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PROFILE

Colette van der Ven is an international lawyer and policy expert recognized for her thought leadership at the intersection of trade, sustainable development, and economic transformation. With over 15 years of experience spanning legal practice, public policy, and advisory work, she is an expert in translating complex international economic law frameworks into practical strategies that advance sustainable development and inclusive growth.

EXPERIENCE

TULIP CONSULTING

Founder and Executive Director, July 2019-present

Geneva, Switzerland

- Producing rigorous, evidence-based policy research and legal analysis on issues at the trade, environment, and development nexus — including over 50 published reports, briefs, and advisory papers. Recent work spans the development implications of EU climate trade measures (CBAM, EUDR, Ecodesign); green industrial policy and its implications for developing countries; electric vehicles, critical minerals, and green supply chains; greening steel through EU-India trade cooperation; and linking circular economy objectives to trade agreements.
- Providing targeted legal advisory and WTO consistency assessments of trade-related environmental measures, analysis of trade agreement provisions and their development implications, and regulatory impact assessments for governments, international organizations, and advocacy groups.
- Designing and delivering tailored capacity-building programmes and technical assistance workshops to government officials and trade negotiators across Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Latin America, and the Caribbean, covering WTO law and dispute settlement, green industrial policy, digital trade, and the circular economy.
- Organising and participating in public and closed-door policy events, including at the WTO Public Forum and UNFCCC climate conferences, to advance dialogue on sustainable trade and development issues.
- Managing and overseeing a team of two full-time leads and three consultants, as well as an advisory board of six senior academics and practitioners.
- Selected clients and beneficiaries:
 - Governments: Finland, Belgium, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Guyana, Indonesia, Bhutan, Malaysia
 - International organizations and institutions: World Trade Organization (WTO), OECD, World Bank Group, International Trade Centre (ITC), UNEP, UNIDO, UNCTAD, International Resource Panel (IRP), GIZ, IISD, African Climate Foundation, LSE Firoz Lalji Institute for Africa, World Economic Forum, Transport and Environment, WWF, Fern, European Climate Foundation, Caribbean Export, EU Switch2Green, CUTS International, OVAM.

GRADUATE INSTITUTE of International and Development Studies

Geneva, Switzerland

Visiting Lecturer, International Economic Law, 2021 – present

- Teaching an annual International Economic Law Clinic Practicum – a practice-oriented seminar in which selected master students work in teams to produce a legal and policy report for a real client on a cutting-edge issue in international economic law.
- Lecturing on substantive international economic law topics, including WTO law, trade and sustainability, green industrial policy, and trade and development, as well as practical legal skills such as legal writing, oral advocacy, and research methodology.

- Providing intensive mentoring and feedback across multiple drafting rounds of student reports (each approximately 50 pages), guiding students from initial research design through final delivery to the client.

BORDERLEX PUBLISHING

Remote

Contributing Op-Ed Writer, April 2025 –present

- Writing regular op-eds for Borderlex on geopolitics, trade fragmentation, and sustainability
- Topics covered include: the EU-India Free Trade Agreement and sustainable industrial transformation; electric vehicles, green supply chains, and trade policy; the implications of Trump-era tariffs for developing countries; EU steel safeguard quotas and FTA commitments; and the EU-India FTA.

EUROPE JACQUES DELORS

Associate researcher, trade and environmental sustainability, August 2022-present

Remote

- Senior Associate Researcher specialising in trade and environmental sustainability, contributing to one of Europe's leading policy think tanks working at the EU-trade-environment nexus.
- Researches and co-authors policy reports and briefs with former WTO Director-General Pascal Lamy on the development implications of EU green trade measures, including the CBAM, EUDR, and Clean Trade and Investment Partnerships.
- Developed the “triangle” framework for EU green trade policy — arguing that trade, environment, and development must be addressed simultaneously — which has been taken up in EU policy debates and cited in the Financial Times, Politico, and Dossier Agence Europe.

LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS, Firoz Lalji Institute

Remote

Researcher, August 2021 – present

- Research Fellow contributing to the Africa Trade Policy Programme, including as co-author of two chapters in the LSE Press volume *How Africa Trades* (2023) and two chapters in *How Africa Eats* (2025), both edited by Professor David Luke.
- Contributing writer to the annual Africa Trade Policy Review (ATPR), covering Africa's engagement with the WTO, the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), and the development implications of EU climate trade measures such as the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM).

