



INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR
TRADE AND SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT

BRIDGES

Weekly Trade News Digest

13 February 2001

ISSN 1563-003X

Volume 5, N°5

TABLE OF CONTENTS

• Sparks Fly In WTO Agriculture Negotiations	1
• WTO Takes Care Of Business On Ministerial Dates, Chairmanships, DSU Review	4
• Canadian Ban On Brazilian Beef Imports Escalates Trade Battle	5
• Draft Services Negotiation Guidelines Under Discussion	7
• NGOs Submit Amicus Brief To WTO Appellate Body On Asbestos	7
• News From The Regions: Canada	8
• IU Revision Moving Slowly But Steadily	9
• In Brief	11
• WTO In Brief	13
• Events	14
• Resources	18

SPARKS FLY IN WTO AGRICULTURE NEGOTIATIONS

In what continues to be a heated political debate, WTO Members resumed discussions on global agriculture reform from 5-7 February. Among the 13 reform proposals discussed was a paper submitted by Japan which several Members felt was a clear indication of Japan's unwillingness to negotiate faithfully in the liberalisation process. Other proposals discussed included submissions by the EU, Japan, Canada, the Cairns Group of agriculture-exporting countries, Switzerland, Swaziland, Mauritius, Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Korea, Mali, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Norway, and India.

According to trade sources present at the talks, Cairns Group Members were extremely critical of the Japanese proposal, which put major emphasis on the various roles, or "multifunctionality", of agriculture in its economy. According to press sources, Uruguay -- which forms part of the Cairns Group -- was vociferous in its criticism, saying that the Japanese paper "flies in the face of everything the WTO stands for."

Besides focusing on the multifunctional role of agriculture with respect to food security, rural employment, cultural heritage and environmental protection, Japan's proposal (G/AG/NG/W/91; see http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/agric_e/negoti_e.htm) also centred on the "concerns of consumers and civil society" and the needs of developing countries.

Much of the criticism waged against the Japanese proposal, while also directed at its overall tone, targeted two particular items: Japan's proposed import restrictions and the use of special safeguard policies to protect against import surges. Both policies are aimed at insulating Japanese agriculture producers from the vulnerabilities associated with unexpected world market fluctuations. In recent years, agricultural imports from China have begun competing strongly in the Japanese food market, where, for instance, Chinese shiitake mushrooms now occupy roughly 40 percent of the traditionally Japanese-dominated shiitake mushroom market.

Despite the strong opposition to Japan's paper, Switzerland, Korea, and Norway -- all of whom also support the multifunctionality argument -- were quick to defend Japan.

Mixed Reactions to EU Proposal

While thematically similar to the Japanese proposal, the EU's paper escaped much of the criticism aimed at Japan. Many of the Cairns Group Members commented that the EU proposal was helpful in moving the agriculture negotiation in the direction of liberalisation. In the area of non-trade concerns -- food security, rural development and environmental protection -- for instance, the Cairns group and the US responded positively to the EU position, which argued that measures used to address non-trade concerns should be targeted and transparent and should not depress world commodity prices. The US and the Cairns Group, however, expressed concern over the EU's interest in extending the "Peace Clause" and the use of special safeguards. According to the "Peace Clause" -- Article 13 of the WTO Agreement on Agriculture -- WTO Member states must refrain from taking dispute settlement action against agricultural related subsidies until 1 January 2004.

In describing the differing views held on the EU and Japanese proposals, one senior EU trade official commented that, "there is a concerted attempt to drive a wedge between the EU and Japan over their positions."

In its presentation to the WTO Committee on Agriculture, the EU used the opportunity to also express concern about the rising incidence of BSE, or mad cow disease, in Europe. At the meeting, European Agriculture Commissioner Franz Fischler argued that food safety is becoming an increasingly important social issue in Europe and that the WTO must respect those policies designed to protect European livestock, farmers and consumers from the disease. Many critics of this argument fear that food safety might be misappropriated and used to legitimise a new wave of protectionism.

Recently, Renate Kunast, the newly appointed Minister of Agriculture and Consumer Protection in Germany, cited the BSE crisis as the impetus to shift Germany's agricultural production model in the direction of sustainable and organic agriculture. Ms. Kunast believes that food safety is a core European social issue that can be addressed using less intensive farming methods.

Small Developing States Express Disagreement Over Preferences

Also discussed at the WTO agriculture meeting was a series of proposals from the small island developing states (SIDS) that highlighted some of the divergent positions taken by these countries. In particular, Mauritius (G/AG/NG/W/96) and SIDS (G/AG/NG/W/97) argue that many Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) schemes that grant preferential market access to certain developing and least-developed countries should be preserved in order to give small island developing countries predictable market access to developed country markets. In contrast, CARICOM (G/AG/NG/W/100) argued that GSP schemes should be maintained only as a transitional measure in the overall development strategy of a developing country.

Informal Session Held To Discuss Phase 2 of Negotiation

On 7 February an informal session of the WTO Committee on Agriculture convened to discuss the shape of the agriculture negotiation's Phase 2, which is scheduled to begin following a stock-taking exercise at the end of March. Members agreed informally that for the benefit of developing country Members the negotiation should not be subdivided into small working groups and that more time must be devoted to the actual negotiations. Many developing countries proposed that the negotiating sessions be held with the same frequency, but be made longer, in order to avoid an overly-busy schedule that would be difficult for smaller delegations to attend. Some Members proposed that Phase 2 last from March 2001 - March 2002, while others -- Japan and Korea, for instance -- were reluctant to set rigid dates to Phase 2.

Additional Special Session Scheduled

An additional Special Session of the Committee on Agriculture has been scheduled for 22-23 March to accommodate those proposals that were not discussed last week at the Fifth Special Session. The meeting will resume discussion on India's proposal (G/AG/NG/W/102), which was cut short at the Fifth Special Session due lack of time.

BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest will provide a comprehensive account of this session in the 28 March edition.

WTO General Council Appoints New Agriculture Chairperson

On 9 February, Mrs. Apiradi Tantraporn, Thailand's Ambassador, was appointed Chairperson of the Special Session on the Committee on Agriculture by the WTO General Council. Ambassador Tantraporn will assume the chairship following the March stock-taking. Mr. Yoichi Suzuki, Minister and Deputy Permanent Representative at the Japanese Mission in Geneva, will continue in his role as Deputy Chairperson of the regular Agriculture Committee.

