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WTO GENERAL COUNCIL MEETS ON ENVIRONMENT, DEVELOPMENT FOR MINISTERIAL

The WTO General Council met in an informal meeting on 8 September to finish discussions in the context of the "second phase" of preparations for the November-December Ministerial Conference in Seattle. Members focused on a number of issues related to sustainable development. These included Japanese/EC proposals on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) and Trade-Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs), a Japanese proposal on forestry and fisheries, proposals from a number of developed and developing countries on technical assistance and capacity-building for developing countries, and a U.S. proposal on trade and sustainable development. To view the texts of these proposals, see the WTO Ministerial Preparations web page at <http://www.wto.org/wto/minist/seatdocs.htm>.

Some developing countries expressed concern over an EU proposal to clarify the relationship between WTO rules and multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) containing trade-related provisions. Developing country Members feel that WTO rules offer sufficient flexibility for countries to sign MEAs, and that since there has not yet been a clash between MEA and WTO rules the problem is more theoretical than real.

The U.S. proposal also sought to create better harmonisation between trade and environment policies. It called for a continuation of use of the WTO Committee on Trade and Environment "as a forum for identification and discussion of links between elements of the negotiating agenda and the environment and public health." The proposal also notified Members that it will conduct a

review at the national level of a new round's potential environmental effects, and invited other Members to do the same.

Kenya, acting on behalf of the African countries, tabled a proposal questioning the TRIPs Agreement's requirement for Members to implement patenting schemes for certain life forms and natural processes. Kenya proposed amending TRIPs to eliminate life patenting from its requirements and to consolidate the agreement with the Biodiversity Convention and the Food and Agriculture Organisation's International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources.

The informal meeting also produced a draft Ministerial Declaration that will be used as a basis for further work in lead-up to the Seattle Conference. With respect to environmental and transparency concerns, the draft text indicated a "reaffirmation of the need to make international trade and environmental policies mutually supportive," and to "reinforce the need to improve responsiveness of the trading system to broader public concerns while respecting its intergovernmental character." For immediate decisions at Seattle, the draft Declaration includes sections for a comprehensive new plan of action for least-developed countries and on technical co-operation. The draft Ministerial Declaration will be posted in the forthcoming days on ICTSD's website, <http://www.ictsd.org>.

The next informal meeting on preparations for the Seattle Ministerial Conference is scheduled for 20 September.

"Africa against patenting of life forms," IPS Terraviva, 10 September 1999; "Negotiators clash over trade and environment," UN Wire, 10 September 1999; ICTSD Internal Files.

POPS NEGOTIATIONS MAKE PROGRESS TOWARD TOXIC CHEMICALS TREATY

From 6-11 September, delegates from 115 countries met in Geneva for negotiations to prepare an internationally legally binding agreement on certain persistent organic pollutants (POPs). During the meeting, negotiators moved from discussion of general concepts to agreeing on actual text for a future convention. Progress was made on specific language for measures to reduce or eliminate 10 POPs, on placing chemicals in the prohibition and restriction annexes, and on continued discussion on technical and financial assistance. There was also agreement on a procedure for adding chemicals to the convention. This third session of the international negotiating committee (INC-3) was also attended by representatives from UN agencies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), intergovernmental organisations (including the WTO) and industry, bringing the final tally to 420 attendees.

According to the UN Environment Program (UNEP), POPs "are chemical substances that persist in the environment, bioaccumulate through the food web, and pose a risk of causing adverse effects to human health and the environment." It was agreed in 1996 that international action to minimise the risks from 12 targeted POPs was required when evidence that long-range transport of these substances to regions where they have never been used or produced posed threats to the global environment.

A burning issue at the INC-3 meeting was the phasing-out of DDT, which is used -- primarily in developing countries -- to control mosquitoes that spread malaria. Environmental groups advocating for a complete ban on DDT met with resistance from those concerned with public

health, who argued that DDT was still required to control malaria. Negotiators recognised the public health need for an exemption for DDT. Delegates decided that while production and use of DDT would be limited to control of "vectors," (i.e. mosquitoes transmitting malaria) for public health purposes, all other uses, including in agriculture, would be prohibited. Although a 1997 World Health Organisation (WHO) action plan to phase out DDT and replace it with alternatives exists, there is little funding for implementation. One source at the POPs meeting suggested that a jointly-administered fund between the WHO and the World Bank-supported Global Environment Facility -- which is already involved in the POPs initiative -- could help resolve this challenge.