SIDLEY AUSTIN LLP

Geneva, Switzerland

Associate, International Trade and Dispute Resolution, October 2014 – April 2018

- Represented sovereign states as counsel in high-stakes WTO dispute settlement proceedings, including as sole associate for Russia in a dispute on SPS measures, principal associate for China in a dispute concerning domestic support, and associate for Japan in a dispute on SPS measures.
- Pleaded a full-day oral hearing before the WTO Appellate Body on behalf of Russia, one of the most senior advocacy roles available to an associate at that stage of practice.
- Drafted legal submissions and pleadings, researched WTO jurisprudence, and prepared governments for panel and Appellate Body hearings.
- Advised governments and trade associations on WTO law through targeted memoranda on issues including SPS measures, domestic support, safeguards, and trade remedies.

Founder and Director, Trade and Development, Pro Bono Program, April 2018 – March 2023

- Founded and directed Sidley's Trade for Development Initiative — the firm's pro bono programme providing free legal and policy advisory on trade law to developing country governments and trade bodies.
- Scoped and designed trade policy projects; managed client relationships; led and supervised project teams; provided legal advice on WTO agreements, trade preferences, and digital trade; and organised capacity-building workshops for trade delegates in Geneva.
- Selected clients: Mauritius, Bhutan, the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), and the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA).

Summer Associate, May-July 2013,

Washington, D.C.

- Conducted legal research and contributed to written submissions for WTO dispute settlement, ICSID arbitration, and Court of International Trade proceedings.

HARVARD HUMAN RIGHTS CLINIC

Cambridge, MA/Pernambuco, Brazil

Clinical participant, Sept. 2013- May 2014

- Drafted petitions and legal briefs for submission to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights on behalf of prisoners held in Pernambuco, Brazil;
- Conducted field interviews with detainees at the Aníbal Bruno prison facility; and engaged in advocacy activities before the Commission.

UNITED NATIONS Assistance to the Khmer Rouge Tribunal

Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Intern, Nov. 2009-June 2010

Processed and assessed applications by Cambodian genocide victims seeking civil party status in proceedings before the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC).

ACUMEN FUND

Mumbai, India

Summer Associate, May-August 2012

Designed a conceptual framework identifying key influence factors for agricultural policy reform in India; conducted 60+ in-depth interviews with senior government officials, private sector actors, and farmers to map the process of agricultural policy change in preparation for Acumen Fund's strategic advisory work in the sector.

WORLD BANK, Integrity Vice Presidency

Washington D.C.

Special Litigation Fellow/Chayes Fellow, May-August 2011

Researched, drafted, and edited legal briefs on fraud and corruption cases for consideration by the World Bank Sanctions Board, contributing to the Bank's institutional integrity and accountability framework.

INTERNATIONAL BRIDGES TO JUSTICE

The Philippines

Documentary Journalist Intern, June-July 2010

Documented land struggles of Filipino farmers at blog.ibj.org

CARR CENTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY, HARVARD

Cambridge, MA

Intern, June-August 2009

Conducted a systematic analysis of the quality and follow-through of recommendations issued by UN Human Rights Mechanisms and Special Rapporteurs, contributing to research on the effectiveness of international human rights accountability processes.

INSTITUTO PRENSA Y SOCIEDAD

Lima, Perú

Intern, March-August 2008

Designed a bilingual Spanish-English bulletin on higher education policy in Peru and authored a series of articles on education reform for publication and distribution across Peruvian media networks.

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT (District of Massachusetts)

Boston, MA

Intern, January 2008, January 2009

Assisted Judge Mark Wolf and his clerks with case research; attended court proceedings.

