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WTO

GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS HOTLY DEBATED IN THE WAKE OF DOHA

The question whether negotiations on the extension of geographical indications (GIs) were officially launched at the Fourth WTO Ministerial meeting in Doha has emerged as one of the most controversial issues in the wake of the Conference. This and other issues related to GIs were also the topic of discussion among government officials and private industry at a recent Symposium organised by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

GIs, as defined in the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs), are identifications of the country or region where the quality, reputation or other characteristic of a product is essentially attributable to the geographical region. Additional protection of GIs already exists for wines and spirits (eg Champagne, Bordeaux and Cognac), and some countries (mainly Asia, Europe and Africa) are calling for this protection to be extended to other products (eg Basmati rice, Darjeeling tea or Camembert cheese). Some believe that by giving value to

biological resources, GIs can provide an incentive to preserve native varieties, the environment in which the respective resources are grown, and the traditional knowledge associated with them.

Mandated negotiations or exploratory discussions?

While the Doha Ministerial Declaration explicitly launches negotiations on establishing a multilateral system of notification and registration of GIs for wines and spirits (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 22 November 2001; <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/01-11-22/story3.htm>), WTO Members are still debating whether negotiations are also mandated for the extension of the protection of GIs for products other than wines or spirits.

While countries opposed to extending GIs, including the US, Argentina and other agriculture exporting countries, argue that no mandate exists, others dispute this conclusion. Switzerland in a communication submitted on behalf of the EC and 13 other countries states that the Ministerial Declaration provides "a clear mandate to launch negotiations" on GI extensions (WT/MIN(01)/W/11). This conclusion was also supported by India which in a joint submission with Bulgaria, Kenya and Sri Lanka asserts that negotiations have been launched on GI extension "as part of the negotiations on outstanding implementation issues" (WT/MIN(01)/W/9). "It is our understanding that no additional consensus is required for the launching of these negotiations," the submission states.

The US, in contrast, stressed in its assessment of the Ministerial Conference's outcome that ministers "avoided launching negotiations" on GIs. "We have confirmed with the [WTO] secretariat that we do not believe -- and they agree -- that this [declaration] mandates negotiations," a US official said. Some have expressed concern that interpreting the Declaration's provisions as not providing a negotiating mandate for GI extension might set a precedent for the possibility of negotiations on other outstanding implementation concerns.

At the centre of the controversy is para. 12 of the Declaration which provides two options for negotiations on implementation-related concerns (which also include GI extension), namely (a) issues to be negotiated under a specific mandate where such a mandate is provided in the Declaration, and (b) outstanding implementation issues to be addressed by the relevant WTO bodies which will report to the Trade Negotiations Committee by the end of 2002 "for appropriate action". While some Members argue that GI extension should be addressed under (a), others see it as an issue for discussion under (b), ie in the TRIPs Council. Also, among those supporting the latter interpretation, some assert that "appropriate action" could, but does not necessarily imply negotiations, whereas others say that it can only be regarded in the context of negotiations.

While the extension of GIs is listed as one of the developing countries' implementation concerns, it is in practice not a North-South dispute, but rather pits countries that want to use GIs to promote the export of valuable products and prevent perceived misappropriation against the main agriculture exporting countries that do not want their products to be prevented from using these names. One developing country representative pointed out that in fact, the extension of GIs is likely to lead to new obligations for developing countries while the benefits will mainly go to developed country that are better prepared at the national level to take advantage of GI extensions.

WIPO Symposium on GIs

GIs were also the focus of a WIPO Symposium, held in Montevideo, Uruguay, from on 28-29 November 2001. The meeting brought together representative from governments and private

industry to exchange information on GI protection at the national, regional and international levels and on future trends in that area. Divergence on the benefits and drawbacks of GI extensions was also apparent among participants, even though the issue was not discussed in much detail.

Additional Resources

The WTO submissions cited in this article are available on the WTO web site at http://docsonline.wto.org/gen_home.asp. For further information on the GI debate, see the forthcoming issue of BRIDGES Between Trade and Sustainable Development (<http://www.ictsd.org/monthly/index.htm>).

