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"Biophysical and Socio-economic Frame Conditions for the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources"

Food Miles and Agrofood Trade Between Africa and European Union

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Abstract

In response to growing anxiety over climate change, policy-makers, firms and consumers are considering ways in which to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. A possible mitigation mechanism undergoing rapid development is food miles labeling. The "food miles" is well known and widely used by consumers interested in having more information available to them on how far food has travelled to make buying decisions. Of particular concern is to assess the capacity of low income countries to participate in food miles labeled trade and help assure that new opportunities exports are exploited. Research shows that the allocation of carbon dioxide emissions varies form one country/region/actor to another. So is there possible to recognise in any food miles labeling the concept of "fair miles"?

A multivariate regression model will be run to assess association between socioeconomic and biophysical conditions by taking farm income as dependent variable, and quantity of fertiliser use (carbon dioxide emission) and cost distance to the market as independent variable. This will show that the cost distance to the market and the carbon dioxide emission explain the income potential of a farm in a given location. Statistical techniques (average, frequency,..) will be used to determine categories with ecological credit. If a category is able to produce goods that have lower carbon emissions per unit than the average category, then that category may expect to be rewarded for supplying the good demanded by consumers (and society). Rewarding the carbon efficiency producer serves to simultaneously encourage innovation in the food chain, and to bring about reduced atmospheric pollution.

The future strategies of maintaining/increasing access of sub-Saharan enterprises to industrialised country's markets through carbon credit investment of elected categories will be found suitable for promoting sustainable development and equitable environmental protection.

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