



ICTSD

INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR
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DEVELOPMENT

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AGRICULTURE: WTO MEMBERS SPLIT ON 'DEVELOPMENT BOX' AND S&D

On 4-6 February, WTO Members met for the last scheduled Special Session in the current Phase II of the ongoing agriculture negotiations to discuss mainly development-related issues, including the establishment of a Development Box, special and differential treatment (S&D) for developing countries, single commodity producers, and small island developing states (SIDS). Food aid and the Green Box provisions for developing countries were also discussed under the bullet "additional issues".

Debate revolved around the question of whether or not different sets of rules should be established for developed and developing countries that would partly exempt the latter from commitments under the WTO Agreement on Agriculture (AoA) (see also BRIDGES Weekly, 2 February 2002, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/02-02-05/inbrief.htm#2>, BRIDGES Weekly, 29 January 2002, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/02-01-29/wtoinbrief.htm - 1>, as well as the recently updated WTO backgrounder "The issues, and where we are now" at http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/agric_e/negs_bkgrnd00_contents_e.htm).

Discussion also centred on how to tackle developing countries' difficulties in the ongoing agriculture negotiations that will now be continued under the mandate agreed at the Doha Ministerial last November. Three basic questions featured in the deliberations: (a) whether significant flexibility for developing countries to protect and support their domestic production (especially with regard to staples and food security crops) is the best way to deal with their weaknesses, or whether further liberalisation flanked with some flexibility is more effective; (b) whether or not only developing countries should be allowed to address non-trade issues such as food security and rural development; and (c) whether further S&D provisions should apply generally to all developing countries, or whether specific groups of developing countries needed extra flexibility. In this context, the question arose whether the "enabling clause" [a 1979 GATT Decision enabling Members to accord differential and more favourable treatment to developing countries as a departure from most-favoured nation treatment] needed to be revised, as it required preferential treatment to be generally available to all developing countries.

Development box

The Like-Minded Group (LMG) of developing countries that has pushed for a Development Box tabled a non-paper on the Box proposing that its provisions, which would apply only to developing countries, should consist of enhanced flexibilities rather than specific prescribed policies. According to the LMG document, the Box should target low-income and resource poor (LI/RP) farmers and secure supplies of "food security crops" (FSCs) and should allow developing countries, inter alia, to exempt these FSCs from their commitments and to maintain or renegotiate high tariffs on them. Furthermore, the LMG believes, developing countries should be provided with a simplified safeguard mechanism so as to protect FSCs, with expanded domestic support provisions applying to LI/RP producers. Cairns Group developing countries opposed this proposal, arguing that

it would impede "south-to- south" trade between developing countries, which should rather be promoted through the negotiations. They also took the view that some of the ideas went against the direction set in the Doha Ministerial Declaration.

In another non-paper, Switzerland principally agreed with most of the flexibilities for developing countries as proposed by the LMG, but cautioned that only temporary and well-targeted measures could avoid the creation of a "two-tier system" permanently exempting developing countries from WTO rules.

Other developed countries, such as the EC, US, Japan and those from the Cairns Group of agriculture-exporting countries also opposed the idea of different sets of rules for developed and developing countries. They cautioned against adopting policies that would increase trade distortions, with the EC stating that "it would [not] be in the interest of developing countries to accept the idea that they should actually increase their tariffs" as "the greatest potential for increase in agricultural trade lies in increasing demand in developing countries." Instead of raising tariffs, some argued, developing countries should rather countervail against cheap subsidised exports from developed countries. Japan and Norway, together with some transition economies, stated that issues such as food security and rural development would also apply to them, an idea that was rejected by many developing countries.

Some Members also mentioned the relationship between the Development Box and special and differential treatment (S&D), with New Zealand describing the Box as a subset of S&D, whereas Norway regarded it as an "operational extension" of S&D.