EDUCATION

HARVARD LAW SCHOOL

Cambridge, MA

Juris Doctor, 2010-2014

Thesis: *Looking Beyond Trade Preferences: The role of industrial policy in turning developing country participation in apparel and textile value chains into sustainable economic development* (honors)

Activities: Co-President, Harvard Law and International Development Society ("LIDS") (2012- 2013)
Co-founder, Trade Innovation Initiative (under LIDS)
Coach HLS ELSA Moot Court Team (2013-2014); Captain, HLS ELSA Moot Court Team (2012-2013)
Research Assistant: Mark Wu (summer - fall 2011)

Journal: Harvard Human Rights Journal (2009)

HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

Cambridge, MA

Master of Public Policy, 2011-2014

Attended classes on statistics and regression analysis, leadership and negotiation, economics and politics

MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE

Middlebury, VT

Bachelor of Arts, major in Political Science, 2005- 2009

Honours: *Magna cum laude*; Shelby Davis United World College Scholar

Study Abroad: La Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, Lima (Jan. -July 2008)

Lima, Perú

Institute for International Mediation and Conflict Resolution (summer 2006)

Cyprus

INSTITUT CATHOLIQUE

Passed the first year of the French Baccalaureate in philosophy, 2005

Paris, France

UNITED WORLD COLLEGE OF THE ATLANTIC

Wales, UK

International Baccalaureate, 2004

Selected from a pool of around 100 candidates by the Dutch National Committee

LANGUAGES

Fluent Dutch (native), Fluent English, near-fluent French, near-fluent Spanish, basic German

ADMISSIONS/MEMBERSHIPS

Friends of Multilateralism (2023); New York Bar (July 2015)

FELLOWSHIPS/AWARDS

Nominated for the Obama Foundation Leaders Europe Programme (2021); Shortlisted for the FT/McKinsey Bracken Bower Prize for best book proposal for authors under 35 (2018); United World College Davis Scholar (2005-2009); Humanity in Action Fellow (2009); Harvard Law School Chayes Fellow (2011); ELSA Moot court (2012-2014): first place, North American round (2013), First place, North American round (2014), second place international round (2014), first place international round for best written submissions (2013).

PUBLICATIONS

Policy briefs and technical reports

- Van der Ven, Colette and Sanvid Tuljapurkar, "The CBAM and Beyond: Leveraging EU trade cooperation to decarbonise Indian steel." TULIP Consulting, April 30, 2026.
- Van der Ven, Colette and Claudia Azevedo. "The Bigger Picture: Global Implications of the EU Steel Strategy beyond CBAM." Europe Jacques Delors, January 29, 2026.
- Shunta Yamaguchi and van der Ven, Colette. "Exploring Synergies between Environmental Labelling and Standards, and Trade in Environmental Goods." OECD Publishing, June 30, 2025.
- Van der Ven, Colette and Claudia Azevedo "Inclusive Ecodesign Requirements for a Just Transition." TESS Synergies, August 14, 2025.
- Van der Ven, Colette and Sanvid Tuljapurkar. "Forest Governance in a Transactional World: Options for von der Leyen II." Fern, May 2025.
- Van der Ven, Colette, "Greening Trade and the WTO: Africa's Offensive and Defensive Interests." In Trade and Climate Sustainability Briefs. African Climate Foundation, May 12, 2025.
- Van der Ven, Colette, Sunayana Sasmal, and Sanvid Tuljapurkar, "Sustainability Outcomes of the 13th WTO Ministerial Conference: Implications for Africa." In Trade and Climate Sustainability Briefs. African Climate Foundation, May 12, 2025.
- Van der Ven, Colette and Claudia Azevedo "Clean Trade and Investment Partnerships: Unpacking the EU-South Africa CTIP." Europe Jacques Delors/TULIP Consulting, April 2, 2025.

