

# PUBLIC SEMINAR

THE NATIONAL EUROPE CENTRE AT THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY INVITES YOU TO:

## Agriculture, trade and multifunctionality: the politico-economic and ecological contexts for 'post-productivist' initiatives in Australia and the EU.

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Thursday March 17, 12.30pm

at the National Europe Centre

The Australian National University, 1 Liversidge Street

(Parking available in Balmain Lane, opposite University House)

\* Light refreshments will be served after the seminar

Agricultural multifunctionality has become a focus of contention in the arena of international trade governance because, within the parameters given by greater WTO disciplines on 'trade-distorting' support, it constitutes the key means by which states may claim a legitimate basis for intervention to address social and environmental (and indeed economic) 'market failure' and to foster greater agricultural sustainability. The EU and Australia appear to deploy differing conceptualizations of multifunctionality, with the former arguing that the joint production of food with certain 'public goods' such as biodiversity and landscape remains widespread in Europe and justifies interventionist policy rather than the unregulated play of market forces. Accordingly the EU, within Pillar 2 of the CAP, has for some time been disbursing funds in support of 'post-productivist' initiatives such as agri-environmental schemes. Australian policy makers and trade negotiators, by contrast, appear to argue that such supports are trade distorting, should be radically decoupled from production, and subject to tight disciplines. This dichotomous conceptualization of agriculture and its multifunctions appears, however, to be belied by, and arguably imposes constraints upon, post-productivist initiatives in Australia itself, initiatives which are attempting to engender greater sustainability through the incorporation of biodiversity and landscape conservation into agricultural practice in a relationship of joint production.

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