Special and differential treatment (S&D)

Drawing on the Development Box debate, the discussion on S&D was ignited by submissions from the African Group together with some LMG members as well as Cairns Group members Colombia and Bolivia. Talks revolved around the question of whether more protection/support or market orientation was the solution. In addition, Columbia endorsed in its non-paper several points of the LMG Development Box paper, while targeting its proposed measures to crops substituting illicit narcotic crops. Bolivia put forward a similar idea seeking special treatment for developing countries that would promote "alternative development".

Whereas most Members agreed that S&D had a high priority in the "Doha Development Agenda" and was an integral part of the agriculture negotiations, the US pointed out that the Ministerial Declaration set S&D within the overall objective of achieving a fair and market- orientated agricultural trading system, so that that all Members could participate in the reform program.

Other issues

Under the bullet "single commodity producers", the African Group and Mauritius proposed inter alia to discipline the operation of multinational corporations similar to those of state-trading enterprises (STEs). Under the agenda item of small island

developing states (SIDS), a group of nine SIDS proposed comprehensive S&D flexibilities together with technical assistance to SIDS for meeting the costs of compliance with sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures and technical standards. Furthermore, under "additional issues" papers were tabled by CARICOM (Food Aid, Green Box), Mauritius (Green Box) and New Zealand (tariff quota expansion).

As this was the last special session in phase II of the negotiations, delegations will now prepare for the next phase, with a first meeting scheduled for the last week in March 2002.

ICTSD Internal Files.

WSSD PREP MEETING HIGHLIGHTS IMPORTANCE OF EQUITABLE TRADING SYSTEM

Delegates at the second meeting of the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom II) for the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) on 28 January - 8 February in New York moved a significant step closer to developing a programme of action for WSSD by adopting the Chair's Paper which will form the basis for discussions at PrepCom III and ultimately the World Summit. Clustered under nine focus points, the recommendations for immediate action, inter alia, call for a trading system that promotes sustainable development in a globalising world, improved market access for poor countries and the reduction of environmentally harmful subsidies.

Despite demands by some countries -- notably Japan -- to remove references to the WTO from the Chair's text, trade-related issues, including the outcomes of the Fourth WTO Ministerial Conference in Doha, subsidies and intellectual property protection of traditional knowledge, feature throughout the Chair's Paper. References to the "Doha Development Agenda", however, that had been included in the initial list of issues and proposals proposed by the Chair were dropped following India's remarks that no development agenda had resulted from the Doha meeting.

Many developing countries, including Indonesia, China, Costa Rica, Iran and Argentina, stressed the need for improved market access for their exports to developed country markets. Thus, the Chair's paper calls for a "universal, rule-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system that benefits all countries in the pursuit of sustainable development". To this end, the Paper encourages WTO Members to implement the outcomes of Doha, in particular by improving preferential market access for least-developed countries, increasing technical cooperation and capacity building, and making special and differential treatment for developing countries an integral part of the negotiations.

Regarding subsidies, the Paper requests countries to eliminate environmentally harmful and trade-distorting subsidies that encourage unsustainable consumption and production patterns. To fulfil the WTO Doha commitment to improve market access for agricultural products, countries are called upon to phase out export subsidies and substantially reduce trade-distorting support. Regarding fisheries, the Paper asks countries to eliminate all subsidies that contribute to the over-capacity of fishing vessels.

At a press conference following the meeting, PrepCom II Chair Emil Salim (Indonesia) stressed that his paper contained only realistic, achievable suggestions aimed at implementing Agenda 21. "The intent is not to talk about lofty ideas - there have been too many speeches already," he said. "We are building up implementation in a globalised world." NGOs generally welcomed the Paper. Daniel Mittler of Friends of the Earth International highlighted in particular the inclusion of globalisation and international governance for sustainable development as important issues of discussion, but also expressed concern that the process was biased towards free trade and that the outcomes of WSSD would be subordinated to the trade regime negotiated in the WTO.

PrepCom III will again take place in New York from 25 March to 3 April. Discussions are expected to focus in particular on the final cluster of the Chair's Paper -- strengthening governance for sustainable development at the national, regional and international levels -- for which no recommendations were developed at PrepCom II. WSSD is currently scheduled to take place in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 26 August to 4 September 2002.