- Van der Ven, Colette and Sanvid Tuljapurkar, “The Costs of Sustainability-Driven Regulations: Pathways for a Fair Distribution.” UNIDO, March 24, 2025.
- Van der Ven, Colette and Claudia Azevedo, “A New Era of Mini Trade Deals? Re-Prioritizing Sustainable Development through Clean Trade and Investment Partnerships.” Europe Jacques Delors, March 10, 2025.
- Van der Ven, Colette, Sunayana Sasmal, Sanvid Tuljapurkar. “WTO Implications of the Proposed ‘No Risk’ Amendment to the EUDR.” TULIP Consulting, December 2, 2024.
- Van der Ven, Colette, Sunanaya Sasmal, Gabriela Alcantara Torres. “Towards a Better Balance: Leveraging EU Free Trade Agreements to Advance Responsible and Resilient Raw Materials Trade.” Transport and Environment, June 26, 2024.
- Van der Ven, Colette. “Emerging Trade Opportunities for LDCs from the Green Transition.” World Trade Organization, June 26, 2024.
- Van der Ven, Colette and Claudia Azevedo “Turning the EU Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism into a Green Development Tool.” Europe Jacques Delors, April 29, 2024.
- Van der Ven, Colette. “The Missing Piece of the EU Green Deal: The Case for an EU Resources Law.” OVAM, January 2024.
- Van der Ven, Colette. “A Pro-Development Green Trade Agenda for COP28.” Europe Jacques Delors, November 2023.
- Van der Ven, Colette. “The Case for a Global Triangle Forum at the WTO.” Europe Jacques Delors, September 2023.
- Van der Ven, Colette. “Leveraging Trade Agreements for an Inclusive Circular Economy Transition.” GIZ, August 2023.
- Van der Ven, Colette. “Linking Economic Transformation to Circular Economy Goals: The Case of Africa’s Garment Industry.” IISD, July 2023.
- Van der Ven, Colette. “EU Trade and the Environment: Development as the Missing Side of the Triangle.” Europe Jacques Delors, June 2023.
- Aggad, Faten, David Luke, Jamie MacLeod, Oluwasola Omojo, Geoffroy Guepie, and Colette Van der Ven. “Implications for African Countries of a Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism in the EU.” African Climate Foundation and LSE Firoz Lalji Institute for Africa, May 2023.
- Van der Ven, Colette. “Exploring the Interface between Unilateral and Bilateral Approaches to Greening EU Trade.” Europe Jacques Delors, April 12, 2023.
- Van der Ven, Colette. “Make-or-Break: Including Multilateral Environmental Agreements as ‘Essential Elements’ in EU Free Trade Agreements.” Europe Jacques Delors, December 2022.
- Van der Ven, Colette. “Circular Innovation and Ecodesign in the Textiles Sector: Towards a Sustainable and Inclusive Transition.” SITRA, September 2022.
- Van der Ven, Colette. “An International Agreement on Natural Resource Management.” OVAM, March 2022.
- Van der Ven, Colette, et al. “Designing Environmental Regulation of Agricultural Imports: Options and Considerations for the UK.” TULIP Consulting, February 2022.
- Van der Ven, Colette, and Landry Signé. “Greening the AfCFTA: It’s Not Too Late.” Brookings Institution, September 2021.
- Van der Ven, Colette. “Trade and the Circular Economy: A Deep Dive into Plastic Action in Ghana.” Global Plastic Action Partnership, August 2021.
- Bellmann, Christophe, and Colette Van der Ven. “Greening Regional Trade Agreements through Technical Barriers to Trade and Regulatory Cooperation.” OECD Trade and Environment Working Papers 2020/04. OECD Publishing, December 2020.
- Van der Ven, Colette, et al. “Sustainable Trade in Resources: Global Material Flows, Circularity and Trade.” UNEP/International Resource Panel, November 2020.
- Bernasconi-Osterwalder, Nathalie, Soledad Leal Campos, and Colette Van der Ven. “The Proposed Multilateral Framework on Investment Facilitation: An Analysis of Its Provisions and Its Relationship to International Trade and Investment Governance.” IISD, September 2020.
- Van der Ven, Colette. “The Circular Economy, Trade and Development: Addressing Spillovers and Leveraging Opportunities.” TULIP Consulting, July 2020.
- Signé, Landry, and Colette Van der Ven. “Keys to Success for the AfCFTA Negotiations.” Brookings Institution, May 2019.
- Van der Ven, Colette. “Joining Forces: How to Help SMEs Leverage E-Commerce through Collaboration.” ITC, April 2019.
- Van der Ven, Colette. “Special and Differential Treatment in the Context of the Digital Economy.” CUTS International, March 2019.

- Van der Ven, Colette. “Sustainable Trade Preferences for the 21st Century: Fine-Tuning the EU’s GSP to Make It a More Effective Tool for Development.” GIZ, January 2019.