The documents distributed at the WIPO Symposium are available at http://www.wipo.int/eng/meetings/2001/geo_mvd/index.htm.

WTO AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE DISCUSSES ENVIRONMENT

For the last time this year, Members convened in the WTO Committee on Agriculture for an informal negotiating session on 3-4 December to discuss, *inter alia*, the relationship between environment and domestic farm support. The debate principally focused on whether some degree of trade distortion is legitimate in cases where states support their farmers whose agricultural activities fulfil environmental purposes. In another debate, some Members pointed out that labelling could also be a way to deal with environmental concerns.

WTO Members have been holding 'special' agriculture sessions since early 2000 as mandated by the Agreement on Agriculture (AoA), which provides for a continuation of the "fundamental reform" programme for the liberalisation of the world's farming sector through ongoing negotiations (Article 20). While the agriculture negotiations have so far been taking place independently of other talks in the WTO in line with the 'built-in agenda', they are now part of the single undertaking launched at the Fourth WTO Ministerial Conference in November (see BRIDGES Weekly, 15 November 2001; <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/01-11-15/story1.htm>).

Environment

Non-papers (i.e. unofficial papers) were tabled by Japan and Norway -- both of which belong to the group of 'friends of multifunctionality' -- and from the Cairns Group of food exporting nations comprising Canada, Australia, and several Latin American and South-East Asian countries. The debate principally revolved around the question, whether environmental concerns are adequately addressed by targeted, transparent and non- or minimally trade-distorting measures while making use of already existing AoA tools [e.g. the Green Box]. The use of existing WTO instruments and provisions is being promoted by those calling for a quick liberalisation of the farming sector, such as the US and the Cairns Group. In contrast, the 'friends of multifunctionality' like Norway, Japan and Korea believe that agriculture is a unique trading sector vis-a-vis, for instance, trade in industrial goods. They argue that agriculture has a multifunctional character as it not only has an economic function, but also addresses so-called 'non-trade concerns' such as environment, food security, rural development and poverty alleviation.

The preamble of the AoA as well as Article 20 itself indeed provide that Members should take non-trade concerns into account. However, significant differences exist among Members on how this should be done. In general, farm subsidies are deemed to be trade-distortive and thus

only allowed under certain conditions listed in the AoA. Members can use the Green Box to compensate farmers e.g. for environmental conservation or protection provided through their agricultural work. Payments under the Green Box, however, must be non-, or at most minimally trade-distorting. Thus, direct payments to farmers, for example, should be decoupled from production so as not to create an incentive for farmers to increase their production -- which would have a trade-distorting effect. The Green Box also allows Members to make payments, *inter alia*, through environmental programmes, but whose criteria need to be clearly defined in order to be targeted and thus minimise trade distortion.

Members, such as Japan and Norway, are concerned that the two options of either decoupling direct payments from production or to provide targeted support via criteria-based programmes might not be sufficient to appropriately address non-trade concerns, arguing that subsidies outside the Green Box are needed in order to help agriculture perform its many roles. While stressing the need to tackle agriculture's diversity as part of these non-trade concerns, the countries take the view that some production linkage of domestic support payments may be necessary, particularly in areas where agricultural production has a low potential because production is needed for environmental reasons.

Labelling

The EC and Switzerland reiterated that labelling could be an option to address some non-trade concerns without distorting trade, as it would enable consumers to freely choose products which comply with their expectations regarding, for instance, organic agriculture. In addition, labelled products could improve market access by increasing consumer confidence.

While Switzerland and other European countries recognised that this issue should be addressed in the Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), they made a link between progress in the agriculture negotiations and the TBT Committee. Cairns Group members, the US and several developing countries objected to this point, arguing that labelling was part not of the agriculture negotiations, but fell under the jurisdiction of the TBT Committee, and in the case of food safety also involved other bodies such as the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) or the food labelling Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

ICTSD Internal Files.

