
PREFACE

The European Economic Community's Common Agricultural Policy acts as a severe constraint to the provision of freer access in the EEC market for agricultural exports from ACP countries. This constraint does not apply in the case of tropical agricultural products and greater progress has therefore been made in liberalising access for these products, both on a preferential basis under the Lomé Convention and other special arrangements and on a wider basis under the Generalised Scheme of Preferences. For CAP products, liberalisation poses special problems arising from the sensitive nature of the trade in most of these products and from the technical difficulties involved in accommodating preferential arrangements within the CAP framework.

However, the continuation of restricted access through for example, tariffs, import charges and non-tariff barriers, and the general commitment provided in the Convention for the granting of more favourable treatment to ACP countries than third countries in respect of these products, indicate scope for improvements in a renewed Convention. In the light of this possibility, the Commonwealth Secretariat felt that useful background information could be provided for the re-negotiation of the Lomé Convention by a study which from the standpoint of the operation of the CAP investigates measures which could facilitate the export of CAP products from ACP countries.

When commissioned the study was intended to cover all the major CAP products. However, since it has been agreed that the Sugar Protocol which has an indefinite duration would not be re-negotiated at this time, a draft chapter on Sugar has been excluded from this volume and is being considered for separate publication.

The study which was commissioned in early 1978 from Wye College, University of London, has benefited from the expertise and experience of its authors in the working of the CAP. Besides providing very useful background information on the working of the CAP in respect of the products covered, the study suggests measures which might be incorporated in a renewed Convention. However, the Commonwealth Secretariat would like to emphasise that the views expressed in the study are those of the authors and reflect neither the position of the Secretariat nor that of any of the parties involved in the re-negotiation.

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