"Japan Comes Under Heavy Fire In WTO Farm Talks," UPI, 6 February 2001; "Japan Ag Negotiating Plan Attacked at WTO," WASHINGTON TRADE DAILY, 7 February 2001; "Japan Starts Picking On China," THE ECONOMIST, 10-16 February 2001; "Criticism From US, Others Mount On Japan's WTO Proposals," KYODO NEWS, 6 February 2001; "EUs Mad Cow Plan Must Not Become Protectionist-WTO," REUTERS, 6 February 2001; "Fischler Puts Food On WTO Agenda," FINANCIAL TIMES, 6 February 2001; "EU Says Mad Cow Scare Must Force WTO Rethink," REUTERS, 5 February 2001; "US Criticizes EU Ag Talks Plan," WASHINGTON

TRADE DAILY, 6 February 2001; "WTO Holds Informal Negotiations On Next Phase Of Farm Trade Talks, WTO REPORTER, 9 February 2001; ICTSD Internal Files.

WTO TAKES CARE OF BUSINESS ON MINISTERIAL DATES, CHAIRMANSHIPS, DSU REVIEW

At meetings of the WTO General Council on 8-9 February, WTO Members formalised dates for the Fourth Ministerial meeting in Qatar, agreed on chairmanships for various key WTO bodies, tackled once again the contentious issue of reform of the Dispute Settlement Understanding (DSU), and established an accession Working Party for the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

WTO Ministerial to be held 9-13 November 2001

The General Council on 8 February agreed that the Fourth WTO Ministerial Conference in Doha, Qatar, will be held on 9-13 November 2001. The offer of the Government of Qatar to hold the Fourth WTO Ministerial Conference was accepted by the General Council on 30 January 2001, when it also authorized its Chairman, in cooperation with the Director-General, to start consultations on both organizational and substantive matters related to the preparations of the Conference and to report back to the General Council.

WTO Members agree on Committee Chairs

After initial differences regarding the chairmanship of the WTO Committee on Agriculture, WTO Members on 9 February finalised the line-up for the 2001 Chair assignments. Stuart Harbinson, Hong Kong's chief representative in Geneva, will head the General Council (see *BRIDGES Weekly*, 6 February 2001 <http://www.ictsd.org/html/weekly/wtoinbrief.06-02-01.htm>), while New Zealand Ambassador Roger Farrell will chair the Dispute Settlement Body. The Council for Trade in Goods will be chaired by Hungarian Ambassador Istvan Major, the Council for Trade in Services by the Brazilian Ambassador Celso Amorim, and the Council for Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs) by Zimbabwe's Ambassador Boniface Guwa Chidyaisiku. The two-Chair system for the Committee on Agriculture will be retained following a decision last year. Ambassador Apiradi Tantraporn of Thailand, a member of the 18-strong Cairns Group of agricultural exporting countries, will chair the Committee during special negotiating sessions, while Japan's deputy representative in Geneva Yoichi Suzuki will retain his position as Vice-Chair and oversee the Agriculture Committee's regular work program. The EU last year had blocked Amorim's (Brazil) appointment as agricultural chair, arguing that as a member of the Cairns Group he could not provide the neutral leadership necessary to steer the sensitive farm trade talks.

Other appointments include Trade Policy Review Body: Amb. Pekka Huhtaniemi (Finland); Committee on Trade and Environment: Amb. Alejandro Jara Puga (Chile); Committee on Trade and Development: Amb. Nathan Irumba (Uganda); Committee on Balance of Payments Restrictions: Amb. Hernando Jose Gomez (Columbia); Committee on Regional Trade Agreements: Deputy Rep. Laurence Dubois-Destriezais (France); Budget Committee: Amb. M. Supperamaniam (Malaysia); Working Group on Trade and Investment: Amb. Oguz Demiralp (Turkey); Working Group on Trade and Competition Policy: Prof. Frederic Jenny (France); and Working Group on Transparency in Government Procurement: Amb. Ronald Saborio Soto (Costa Rica).

Divisions persist over DSU review

A proposal submitted to the General Council by a group of countries -- led by Japan -- seeking to amend certain provisions of the WTO Dispute Settlement Understanding (DSU) was also discussed, though no substantive decision was taken. Japan noted the importance of resolving the so-called 'sequencing' issue, which refers to the current ambiguity contained in the DSU as to the right of a WTO Member to impose unilateral sanctions against a fellow Member before a panel has established that the targeted country has actually failed to implement a WTO ruling (see *BRIDGES Weekly*, 16 January 2001, <http://www.ictsd.org/html/weekly/story1.16-01-01.htm>).

Agreement was not reached on resolving the sequencing problem, due mostly to difficulties with the proposal by the EU and the US. The EU noted that it wanted a comprehensive approach to DSU review, saying that it desired a number of areas of the DSU opened up for revision in addition to the sequencing sections. General Council Chair Kåre Bryn reminded the EU that this approach had already been tried, but had met with no success. The US continued to call for increased transparency provisions in the DSU, though this continued to meet with little support from most other WTO Members. The US is pushing primarily to allow non-governmental actors to submit amicus briefs in disputes, and -- less forcefully -- for non-governmental actors to participate as observers in dispute settlement proceedings. As was demonstrated in the failed DSU review process in 1999 prior to the Seattle Ministerial in 1999 (see *BRIDGES Weekly*, 27 September 1999, <http://www.ictsd.org/html/story5.27-09-99.htm>), dispute settlement transparency remains a contentious area, leaving DSU reform an unresolved issue for the time being. Bryn did state, however, that it would remain at the level of General Council discussions and consultations, and that he "would work with the co-sponsors of the proposal to help it reach its proper conclusion."

Supporters of the DSU amendment proposal include Bolivia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Switzerland and Venezuela, and Uruguay joined the group at the General Council meeting. Thailand and Hong Kong-China also offered their provisional support, though they called for some fine-tuning to the proposal.

Yugoslavia accession formally begins

Finally, the General Council agreed on 8 February to establish a Working Party for the accession of Yugoslavia. WTO officials would not speculate as to how long the accession process would take. Yugoslav officials on 23 January applied for Membership in the WTO, asking for a speedy accession process. The old Yugoslav federation was a member of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) before its suspension in 1992 as the country disintegrated into war.

"WTO Members Finalize Lineup for Chairs of Committees," WTO REPORTER, 12 February 2001; ICTSD Internal Files.

CANADIAN BAN ON BRAZILIAN BEEF IMPORTS ESCALATES TRADE BATTLE

Canada's decision on 3 February to ban imports of Brazilian beef has triggered an avalanche of fierce Brazilian reactions ranging from governmental threats of diverse measures of retaliation to domestic Brazilian demonstrations of discontent.

Canada justified the import ban on Brazil by citing Brazil's failure to provide information requested in 1998 to show that Brazilian cattle is not infected by mad cow disease, or BSE. The Canadian move was quickly followed by fellow NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) members Mexico and the US. Brazil's Foreign Minister Celso Lafer said early last week that there was no justification for the ban and demanded that Canada lift it immediately. On 9 February, Brazil's President Fernando Henrique Cardoso set Canada a deadline of three weeks to revoke the ban. According to President Cardoso, if the problem is not resolved within the deadline, "war is war." At the same time, Canada promised to send a team of health inspectors as demanded by Brazil, who are expected to arrive in Brazil sometime this week. According to Canada, as soon as the team concludes that there is no mad cow disease, the ban will be lifted.

