

# Research on the Influence of Green Trade Barriers on China's Export and Its Coping Strategies

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**Abstract:** With the increasing awareness of global protection, green trade barriers have gradually become a factor that cannot be ignored in international trade. This paper aims to discuss the impact of green trade barriers on China's exports, and put forward corresponding countermeasures. The paper first summarizes the definition, development process and main characteristics of green trade barriers, then analyzes their impact on China's export, and finally puts forward countermeasures from the two levels of government and enterprises.

**Keywords:** Green trade barriers; export impact; and coping strategies.

## 1. Introductory Paragraph

Today, with the vigorous development of global economy, the process of trade liberalization is accelerating. However, it is accompanied by the awakening of environmental protection awareness and the increasingly prominent global environmental problems. Governments began to seek out ways to protect their domestic environmental resources while promoting economic growth. Green trade barriers, as an important non-tariff measure, emerge at the historic moment and play an increasingly important role in international trade. China, as the world's largest exporter, is facing the severe challenge of green trade barriers. These barriers may not only have an impact on China's total export volume, but also may change the structure of China's export products, and even affect the international competitiveness of China's export products. Therefore, in-depth analysis of the impact of green trade barriers on China's export and exploration of coping strategies are not only crucial to the sustainable development of China's export trade, but also of profound significance to the global environmental protection and the harmony and stability of the international trade order. This study aims to provide reference for Chinese export enterprises and government decision-making through systematic research.

## 2. Overview of Green Trade Barriers

Green trade barriers refer to a series of non-tariff measures set up in order to protect the domestic environment and resources and promote sustainable development in international trade. These measures often appear in the form of environmental protection regulations, environmental technical standards, and environmental certification systems, aiming to limit or prohibit imported products that may cause environmental pollution, ecological damage or excessive consumption of resources. Since the 1970s, with the increasingly prominent global environmental problems, governments of various countries have begun to deeply realize the importance of environmental protection and taken measures to strengthen domestic environmental protection, and green trade barriers have emerged at the historic moment. In this context, the development of green trade barriers has experienced the transformation from voluntary to mandatory technical regulations, and in the process of the transformation

from voluntary to mandatory technical regulations, the field of environmental protection and energy conservation has become a hot spot of green barriers.

Green trade barriers have three characteristics of legality, flexibility and pertinence. First of all, its legitimacy is reflected in the fact that these measures often comply with international environmental regulations and standards, and they are reasonable measures taken by national governments to protect the environment. Second, green trade barriers are flexible and can be adjusted according to the environmental conditions, resource conditions and development levels of different countries to adapt to the actual situation of each country. Finally, it is highly targeted, mainly for those with serious environmental pollution, large resource consumption of imported products, in order to reduce the negative impact on the environment.

In addition, green trade barriers also have a certain concealment and controversy. The concealment is reflected in the fact that these measures are often in the name of environmental protection, but they actually hide the purpose of protecting domestic industries and restricting imports. The controversy stems from the differences among countries on environmental standards and measures, as well as the different interests of developing countries and developed countries in environmental protection.

Under the background of global economic integration and trade liberalization, green trade barriers have become a factor that cannot be ignored in international trade. For China, as one of the largest exporters in the world, a thorough study of the characteristics, development trend and coping strategies of green trade barriers is of great significance for promoting the sustainable development of export trade and the protection of domestic environmental resources.

## 3. The Impact of Green Trade Barriers on China's Exports

Green trade barriers, as a non-tariff means in contemporary international trade, have had a profound impact on China's export trade. These effects are embodied in the following aspects:

### 3.1. Far-reaching impact on total exports

With the improvement of global environmental awareness,

green trade barriers have gradually become the new normal of international trade. For China's exports, this means that its products should not only meet the traditional competitive factors such as quality and price, but also need to meet the increasingly stringent environmental standards. The establishment of these barriers leads to the exclusion of some of our export products in the international market, thus affecting the overall total export volume. According to relevant data, in recent years, China does not meet the environmental standards and suffered returns, rejected from time to time, which undoubtedly brought a small impact to the total export of China. More seriously, this trend is likely to continue to intensify in the future, as standards for green trade barriers will only get higher as technology advances and environmental awareness increases.

### **3.2. Differential impact on exports of different industries**

The impact of green trade barriers on different industries is significantly different. For those traditional industries with high pollution and high energy consumption, such as chemical and paper industry, their export impact is particularly obvious. Because the products of these industries are often accompanied by a large number of pollutants in the production process, it is difficult to meet the international environmental standards. In contrast, the export of those emerging industries with environmental technology advantages, such as new energy and new materials, is relatively less affected. The impact of this differentiation has led to significant changes in China's export structure, with the export share of traditional industries gradually declining, while the export share of emerging environmental protection industries showing an upward trend. This change is of great significance to the adjustment of industrial structure and the transformation of economic development mode.