With respect to trade, delegates did not agree on whether to extend prohibition to exporting and importing the 10 targeted POPs: some highlighted concerns regarding non-parties and compatibility with World Trade Organisation commitments. On dealing with wastes exported for environmentally sound destruction or disposal, requests were made to clarify the need in the prohibition provision for Australia's proposed language stipulating that chemicals be treated as wastes once banned. Both Iran and China proposed language making the prohibition and restriction requirements "subject to the accessibility of financial and technical assistance."

The proposals from the INC-3 now go to participating countries for consultation, followed by consideration at the fourth round of negotiations, set for 20-25 March 2000 in Bonn. A signing session for the convention is tentatively planned for Sweden in 2001.

Earth Negotiations Bulletin, 14 September 1999; UNEP News Release, 13 September 1999 NR99/102; "POPs: WHO outlines DDT-reduction action plan," UN Wire, 10 September; ICTSD Internal Files.

CIVIL SOCIETY WEIGHS IN ON NEW WTO TALKS

A coalition of African non-governmental organisations (NGOs), citizens groups, trade unions and social groups last week called for a moratorium on any new negotiations at the WTO and called for a comprehensive, in-depth assessment of the impacts of existing agreements. The African Trade Network (ATN), meeting in Accra earlier this month, said in a statement that it is "opposed to any attempt to expand the powers of the WTO through a new comprehensive round of trade liberalisation."

"In the past five years the WTO regime has contributed to the concentration of wealth in the hands of the rich few; increasing poverty and indebtedness for the majority of the world's population; and unsustainable patterns of production and consumption," according to the ATN statement. "The Uruguay Round Agreements have functioned principally to prise open markets for the benefit of transnational corporations at the expense of national economies; workers, farmers, women and other groups in the developing world; and the environment," the statement said.

ATN said also that it supports a proposal put forward by the African group of WTO Members regarding the review of Article 27.3(b) of the Agreement of Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS Agreement), joining a number of NGOs worldwide in opposition to the patenting of life forms (see *BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest* Vol. 3, No. 33, 23 August 1999, <http://www.ictsd.org/html/story2.23-08-99.htm>). ATN also said it viewed proposals by the EU and Japan to negotiate a WTO agreement on investment as "attempts to transfer the utterly discredited

MAI from the OECD to the WTO." (see *BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest* Vol. 2, No. 43, 9 November 1998)

In other news, Third World intellectuals and non-governmental organisations on 29 August released a statement calling for the issue of linking trade with environment and/or labour to be laid to rest at the WTO.

"Trying to implement two objectives, the freeing of trade and advancing social and moral agendas, through one policy instrument such as WTO, you will undermine both," the statement said. The list of signatories included Jagdish Bhagwati (Columbia University, USA), Yash Tandon (International South Group Network, Zimbabwe), Muchkund Dubey, (Government of India), Arvind Panagariya (University of Maryland, USA), Pradeep S. (Mehta Consumer Unity and Trust Society, India), Jasper Okelo (University of Nairobi, Kenya).

The group of experts emphasised that "the WTO's design must reflect the principle of mutual gain; it cannot be allowed to become the institution that becomes a prisoner of every developed country lobby or group that seeks to advance its agenda at the expense of the developing countries."

The grouping argues that the push for trade linkages with labour and environment are driven by two factions: politically powerful lobbying groups that are "protectionist", and morally-driven human rights and other groups that wish to see higher standards abroad and have no protectionist agenda. However, the grouping holds that any moral concerns are ultimately contaminated in the linkage debate by virtue of the fact that linkage agendas would be selected from the viewpoint of trade-competitiveness concerns, thus contaminating and devaluing the moral objectives.

"Statement of African civil society on the Third Ministerial Conference of WTO," AFRICAN TRADE NETWORK, DATE TK; "Civil Society Rejects Attempts to Expand WTO Powers," IPS, 10 September 1999; "Third World Intellectuals and NGO's statement against linkage," 29 August 1999.