In response to Canada's decision, the Brazilian government last week threatened various actions, including abandoning talks on the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA), retaliating against Canadian companies, challenging Canada before the WTO and turning to the International Court of Justice to seek compensation for the losses (estimated by Brazilian beef exporters to amount to \$US1 million dollars per week). The Canadian move also sparked outrage among the Brazilian public. Two national trade associations representing 5,000 restaurants and bars started an anti-Canada campaign by distributing stickers saying "This establishment does not sell Canadian products" and by dumping Canadian whisky bottles in the trash. A good-humoured student protest group dragged a 225 kg cow to the Canadian Embassy in Brasilia and suggested it be barbecued since it is mad cow-free. More seriously, the incident is believed to strengthen social movements in Brazil opposed to the creation of a continent-wide FTAA.

The fact that Canada's decision was announced just one day after Brazil's victory in the longstanding Canada-Brazil aircraft subsidies dispute before the WTO (see *BRIDGES Weekly*, 6 Feb 2001, <http://www.ictsd.org/html/weekly/story3.06-02-01.htm>) -- coupled with the fact that the Canadian government admitted there was no evidence of mad cow disease -- has raised suspicions that the beef issue had little to do with mad cow disease. Canadian Minister of International Trade Pierre Pettigrew acknowledged the timing of the ban to be "unfortunate" but said that there was no connection with the WTO dispute. "The ban on Brazilian beef products is purely a health issue," he assured. Brazil, however, sees the current developments as going far beyond health questions and regards them as a problem of unequal trade relations in which the industrialised North imposes its conditions on the developing South.

"Brazil Sends Confusing Signals As Canada Row Heats Up," DOW JONES, 9 February 2001; MAD COW: "Brazil official sees early solution to Canada beef row," BRIDGE NEWS, 9 February 2001; "CANADA HAS BURIED THE FTAA, CHARGES BRAZIL," IPS DAILY JOURNAL, 9 February 2001; "Canadian Ban on Brazilian Beef Imports Sparks Nationalistic Backlash," TRADE COMPASS, 9 February 2001; "l'ESB menace la création d'une zone de libre-échange de l'Alaska à la Terre de Feu," LA TRIBUNE, 12 February 2001; "Brazil's Cardoso Gives Canada Three Weeks to Lift Ban," BLOOMBERG, 9 February 2001; "Brazil threatens retaliation over Canada's beef ban," FINANCIAL TIMES, 10,11 February 2001; "Brazil issues ultimatum over Canada beef ban," REUTERS, 9 February 2001; "Brazil beef ban ignites anti-Canada campaign," CBC, 9 February 2001; "Canada Trade Minister: Brazil beef ban purely a health issue," BRIDGE NEWS, 5 February 2001, "Canada Could Revoke Brazil Beef Ban Monday," REUTERS, 10 February 2001; "Canada and Brazil trade row escalates," BBC NEWS, 12 February 2001.

DRAFT SERVICES NEGOTIATION GUIDELINES UNDER DISCUSSION

The WTO Council for Trade in Services on 7 February held an informal meeting to discuss draft guidelines and procedures for the continuation of services negotiations at the WTO (see *BRIDGES Weekly*, 30 January 2001, <http://www.ictsd.org/html/weekly/story5.30-01-01.htm>). The guidelines were issued in January by the WTO Secretariat and were based on proposals submitted by Members as well as on already-existing provisions of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS). The draft guidelines respond to a multitude of interests and, according to some delegations, must now be narrowed down and refined by Members. According to trade sources, discussions at the meeting were "constructive" and areas of disagreement minor.

Among contentious subjects, developed countries -- particularly the US -- were said to have reacted to the fact that the draft guidelines focused too heavily on the needs of developing countries for flexibility, including the possibility of opening fewer sectors. Developing and developed countries alike also reacted to a provision stating that "existing provisions of the GATS may be subject to technical review...in order to improve the clarity and legal consistency of the text." (point 18). According to one WTO source, this provision does not foresee a possible revision of fundamental GATS structures or interpretations; rather, it refers to issues such as avoiding the possible overlap of GATS Articles XVI (market access) and XVII (national treatment). Revised guidelines taking into account the reactions and proposals stemming from the meeting are to be circulated by the Secretariat this week; a subsequent informal meeting is scheduled for 20 February.

The WTO hopes to have agreement on the guidelines prior to the Services negotiations stock-taking exercise at the end of March so that Members can begin the more intensive phase of bargaining over market access offers.

ICTSD Internal Files.

NGOS SUBMIT AMICUS BRIEF TO WTO APPELLATE BODY ON ASBESTOS

A coalition of environmental and health NGOs has filed an amicus curiae ('friend of the court') submission to the WTO Appellate Body (AB) in the dispute between Canada and the EU regarding the French ban on the import of asbestos (see *BRIDGES Weekly*, 19 September 2001; <http://www.ictsd.org/html/weekly/story2.19-09-00.htm>). The submission is the second attempt by the coalition to have its views heard in the proceedings after the AB refused their first request for leave to file a written submission in November last year, arguing that the submission did not comply with the specified requirements (see *BRIDGES Weekly*, 28 November 2001; <http://www.ictsd.org/html/weekly/story1.28-11-00.htm>).

In a statement accompanying the submission, the NGOs -- which include the Foundation for International Environmental Law and Development (FIELD) on behalf of Ban Asbestos (International and Virtual) Network, Greenpeace International, International Ban Asbestos Secretariat, and World Wide Fund for Nature (International) -- stated their continued belief that they met each requirement and accordingly took this opportunity "to demonstrate in full, with the enclosed brief, what we were unable to demonstrate to the Appellate Body's satisfaction in the Application for Leave". They furthermore outlined the reasons why the second submission was "pertinent and useful" and should therefore be accepted by the AB. In the submission itself, the

NGOs supported the decision of the AB which upheld the French ban as compatible with WTO rules, but also stated that the "Panel made certain errors of law in its application of customary rules of treaty interpretation of public international law under the Vienna Convention." The submission is available online at: <http://www.field.org.uk/papers/tepap.htm>.

ICTSD Internal Files.

NEWS FROM THE REGIONS: CANADA

Canada announces framework for environmental assessments of trade negotiations

Canada's International Trade Minister Pierre Pettigrew and Environment Minister David Anderson on 5 February announced Canada's "Framework for Conducting Environmental Assessments of Trade Negotiations", which establishes the process and analytical requirements for conducting strategic environmental assessments (SEA) of trade agreements. The SEAs aim to serve two key objectives: to assist Canadian negotiators to integrate environmental considerations into the negotiating process from the earliest stages of an initiative by providing information on the potential environmental impacts of the proposed trade agreement; and to address public concerns by documenting how environmental factors are being considered in the course of trade negotiations. "The Framework will ensure that Canada takes an integrated approach to trade and environmental issues," Minister Anderson said. "Canadians can be assured that we are taking appropriate action to promote balanced and sustainable development."