### **3.3. Complex impacts on export costs, structure, and competitiveness**

Green trade barriers require export products to meet higher environmental standards, which undoubtedly increases the production and operation costs of enterprises. In order to meet these standards, enterprises have to increase their investment in technology research and development, equipment renewal, pollution control and other aspects. These additional costs will undoubtedly be passed on to the product, leading to higher export prices and lower competitiveness. In addition, green trade barriers may also lead to the structure of China's export products. Some products are eliminated because they cannot meet the environmental protection standards, which will make China's export product structure to more environmental protection, high technology direction development. However, this change does not mean that the overall competitiveness of China's export products will improve, because the international competition of high-tech products is equally fierce, and it is often accompanied by higher risks and uncertainties. Therefore, green trade barriers have a complex impact on the competitiveness of China's export products, which has both a positive promotion effect and a negative restriction effect. This influence needs to be highly valued and deeply studied by the Chinese government and enterprises.

To sum up, the impact of green trade barriers on China's exports is multifaceted, including the decline of the total volume, structural adjustment, and the weakening of

competitiveness. Therefore, China's export enterprises and the government must attach great importance to this problem and take corresponding measures to deal with it.

### **3.4. Case analysis: Textile industry and green trade barriers**

As the traditional pillar industry of China's export, the textile industry has faced increasingly severe challenges of green trade barriers in recent years. With the promotion of global environmental awareness, developed countries have strengthened the environmental protection testing and requirements for imported textiles. These requirements not only involve the production process of textiles, but also extend to the selection of raw materials, the use of dyes and the final treatment of products.

The European Union, for example, has imposed strict environmental regulations on imported textiles, such as banning the use of certain harmful dyes and chemicals, and requiring energy consumption and pollution emissions during textile production to meet certain standards. For China's textile export enterprises, these regulations mean that they must increase the investment in environmental protection technology and equipment to ensure that the products meet the environmental protection standards of the international market.

However, there have always been some problems in environmental protection in China's textile industry. For example, in order to pursue low cost and high efficiency, some enterprises ignore the environmental protection investment and governance, resulting in the products can not meet the environmental protection standards of developed countries. This not only makes these products are refused imports, but also brings a negative impact on the reputation of China's textile exports.

## **4. Countermeasures to Green Trade Barriers**

### **4.1. Coping strategies at the national level**

Facing the challenge of green trade barriers, the government, as the policy maker and the representative of national interests, should adopt a series of forward-looking and targeted strategies to support and guide the export enterprises to respond.

#### **4.1.1. Improve the domestic environmental protection laws and regulations**

In improving domestic environmental regulations, the government needs to take a series of measures to strengthen the formulation and implementation of environmental regulations. First of all, a more stringent and comprehensive environmental regulatory system should be established, covering environmental protection requirements in product production, packaging, transportation and other links, to ensure that export products meet international environmental protection standards. Secondly, the government should strengthen the publicity and training of environmental protection laws and regulations, and improve the awareness and compliance awareness of enterprises and the public of environmental protection laws and regulations. At the same time, the government should also strengthen the supervision and inspection of the implementation of the environmental laws and regulations, and strictly punish and publicize the enterprises that violate the environmental laws and

regulations, so as to play a warning and deterrent role. Through these measures, we can improve the environmental protection level of China's export products, enhance the international competitiveness, and reduce the risk of green trade barriers due to environmental protection issues.

#### **4.1.2. Strengthening international trade cooperation and negotiations**

In strengthening international trade cooperation and negotiations, the government should actively participate in international environmental protection organizations and trade negotiations, and strive for more opportunities and voice in environmental protection cooperation. First of all, China should strengthen environmental protection cooperation with developed and developing countries, jointly deal with global environmental issues, and promote the establishment of fair and reasonable international environmental protection rules. Second, the government should actively participate in international trade negotiations, strive to give more consideration to the interests of developing countries in the formulation of international trade rules, and promote the establishment of a more fair, transparent and predictable international trade environment. At the same time, the government should also strengthen communication and coordination with other countries, promote the establishment of bilateral or multilateral cooperation mechanisms in the field of environmental protection, and jointly address the challenge of green trade barriers. Through these measures, we can enhance China's voice and influence in international trade, and provide a more favorable trade environment for China's export enterprises.

#### **4.1.3. To provide support and assistance from export enterprises**

In terms of providing support and help to export enterprises, the government should increase the support to export enterprises, provide technical support, financial subsidies and other help, and reduce the cost of enterprises to deal with green trade barriers. First, the government can set up special funds to support export enterprises in the research and development and innovation of environmental protection technologies, and to improve the environmental performance and added value of their products. Secondly, the government can provide preferential policies such as export tax rebate and export credit insurance to reduce the cost and risk of export enterprises. At the same time, the government can also strengthen the cooperation with international environmental protection organizations and trade agencies, provide more professional consulting and services for export enterprises, and help them better cope with the challenge of green trade barriers. Through these measures, the competitiveness and adaptability of export enterprises can be enhanced to promote the sustainable development of China's export trade.

