product production and environmental protection.

Fourth, we should use the "the Belt and Road" initiative to deepen the relationship between trading countries. In order to comply with the trend of the global era, strengthen trade relations among countries, promote the free flow of factors of production in the global economy, and achieve the optimal allocation of factors and resources, China put forward the "the Belt and Road" initiative in 2013. In this context, China should take advantage of the "the Belt and Road" initiative, give full play to the advantages and potential of its products, and strengthen trade cooperation and economic exchanges with countries along the the Belt and Road[24]. On the one hand, we can utilize the resource advantages of trading countries and China's production advantages to achieve win-win cooperation in trade between both sides[25], achieving the goal of jointly promoting the economic development of the two countries. On the other hand, we can also build a bridge for economic and trade between China and trading countries based on this, and also lay the foundation for establishing friendly trade partnerships. This is not only conducive to improving the brand image and competitiveness of Chinese products in the international market, attracting and cultivating potential consumers, expanding the international market scale of product placement, but also has a certain positive effect on reducing the resistance of trading countries to Chinese products in the future, and reducing relevant tariff and non-tariff barriers.

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