APEC MEETS IN NEW ZEALAND

Leaders from the Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) forum met from 12-13 September in Auckland, New Zealand - preceded on 9-10 September by a meeting of APEC trade ministers. Ministers endorsed the launch of a new three-year round of global trade talks but failed to agree on specific details as to what should be included or derived from negotiations.

APEC comprises Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Peru, the Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, the U.S. and Vietnam.

As to what APEC Ministers did agree: Ministers endorsed a previously agreed-to call for the next round to encompass industrial tariffs in addition to the built-in agenda items covering agriculture and services. Ministers agreed to press for the elimination of agricultural export subsidies in WTO talks on agriculture, which Ministers hope will increase pressure on the EU to further liberalise its farm sector.

Ministers rejected the U.S. proposal for a so-called early harvest approach to WTO trade talks, wherein agreements would be reached sector by sector. Instead, APEC ministers agreed that the new round should "be structured so that the outcomes are finalised, bound and fully implemented as a single package," according to the APEC Ministers' Joint Statement. The EU and Japan have long advocated this approach.

At the urging of the U.S., APEC Ministers "...affirmed the importance of transparent and science-based approaches to the introduction and use of biotechnology products, and of technical co-operation, exchanging information on new technology, and capacity-building in this area. Such activity should take into account WTO rules, as well as consumers' interest in food safety, environmental quality, and facilitate the realisation of the potential benefits of this technology," the Joint Statement said.

Regarding developing countries, Ministers called for special and differential treatment for developing economies in the next trade round. Ministers noted that the "concept of differential timing for the achievement of free trade is one useful means of meeting developing economy concerns," with regard to further trade liberalisation. Ministers agreed also that the next round must deliver effective and timely market access for developing countries.

Further, Ministers agreed to extend a moratorium on e-commerce duties, despite concern expressed by the Philippines that a legal framework is needed to protect consumers' privacy. An agreement was reached to move forward with a framework for the integration of women into APEC, and Ministers also called for the accession of both Taiwan and China to the WTO before the Third WTO Ministerial. In a related development, the U.S. and China agreed to restart bilateral accession talks on hold since May (*BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest* will publish an accession update covering this development along with other accession updates in a forthcoming issue).

"Eleventh APEC ministerial meeting: joint statement," APEC, 10 September 1999; "Leaders to press WTO agenda as Asian recovery picks up steam;" "U.S. urges APEC to back science-based biotech trade, in message aimed at EU," INTERNATIONAL TRADE REPORTER, 8 September 1999; "APEC to move on farm subsidies," FINANCIAL TIMES, 11 September 1999; "APEC summit seen as preparing ground for global trade talks," AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, 5 September 1999; "Special treatment for developing economies urged," KYODO NEWS INTERNATIONAL, 7 September 1999; "Southeast Asia to give limited backing to APEC free trade plans," AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, 5 September 1999; "APEC meet to broaden support from grassroots," THE STAR (Malaysia); "APEC Ministerial and leaders' meetings media backgrounder," MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE (New Zealand), September 1999.

U.S. WARNS EU ON ANTIBIOTICS BAN

U.S. trade officials have warned the EU that its ban on the use of four antibiotics may violate international trade rules. The ban -- which went into effect on 1 July -- was imposed to address concerns that use of the antibiotics could build up resistance in human consumers.

EU lawmakers utilised the "precautionary principle" in justifying the ban -- a principle used to allow taking preventive health safety measures when scientific evidence is inconclusive. The U.S.

meanwhile has called on the EU to provide scientific justification for the ban, arguing that "in the case of the four banned products, either no objective risk assessment was carried out, or the results were ignored," according to an August letter from Peter Scher, the special agriculture negotiator for U.S. Trade Representative. Mr. Scher also expressed concern that the EU failed to notify the WTO of the ban in violation of the WTO Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) (see *BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest* Vol. 3, No. 27, 12 July 1999, <http://www.ictsd.org/html/story8.12-07-99.htm>).

Sales of the four antibiotics are worth US\$350 million a year to the four manufacturers that produce and market them. More important than the monetary value of the ban, the U.S. is concerned that the ban could signal a wave of trade restrictions related to antibiotics, such as the banning of meat imports that might have been produced using antibiotics, and/or the labelling of meat products which may have been produced using antibiotics.

