



Nigeria's 2026 Fiscal Policy Measures: What the New Import Restrictions Mean for Trade and Supply Chains

Introduction

With effect from 1 April 2026, the Federal Government of Nigeria has implemented revised import restrictions under the 2026 Fiscal Policy Measures and Tariff Amendments. The circular, issued by the Minister of Finance and Coordinating Minister of the Economy, introduces an updated import prohibition list covering 17 categories of goods from countries outside the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), alongside a green tax surcharge on certain motor vehicles, effective 1 July 2026.

The measures supersede the 2023 fiscal policy framework and signal a policy shift toward import substitution, regional trade alignment, and industrial

protection, with immediate implications for supply chains, pricing, and trade structuring.

Scope of the Import Restrictions

The revised prohibition list restricts imports from outside ECOWAS across key sectors, including:

- **Food and Agriculture:** poultry and livestock products, pork and beef cuts, non-breeding eggs, refined vegetable oils, cane and beet sugar, cocoa products, and processed tomato products.
- **Pharmaceuticals and Fertilizers:** medicaments, waste pharmaceuticals, and NPK fertilizers.

Legal and Regulatory Implications

- **For manufacturers and agribusinesses:** Businesses reliant on imported inputs—particularly fertilizers, vegetable oils, packaging materials, and intermediate goods—may face immediate supply adjustments and cost pressures. Existing supply contracts should be reviewed for country-of-origin clauses, termination rights, and price adjustment mechanisms, while alternative sourcing within ECOWAS should be assessed.

- **For pharmaceutical companies:** The inclusion of medicaments and waste pharmaceuticals raises potential concerns around availability, pricing, and regulatory compliance. Operators should review contractual protections (including force majeure and regulatory change clauses) and ensure alignment with National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) requirements.

- **For traders and importers:** The transition window is limited. Importers should confirm that all qualifying transactions are properly documented and capable of clearance within the 90-day period. Delays may result in goods becoming subject to the new prohibition regime.

- **For international trade and investment stakeholders:** The breadth of the restrictions introduces potential tension with Nigeria's obligations under WTO agreements and AfCFTA protocols, particularly around non-discrimination and trade liberalisation commitments. Affected businesses may need to consider dispute resolution mechanisms, exemptions, or restructuring of trade routes within compliant frameworks.

The Road Ahead

Nigeria's 2026 Fiscal Policy Measures mark a clear recalibration of trade policy toward domestic protection and regional integration. For businesses, the focus now shifts to adaptation—restructuring supply chains, revisiting contractual arrangements, and aligning with the evolving regulatory landscape.

Early engagement with these changes will be critical to managing disruption and identifying new opportunities within the ECOWAS market. For further guidance on trade regulation, fiscal policy developments, and cross-border compliance, contact info@scp-law.com or visit www.scp-law.com.



- **Construction and Manufacturing Inputs:** bagged cement, selected steel products, corrugated paper, cartons, and large-capacity glass bottles.

- **Consumer Goods:** soaps and detergents, sweetened beverages, and ballpoint pens and components.

A 90-day transition window applies to transactions supported by valid Form 'M' documentation and irrevocable trade commitments entered into before 1 April 2026. All new transactions from that date fall under the revised regime.

Policy Direction and Trade Positioning

The measures reflect a coordinated policy objective to:

- reduce dependence on non-ECOWAS imports;
- stimulate domestic production capacity; and
- strengthen regional trade within ECOWAS.

These are familiar objectives, and the direction is defensible. However, they raise broader questions around market access, supply constraints, and alignment with Nigeria's international trade commitments, particularly under the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). The tension between protectionist instinct and treaty obligation is one this framework will have to navigate carefully.