The Framework was developed with inputs from the public, the provinces and territories, Aboriginal groups, and representatives from academic, non-governmental organisations, and the private sector as part of the Canadian government's commitment to sustainable development. The initiative is in keeping with the 1999 Canadian Cabinet Directive on the Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals. Assessments will consider economic effects of negotiations as well as identify and evaluate the significance of potential trans-boundary, regional and global impacts on the Canadian environment. They will also offer opportunities for the public, environmental non-governmental organisations and business groups to provide input to the environmental assessment.

The Framework is available online at: <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/tna-nac/social-e.asp#environment>.

Canada's Prime Minister calls for labour, environmental provisions in FTAA

In his address to the Organization of American States (OAS) in Washington last week, Canada's Prime Minister Jean Chretien said that the proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) covering North and South America must include labour and environmental protections. The FTAA is expected to dominate the next Summit of the Americas to be held in April in Quebec City. As the host, Chretien is meeting the new US President George W. Bush and other leaders to set the agenda for the talks. After his first meeting with President Bush last week, Chretien also said that the proposed new pact would be similar to the North American Free Trade Agreement between Canada, the US and Mexico. OAS Secretary-General Cesar Gaviria, in welcoming Canada as a new member

of the organisation, stated that other countries of the region also anticipate greater multinational oversight on such matters as labour and the environment.

Canadian public raises concerns over Services negotiations

Canadians taking part in a public consultation on Canada's participation in WTO services negotiations have cautioned against blanket liberalisation while others warned of the need to differentiate trade liberalisation and deregulation, and ensure that Canadian interests are fully protected, a report released on 7 February by Canadian International Trade Minister Pierre Pettigrew said. Non-governmental and public interest organisations in particular tended to be less favourable to trade liberalisation in services, pointing out the danger of weakening Canada's sovereignty by restricting its right to regulate in the public interest; the need to better integrate social values into trade agreements; and the need for greater transparency in the negotiation and management of trade agreements. Representatives of business, professional and consumers' associations, on the other hand, tended to be favourable towards services liberalisation and focused their comments on issues such as impediments to cross-border movement; recognition of credentials and maintenance of regulatory standards; and the question of autonomy for self-governing bodies. The results of the public consultation will help to set goals for Canada's negotiators in developing their positions for the WTO services talks. "The diversity of opinions and the range of suggestions collected both during the consultations and afterward are helping us to define and promote Canadian interests," Pettigrew said in a statement accompanying the release of the report.

Canada's Ambassador to the WTO, Sergio Marchi, is currently overseeing negotiations in services as Chair of the WTO Council for Trade in Services.

The report is available online at: <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/tna-nac/GATS-e.asp>.

"Pettigrew announces Framework for Environmental Assessment for Trade Negotiations," DEP. OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE - CANADA, 5 February 2001; "Chretien wants labor, Environment Rules in Trade Pact," BLOOMBERG, 6 February 2001; "Canadian Public Consultations on GATS Raise Concern Over Nature of Services Talks," WTO REPORTER, 8 February 2001.

IU REVISION MOVING SLOWLY BUT STEADILY

The Contact Group of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA) of the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) met for its Fifth Inter-sessional Meeting from 5-10 February in Rome, Italy. The CGRFA is in charge of the revision of the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (IU). The revision is aimed at harmonising the IU with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The meeting resulted in notable success in negotiations on less contentious chapters, while the most disputed issues were left to cool down after the turmoil of the last meeting in Neuchâtel, Switzerland, held on 12-17 November 2000 (see *BRIDGES Weekly*, 5 Dec 00, <http://www.ictsd.org/html/weekly/story5.05-12-00.htm>).

In comments on the IU's legal status after the review, a general level of agreement that the IU should be a legally binding agreement related to both the FAO and the CBD was noted. On the mode of linkage between these bodies it was recognised that a slight preference among participants existed for linking the IU to Article 14 (Conventions and Agreements) of the FAO Constitution. This would make the IU part of the constitutional framework of the FAO. Other possibilities include the adoption as a protocol to the CBD -- placing IU on the same level as the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety -- or the adoption as an Agreement for the implementation of the CBD. Despite of the general level of agreement on this issue, delegates expressed their frustration with a lack of expertise on the minutiae of FAO rules and regulations. In this context, the question was raised how to operationalise the link between the IU and the FAO and the CBD. This link could include mutual reporting at intergovernmental and secretariat levels, mutual access to information, development of joint programmes of work and joint working groups, and response of the IU Governing Body to requests of the CBD Conference of the Parties (COP) in the area of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (PGRFA).

In the negotiations of the draft text, discussions on procedural and legal matters regarding voting, the Governing Body (GB) and the secretariat were among the focal points. Progress could be noted in defining the roles of the GB and the secretariat, while voting rules remained a difficult issue. No agreement was reached on how and where decisions should be made by consensus or majority voting.

The substantive discussion of the meeting involved how to include the collections of PGRFA held at the centres of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and other international institutions under the IU. There was general agreement that the centres should be placed under the IU, which implies that they would be part of the Multilateral System (MS). The MS is designed to ensure access and fair and equitable benefit sharing of profits arising from plant genetic resources, meeting the specific needs of agriculture, as laid out in Article 11 of the draft text. The meeting discussed a proposed Annex V on ex situ collections aimed at regulating the status, access and sharing of benefits derived from the use of material and related data held by international institutions. Among the unresolved questions remains how to treat ex situ collections -- i.e. collections held outside their natural habitat -- held prior to the CBD's entry into force and subsequently the placing of genetic resources under national sovereignty. Observers noted that this will require negotiating an essentially new system to encompass different, and arguably undefined, property regimes over internationally held PGRFA. Another open question remains whether and how non-Parties to the IU can access such material. This raises the legal question of whether a subset of states (the members to the CGRFA) can set conditions on PGRFA now held in trust for the international community.

Over the issue of designated collections, developing countries objected strongly to the argument of some developed nations that they could not obligate private property holders to provide access to their materials. Developing countries, where public institutions hold the majority of their PGRFA, pointed out the inherent imbalance in such a system if private property holders are not included. However, non-governmental and industry representatives noted that private sector holdings are generally declining and that resources they use are generally already available in public collections.

After the meeting, delegates expressed concern about the increasing number of unresolved issues. These included the contentious linkage between facilitated access and benefit-sharing with respect

to Intellectual Property Rights. Even though all brackets have been removed from Article 14 (Benefit-sharing), several countries expressed their discontent with the negotiated text at the last meeting of the Contact Group in Neuchâtel. The Rome meeting did not address these issues and observers were left wondering if the slow pace will enable the Contact Group to work out a final draft for the upcoming 31st Session of the FAO Conference in November this year. The next meeting of the Contact Group is scheduled from 23-28 April, to be held in Italy, but outside of Rome.