EU Health and Consumer Protection Commissioner-designate David Byrne on 3 September told the European Parliament that in cases where scientific evidence is not conclusive as to the safety of a product, the precautionary principle should be used. Mr. Byrne also endorsed the use of labelling of products containing genetically modified organisms (GMOs), including animal feed containing GMOs.

Meanwhile, Unilever -- the Anglo-Dutch consumer products company -- called for the creation of an independent EU food and drug regulatory body akin to the U.S. Food and Drug Agency. Unilever's chairman said a powerful and independent regulator could help restore EU consumers' confidence in food safety. The idea for a centralised agency was proposed earlier this year by Germany (see *BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest* Vol. 3, No. 23, 14 June 1999, <http://www.ictsd.org/html/story4.14-06-99.htm>), and supported by European Commission President-designate Romano Prodi. Mr. Prodi has assigned responsibility for developing plans for an EU food and drug agency to EU Health and Consumer Protection Commissioner-designate David Byrne.

"Scher warns EU on antibiotics ban in animal feed, seeks clarification," *INSIDE US TRADE*, 10 September 1999; "Food safety: demand for new agency," *FINANCIAL TIMES*, 7 September 1999; "Union must restore public confidence, says David Byrne," *EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT PRESS RELEASE*, 3 September 1999; "EU to place new curbs on feed additives," *WALL STREET JOURNAL*, 6 September 1999.

BANANAS: EU PEELING AWAY AT OPTIONS

The senior EU official in charge of handling the dispute over the EU banana regime, deputy director general Bernhard Zepter, on 8 September reported to the EU Commission on progress made toward achieving a WTO-consistent banana import regime.

The WTO ruled in April that the EU had not complied with a 1997 WTO ruling against its banana import regime (see *BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest* Vol. 3, No.13-14, 12 April 1999, <http://www.ictsd.org/html/story1.12-04-99.htm>). Since that time, an EU team led by Mr. Zepter has been working to forge a regime acceptable to all concerned parties -- specifically Ecuador, the U.S. and banana-producing countries in African, Pacific and Caribbean (ACP) countries. In the meantime, the WTO authorised the U.S. to impose US\$191 million in retaliatory tariffs to

compensate for lost banana revenues resulting from the current EU regime. The EU is expected to table a formal proposal for a WTO-compliant banana import regime sometime this month.

Mr. Zepter told the EU Commission that any new regime must achieve three goals: end the dispute between the EU and Ecuador; ensure the EU's international obligations towards the ACP countries; and to whatever extent possible prevent a new international trade dispute.

Mr. Zepter reported last week that thus far he has been unable to work out an agreeable tariff-rate quota regime, which could mean that the EU would have little option but to draft a tariff-only approach toward banana imports. A tariff-only approach was among three possible approaches the WTO dispute settlement panel advised would bring the EU into compliance with the 1997 WTO ruling (the other two approaches included a tariff-quota for ACP bananas under a WTO waiver; or country-specific quotas possibly combined with duty-free treatment for ACP bananas).

Under a tariff-only approach, the EU would increase its current bound tariff of 75 euros per ton on bananas not originating from ACP countries. The EU holds that at 75 euros/ton, the tariff is not high enough to deliver equivalent preference for ACP bananas available under the current EU regime. To achieve this equivalency, the EU would need to impose a tariff on non-ACP bananas of perhaps 275 euros per ton -- a tariff level the U.S. rejects as too preferential for ACP bananas.

Chiquita Brands International, one of the parties on whose behalf the U.S. brought the original complaint to the WTO, reportedly favours a tariff-rate quota regime because this approach would create a market where banana supply is controlled -- and therefore more profitable. Ecuador prefers a tariff-rate quota as well, though under slightly different terms than those preferred by Chiquita.

According to the report issued last week, a reduction in ACP preferences under a new banana import regime would violate the EU's obligations under the Lomé Convention, the trade and aid agreement between the EU and the 71 ACP countries. The Lomé IV Convention expires in February 2000: the EU and ACP are currently negotiating a successor agreement. Informed sources report that previously staunch defenders of ACP banana preferences (e.g. Italy and Portugal) may be ready to compromise under pressure from U.S. trade sanctions targeting exports mainly from EU countries favouring ACP protection. The EU must also devise a licensing regime for banana importers acceptable to all parties.