Biotechnology

CHINA-US GMO DEAL; MEXICAN MAIZE; OECD CONFERENCE

China Endorses GMO Deal With US

In a letter dated 26 November, the Chinese Ministry of Agriculture formally endorsed a deal reached in October with the US regarding China's regulations on imports of genetically modified organisms (GMOs), according to the office of the US Trade Representative (USTR). The interim deal (see BRIDGES Weekly, 30 October 2001, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/01-10-30/story4.htm>) had been put in place until China issued implementation details for its 6 June GMO regulations. The USTR office welcomed the official endorsement, which they said was needed to increase orders of US soybeans from Chinese importers. The USTR also announced that it was sending its top agriculture negotiator, Allen Johnson, to China in mid-December for further discussions on China's GMO rules. The release of implementation details, however, has been delayed until further notice, according the China's Ministry of Agriculture.

Transgenic Components Found In Mexican Native Corn

Native varieties of corn grown in remote regions of Mexico have been contaminated by transgenic DNA, according to a study published in the 29 November edition of the science journal *Nature*. "This is very serious because the region where our samples were taken are known for their diverse varieties of native corn, which is something that absolutely needs to be protected," warned Ignacio Chapela, one of the authors from UC Berkeley. Environmental groups called for an immediate moratorium on growing bioengineered crops. "These findings are deeply disturbing and highlight the huge gamble the biotech industry is taking with nature," said Pete Riley of Friends of the Earth. "To my knowledge this is the first time anyone has found transgenic material in wild plants," he added.

The source of the contamination is still unknown, but is likely to have come from multiple pollinations over time, the authors said. The planting of bioengineered corn has been banned in Mexico since 1998 and the nearest known plantings are located 60 miles from the study site. "It's not clear if the moratorium was poorly enforced, or if the contamination occurred before the moratorium was enacted," said Chapela. Import of bioengineered corn, however, is still allowed. "It's more likely that the contamination came from food aid brought in to these regions," speculated David Quist, the second author. "A lot of it comes from the United States and a lot of it is transgenic."

OECD Conference discusses LMOs and environment

Environmental assessment of transgenic organisms was the focus of the International Conference "LMOs [Living Modified Organisms] and the Environment", organised by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in Raleigh-Durham, USA, on 27-30 November. The Conference aimed to promote dialogue between developed and developing countries in an effort to identify country- and region-specific assessment needs.

In their (draft) summary report of the meeting, the rapporteurs summarise current trends in the development and assessment of LMOs and outline areas of general agreement among participants and some outstanding issues. Regarding the way forward, the report highlights the need for improved environmental assessment methodologies, and for undertaking further scientific investigations. The authors furthermore consider the potential for using international standards as a way to minimise disruption of international trade and "undercutting the capacity of developing countries to use emerging technologies" while allowing all countries to meet their needs.

Additional Resources

Documents of the OECD Conference are available at
<http://www1.oecd.org/ehs/raleigh/index.htm>.

"China says delays issuing details of GMO rules," REUTERS, 3 December 2001; "China endorses deal on GMO soybeans," REUTERS, 4 December 2001; "Transgenic DNA discovered in native Mexican corn, according to a new study by UC Berkeley researchers," UC BERKELEY, 18 November 2001; "Mexican study raises GM concern," BBC, 28 November 2001; "Scientists find GM material in native Mexican corn," REUTERS, 30 November 2001.

Fisheries

NEW STUDY REVEALS UNDERREPORTING OF FISH CATCH DECLINE

Contrary to statistics by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), a new study, published in the 29 November edition of the science journal *Nature*, shows that fish catches have actually been declining by 800 million pounds since the late '80s rather than increasing by 700 million pounds as previously thought. At the current rate, by 2015, global fish stocks will have fallen by half. The world is "playing with the food supply of the planet," said Reg Watson, one of the authors. "These earthshaking findings are the most significant fishery and food security results in decades," said Jane Lubchenco from Oregon State University. "They call into question the very basis of international fisheries management."

