



The AfCFTA's Influence on Southern African Regional Supply Chains in Zambia: A Contemporary Perspective

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Abstract

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) aims to foster economic integration in Africa by reducing trade barriers among its member states. Southern Africa, including Zambia, is a key region for AfCFTA implementation due to the presence of established regional supply chains. The analysis draws upon secondary data from official trade reports, business surveys, and academic literature to assess changes in trade patterns, investment flows, and market access for Southern African producers. The AfCFTA presents both opportunities for growth through expanded trade networks and challenges related to market diversification and regulatory harmonization. Addressing these issues is crucial for realising the full benefits of regional integration in Zambia's economy. Policy makers should prioritise sector-specific strategies, such as developing export-oriented value chains and enhancing SME competitiveness, alongside broader efforts towards institutional reforms that facilitate smoother trade flows.

Keywords: *African, Integration, Regionalism, Supply, Logistics, Mercosur, Integration Theory*

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