Mr. Zepter is to meet next with the EU Council of Ministers on 13 September, after which it is expected a final proposal will be developed. Meanwhile, Caribbean countries and Ecuador continue to meet independently toward negotiating a WTO-consistent settlement. Ecuador is the world's largest banana producer: Caribbean countries hope that a Caribbean-Ecuador agreement would entice other parties to the dispute to buy into their arrangement.

"EU official reports failure to reach consensus on new banana regime," *INSIDE US TRADE*, 10 September 1999; "Un consensus se dégage dans le conflit de la banane," *LA TRIBUNE*, 6 September 1999; "EU considers tariff approach to end banana row," *REUTERS*, 7 September 1999; "Banana exporters look for answer that has eluded squabbling trade giants," *FINANCIAL TIMES*, 7 September 1999.

IN BRIEF

The U.S. announced on 6 September that it would relax import quotas on textiles from Turkish firms affected by the devastating 17 August earthquake in the North-East region of Turkey. Turkish trade officials hope the offer signals U.S. intention to remove textile quotas entirely as the U.S. and Turkey negotiate a new bilateral trade deal. Separately, U.S. officials proposed lifting quotas on wool apparel from Romania and Macedonia -- however the wool fabric would have to be of U.S. origin. "Turkish textiles welcome promise of U.S. quota move," REUTERS, 6 September 1999; "Some US trade help for Southeast Europe," TRADE COMPASS, 10 September 1999.

Indian trade officials earlier this month projected that a bumper rice crop in India will mean that India could lift its restrictions on rice exports. India's rice exporters may still face other challenges: Bangladesh, a major trading partner, is also expected to have a robust rice harvest; and consumer preference in potential markets like Indonesia and Philippines is directed toward Thai rice. "India set to abandon rice export curbs," FINANCIAL TIMES, 8 September 1999.

Leaders from East Asia, Latin America and the Pacific on 3 September met to launch the so-called East Asia-Latin America Forum (EALAF). The forum hopes to build economic ties between the two regions and reduce U.S. economic dominance in Asia. Chile is to host the first EALAF ministerial during the first part of 2001. "Latin America, East Asia build own bridge of ties," IPS, 7 September 1999.

A working group of experts from 87 countries met last week to finish drafting a Basel Convention Protocol on liability and compensation for environmental damages caused during export and disposal of hazardous waste. The Protocol for Liability and Compensation for Damage Resulting from Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal was held up by developed countries opposed to the creation of an Emergency and compensatory Fund for assisting developing countries faced with unwanted wastes. "Rich nations block hazardous waste disposal fund," IPS, 9 September 1999.

A dispute between Ecuador and Colombia over Colombia's ban on Ecuadorian fruit exports was resolved on 6 September after the Andean Community (comprised of Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Venezuela) ruled that Colombia must lift its ban. Colombia instituted the ban in July against 20 types of Ecuadorian fruit saying the fruit posed a health risk. Ecuadorian fruit producers estimate the ban cost US\$62 million in lost exports. "Colombia told to allow in Ecuadorian fruit imports," DOW JONES, 6 September 1999.

WTO IN BRIEF

Meeting from 3-5 September leaders from the International Organisation of French-Speaking Countries (La Francophonie) agreed to work toward a broad consensus on upholding the so-called cultural exception in the next round of global trade talks (expected to launch at the Third WTO Ministerial in November). La Francophonie leaders said that cultural goods and services "are in no way reducible to their economic dimension" and "must not be treated as mere cargo, notably in the context of multilateral talks" (see *BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest* Vol. 3, No. 35, 6 September 1999 <http://www.ictsd.org/html/story2.06-09-99.htm>). La Francophonie leaders also called for the integration of its least-developed members into the world trading system and for

increased economic co-operation between the developed and developing member countries of La Francophonie. "Plan d'action: Déclaration finale," VIII^E CONFÉRENCE DES CHEFS D'ETAT ET DE GOUVERNEMENT DES PAYS AYANT LE FRANÇAIS EN PARTAGE, 5 September 1999; "Francophone nations push for united "cultural exception" front against U.S.," AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, 4 September 1999.