Additional Resources

For the FAO Constitution visit: <http://www.fao.org/legal/default.htm>. To obtain a copy of the IU draft text negotiated in Rome visit: <http://www.fao.org/WAICENT/FAOINFO/AGRICULT/cgrfa/meetings.htm>. IISD Earth Negotiations Bulletin offers an extensive coverage of the meeting: <http://www.iisd.ca>.

"Fifth Inter-sessional Contact Group Meeting on the Revision of the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, in Harmony with the CBD: 5-10 February 2001", EARTH NEGOTIATIONS BULLETIN, 12 February 2001; ICTSD Internal Files.

IN BRIEF

EUROPEAN COMMISSION GIVES GREEN LIGHT FOR MODIFIED EBA PROPOSAL. The European Commission last week formally authorised EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy to propose modifications to its 'Everything but Arms' (EBA) initiative, which will now be submitted to the EU Council of Ministers (see *BRIDGES Weekly*, 30 January 2001, <http://www.ictsd.org/html/weekly/story2.30-01-01.htm>). The EBA will cover all goods exported by Least-Developed Countries (LDCs) to the EU except arms. Duty and quota free access for most products covered by the initiative would come into effect as soon as the initiative is agreed by the Council of EU Ministers. However, the proposed scenario provides for flexibility on a number of sensitive products by allowing for longer phasing-in periods for bananas (starting 2 February 2002 and completing at the latest 1 January 2006), sugar (starting 1 July 2006, completing 1 July 2009) and rice (starting 1 October 2006, completing 1 October 2009). To compensate for the longer delay on sugar and rice, a duty-free quota will be created to ensure increased, effective market access for LDCs into the EU market in the interim period. The flexible phasing-in periods were introduced following pressure from the Commission's Directorate for Agriculture as well as from European sugar producers who had claimed that granting duty and quota free access to sugar, rice and bananas would disrupt the EU markets by flooding them with these products from LDCs. "European Commission bows to pressure and formally adapts everything but arms proposal," EUROSTEP, 9 February 2001; "Commission authorises Pascal Lamy to adapt 'Everything but Arms' initiative to facilitate approval by Council of Ministers," DG TRADE, 7 February 2001.

AFRICAN COUNTRIES AND EU HOLD TALKS ON NEW TRADE ISSUES. African countries belonging to the WTO met for a seminar in Cape Town, S. Africa with representatives of the EU to discuss 'new' issues such as investment, competition, environment, and trade facilitation that are emerging in the lead-up to a potential future round of trade negotiations. The goal of the meeting -- sponsored by S. Africa and the EU -- was to lay a foundation for ongoing discussions between Africa and Europe over trade, addressing questions and clarifying issues that could be on the WTO

agenda at the end of the year. Chief Director of the South African Department of Trade and Industry, Tshediso Matona, said that although all the issues were important to Africa, the problem of market access was of "overwhelming concern". "African countries confront supply and infrastructural constraints in their trade, and therefore focusing on these remains critical," Matona said. African delegates saw the meeting as very important as they needed the assistance of more advanced partners such as the EU to begin to place Africa's interests and concerns on the international agenda. Regarding the 'new' issues, Matona said, competition and trade facilitation in particular were very decisive in the governance of the global trade system. According to Karl Falkenberg, Director in the EC Trade Directorate-General who attended the Cape Town meeting, "if there is one basic lesson to be learnt from Seattle that can help us in the months ahead, then surely it is that the WTO in the future, and a new trade round in particular, must have development right at its heart." "Market access still key, says S.African official" I-NET BRIDGE, 9 February 2001.

S. AFRICA FORGES AHEAD WITH SADC PROTOCOL. South Africa will be the first country to implement the South African Development Community (SADC) Free Trade Protocol in September this year. Speaking at a conference on border control at the University of Pretoria, Sifiso Ngwenya, Director of Africa Trade Relations at the South African Department of Trade and Industry said zero percent tariffs will be charged on 76 percent of products in its trade with other SADC member states from September onwards, with 97 percent of trade tariffs being removed by 2006. The SA trade official revealed that despite negotiations being stalled on a number of issues, South Africa would be the first amongst the signatories to the Maseru Trade Protocol to open its markets, while other countries in the Community will take about eight years to open theirs. By September, Mauritius is expected to open its market by 51 percent, Malawi by 41 percent, and Zimbabwe by 30 percent. The Trade protocol was designed to promote economic development and stimulate investment in the SADC region." South Africa to implement SADC Free Trade Protocol in September," XINHUA NEWS AGENCY, 6 February 2001.

MEXICO TO FLY WITH EMBRAER PLANES. Mexico's Foreign Minister Jorge Castaneda said on 6 February that his government would buy \$US250 million in regional planes made by Brazilian jet maker Empresa Brasileira de Aeronautica SA (Embraer). Mexico will use the planes primarily to monitor drug trafficking. Mexican officials did not rule out plans to purchase more planes from Brazil. Embraer is the fourth largest manufacturer of commercial aircraft and Brazil's largest exporter. Castaneda said the decision to buy the planes was made by the defence ministry, and that Embraer's Canadian rival Bombardier did not compete for the contract despite its knowledge of the sales. Brazil and Canada are currently engaged in a five-year escalating trade war regarding aircraft subsidies to local jet makers Embraer and Bombardier respectively (see related story, this issue). Meanwhile, both Mexico and Brazil are expected to sign a preferential trade agreement by the end of the first quarter of this year and later with the Mercosur bloc countries. Products involved were not mentioned but officials stated that they hope the pact will enhance the advancement of the proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), a free trade zone that would cover 34 countries in the Western hemisphere. "Mexico to buy Embraer airplanes worth about \$250m," DOW JONES, 6 February 2001.

ZOELLICK RECEIVES SENATE APPROVAL. Robert Zoellick, President Bush's nominee for the position of US Trade Representative (USTR), was confirmed unanimously by the US Senate on 6 February. Zoellick inherits a number of contentious disputes -- such as ongoing cases over bananas and beef hormones with the EU -- from his predecessor Charlene Barshefsky. According to Zoellick top priority is to secure so-called 'fast-track' negotiating authority for the President. Under fast-

track, the US Congress waives its right to amend trade agreements negotiated by the President, putting negotiated agreements only to an up or down vote. Analysts say that Bush requires fast-track to complete one of his top trade goals, the creation of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). Other trade concerns for Zoellick will be inclusion of environmental and labour issues in trade agreements as signed by the Clinton administration, a surge in steel imports, and lumber trade frictions with Canada. "US Senate confirms Zoellick as US trade rep." REUTERS, 6 February 2001.

