

EU / Latin America Webinars

The Paddy Ashdown Forum (PAF*), in collaboration with the Group of Producing Countries of the Southern Cone (GPS**), and in association with European Liberal Forum (ELF***) as well as RELIAL**** are curating a series of webinars with the purpose to strengthen the ties between Europe and Latin America to promote greater sustainably viable collaboration in agriculture, deforestation, climate change and trade within the context of the EU-MERCOSUR Trade Agreement and the EU New Green Deal.

Introduction

For Europe to meaningfully achieve targets of net-zero, waste and carbon reductions must be delivered via harmonised cross border geopolitical policies to ensure gains in the EU are not then offset elsewhere. It follows, such action will optimise freedom to achieve both the goal of environmental sustainability and ameliorate opportunities of economic growth of the least developed countries to protect their vulnerable population. As a result, to promote sustainable and efficient agri-food systems that guarantee a sufficient food supply for the growing global demand is inherent in any long-term sustainably viable policy.

Accordingly, The Paddy Ashdown Forum have initiated the webinars to explore opportunities within the context of the EU New Green Deal and the new Circular Economy Action Plan. As a result, present improvements to production and consumption cycles that protect the environment as well as preserve and protect economic balance. Hence, create greater trust between Government, institutions and the general public in a post COVID-19 new order. For example, since waste is a major issue, explore how transforming the way we see the agricultural systems can influence both its reduction as well as the cutting of all associated emissions.

Such open dialogue and projects can aid the attainment of net-zero targets that is fair and just for all as well as reduce the dependency, risk and use of chemicals and pesticides, fertilisers or even antibiotics; as new tilling methods such as those promoted by GPS have lower emissions yet protect harvests from pests and diseases.

Consequently, greater cooperation will help promote food safety as well as ensure not just compliance and parity of standards but help reveal avenues to raise the bar on those standards. Hence, we openly work together to seek sustainably viable agricultural practises from upstream and downstream of production and consumption systems to achieve a greater more inclusive circular economy.

Format

In bringing together some of the very brightest and experienced people from South America and the EU to help solve some of the most intractable problems associated with feeding over seven billion people while aiming at a net-zero world, the intention is to curate an initial programme of interdependent webinars that will hopefully lead to collaborative projects.

There will be 4 from South America (currently 3 are described in the appendix). Experts from South America and moderated by an expert from Europe.

The first four will be followed up by four webinars with European Experts and moderated by an expert from South America.

* The Paddy Ashdown Forum is a Think Tank that brings together senior academics and policy makers to produce new thinking on domestic, European and International issues. Work will be disseminated via books, policy papers, reports, workshops, roundtables, seminars and discussions. www.thepaddyashdownforum.org

** GPS is a network of private institutions and experts from the agribusiness sector from Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay (ABPU). The purpose of GPS is to contribute to the integration of the Southern Cone countries and their international projection. GPS seeks to generate and share knowledge through its reports and documents related to its fields of interest. <https://grupogpps.org/swcb/>

*** The European Liberal Forum (ELF) is the official think tank and political foundation of the European Liberal Party, the ALDE Party. Together with 46 member organisations ELF work all over Europe to bring new ideas into political debate, to provide a platform for discussion and to enable citizens to make their voices heard. www.liberalforum.eu

**** The Liberal Network for Latin America, abbreviated to RELIAL, is a network of 42 liberal institutions from 17 Latin American countries. Members of RELIAL include political parties as well as think tanks, foundations and research institutes. Most of the members tend to market liberalism. www.reliat.org

WEBINAR #4. AUGUST 5TH 15:00 – 16:45 CEST

Trade and Forests. The EU Green Deal and Deforestation, the EU approach with third countries exporters of agricultural products, the challenges for the Argentine public and private sectors, and the possibilities for a joint work.

In August 2019, the Communication entitled "Intensifying EU action to protect and restore the world's forests" was presented by the European Commission (EC). The EC indicates that 80% of global deforestation is caused by the expansion of the land used for agriculture and focuses on the countries that supply certain products (food, feed, biofuels, wood and other basic products) to the EU. More specifically, imports from the European Union of products such as palm oil, meat, soybeans, cocoa, corn, wood, rubber, including in the form of processed products or services, are pointed out.

Argentina has a National Action Plan on Forests and Climate Change that is a public policy instrument that constitutes the national strategy for reducing emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD +) in Argentina. The plan was agreed upon with the ministries that make up the National Climate Change Cabinet (GNCC); and representatives of the academic sector, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, small producers, and indigenous peoples.

Also, there are other initiatives in Argentina like the "Programa Agroideal" in the soy sector, in which companies, NGOs, banks and research institutions have joined efforts to develop a free online territorial intelligence decision making support system. The system helps assess risks associated with the expansion of cropland areas, searching for regions of high economic benefit and productivity, coupled with a low socio-environmental impact.

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Robert Woodthorpe Browne MBE, Chair, The Paddy Ashdown Forum

Horacio Sánchez Caballero, General Coordinator, GPS

Carola Ramón Berjano, Undersecretary of Multilateral and Bilateral Economic Negotiations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Argentina Republic.

Speakers:

Borjan Grlas. Team Leader, International Forestry Policy of the Environmental Directorate General, European Commission.

Alexander Doring. Secretary-General of European Feed Manufacturer's Federation (FEFAC).

Gustavo Idígoras. President of the Chamber of the oil industry of the Argentine Republic (CIARA-CEC) and member of GPS network.

Tomás Schlichter. Vice President of the National Institute of Agricultural Technology of Argentina Republic (INTA).

Moderator: Irina von Wiese, former MEP & Legal Counsel GSMA