French President Jacques Chirac told the French press that France would strongly defend its position against the sale of GMO products and hormone-treated beef at the Third WTO Ministerial in November. "Our conviction is that we have no assurance that these practices meet standards for the health of mankind and we cannot play with that. We French will be very firm on this point in Seattle," Mr. Chirac told the French press. French farmers have led opposition to GMOs and hormone treated beef, carrying out a series of demonstrations this summer against U.S. firms such as Coca-Cola and McDonalds (see *BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest* Vol. 3, No. 34, 30 August 1999, <http://www.ictsd.org/html/story2.30-08-99.htm>). "France to stand firm on GMOs at WTO meeting -- Chirac," REUTERS, 4 September 1999.

ON THE MOVE

The WTO Director-General has decided to appoint Patrick Low as Director of the Office of the Director-General with immediate effect. This appointment is temporary, and will run until 31 January 2000, at which time the Director-General will reconsider arrangements for his office in light of developments arising from the Seattle Ministerial Meeting. Karl-Michael Finger will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the Economic Research and Analysis Division during this period, and will work in close co-operation with the Director of the Office of the Director-General (note: this is not Michael Finger, Lead Economist, Trade Policy, World Bank).

EVENTS & RESOURCES

▪ EVENTS

For a more complete list of events, please refer to ICTSD's web calendar at <http://www.ictsd.org/html/calendar.htm>

WTO Meetings

An updated list of forthcoming WTO meetings is posted at <http://www.wto.org/wto/about/meets.htm>. Please bear in mind that dates and times of WTO meetings are often changed, and that the WTO does not always announce the important informal meetings of different WTO bodies. Unless otherwise indicated, all WTO meetings are held in Geneva, Switzerland.

13-15 September: TEXTILES MONITORING BODY. For information contact Luis Ople, WTO, 739-5374

16 September: DISPUTE SETTLEMENT BODY. Members will consider the following disputes: Chile – taxes on alcoholic beverages: Report of the panel; Argentina - Safeguard measures on

imports of footwear: Report of the panel; and Korea - Definitive safeguard measure on imports of certain dairy products. For information contact Nuch Nazeer, WTO, 739-5393

22 September: DISPUTE SETTLEMENT BODY. Members will survey the implementation of (A) EC – regime for the importation, sale and distribution of bananas: status report by the EC; and (B) U.S. – import prohibition on certain shrimp and shrimp products: status report by the U.S. Also on the agenda is Review of the DSU and proposed nominations for the indicative list of governmental and non-governmental panelists. For information contact Nuch Nazeer, WTO, 739-5393.

22-24 September: COMMITTEE ON REGIONAL TRADE AGREEMENTS 24TH SESSION. For information contact Hans-Peter Werner, WTO, 739-5286

24 September: WORKING GROUP ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TRADE & INVESTMENT. For information contact Luis Ople, WTO, 739-5374

28 September: SUB-COMMITTEE ON LEAST-DEVELOPED COUNTRIES. For information contact Lucie Giraud, WTO 739-5075

29-30 September: COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE. For information contact Peter Ungphakorn, WTO, 739-5412

30 September: COMMITTEE ON TECHNICAL BARRIERS TO TRADE. For information contact Luis Ople, WTO, 739-5374

Other Events

27-29 September, Washington D.C.: THE EARTH TECHNOLOGIES FORUM SECOND ANNUAL CLIMATE CHANGE AND OZONE PROTECTION CONFERENCE. For information contact Erika Fischer, tel: (1-703) 807-4052, fax: 243-2874, web: <http://www.earthforum.com>

12-15 October, Washington, D.C.: TRANSATLANTIC ENVIRONMENTAL DIALOGUE (TAED). This second meeting of TAED will bring together NGOs from North America and Europe concerned about the impact of U.S. and European Union policies on environmental protection and sustainable development. The meeting format involves NGO working groups dialogues with EU and US government officials. For information contact Ron Kingham, tel: (32-2) 289-1304 or Eugene Malachy Clancy, tel: (32-2) 289-1094, fax: 289-1099, email: taed@eeb.org, web: <http://www.eeb.org> or <http://www.tiesnet.org/environment/taed>