US TO ACT ON NAFTA TRUCKING RULING. The US has said that it will open its borders at least partially for Mexican trucks as a North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) arbitration panel unanimously ruled that the US violated NAFTA by barring Mexican trucks from most of its highways. The panel -- which consisted of two Americans, two Mexicans, and a British Chairman - - said that the US could ask the truckers to comply with its safety standards. US transportation department officials said 35 percent of Mexican trucks that entered US roadways were put out of service mostly due to safety concerns. American trade officials did not say how they would keep unsafe trucks from US roads but noted that NAFTA trucking provisions should be implemented. NAFTA, which entered into force in Canada, the United States and Mexico on 1 January 1994, contains a phasing-in provision allowing Mexican trucks to operate in the US provided they meet US safety standards. Canada and US have similar inspection checks on their trucks but Mexico has no such system, so its trucks are only allowed within 20 miles north of the US-Mexico border, at which point cargoes must be offloaded onto US vehicles. US officials have come under pressure from truckers and their unions not to implement the agreements and to denounce the ruling. "US violated NAFTA, trade panel finds" ASSOCIATED PRESS, 6 February 2001. "NAFTA ruling opens borders to Mexican trucks" WASHINGTON POST, 7 February 2001.

WTO IN BRIEF

UNEP WORKSHOP DISCUSSES FISHERIES SUBSIDIES AHEAD OF CTE MEETING. Delegates met on 12 February for a Fisheries Workshop organised by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) ahead of the meeting of the WTO Committee on Trade and Environment (CTE) on 13 and 14 February.

Discussions at the workshop focused primarily on the relationship between fisheries subsidies, overcapacity and overfishing, and also on the effects of fisheries subsidies within the overall context of fisheries management regimes. These issues have featured prominently in previous meetings of the CTE and will be on the agenda for the current meeting. Gareth Porter presented a paper for UNEP's Economics and Trade Unit, outlining a historical overview of the issue of fisheries subsidies in the context of world trade negotiations; an analysis of the state of knowledge of the relationship between fisheries subsidies and overfishing; and a set of procedural and substantive issues that should be discussed in a more structured and systematic way to develop greater international consensus on the need for and feasibility of new disciplines on fisheries subsidies. Participants generally welcomed the paper as a useful basis for further debate. The event was commended as being timely and relevant to discussions at the WTO, though several delegations stressed the need to take a broader, sustainable development approach to the fisheries and trade debate, noting that subsidies were significant, but not the only important aspect of this discussion. Formal presentations were also made by the WTO, the OECD, the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF), and a UNEP fisheries expert. Country studies were presented by Argentina, Japan, New Zealand and Senegal.

Papers submitted to the workshop are available at: <http://www.unep.ch/etu/etp/events/upcming/fishery.htm>. *BRIDGES* Weekly will report on the outcomes of the CTE meeting in a forthcoming issue. ICTSD Internal Files.

SWEDEN EU PRESIDENCY TO PUSH FOR ENVIRONMENT, HUMAN RIGHTS LINKAGE AT WTO. Sweden announced last week that it would use its EU presidency to promote a broad world trade liberalisation agenda that would include environmental issues and workers' rights. "Trade rules must be in harmony with international environmental treaties," Swedish Foreign Minister Anna Lindh said in a speech to the Swedish national parliament last week. "The WTO should also promote human rights in the labour market." This approach appears to diverge from recent statements by European Commissioner for External Relations Chris Patten, who said during an official trip to India last month that core labour standards and environmental issues should be kept off the WTO agenda (see *BRIDGES* Weekly, 30 January 2001, <http://www.ictsd.org/html/weekly/story4.30-01-01.htm>). Sweden also aims to speed up liberalisation of the EU's textiles and clothing trade with leading Asian and South American countries, a move which could result in current restrictions on textiles and clothing imports from these countries being abolished much earlier than the January 2005 date agreed by the WTO. According to Sweden, the EU would seek bilateral deals with 13 countries, thereby helping growth in their economies while at the same time providing more competition and lower prices in the EU as well as opportunities for EU textile exporters. Sweden said that the lifting of restrictions would depend on poorer countries' willingness to cut barriers and tariffs on textiles and clothing imports from the EU. Sweden also announced that it would like to see the EU abolish customs tariffs on goods for the world's 48 poorest countries and that it supports China's application to join the WTO. "Sweden want green, labour issues on WTO agenda," *WORLD TRADE NEWS*, 7 February 2001; "Sweden in drive to speed EU textiles opening," *FT*, 2 February 2001.

AIRCRAFT ON THE AGENDA FOR 16 FEBRUARY DISPUTE SETTLEMENT BODY MEETING. Canada will make a second request for the establishment of a compliance panel in the long-standing Canada-Brazil aircraft subsidies dispute. At stake is Brazil's revised subsidy programme, which Canada claims still to be inconsistent with WTO rules (see *BRIDGES* Weekly, 6 Feb 2001, <http://www.ictsd.org/html/weekly/story3.06-02-01.htm>). At the last Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) meeting held on 1 February, Brazil was opposed to the establishment of a panel, thereby raising the question of whether the procedure for the establishment of a compliance panel is identical to the procedure applying to ordinary panels, in which case the first request can be blocked by the defending party but not the second. This question was not answered at the 1 February meeting. It thus remains to be seen if Canada's second request will now be automatically granted. *BRIDGES* Weekly will report on the DSB meeting in its next issue. ICTSD Internal Files.

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/html/calendar.htm>.

ICTSD Events

16 February, International Environment House, Geneva, Switzerland: INFORMAL 'CAFÉ-CROISSANTS' DIALOGUE ON "IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES AND THE CALL FOR A NEW

ROUND: WHERE ARE WE?". The meeting will be held from 09:30 to 11:30 in Room 3, International Environment House, 13 chemin des Anémones, Châtelaine, Geneva. Ambassador Munir Akram of Pakistan will give a brief 15-30 minute presentation on the subject matter, after which the floor will be given over to participants for an informal and open discussion from a sustainable development perspective. Given that there is limited seating, please RSVP to ICTSD your intention to participate by email at: ictsd@ictsd.ch or by fax at: (41-22) 917-8093.

22-24 February, Cusco, Peru: LATIN AMERICAN MULTI-STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE ON TRADE, INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES. This workshop is convened by ICTSD in collaboration with Sociedad Peruana de Derecho Ambiental (SPDA), ANDES, the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), and the Quaker United Nations Office in Geneva (QUNO). The objective of the dialogue is to strengthen Latin American countries' ability to understand options for advancing their own public policy objectives through the implementation or review of the WTO TRIPs Agreement and in particular to participate actively in the review of TRIPs Article 27.3(b). The dialogues will mobilise 30 key stakeholders from the region, including national Ministries (Environment, Health, Agriculture, Trade), Intellectual Property Offices, academics, environment and development NGOs, indigenous peoples representatives, farmers, and the private sector (pharmaceutical and seed industries).