According to the study, the discrepancies are mainly due to over-reporting by China, which accounts for almost 40 percent of the deviation between reported and corrected levels. "FAO must generally rely on the statistics provided by member countries, even if it is doubtful that these correspond to reality," the study points out. While some blame incorrect reporting by Chinese local officials, the authors point at the institutions involved in the reporting process. "The same parts of the state devoted to monitoring the economy are also tasked with increasing its output," they said. "Our studies showed that whatever China's leaders set as production targets is what is officially reported." Others, however, prefer to focus on the widespread problem of overfishing rather than looking for whom to blame. "This is a global problem not a case of a few bad actors," said Andy Rosenberg from the University of New Hampshire.

The authors, however, warn against using the findings to promote aquaculture as a means of boosting fish catch, which they say would need to fundamentally change to become a viable alternative. "Aquaculture cannot replace wild seafood because so much farmed seafood relies on wild fish for fishmeal," according to Watson. Others highlight the problems of pollution and escapes from the net cages into the ocean as some of the industry's most serious problems, leading, for instance, the David Suzuki Foundation to demand an end to floating cages in the salmon farming industry.

Agreement On Fish Conservation Adopted By UN General Assembly

The 56th session of the UN General Assembly on 28 November adopted an Agreement setting out provisions concerning the conservation and management of straddling and highly migratory fish stocks. The Agreement -- which will enter into force on 11 December following deposition of the thirtieth instrument of accession to the Agreement on 11 November -- also includes provisions on sub-regional and regional cooperation in enforcement, binding dispute settlement and the rights and obligations of states in authorising the use of vessels flying their flags for fishing on the high seas. It furthermore invites member states to provide assistance to developing and least-developed states to enable them "to develop their national capacity to exploit fishery resources" while ensuring adequate conservation and management of those fisheries resources. The Agreement also includes references to precaution, urging all states "to apply the precautionary approach widely to the conservation, management and exploitation of straddling fish stocks and highly migratory fish stocks."

Additional Resources

Further information on the *Nature* study can be found on the SeaWeb web site at <http://www.seaweb.org/NatureNovember29.html>.

"Chinese misreporting masks dramatic decline in ocean fish catches, scientists say", AP, 29 November 2001; "Experts say Chinese overreporting masks decline in catches," UN WIRE, 29 November 2001; "Inflated Chinese fisheries data masks global fish decline," ENS, 29 November, 2001; ICTSD Internal Files.

Intellectual Property Rights

US SUPREME COURT DECISION ON PLANT PATENT POSSIBLE IN EARLY 2002

Since 1985, more than 1,800 patents issued in the US include claims to plants, seeds, or plant parts or tissues, of which 1,300 explicitly claim a plant seed. It would appear then that patent claims directed to sexually reproduced plants are here to stay. Or are they?

A patent infringement case involving Pioneer Hi-Bred, a subsidiary of DuPont, which is the world's largest producer of seed corn, has re-opened the question of whether seeds and plants are patentable in the US.

In 1998, Pioneer sued a company called J.E.M. Ag Supply in a district court for selling bags of corn seeds. Pioneer claimed to hold patents on these seeds and argued that J.E.M. was infringing its patents by selling them without authorization and in contravention of Pioneer's licensing agreements covering patented seed that forbade resale.

J.E.M. responded by arguing not only that the patents were invalid, but that Congress had never intended the scope of patentable subject matter to be extended to seeds and plant varieties. The basis of J.E.M.'s argument was that when Congress passed the 1970 Plant Variety Protection Act (PVPA), its intention was that IPR protection of seeds and sexually reproduced plants should be exclusively covered by that law.

The district court denied J.E.M.'s counter-claim, a decision which was upheld the following year by the Court of Appeals to the Federal Circuit, which agreed that Congress's enactment of a plant variety protection law did not indicate its intention to exclude sexually reproduced plants from the patent system.

The matter would have ended there if the lawyers representing J.E.M. had not requested the Supreme Court to determine whether patents on plant varieties are invalid because of the existence of two laws: the PVPA, which covers sexually reproduced varieties; and the 1930 Plant Patent Act, which despite its name is different from conventional utility patents, for asexually reproduced varieties.