13 October, New York, N.Y.: STATES' RIGHTS V. INTERNATIONAL TRADE: THE MASSACHUSETTS BURMA LAW. The conference is organised by the New York Law School/Committee on International Trade, the Association of the Bar of the City of New York/Customs and International Trade Bar Association. For information contact Michael Rhee, Center for International Law, New York Law School, 57 Worth St., New York, NY 10013, USA, fax: (1-212) 966-6393, email: mrhee@nyls.edu

11-15 October, Melbourne, Australia: CONFERENCE ON INTERNATIONAL FOOD TRADE. "Beyond 2000: Science-Based Decisions, Harmonisation, Equivalence and Mutual Recognition" is organised by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the World Health Organisation

(WHO) and the WTO. The Conference will be held in English, French and Spanish. For information contact G. Orriss, Food and Nutrition Division, FAO, Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00100 Rome, Italy, tel: (39-06) 570-52042, fax: 570-54593 email: gregory.orriss@fao.org

29 October – 7 November, Tunguu, Zanzibar: ZANZIBAR INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR. Organised by the Zanzibar Ministry of Trade, Industry and Marketing, the Ministry of State, Planning and Investment, the Zanzibar Chamber of Commerce, and Women Development for All. The trade fair is designed to create trade links to other parts of Africa. All interested exhibitors are welcome to attend. For information contact the Zanzibar International Trade Fair, Ministry of Trade, Industry and Marketing, PO Box 601, Zanzibar, Tanzania, tel: (255) 54-232100 or 54-232305, fax: 54-231870, email: africare-znz@twiga.com

12-17 November, Erice, Italy: SEMINAR ON BIODIVERSITY: AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH BETWEEN NATURAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES. Organised by Fondazione Eni Enrico Mattei (FEEM) and the International School of Ethology by Erice. For information contact Ignazio Musu, email: musu@unive.it

1. RESOURCES

PROTECTING PUBLIC HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT: IMPLEMENTING THE PRECAUTIONARY PRINCIPLE. 1999. By Carolyn Raffensperger and Joel Tickner. Presents results of work initiated at the 1998 Wingspread Conference on Implementing the Precautionary Principle. Describes history, content and philosophical foundations of the principle of precautionary action, with applications ranging from agriculture to manufacturing. Sections cover law and theory, integrating precaution into policy, and precautionary principle in action. Includes case studies of manganese in gasoline, tetraethyl lead, endocrine disrupters and more. 385pp. To order contact Island Press, 76381 Commercial Street, P.O. Box 7, Covelo, CA 95428; tel: (1-707) 983-6432; fax 983-6414; email ipwest@igc.apc.org; web <http://www.islandpress.org>

THE UNITED NATIONS AND GLOBAL COMMERCE. September 7, 1999. By the United Nations Department of Public Information. This new study identifies key UN roles in facilitating the global economy and assesses the benefits of 'the soft infrastructure', as Secretary-General Kofi Annan terms it, that establishes the framework for the international exchange of goods, money and information. 75 pp. ISBN 92-1-100815-8. To order contact United Nations Publications, Sales No. E.99.I.18, Two UN Plaza, Room DC2-853, Dept. PRES, New York NY 10017 USA, tel: (1-800) 253-9646 or (1-212) 963-8302, fax: (1-212) 963-3489, email: publications@un.org; or Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland, tel: (41-22) 917-2614, fax: 917-0027, email: unpubli@unog.ch; web: <http://www.un.org/Publications>

THE MAI AFFAIR, A STORY AND ITS LESSONS. 1999. By David Henderson. Mr. Henderson, former chief economist of the OECD, ascribes the failure of the MAI to two main interrelated sources of concern. The first was the fierce disagreements within the negotiations; the second was the rising anxiety of a host of non-governmental organisations. David Henderson outlines the course of these events, accounts for the breakdown of negotiations, examines the arguments brought to bear, weighs the implications of failure, and suggests lessons to be drawn. He places this remarkable and disturbing episode in perspective. ISBN 1 86203 039 1.

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