The outcomes of the workshop will feed into an ongoing Geneva-based process aimed at facilitating consensus-building and creative thinking for the review of TRIPs. This process will include a series of seminars and informal discussions for developing country delegations to the WTO. It is expected that the conclusions and experiences shared in the regional multi-stakeholder dialogues will contribute to strengthening the Geneva-based process as well as developing country negotiators' ability to better define and advance their own public policy objectives in the field of trade, IPRs and biodiversity. For further information contact: Christophe Bellmann, email: cbellmann@ictsd.ch; Internet: <http://www.ictsd.org/dialogueweb/Dialogues/22-02-01-desc.htm>.

Coming Up This Week

13-23 February, New York, USA: 39TH SESSION OF THE UN COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT. For further information visit: www.un.org/esa/socdev/csd/2001.htm.

13-23 February, New York, USA: UN HIGH-LEVEL INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONSULTATION ON FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT - PREP. COM. 2. For further information email: pietracci@un.org.

14-18 February, Geneva, Switzerland: MEETING OF THE INTERIM CHEMICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE OF THE ROTTERDAM CONVENTION. For further information contact: Jim Willis, UNEP Chemicals, Geneva, Switzerland; tel: (41-22) 917-8111; fax: 797-3460; email: chemicals@unep.ch.

16 February, International Environment House, Geneva, Switzerland: INFORMAL 'CAFÉ-CROISSANTS' DIALOGUE ON "IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES AND THE CALL FOR A NEW ROUND: WHERE ARE WE?". See above for details.

19-21 February, Mexico City, Mexico: INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND THE ENVIRONMENT. The conference entitled, "Development: Perspectives from Latin America and the Caribbean", is being co-hosted with the Government of Mexico by UNEP, IISD, UNAM, COMEDS, and UNCTAD. Confirmed speakers include Mexican Environment Minister Victor Lichtinger and Colombian Environment Minister Juan Mayr. This meeting is designed to provide an open forum to develop ideas and analysis relevant to ongoing trade liberalisation processes involving LAC countries; provide an excellent opportunity to share perspectives, experience and expertise; and ensure that all stakeholders working with trade, environment and development issues in the LAC region are represented. For further information contact: Mindahi C. Bastida, UNEP-ROLAC, Environmental Training Network, tels: (52) 5202-6394, (52) 5202-4841; fax 5202-0950; email: mbastida@latino.rolac.unep.mx. Draft agenda available at: <http://www.iisd.org/trade/webag2.htm>.

WTO Events

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.

13-14 February: WTO COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND ENVIRONMENT. On the agenda, inter alia: items 2 through 8 of the CTE Work Programme (see http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/envir_e/cte00_e.htm), and pending requests for observer status for IGOs. For further information contact: Hans-Peter Werner, WTO Information and Media Relations Division; tel: (41-22) 739-286; Internet: http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/envir_e/envir_e.htm.

14 February, Geneva, Switzerland: TRADE, TECHNOLOGY AND DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR. The WTO is organising this seminar through its Committee on Trade and Development, aimed at identifying opportunities and challenges faced by developing countries in relation to technology access in the context of the WTO. Experts from the WTO and other agencies, academics, donor and WTO representatives will help identify policy options and choices, as well as types of support and assistance available to developing countries. For further information contact: Lucie Giraud, WTO Information and Media Relations Division; tel: (41- 22) 739-5075; Internet: http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news_e.htm#tradetec.

16 February, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO DISPUTE SETTLEMENT BODY. On the agenda, inter alia: Canada is expected to make a second request for the establishment of a compliance panel in the long-standing Canada-Brazil aircraft subsidies dispute. At stake is Brazil's revised subsidy programme, which Canada claims still to be inconsistent with WTO rules (see WTO In Brief, this issue). For further information contact: Nuch Nazeer, WTO Information and Media Relations Division, (41-22) 739-5393.

16 February, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT (CTD). On the agenda, inter alia: consideration of input by Members to the UN High-Level Financing for Development event in 2002; consideration of "A Strategy for Technical Assistance in the WTO" report by the Secretariat; and continuation of consideration of "Implementation of

Special and Differential Treatment Provisions in WTO Agreements and Decisions." In addition, selection of the Chairperson of the CTD and the Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on Least-Developed Countries. For further information contact: Lucie Giraud, Information and Media Relations Division; tel: (41-22) 739-5075.

22-23 February, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO SYMPOSIUM ON TOURISM SERVICES. The purpose of the symposium is to evaluate current developments in international tourism that may be of relevance to the GATS negotiations, and particularly to the proposal for a tourism annex. The items on the agenda are without prejudice to their eventual discussion in the Council for Trade in Services or to the position of any delegation on any of the issues. For further information contact: Mr. Dale B. Honeck, Counsellor, Trade in Services Division, WTO; tel: (41-22) 739-5149; fax: 739-5771; email: dale.honeck@wto.org; Internet: http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news01_e/symposium3r.doc.

22-23 February, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO COMMITTEE ON REGIONAL TRADE AGREEMENTS. The committee will be discussing Regional Trade Agreements involving the following countries: Kyrgyz Republic, Russian Federation, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Moldova, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, and Estonia. In addition, the committee will be discussing the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement between the European Communities and Tunisia and the Free Trade Agreements between: EFTA and Morocco; Hungary and Lithuania; Hungary and Latvia; and Poland and Latvia. For further information contact: Hans-Peter Werner, WTO Information and Media Relations Division; tel (41-22) 739-5015.

7-8 March, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO WORKING GROUP ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TRADE AND INVESTMENT. On the agenda, inter alia: the implications of the relationship between trade and investment for development and economic growth; and stocktaking and analysis of existing international instruments and activities regarding trade and investment. For further information contact: Lucie Giraud, WTO Information and Media Relations Division; tel: (41-22) 739-5075.

14-15 March, Geneva, Switzerland: COMMITTEE ON SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES. Members will discuss, inter alia: the SPS Agreement and Developing Countries-implementation of the provisions for special and differential treatment; identification of technical assistance needs; and monitoring of the use of international standards. There will also be an informal meeting on 13 March on the issue of equivalence and developing countries and on criteria for the acceptance of observer organisations. For further information contact: Peter Ungphakorn, WTO Information and Media Relations Division, tel: (41-22) 739-5412.

Other Forthcoming Events

25 February, Cairo, Egypt: THIRD SUMMIT OF THE D-8. Leaders of the D-8 Muslim countries--Bangladesh, Egypt, Iran, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan And Turkey--will meet to draw up plans for expansion of trade and investment and to map out goals in shipping, insurance and cyber communications to bolster the D-8 economic bloc representing close to 800 million people. Further information is not available at this time.