Documents of PrepCom II, including the Chair's Paper, are available online at <http://www.johannesburgsummit.org/html/documents/prepcom2.html>. For daily coverage of the meeting, see IISD Linkages at <http://www.iisd.ca/linkages/2002/pc2/>.

"Action Agenda comes into sharp focus as Prepcom II concludes," UN PRESS RELEASE, 8 February 2002; IISD ENB Vol. 22, No. 19.

NEWS FROM THE REGIONS: AFRICA

New African development initiative garners high-level buy-in

The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), adopted by African heads of state in Nigeria in October 2001, received high-level support last week from WTO Director-General Mike Moore and key Western leaders, including French President Jacques Chirac and British Prime Minister Tony Blair. Previously, Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien told the World Economic Forum on 1 February that his country would set aside a US\$ 500m fund for NEPAD.

According to the document setting out the parameters of the NEPAD (see <http://www.dfa.gov.za/events/nepad.pdf>), the Partnership is "a pledge by African leaders...that they have a pressing duty to eradicate poverty and to place their countries, both individually and collectively, on a path of sustainable growth and development, and at the same time to participate actively in the world economy and body politic." It is a call for a new partnership between Africa and the international community, particularly developed countries, to overcome the "development chasm" between Africa and the industrialised world.

Sources indicate that France and Britain, who have recently agreed to coordinate their Africa policies, will promote the NEPAD at the next G- 8 (seven developed countries plus Russia) summit in Kananaskis, Canada in June. Leaders from 13 African countries met in Paris with French President Chirac on 8 February to work on the NEPAD, while British Prime Minister Tony Blair promoted the plan during his tour last week of four African countries. Speaking in Lagos, Nigeria on 7 February, Blair said, "this is the best chance in a generation for us to make their partnership work. There is a generation of African leaders who are prepared to say 'it's our responsibility'".

A G-8 team will be in Cape Town, S. Africa on 14-15 February to discuss the main elements of a G-8 Action Plan for Africa with NEPAD executive director Wiseman Nkuhlu and representatives of the NEPAD 15-country executive committee. The discussions are to prepare for this year's June summit. Leaders took the unprecedented step at last year's G-8 meeting of naming personal representatives to draft an African Action Plan for approval at Kananaskis. The drafting team will reconvene in Senegal and Canada prior to finalising its plan of action for the June summit.

Speaking at the end of a three-day visit to South Africa on 11 February, WTO Director-General Moore said that the NEPAD was complementary to the WTO's new round of trade negotiations launched in Doha, Qatar last November, and to the Doha mandate's capacity-building work for developing countries. "We have to build capacity...so that when we make the decisions they can be implemented on the ground," Moore said in a radio interview. "I think we should move on areas like investment, to get up investment regimes that are transparent (and) good governance regimes on things like trade facilitation," he said. The issues of investment, competition, government procurement and transparency in government procurement remain contentious areas for many developing and least developed countries at the WTO, however. A number of African countries, together with Like-Minded Group members such as India and Pakistan, are concerned that they lack the capacity to negotiate on these topics, and are not convinced that negotiations will benefit their economies.

On trade, the NEPAD advocates a number of areas where Africa should focus its efforts. These include the development of a best-practice framework for technical regulations that meets both the requirements of the WTO's Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) and the needs of Africa; negotiating measures and agreements to facilitate market access for African products to the world market; encouraging foreign direct investment; strengthening country and sub-regional capacity in trade negotiations; implementing the rules and regulations of the WTO, and identifying and exploiting new trading

opportunities that emerge from the evolving multilateral trading system. The NEPAD also urges African heads of state to identify strategic areas of intervention and, together with the international community, strengthen the contribution of trade to the continent's recovery.