In October 2001, the Supreme Court heard the arguments of lawyers representing Pioneer and J.E.M., and the US Solicitor-General, who took a position supporting Pioneer. Some of the judges were reportedly sympathetic to the views of the J.E.M. representative, suggesting that the outcome is by no means certain.

The Supreme Court has not indicated when its decision will be published, but it could well be in the early part of 2002.

Additional Resources

"US mulls over plant utility patents," Information Systems of Biotechnology News Report, December 2001, <http://www.isb.vt.edu/news/2001/dec01.pdf>; Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit – Decision Docket No. 99-1035, <http://www.fedcir.gov>; Amicus Briefs from Office of the Solicitor General (<http://www.usdoj.gov/osg/briefs/2000/2pet/6invit/1999-1996.pet.ami.inv.pdf>, <http://www.usdoj.gov/osg/briefs/2000/3mer/1ami/1999-1996.mer.ami.pdf>); US Supreme Court, http://www.supremecourtus.gov/oral_arguments/argument_transcripts.html.

WSSD

ASIA-PACIFIC REGIONAL PREP MEETING ADOPTS PLATFORM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

In what some described as perhaps the best outcome yet of the five regional preparatory meetings for the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), government officials at the High-level Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting in Phnom Penh, Cambodia (27-29 November) adopted the "Platform on Sustainable Development for Asia and the Pacific". Overall, the meeting -- which was one of a series of regional preparatory meetings for the WSSD, due to take place in Johannesburg, South Africa, in September 2002 -- aimed to review progress in the implementation of Agenda 21 in the regions, and to identify policy issues, priorities, goals, constraints and actions in preparation of the WSSD.

The Platform consists of five sections: regional assessment of the implementation of Agenda 21; key issues and priorities for sustainable development; follow-up actions; financing sustainable development; and final statements. The second part, on key issues and priorities, deals with several economic issues including the impacts of globalisation on sustainable agriculture and food security. It notes that globalisation has both positive and negative impacts on sustainable development, and cites trade-related loss of natural resources as an example of the latter. The Platform acknowledges that least-developed countries (LDCs) are especially vulnerable to negative impacts. Developing countries, LDCs and economies in transition must be better integrated into the world economic and trade system. This requires capacity-building, technical assistance, improved market access, and the promotion of trade and investment.

The Platform also mentions that the reduction of trade distortions is essential to pursue sustainable agriculture and rural development. The second part of the Platform furthermore recognises regional priorities in relation to environmental and natural resource issues. It points out "the need to address in a holistic manner the issue of illegal logging, illegal trade in timber, non-timber forest products, genetic resources and its underlying causes". One of the key cross-cutting issues covered is that of technology transfer. The Platform expresses concern that the commitment to further promote the transfer of environmentally-sound technologies to developing countries on favourable terms, as provided in Agenda 21, "has largely been unfulfilled".

WSSD To Be Rescheduled?

The UN World Summit on Sustainable Development, the follow-up to the 1992 Earth Summit, is scheduled to take place from 2 – 11 September in Johannesburg, South Africa. However, because the closing day is the one- year anniversary of the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, the United Nations is considering the possibility of bringing the event forward by a week. For logistical reasons, any change will have to be agreed by the U.N. General Assembly in the next two weeks.

Additional Resources

A summary and analysis of the WSSD Asia-Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting can be found at: <http://www.iisd.ca/linkages/2002/wsasi/>. The "Phnom Penh Regional Platform on Sustainable Development for Asia and the Pacific" is available online at <http://www.rrcap.unep.org/wssd/documents/apacificDoc.cfm>.

"UN may shift Earth Summit date to avoid September 11," REUTERS, 3 December 2001; "Earth Summit in S.Africa hit by Sept 11 events," REUTERS, 30 November 2001; ICTSD Internal Files.