28 February, Geneva, Switzerland: INFORMAL WORLD BANK PRESENTATION ON UN-WB PARTNERSHIP FOR DEVELOPMENT. In an informal session entitled, "Should the United

Nations and the World Bank be Partners in Development; An Ideal or a Contradiction?", Mr. Mats Karlsson, Vice President, External Affairs and UN Affairs will address the questions of how the World Bank and the UN are working together; is there any overlapping in their missions and objectives; and how does the partnership work. For further information contact: The World Bank Group, Geneva, Switzerland, tel: (44-22) 799-8872; fax: 799-7694; email: Ngojkovi@worldbank.org or Fzarcone@worldbank.org.

2 March, Brussels, Belgium: CAMERON-MAY CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND COMPETITION. The conference will bring together key trade and competition officials, as well as renowned practitioners to take stock of trade and competition issues, discuss how best to proceed, and define the most promising solutions to the challenges at hand. There will be opportunity for delegates to pose questions to key officials and other expert speakers on the panel. For further information contact: Cameron May Ltd, 69-71 Bondway, London, UK; tel: (44- (0)) 207-7582-7567; fax: 207-793-8353; email: conferences@cameronmay.com; Internet: <http://www.lexmercatoria.org>, <http://www.cameronmay.com>.

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 Hugo Cameron, hcameron@ictsd.ch. Submissions of publications to ICTSD's documentation centre would also be welcome (contact Marc Galvin, mgalvin@ictsd.ch).

CITIZENS' GUIDE TO TRADE, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY, by Friends of the Earth International, 2001. This free resource covers many issues that may be of interest to those with either basic or comprehensive knowledge of the world trading system. It includes topics such as an Introduction to the World Trading System, as well as having sections on issues regarding specific areas of interest. It also takes a look at What's Wrong with the World Trade System, where it investigates a range of impacts associated with the global trading system. For further information, visit: http://www.foei.org/activist_guide/tradeweb/.

ETHICS, ECONOMICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: TRANSPARENT SOVEREIGNTY IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF LIFE. By Dr. Peter G. Brown, Director of the McGill School of Environmental Studies, McGill University, Montreal, published by Edinburgh University Press, 2001. Brown develops what he calls "Stewardship Economics", an economics that makes humans one part of the resource base and the web of life. Brown warns that, "the most pervasive scientific error made by mainstream economics is that it carries forward as an unexamined background assumption that humans are not significant actors in the earth's biophysical systems." To achieve a stewardship economy that operates within the commonwealth of life (e.g, the resource rich life-supporting, economy-supporting ecosystem), Brown states that society has fiduciary responsibilities that include operating an economy within a "Common Pool Resource" (CPR). For further information contact: Dr. Peter G. Brown, Director, McGill School of Environment, 3534 University Ave., Montreal, Quebec H3A 2A7; tel: (1-514)398-2827; email: pgb@mse.mcgill.ca; Internet: <http://www.mcgill.ca/mse/>.

OPTIONS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FARMERS' RIGHTS AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL, by Carlos M. Correa, published by the South Centre, December 2000. This study presents

options for putting Farmers' Rights into practice at the national level in developing countries. After fleshing out the history, meaning and state of negotiations on Farmers' Rights in international law, Correa explores the core issues governments should be aware of when they translate Farmers' Rights into effective legal systems and practical actions. This document provides useful background policy discussions on TRIPs, sui generis rights and how to promote more bio diverse, and more equitable, agricultural sectors in the South. To download an electronic copy visit: <http://www.southcentre.org/publications/farmersrights/toc.htm>. To request a hard copy, contact: South Centre, CP 228, 1211 Geneva 19 Switzerland; tel: (41-22) 791-8050; fax: 798-8531; email: south@southcentre.org.

"Plant Variety Protection in Africa - Towards Compliance with the TRIPS Agreement", by Philippe Cullet. This article, put out by The International Environmental Law Research Centre (IELC), examines recent developments in Africa concerning the development of plant variety protection legislation as required by the TRIPS Agreement for all WTO Member states. It analyses these recent developments against the experience gained in India over the past few years in this area and makes a number of recommendations concerning the development of sui generis plant variety protection regimes. The article will be published shortly in the JOURNAL OF AFRICAN LAW by Cambridge University Press and is now available on the Internet at: http://www.ielc.huma.org/English/intellect_1.htm. For a hard copy, contact the IELC at email: ielc@span.ch or the author at: pcullet@span.ch. Electronic Resources

"UNEP DOT NET". This interactive environmental website, launched on 8 February 2001 by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), provides an expanded series of environmental management solutions. The network portal offers a forum for scientific, technical peer review; provision of insights on environmental issues to the global community; and exchange of ideas, information and data. The website intends to bring together new integrated information frameworks and harmonized, readily accessible data sets to support assessment and decision-making across the international system, including UNEP's own assessment activities. The web address is: <http://www.unep.net>.

POSITION VACANCIES

Oxfam International

Advocacy Officers. Oxfam International is recruiting two Advocacy Officers to lead newly established offices. The Brussels position will develop and implement advocacy strategies to influence the institutions of the EU with a focus on humanitarian and trade issues. The Geneva position will lobby the WTO and play a pivotal role in Oxfam International's ambitious new trade campaign. The successful applicants will be experienced NGO advocates with strong lobbying, media and policy skills. Closing date: 21 February 2001. Send a CV of no more than 4 pages to Vacancy, Oxfam International, email: applications@oxfaminternational.org; fax: +1-202-783-5547. Please specify which job/s you are applying for. Position descriptions available upon request.

BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest© is published by the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD) <http://www.ictsd.org>, with technical support from the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP). Contributors to this issue are Jordana Fish, Kojo Frempong, Andrew Baldwin, Caroline Wiman, Anton Kuchler, and Heike Baumuller. Edited by Hugo Cameron, hcameron@ictsd.ch. 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: (41-22) 917- 8093.. Excerpts from *BRIDGES* Weekly Trade News Digest© may be used in other publications with appropriate citation. Comments and suggestions are welcomed and should be directed to the Editor or the Director.

To subscribe to *BRIDGES* Weekly Trade News Digest©, send an email to: listserv@iatp.org. Leave the subject line blank. In the body of the message type: subscribe bridges To unsubscribe, please send an email to listserv@iatp.org. In the body of the message type: unsubscribe bridges. *BRIDGES* Weekly Trade News Digest© can also be found at the ICTSD web page: <http://www.ictsd.org/html/newsdigest.htm> and at the IATP web page: <http://www.newsbulletin.org>

ICTSD would like to thank the funders that have made the *BRIDGES* series of Publications possible in 2000: Christian Aid (UK); The Government of Denmark (DANIDA); IUCN The World Conservation Union (Switzerland); The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation (US); The Government of the Netherlands (DGIS); Oxfam (UK); The Government of Switzerland (SECO); and the Swiss Coalition of Development Organisations (Switzerland).