NEPAD is spearheaded by South African President Thabo Mbeki, Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, Senegalese President Abdoulaye Wade, Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

SACD Economist offers optimistic outlook

Principal economist for the 14-member Southern African Development Community (SADC) Fudzai Pamac Cheche said on 11 February that SADC hoped to achieve tariff waivers of at least 85 percent by 2008 and zero tariffs by 2012. However, citing the need to remove hindrances to market access such as immigration controls, Cheche cautioned that, "the reduction of tariffs will not bring about an increase in trade unless some of the key elements governing trade are attended to." In his introduction to a three-day meeting of SADC foreign ministers slated to begin on 12 February in Zanzibar, Tanzania, he advocated for political stability in the region. "In any economy if there is some degree of political instability, certainly the economic base suffers...But I think in terms of policy implementation that cannot be compromised, we are progressing very well; what can be compromised is the rate of implementation," he said.

SADC produced an aggregate gross domestic product of 3.4 percent in 2000, up from 1.8 percent in 1999 but still below the growth target of 6 percent defined in the UN's New Agenda for Development in Africa (see <http://www.un.org/esa/africa/un-nadaf.htm>) as the minimum growth rate required for sustainable economic development. The SADC market of 195 million people is estimated to be worth \$US 185 billion.

"S African Nations Hoping For Econ Integration - Official" ASSOCIATED PRESS, 11 February 2002; "WTO director general supports Africa's development initiative," AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, 11 February 2002; "G8 Leaders Show Support For Nepad," BUSINESS DAY (Johannesburg), 12 February 2002.

In Brief

UNCTAD ANNOUNCES CAPACITY BUILDING FOR TRADE NEGOTIATORS

The UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) last week announced a new "demand-driven" and "tailor-made" capacity building and technical assistance programme to increase developing countries' capacity to effectively participate in post-Doha trade negotiations. The programme - presented by UNCTAD's Secretary-General

Rubens Ricupero at the meeting of UNCTAD's Commission on Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities -- will focus on investment, trade facilitation and electronic commerce, offering policy analysis, human resources development and institutional capacity building. "The next few months will be a key test for the multilateral trading system," said Ricupero, referring to the short time left until the Fifth WTO Ministerial Conference in 2003. He cautioned, however, that trade negotiations were "necessary, but in themselves not sufficient conditions for development", stressing the need for developing countries to overcome supply constraints in order to more effectively participate in the trading system. In related developments, UNCTAD has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Geneva-based Agency for International Trade Information and Cooperation (AITIC) to support developing countries and transition economies in building their negotiating capacity.

"UNCTAD announces Post-Doha action for developing countries," UNCTAD PRESS RELEASE, 6 February 2001.

US OUTLINES TRADE OBJECTIVES FOR 2002

On Wednesday, 6 February, US Trade Representative Robert Zoellick informed a US Senate panel that the trade-related goals of the US for the coming year include completing bilateral free trade agreements (FTAs) with Chile and Singapore, advancing Russia's accession to the WTO, and ensuring the involvement of least developed countries in the global talks launched at the November 2001 WTO meeting in Doha. Zoellick also made reference to trade-environment linkages in the Doha Ministerial Declaration, saying, "the United States played a leading role in forging the compromise to incorporate environmental concerns into the new global trade negotiations. We can take practical steps that show that good environmental policies and sound economics can be mutually supportive."

"USTR Zoellick Outlines Trade Objectives for 2002: Cites WTO accession for Russia; Chile, Singapore pacts," <http://usinfo.state.gov/>, 7 February 2002.

NEW GROUP TO SUPPORT BANGLADESH IN WTO PROCEEDINGS

A new non-governmental group -- WTO Watch-Bangladesh -- has been set up in Bangladesh to monitor and study the implications of the WTO Agreements in the context of Bangladesh. It consists of a committee of nine individuals from a variety of backgrounds, including government, non-governmental, the media, and academia. Former Bangladeshi Ambassador Masum A. Chowdhury will act as Chair, while the Centre for Sustainable Development will function as the secretariat. According to a 7 February press statement, the group will extend support to the Bangladeshi government in its preparations for WTO meetings and disseminate information on the implications of different WTO agreements through policy briefs, lobbying, colloquium, workshops, seminars and discussions, involving a wide variety of stakeholders. The committee consists of nine people, including Chairperson Masum A. Chowdhury, former

ambassador, and Secretary Mahfuz Ullah, Secretary General for the Centre for Sustainable Development.