Media, Op-Eds and Blog Posts

- Van der Ven, Colette. “Steel Quotas: EU loses its shine as reliable trading partner.” Borderlex, May 27, 2026.
- Pascal Lamy and Colette van der Ven, “Steel decarbonisation: a test case for a new EU-India partnership.” Sustainable Views, Financial Times. May 21, 2026.
- Van der Ven, Colette and Sanvid Tuljaupurkar, “The EU-India FTA: A stepping stone for industrial transformation?” Borderlex, February 24, 2026
- Van der Ven, Colette and Claudia Azevedo, “Rules of the Road: EU Trade Policy for the Electric Vehicle Era.” Borderlex, February 26, 2026.
- Van der Ven, Colette. “The EU-India FTA: A New Model Linking Trade, Climate and Industrial Policy?” Borderlex, January 20, 2026.
- Van der Ven, Colette. “What Does the EU Carbon Border Tax Mean for Green Steel?” Sustainable Views, January 6, 2026.
- Van der Ven, Colette. “Is the New EU-India Strategic Agenda a Victory for Decarbonising Steel?” Economic Times, October 2025.
- Van der Ven, Colette. “Enlightened Interest: The EU Should Support Poor Countries Hit by Trump Tariffs.” Borderlex, April 23, 2025.
- Van der Ven, Colette, and David Luke. “Why African Countries Struggle to Exercise Their Agency in the World Trade Organization.” LSE Business Review, May 18, 2023.
- Van der Ven, Colette. “These 4 Methods Can Help Solve Ghana’s Plastic Waste Dilemma.” World Economic Forum, September 2021.
- Signé, Landry, and Colette Van der Ven. “How the AfCFTA Will Improve Access to ‘Essential Products’ and Bolster Africa’s Resilience to Respond to Future Pandemics.” Brookings Institution, April 30, 2020.
- Signé, Landry, and Colette Van der Ven. “Nigeria’s Benin Border Closure and What It Means for the African Continental Free Trade Area.” Brookings Institution, November 2019.
- Van der Ven, Colette. “Entrepreneurial Lawyering for Digital Trade.” International Trade Forum, July 10, 2017.

Peer-Reviewed Academic Articles

- van der Ven, Colette. “Inclusive Industrialization: An Analysis of the Interplay between FDI and SME Promotion Policies in Sub-Saharan Africa.” *Law and Development Review* 11, no. 2 (April 2018).
- van der Ven, Colette. “Trade, Development and Industrial Policy in Africa: The Case for a Pragmatic Approach to Optimizing Policy Coherence Between Industrial Policy and the WTO Policy Space.” *Law and Development Review* (June 2017).
- van der Ven, Colette. “Where Trade and Industrial Policy Converge: How Developing Countries Can Utilise Trade Preferences to Generate Sustainable, Local Growth in the Garment Industry.” *The International Lawyer* 49, no. 1 (Summer 2015).
- Van der Ven, Colette and Sunayana Sasmal, “Responding to the EU Green Deal: A Proactive Approach to Trade and Green Industrial Policy in Africa.” *Global Trade and Customs Journal* 19, issues 7-8 (July 2024).

Peer-Reviewed Book Chapters

- Van der Ven, Colette. “Food Security in the African Continental Free Trade Area Legal Framework.” In *How Africa Eats: Trade, Food Security and Climate Risks*, edited by David Luke. London: LSE Press, 2025.
- van der Ven, Colette, and David Luke. “The World Trade Organization’s Legal Framework and Africa’s Food Security.” In *How Africa Eats: Trade, Food Security and Climate Risks*, edited by David Luke. London: LSE Press, 2025.
- Van der Ven, Colette, and David Luke. “Africa in the World Trade Organization.” In *How Africa Trades*, edited by David Luke. London: LSE Press, 2023.
- Shoyer, Andrew, Jung-Ui Sul, and Colette Van der Ven. “Carbon Leakage and the Migration of Private CO2 Emitters to Other Jurisdictions.” In *The Oxford Handbook of International Climate Change Law*, edited by K.R. Gray, R. Tarasofsky, and C. Carlarne. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.

- Van der Ven, Colette and Sanvid Tuljapurkar, “Rethinking trade’s winners and losers: the Case of the EU CBAM and Indian steel.” In an OUP Handbook on Comparative Trade Law, edited by Kathleen Claussen and Rodrigo Polanco (forthcoming).
- Katin Kuhlmann & Colette van der Ven, “Globalizing International Economic Law: The Evolution of TradeLab Clinics” in Legal Clinics and International Law, edited by Giulio Bartolini. Oxford University Press (forthcoming)
- Colette van der Ven and Claudia Azevedo, “(Old) Treaty-making problems and new negotiating approaches” in Research Handbook on Natural Resources and International Economic Law, edited by Elena Cima and Ilaria Espa (forthcoming).