In Brief

US CONGRESS PASSES FAST TRACK BILL. By a margin of just one vote, US Congress on 6 December passed the trade promotion authority (TPA) bill -- formerly known as 'fast-track' -- which would allow the US President to negotiate trade agreements that Congress can only accept or reject, but not amend. "I commend the House of Representatives for passing legislation that will restore our nation's authority to negotiate trade agreements," said US President George W. Bush. Supporters of the bill argue that TPA is crucial for US participation in multilateral trade negotiations, which will open foreign markets to US exporters. Most Democrats, in contrast, opposed the bill on the grounds that the language on labour and environment was not strong enough. The bill was also strongly criticised by conservation groups who are concerned that TPA could undermine efforts to include environmental, health and labour provisions in future trade agreements. "We shouldn't rush through important trade deals without making sure that all Americans' needs are addressed - including protections for the environment and workers. But that's by definition what 'fast-track' does," said Carl Pope of the Sierra Club. His sentiments were echoed by Marty Hayden of Earthjustice, who described TPA as "a real threat to American democratic and environmental values." The bill, which would grant TPA until 2005, now has to be passed by the US Senate and signed by President Bush before it can enter into force.

"U.S. House passes fast track authority," ENS, 7 December 2001; "Trade bill passes House in victory for Bush," REUTERS, 7 December 2001; "House passes trade negotiation authority bill 215-214," WASHINGTON FILE, 6 December 2001.

SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS IN TRIPS COUNCIL POSTPONED. In its first meeting after the Fourth WTO Ministerial Conference in Doha, the Council for Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs) focused only on the review of national implementing legislation. According to one trade source, Members had decided to not hold discussions on the remaining items -- including geographical indications, reviews under Articles 27.3(b) (patentability of life forms) and 71.1, and the issue of intellectual property rights and public health -- at this stage in order to give countries time to consider the outcomes of the Ministerial Conference and develop their positions. The next meeting of the TRIPs Council has been tentatively scheduled for 5-7 March 2002, with informal consultations to be held early next year on how the Council should organise its work in the light of the Doha Declaration.

ICTSD Internal Files.

Events & Resources

EVENTS

For a more comprehensive list of events in trade and sustainable development, please refer to ICTSD's web calendar at: <http://www.ictsd.org/cal/index.htm>. An updated list of forthcoming WTO meetings is posted at: http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/meets.doc. 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 the different bodies. Unless otherwise indicated, all WTO meetings are held at the WTO, Centre William Rappard, rue de Lausanne 154, 1211 Geneva, Switzerland. For further information on WTO events contact: WTO Information and Media Relations Division, Geneva; tel: (41-22) 739- 5007; fax: 739-5458; email: enquiries@wto.org.

6 December, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE: REGULAR SESSION.

7 December, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE: FORMAL SPECIAL SESSION.

7-8 December 2001 in Berlin, Germany: 2001 BERLIN CONFERENCE ON THE HUMAN DIMENSIONS OF GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE. Entitled "Global Environmental Change and the Nation State," the conference will examine the interlinkages between global and national environmental politics, and look at new forms of global environmental governance that link global institutions with a significant degree of national decision-making. For further information visit: <http://www.environmental-policy.de>. From IISD Linkages: <http://www.iisd.ca/linkages/journal/>.

8 - 10 December, Mahé, Seychelles: CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF ECOTOURISM IN SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES (SIDS) AND OTHER SMALL ISLANDS (Preparatory Conference for the International Year of Ecotourism, 2002). Organised by the World Tourism Organization. For further information contact Mr. Eugenio Yunis, Chief, World Tourism Organization, Sustainable Development of Tourism, tel: (34 915) 678 212; fax: 713 733; email: env@world-tourism.org; Internet: http://www.world-tourism.org/frameset/frame_sustainable.html

10 - 12 December, Isle of Vilm, Germany: EUROPEAN WORKSHOP: "CLIMATE PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY - HOW TO SOLVE POSSIBLE CONFLICTS AND FIND WIN-WIN SOLUTIONS". Organised by German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation. For further information, contact Ms. Jutta Stadler, German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, tel: (49- 38) 301-86 0 or 86130/34; fax: 301-86 150; email: bfm.ina.vilm@t-online.de

10-14 December, Geneva, Switzerland: WIPO SECOND SESSION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE ON INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND GENETIC RESOURCES, TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND FOLKLORE. The following are on the agenda for this meeting: "Accreditation of certain Non-Governmental Organizations," "Operational Principles for Contractual Agreements Concerning Access to Genetic Resources and Benefit-Sharing," "Traditional Knowledge" which includes a review of current IPR protection, Folklore, and Future Work. For further information contact: WIPO Secretariat, tel: (41 22) 338-9428; email: francis.gurry@wipo.int; Internet: http://www.wipo.int/eng/meetings/2001/igc/index_2.htm.