Press Release, WTO WATCH-BANGLADESH, 7 February 2002.

NGOS GAIN IN PUBLIC TRUST

A survey of US and European opinion leaders conducted by public relation firm Edelman Worldwide shows that trust in non-governmental organisations (NGOs) is approaching parity with business and government and that American attitudes toward corporate social responsibility are rising towards the level of their European counterparts. In the US, trust in NGOs has risen from a year ago, while in Europe they have maintained their dominant position. "We believe NGOs are now the Fifth Estate in global governance-the true credible source on issues related to the environment and social justice," said Richard Edelman, President and CEO of Edelman Worldwide, in a speech at the World Economic Forum in New York last week. StrategyOne, Edelman PR Worldwide's research unit, surveyed 850 Opinion Leaders across the US, France, Germany and the UK regarding their attitudes toward business, NGOs, government and the media. Opinion Leaders are defined as media and policy attentive adults ages 35-64, with college education and household income greater than \$US 75,000. For further information visit: <http://www.edelman.com/>.

"NGOs Approach Parity in Credibility with Business and Government in US; Maintain Large Advantage Over Other Major Institutions in Europe," EDELMAN, 2 February 2002.

10,000 ENDANGERED TURTLES KILLED IN ORISSA, INDIA

Operation Kanchappa, an Indian conservation group, reported on 5 February that over 10,000 Olive Ridley sea turtles died in the waters off the coast of the Indian state of Orissa between December and January when they were trapped in the nets of fishing boats. Much of the fishing is believed to be illegal. From December to March the turtles are especially susceptible as it is their mating season and they congregate in nesting grounds in large numbers. Although the Orissa government has banned fishing within 10 kilometres of the coast, the fisheries department lacks the resources for proper enforcement. In a 1998 Appellate Body decision, the WTO ruled that while a US import ban on shrimp caught in countries -- including India -- whose fishermen did not use devices to allow the escape of turtles from fishing nets was not in violation of WTO rules, the US implementation of the ban did contravene WTO rules. On 27 January 2000, the US stated that it had implemented the DSB's rulings and recommendations, namely by adopting a certification system that was based on shipment-by-shipment, rather than country-by country (see BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest, Vol. 4, Number 4, 2 February 2000, <http://www.ictsd.org/html/weekly/story3.02-02-00.htm>).

"10,000 Endangered Turtles Killed On Indian Coast," ENVIRONMENT NEWS SERVICE, 5 February 2002; ICTSD Internal Files.

WTO In Brief

CHAIRS FOR DOHA NEGOTIATIONS ON AGENDA FOR 13 FEBRUARY

Among other issues to be addressed at the 13 February meeting of the WTO General Council (GC), Members are expected to discuss -- and possibly agree on -- Chairpersons to head up not only the regular committees of the WTO but also the new negotiating groups set up last week at the 1 February meeting of the Trade Negotiations Committee (see BRIDGES Weekly, 5 February 2002, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/02-02-05/story1.htm>). Current GC Chair Stuart Harbinson (Hong Kong-China) has been conducting consultations on the Chair positions over the past few weeks. WTO Members traditionally strive for geographical balance in the appointment of these political posts, most of which are derived from Geneva-based ambassadors.

Other items on the agenda include: Iran - request for accession; appointment of the next Director-General - follow-up to the Decision of 22 July 1999 (WT/L/308, WT/L/438) - statement by the Chairman; Review of Procedures for the Circulation and Derestriction of WTO Documents - Report on Consultations; Reports of the Special Sessions of the Committee on Agriculture and the Council for Trade in Services; Work Programme on Small Economies - Discussion on Modalities and Institutional Arrangements; WTO Work Programme for Least-Developed Countries - Report by the Chairman of the Sub-Committee on Least- Developed Countries; Election of Chairperson.