## **4.2. Enterprise-level coping strategies**

At the enterprise level, in the face of green trade barriers, export enterprises should adopt a series of specific coping strategies to enhance their competitiveness and adaptability.

### **4.2.1. Improve product environmental protection standards**

Export enterprises should pay attention to product research and development and innovation, and integrate the environmental protection concept into the product design and production process. Through the adoption of environmentally friendly materials and advanced production technology,

improve the environmental performance of products, to meet the international market demand for environmentally friendly products. Enterprises should also pay attention to the changes in international environmental protection regulations and standards, timely adjust their own production standards and processes, to ensure that the products meet the environmental protection requirements of the international market. At the same time, enterprises can cooperate with domestic and foreign environmental protection institutions to jointly research and promote environmental protection technologies to improve the environmental protection level of products.

### **4.2.2. Strengthen environmental protection certification**

In order to enhance the international competitiveness of the products, export enterprises should actively apply for international environmental protection certification, such as ISO14000, etc. These certifications can prove that the products meet the international environmental standards and requirements, improve the credibility and competitiveness in the international market. In the process of applying for environmental protection certification, enterprises should fully understand the certification standards and requirements, strengthen internal management and training, and ensure that the production and management of the enterprises meet the certification standards. At the same time, enterprises can also participate in international environmental protection exhibitions and forums and other activities, to show their own environmental protection strength and product advantages, to attract more international customers and partners.

### **4.2.3. Expand diversified markets**

In order to reduce the dependence on the single market and reduce the impact of green trade barriers on China's export, export enterprises should actively explore emerging markets. Through an in-depth understanding of the needs and characteristics of different markets, enterprises can adjust their product strategies and market strategies to expand diversified sales channels and markets. At the same time, enterprises can also strengthen the cooperation with foreign enterprises and institutions, jointly develop new products and new technologies, and improve the competitiveness of products and market share. By expanding diversified markets, enterprises can reduce market risks and improve their overall profitability.

### **4.2.4. Enhance environmental awareness**

Within the enterprise, strengthening environmental protection publicity and education is an important way to improve employees' environmental awareness. By organizing regular environmental protection training and publicity activities, enterprises can let employees understand the importance and urgency of environmental protection, and improve their environmental awareness and sense of responsibility. At the same time, enterprises should also establish a sound environmental protection management system and incentive mechanism, encourage employees to actively participate in environmental protection activities and practice, and form the concept of green production and management. By enhancing employees' awareness of environmental protection, enterprises can improve their own environmental protection image and brand value, and enhance their international competitiveness.

## **5. China's Opportunity to Deal with Green Trade Barriers**

When facing green trade barriers, China should not only

pay attention to the challenges brought to China's export trade, but also explore the precious opportunities contained in them. Green trade barriers are essentially a strong impetus for environmental technology innovation and product upgrading, which forces enterprises to re-examine their own production process and product quality to meet higher environmental standards. This not only enhances the international competitiveness of the products, but also injects new vitality into China's export enterprises. At the same time, this trend also promotes the diversification of China's export market, guides enterprises to explore more emerging markets, and reduces their dependence on a single market. What is more profound is that green trade barriers have promoted the optimization and upgrading of China's industrial structure, guided the flow of resources to more environmentally friendly and efficient areas, and contributed to the high-quality development of China's economy. Therefore, we should actively respond to green trade barriers, take them as a new driving force for the sustainable development of China's export trade, and embrace this historic opportunity with a more open and innovative attitude.

## 6. Conclusions and Suggestions

This study deeply discusses the impact of green trade barriers on China's export trade, and systematically analyzes the opportunities and challenges contained in them. As a non-tariff trade measure, green trade barriers are increasingly valued in the world, which has caused a significant impact on China's export trade. This impact is not only limited to the trade restrictions and cost increases in the short term, but more importantly, it prompts China's export enterprises, governments and relevant institutions to re-examine and evaluate the current trade strategies and models.

For the government, green trade barriers require China to improve environmental protection laws and regulations and improve environmental protection standards for export products, which not only helps to promote the green transformation of domestic industries, but also can enhance its status and influence in international negotiations. In addition, strengthening international trade cooperation and negotiations and establishing a fairer and more transparent environmental protection standard system are also an important means for China to deal with green trade barriers.

For enterprises, green trade barriers provide an opportunity for transformation and upgrading. By strengthening environmental protection technology innovation, improving product environmental protection standards, and strengthening environmental protection certification, enterprises can enhance the international competitiveness of their products, and open up a broader market space. At the same time, expanding the diversified market and reducing the

dependence on the single market is also an important strategy for enterprises to deal with green trade barriers.

In general, green trade barriers bring both challenges and opportunities. In the face of the challenges, the Chinese government and enterprises should work together and take active and effective measures to promote the sustainable development of export trade. At the same time, we should also see the deep-seated reasons behind the green trade barriers and the development trend of global trade, and make greater contributions to the high-quality development of China's economy and the prosperity and stability of global trade.

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