

## **FEDIOL views on sustainability**

FEDIOL has a long-standing commitment to sustainable development and strives to ensure that its three main components (economic, social and environmental) are consistently taken account. Sustainability is therefore the backbone of our contribution to EU policies (the Common Agricultural Policy, legislation on biofuels, ETS, REACH, waste, health and nutrition, biotechnology). Industry and civil society-led initiatives also form an important part of our activity to promote sustainability.

Sustainable development entails conserving services provided by eco systems, producing agricultural raw materials helping to meet the demands of a growing world population and offering employment abroad and within the EU. This can only be reached when both the market (producers and consumers) and legislators take their responsibility. For sustainability standards, whether legal or voluntary, to be a success, they need to be based on sound science, workable and verifiable throughout the supply chain.

At EU level, ensuring a level playing field and fair market conditions is a positive factor for the emergence of sustainable products. Indeed, competition can be a leading driver of sustainability. FEDIOL therefore supports the development of sustainability initiatives at EU level (such as the Sustainable Consumption and Production Round Table) rather than at national level. This avoids undesirable consequences such as market distortions that inevitably arise from national initiatives.

Regarding the impact of sustainability concerns on international trade, EU decision-makers should keep in mind that the EU legislation should be WTO compatible. It is essential that any sustainability criteria put in place by the EU be non-discriminatory towards specific products or third country producers. Otherwise, the European industry suffers from a lack of legal certainty as the EU legal framework is potentially subject to WTO challenges. This threatens innovation and progress towards sustainable production. A dialogue with third countries for a harmonious approach on sustainability issues is therefore the right way forward.

As a representative of the first transformation industry, FEDIOL has a specific interest in the promotion of sustainable agricultural practices. This interest has led to FEDIOL's active involvement in multi-stakeholder platforms aimed at designing voluntary schemes, developing good agricultural practices and implementing these guidelines among the participating farming communities as a means to support the sustainable sourcing of agricultural products. FEDIOL has therefore been involved in the RTRS (Roundtable for Responsible Soy) since 2007 and is an affiliate member of the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil. These international initiatives actively promote the trade of sustainable products on a global scale.