ICTSD Internal Files.

On The Move

MOHAMED IBN CHAMBAS

Mohamed Ibn Chambas was chosen as the new executive secretary of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) by the heads of state of the 15 members of the group. Chambas, a Ghanaian negotiator and politician, will succeed Guinea's Lansan Kouvate, who left the post after four years.

"Skilled Ghanaian Negotiator Named New Head of ECOWAS," AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE, 6 February 2002.

MICHAEL ZAMMIT CUTAJAR

Executive Secretary Michael Zammit Cutajar will depart from the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change following an 11-year tenure. He marked the end of his tenure with a speech that urged governments to focus on sustainable development's economic benefits. Cutajar leaves following a three-year cycle of talks started after the adoption of the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, with a deal for ratification finalised at recent conferences in Marrakech, Morocco, and in Bonn, Germany. He will be replaced by veteran UN official Joke Waller-Hunter (Netherlands).

"UNFCCC Chief Departs, Urges Sustainable Development," UN WIRE, 1 February 2002.

GLENYS KINNOCK

Following a Bureau meeting of the African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP)- EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly, Glenys Kinnock (UK, Socialist) was approved as the new Co-President of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly. She replaces John Corrie (UK, Conservative). Kinnock has served as the Labour Spokesperson and Government Link on the European Parliament's Development and Co-operation Committee as well as Vice-President of the African, Caribbean and Pacific States' ACP-EU Joint Assembly.

"ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly Chooses New EU Co-President," EUROSTEP PAF, 8 February 2002; <http://www.eplp.org.uk/gkinnock.htm>.

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>.

Coming up this week: 12-19 February

1 February-30 June, Online Electronic Discussion: LINKING POVERTY REDUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT: POLICY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES. The e-discussion solicits comments based on a consultation draft entitled "Linking Poverty Reduction and Environmental Management" prepared by the UK Department for International Development, the European Commission Directorate General for Development, the UN Development Programme, and the World Bank. The

paper focuses on ways to reduce poverty and sustain growth through sound and equitable environmental management. The e-discussion will be moderated by Rama Chandra Reddy of the World Bank. To join the discussion visit: <http://vx.worldbank.org/cgi-bin/lyris.pl?enter=env-rio-10> or <http://wbweb4.worldbank.org/nars/eworkspace/ews004/mydevforum1.asp>.

12-21 February, New York, US: 40TH SESSION OF THE UN COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT. At its 40th session, the Commission for Social Development will focus on the 'Integration of social and economic policy.' Key topics to be discussed include: social aspects of macro- economic policies, social assessment as a policy tool, and expenditures in the social sector as a productive factor. For further information, contact: ESA Secretariat, email: esa@un.org; Internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/csd/2002.htm>.

13-15 February, Cartagena, Colombia: SEVENTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE UNEP GOVERNING COUNCIL/GLOBAL MINISTERIAL ENVIRONMENT FORUM. For further information contact: Secretary for Governing Council; tel: (254-2) 623-431; fax: (254-2) 623-929; email: beverly.miller@unep.org; Internet: http://www.unep.org/governingbodies/gc/specialsessions/gcss_vii/. From IISD Linkages: <http://www.iisd.ca/linkages/journal/>.

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. 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.

13 February, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO GENERAL COUNCIL. For agenda items see WTO In Brief, this issue.

14 February, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO CAMBODIA ACCESSION WORKING PARTY.

14 February, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE.

15 February, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AGREEMENT COMMITTEE.

19 February, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO DISPUTE SETTLEMENT BODY.

19-20 February, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO COMMITTEE ON REGIONAL TRADE AGREEMENTS.