Other Forthcoming Events

4 - 8 February 2002, Montreal, Canada: MEETING OF THE AD HOC INTER-SESSIONAL WORKING GROUP ON ARTICLE 8(J). For further information, contact the CBD Secretariat; tel: (1 514) 288 2220; fax: 288 6588; email: secretariat@biodiv.org. Documents of this meeting are now available online at <http://www.biodiv.org/programmes/socio-eco/traditional/wg8j-02.asp>.

15-17 February 2002, Windsor Castle, UK: ASSESSING THE FUTURE FOR AGRICULTURE IN A GLOBALISED WORLD: WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF WORLD TRADE ON LOCAL AGRICULTURE? Organised by The College of St George in conjunction with the Society, Religion and Technology Project of the Church of Scotland and the Scottish Agricultural College. For further information contact Mrs Mandy Reed, Tel: (44 1753) 848 709; fax: 848 755.

30 March 2002, Washington, USA: 7TH INTERNATIONAL WILDLIFE LAW CONFERENCE. Organised by the Wildlife Interest Group of the American Society of International Law. Under this year's theme "The Convention on Biological Diversity: A Ten Year Report Card", the conference aims to bring together participants from throughout the world in an ongoing colloquy about the role of international law and legal institutions in furthering the goal of species conservation and protection of the Earth's biological diversity. For further information contact: William C.G. Burns, tel: (1 650) 281 9126; fax: (1 801) 838 4710; email: asilwildlife@pacbell.net; Internet: <http://eelink.net/~asilwildlife/programs2.shtml>.

19 - 22 May 2002, Quebec, Canada: WORLD ECOTOURISM SUMMIT. Organised by the World Tourism Organization, and hosted by the Canadian Tourism Commission and Tourism Québec. For further information, contact the World Tourism Organization, tel: (34 91) 5678100; fax: 713733; email: env@world-tourism.org; Internet: <http://www.ecotourism2002.org/>

RESOURCES

If you have a relevant resource (books, papers, bulletins, etc.) you would like to see announced in this section, please forward a copy for review by the BRIDGES staff to hbaumuller@ictsd.ch. Submissions of publications to ICTSD's documentation centre would also be welcome (contact mgalvin@ictsd.ch).

WORLD MARKETS FOR ORGANIC FRUIT AND VEGETABLES. Published by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), November 2001. The report encourages developing countries to increase their exports of organic produce in light of growing demand in industrialised countries, which is unlikely to be met through domestic production. To this end, the report outlines several recommendations, including establishing national or regional organic standards and regulations, increasing know-how on organic farming, and good post-harvest handling, infrastructure and logistics. For a copy of the report, contact: Ms. Daniela Piergentili, FAO, Rome, Italy; tel: (39) 06 5705 2864; email: daniela.piergentili@fao.org.

"The position of Via Campesina on biodiversity, biosafety and genetic resources," by Via Campesina in *DEVELOPMENT* 44 (4, 2001): 47-51. Via Campesina, an international coalition of farmer organizations, argues for the need to guarantee effective protection of local and traditional agricultural systems and food security together with human and collective rights. They maintain that biosecurity and agreed multilateral positions on environmental protection must over-ride trade agreements and policies.

"Deforestation, distribution and development," by G. Kopp & L. Tole in *GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE: HUMAN AND POLICY DIMENSIONS*, 11 (3, 2001): 193-202. This paper investigates the role played by distributional factors in mediating the effects of growth and development on forest depletion in tropical developing countries. A key finding of the paper is that the distributional profile of a country significantly determines whether economic development will have either a positive or a negative effect on the rate of forest loss. In countries where levels of inequality are high, development will tend to exacerbate deforestation rates while in countries where distributional profiles are more egalitarian, the negative effects of growth and development on forest cover will be ameliorated.

