

**Dear**

I am sure you already know that the 135 members of the World Trade Organisation meet in Seattle from 30 November to 3 December 1999 to decide on the agenda for a new round of talks to remove barriers to trade, and possibly investment.

As someone who cares about the wellbeing of our environment and of people everywhere, I am increasingly concerned that environmental protection and sustainable development are being left behind in the rush to globalise trade.

The planet's natural resources have been substantially eroded over the past 40 years, even as market barriers have been reduced. Although trade liberalisation has helped create more wealth, the gap between rich and poor countries is also widening.

It is vitally important that governments and parliaments ensure any further liberalisation of world trade is done in a way that supports sustainable development and alleviates poverty, while paying full respect to existing environmental protection agreements and laws.

This next round of trade talks is a crucial opportunity to create harmony between WTO rules, policies for economic development and the increasingly urgent need to protect the environment.

I look to you to **reclaim trade policy for people and the planet** by calling for:

- WTO members to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the environmental and social impacts of the current trade system, and of any proposals for further liberalisation;
- The WTO to make reforms of specific rules, and in particular to respect fully the authority and rules of international conservation and environmental agreements;
- WTO members to ensure that trade liberalisation is accompanied by improved environmental rules and other policies needed to create a sustainable market; and
- The WTO to avoid expanding its rules into investment and other major new areas of commerce.

When you see trade, please think environment. And please think people, local communities and what any agreement might mean for their future.

Yours faithfully,