Other Forthcoming Events

25 February, Brussels, Belgium: EUROPE IN THE WORLD WORKSHOP. The workshop is being organised by the European Rio+10 Coalition. For further information contact: European Partners for the Environment, Brussels, Belgium; fax: (32-2) 539-4815; email: info@epe.be; Internet: <http://www.epe.be/>. From IISD Linkages: <http://www.iisd.ca/linkages/journal/>.

25 February, Zurich, Switzerland: DOING BUSINESS WITH CHINA AND TAIWAN: WTO ACCESSION AND WHAT IT MEANS FOR BUSINESS. The purpose of the conference is to provide in-depth insights into the substance and the effects of WTO accession by China and Taiwan, including the range of legal and administrative reforms that accompany it. For further information contact: Carol George, Baker & McKenzie, London; tel: (0- 207) 919-1147; email: wto@bakernet.com.

14-15 March, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil: UNEP FINANCE INITIATIVES ANNUAL GLOBAL ROUNDTABLE ON FINANCE AND SUSTAINABILITY. Entitled "Financing a Sustainable Future - Strategies, Partnerships, and Opportunities on the way to Johannesburg 2002," the event will seek to build new partnerships for sustainability within the finance and insurance industries. It will feature speakers and participants from the world's major financial companies as well as interactive workshops on Microfinance, Venture Capital, and Environment and Security, among others. The meeting will provide the finance community an opportunity to fine-tune its sustainability agenda for WSSD and beyond. For further information contact: Trevor Bowden; email: trevor.bowden@unep.ch; Internet: <http://unepfi.net/rio>. From IISD Linkages: <http://www.iisd.ca/linkages/journal/>.

15-17 March, Coventry, UK: INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON GLOBALIZATION, GROWTH AND (IN)EQUALITY. This international event will focus on how globalisation impinges upon growth and equality. For further information contact: Denise Hewlett or Domenica Scinaldi; tel: (44-0- 247) 657-2533; fax: 657-2548; email: Denise.Hewlett@warwick.ac.uk or D.Scinaldi@warwick.ac.uk; Internet: http://www.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/CSGR/5th_Annual_Conference. From IISD Linkages: <http://www.iisd.ca/linkages/journal/>.

19 March, Geneva, Switzerland: UNEP WORKSHOP ON CAPACITY BUILDING ON ENVIRONMENT, TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT. This UN Environment Programme (UNEP) workshop aims to provide a forum for identifying capacity building activities needed to assist countries effectively engage in trade and environment negotiations, assess the environmental as well as the developmental implications of the WTO agreements, and develop and implement mutually supportive trade and environment policies. For further information contact: UNEP Division of Technology, Industry, and Economics, Geneva, Switzerland; tel: (41-22) 917-8243; fax: (41-22) 917- 8076; email: etb@unep.ch; Internet: <http://www.unep.ch/etu>. From IISD Linkages:

<http://www.iisd.ca/linkages/journal/>.

25 March-5 April, New York, USA: THIRD SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE 2002 WSSD. The meeting will aim to produce the first draft of a "review" document and elements of the CSD's future work programme. For further information contact: Andrey Vasilyev; tel: (1- 212) 963-5949; fax: (1-212) 963-4260; email: <mailto:vasilyev@un.org>; Internet: <http://www.johannesburgsummit.org/>. From IISD

Linkages: <http://www.iisd.ca/linkages/journal/>.

22-23 April, Singapore: ASIA BIO-FUELS 2002 CONFERENCE. The conference will address what it takes to develop successful bio-fuels projects in Asia. Highlights include detailed case studies from Asian projects, analysis of the economic and social benefits available from bio-fuels application, understanding market structure for ethanol and new production, distribution and use, and evaluation of technology options for fast track project implementation. The conference will lay the foundations necessary for exchange of information and experience and reveal the concerns and issues that challenge the speed of development. For further information contact: tel: (65) 732-1970; fax: (65) 733- 5087; email: juliana.lim@ibcasia.com.sg; Internet: <http://www.ibc-asia.com/biofuels.htm>.