"Transgenic crops and the environment: missing markets and public roles", by S. Batie and D.E. Ervin in *ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT ECONOMICS*, 6 (4, 2001): 435-457. According to the authors, the rapidity of change has left scant opportunity for investigation of the consequences of adoption of transgenic crops on long-term ecosystem or economic system functioning. Economic theory suggests that, if the "Biotechnology Revolution" is left to market

forces alone, there will be neglected public goods. Theory and limited empirical evidence suggests that there are significant incentives for private firms to discount and neglect certain environmental impacts and to develop products that meet mainly the needs of those able and willing to pay. Negative distributional impacts on rural societies and economies will not normally enter the private calculus nor will the long-term problems of insect and plant resistance. Thus, there is a strong case for enhanced public roles with respect to the use of transgenic crops. The adoption of the precautionary approach in public policies addressing transgenic crops is one alternative to better reflect public concerns.

"Free trade and the environment-development system," by B. Liddle in *Ecological Economics* 39 (1, 2001): 21-36. The authors develop a simulation model to analyse the trade-environment-development system that contains a number of important advances over the earlier and current theoretical models. They found that (1) the benefits of trade (i) can be either positive or negative, and (ii) depend on country endowments; and (2) the pollution effects of trade are closely tied to the benefits of trade.

SCHOLARSHIPS

The UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre, in collaboration with the UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office, is offering six UNEP-WCMC Chevening Scholarships in Biodiversity, beginning September 2002. The scheme will draw scholars from all regions of the world to work for one year at the Centre in Cambridge. They will analyse an aspect of biodiversity conservation and sustainable management relevant to the policy needs of their region. This scheme aims to help young researchers to prepare for a role in national and regional policy development and decision-making to resolve biodiversity-related challenges. With support from the Centre's staff they will select a subject for analysis and publish recommendations for action over a period of one year, from September 2002.

Candidates should apply on the Chevening Scholarships form attaching a CV, publications list and covering letter explaining why they wish to spend a year at the Centre. Application forms are available from, and should be submitted through, any UK Embassy, High Commission or British Council office, or the Head of Human Resources, UNEP-WCMC, 219 Huntingdon Road, Cambridge CB3 0DL, UK. Tel: +44 1223 277314; fax +44 1223 277136; email brenda.gillian@unep-wcmc.org. Closing date for applications: 1st March 2002. Shortlisted candidates only will be informed by 1st April 2002. Further information about the Centre may be found at <http://www.unep-wcmc.org>.

BRIDGES Trade BioRes© is published by the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD), <http://www.ictsd.org>, in collaboration with IUCN - World Conservation Union, <http://www.iucn.org>, and IUCN's Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy, CEESP, <http://www.cenesta.org/ceesp/>. This edition of *BRIDGES Trade BioRes* was co-edited by Heike Baumuller, hbaumuller@ictsd.ch, and Graham Dutfield, gdutfield@ictsd.ch. Contributors to this issue were Alex Werth and Christophe Bellmann. The Managing Editor is Andrew Crosby, acrosby@ictsd.ch. The Director is Ricardo Meléndez-Ortiz, rmelendez@ictsd.ch. ICTSD is an independent, not-for-profit organisation based at: 13, ch. des Anémones, 1219 Geneva, Switzerland, tel: (41-22) 917-8492; fax: 917-8093. Excerpts from *BRIDGES Trade BioRes* may be used in other publications with appropriate citation. Comments and suggestions are welcomed and should be directed to the Editors or the Director. *BRIDGES Trade BioRes* is made possible in 2001 through the generous support of the Minister of Housing, Spatial Planning, and the Environment (Netherlands). It also benefits from ICTSD's core funders: the Governments of Finland, Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden; Christian Aid (UK), the Rockefeller Foundation, MISEREOR, NOVIB (NL), Oxfam (UK) and the Swiss Coalition of Development Organisations (Switzerland).

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