13-15 May, Paris, France: OECD FORUM 2002. The OECD Forum is an international public conference offering business, labour and civil society the opportunity to discuss key issues with government ministers and leaders of international organisations. With the overarching theme of "Taking Care of the Fundamentals: Security, Equity, Education and Growth," the Forum will allow participants to shape the outcome of the OECD annual ministerial summit meeting to be held on 15-16 May 2002. For further information contact: OECD Forum; fax: (330-14) 430-6346; email: oe.cd.forum@oe.cd.org; Internet: <http://www1.oe.cd.org/forum2002/>. From IISD Linkages: <http://www.iisd.ca/linkages/journal/>.

17-22 June, Geneva, Switzerland: SIXTH SESSION OF THE PERSISTENT ORGANIC POLLUTANTS (POPs) INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE. For further information contact UNEP Chemicals, Geneva, Switzerland; tel: (41-22) 917-8193; fax: (41-22) 797-3460; email: pops@unep.ch. From IISD Linkages: <http://www.iisd.ca/linkages/journal/>.

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 Matteo Rizzolli, mrizzolli@ictsd.ch).

THE NORTH AMERICAN MOSAIC: A STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT REPORT. Published by the North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC), January 2001. According to this report, North America is facing a "widespread crisis" due to its shrinking biodiversity. The three NAFTA partners have responded to the threat posed by rapid decline of biodiversity, but the report highlights the threats that overshadow such achievements. For the complete report, visit <http://www.cec.org/soe>.

TOWARDS COMPATIBILITY: THE FUTURE OF ELECTRONIC COMMERCE WITHIN THE GLOBAL TRADING SYSTEM. By Andrew D. Mitchell in JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC LAW, Volume 4, Issue 4. This article examines the key issues that electronic commerce poses for global trade. It considers the compatibility between electronic commerce and trade at three levels: first, at the level of GATS, providing recommendations to improve the treatment of electronic commerce within that agreement; secondly, at the structural level of the WTO agreements; and thirdly, at the level of the global trading system, exploring how recognition of electronic commerce as a global public good may help reduce the digital divide between developed and developing countries. For the full article, visit <http://www.3.oup.co.uk/jielaw/hbd/Volume 04/Issue 04/040683.sgm.abs.html>.

GLOBAL TRADE AND GLOBALISING SOCIETY -- CHALLENGES FOR GOVERNANCE AND SUSTAINABILITY: THE ROLE OF THE EU. Edited by Angela Liberatore and Nikolaos Christoforides, published by European Commission, November 2001. This journal summarises the discussions on globalisation that were undertaken at a dialogue workshop held in Brussels on 14-15 December 2000. For further information, contact Ms. A. De Greef- rue de la Loi, 200 (SDME 4/51), B-1049 Brussels, tel: (32-2) 295-9755; fax: (32-2) 296-2137; email: anne.de-greef@cec.eu.int.

Electronic Resources

"INVESTMENT FOR DEVELOPMENT" is the name of the two-year research programme conducted by CUTS Centre for International Trade, Economics & Environment (CUTS-CITEE), meant to create awareness and capacity building on investment regimes and international investment issues in selected developing and transition economies with the support of DFID, UK. IFD E-news is a quarterly investment e-newsletter of CUTS-CITEE of "Investment for Development" (IFD) project. It aims to inform and stimulate awareness among various stakeholders in an economy regarding investment issues at the WTO. IFD E-News pays special attention to investment issues and news related to developing countries. The e- newsletter contains summary updates of project progress and selected news items on topics of investment in the project countries. To subscribe, email ifd_cuts@rediffmail.com. For further information on the IFD project please visit <http://www.cuts.org/ifd-indx.htm>.

NEW WEBSITE ON THE DEVELOPMENT BOX now available at the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP). The site contains press statements, developing country proposals, NGO briefs and other materials. Available at <http://www.tradeobservatory.org/> and scroll down to "WTO Development Box."

A searchable archive of BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest© can be accessed at: http://www.newsbulletin.org/bulletins/WhichBulletin.cfm?Bulletin_ID=14&SID=

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