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## Traditional Knowledge

### WIPO COMMITTEE: COUNTRIES DIVIDED ON NEED FOR AND SCOPE OF LEGAL SYSTEM TO PROTECT TK

Potentially the most far-reaching topic at the third meeting of the WIPO [World Intellectual Property Organization] Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore on 13 - 21 June in Geneva, Switzerland, concerned possible elements of an international legal system for the protection of traditional knowledge (TK). Also of interest were discussions on disclosure requirements for the country of origin of genetic resources and/or associated TK in patent application; and the suitability of existing intellectual property rights (IPRs), in particular geographical indications, to protect TK and folklore.

#### A legal system for TK protection - whether and how?

Delegates continued discussions on possible legal norms for the protection of TK (see *BRIDGES Trade BioRes*, 20 December 2001; <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/01-12-20/story4.htm>). Differences arose regarding the need for, scope and nature of the legal protection. Some delegations, including the US, Norway and New Zealand, felt that a legally binding international sui generis system for the protection of TK was premature or even unnecessary. In contrast, many Latin American countries, the African Group and the Saami Council, supported an international treaty and considered this to be an urgent priority. Their position complements

related proposals for a legally binding treaty on access and/or benefit-sharing related to genetic resources, most recently at the Sixth Conference of the Parties (COP-6) of the CBD in April (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 18 April 2002; <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/02-04-18/story1.htm>) and the Fourth Preparatory Meeting for the World Summit on Sustainable Development in June (BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 13 June 2002; <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/02-06-13/story1.htm>).

With respect to the scope of protection, while some developing countries supported the idea of an agreement that would encompass both TK and folklore (e.g. Iran and the Organization of African Unity), others cautioned that it would be better to keep these separate, perhaps with TK being confined to knowledge that is associated with genetic resources. Nonetheless, developing countries supporting the unified approach tended to agree with those favouring the separation of TK and folklore that the scope of protection should reflect the holistic nature of these concepts. Canada and the International Chamber of Commerce dissented, arguing that this would lead to practical difficulties. Regarding the elements of the *sui generis* system, several suggestions were made, including incorporating such norms and principles as human rights, unfair competition and moral rights. Views, however, differed on the extent to which the system should resemble existing IPRs, such as patents, trademarks and geographical indications.

### **Disclosure of origin in patent applications**

Delegates furthermore discussed whether and how to incorporate a requirement to disclose the origin of genetic resources and/or associated TK into patent applications. This controversial matter had previously been raised at COP-6 of the CBD where delegates had agreed to include disclosure requirements as a possible compliance measure in the Bonn Guidelines (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 18 April 2002; <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/02-04-18/story1.htm>), and has been deliberated on by the WTO Council on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs) and WTO Committee on Trade and Environment (CTE). At the meeting, the US stated that such a requirement would be incompatible with the TRIPs Agreement since it added another substantive condition on patentability beyond those already provided. Countries like India and Brazil have repeatedly stated that such a measure was necessary to make patents supportive of the CBD. They claim that mandatory disclosure of origin would do this by preventing private monopoly rights from extending to illegally acquired genetic resources. The business community, however, tends to the view that compliance could be very difficult for companies in certain cases.

### **Geographical indications - a tool for TK protection?**

Discussions also took place on the suitability of existing IPR protection for TK and folklore. The Asian Group suggested that WIPO explore practical means to protect expressions of folklore through such IPRs as copyrights, industrial designs, certification and collective marks and geographical indications (GIs). Brazil, however, expressed scepticism about text in one of the Secretariat's papers (WIPO/GRTKF/IC/3/7), which singled out GIs as a suitable IPR for protecting TK. Mexico cautiously agreed that GIs have such potential, but agreed with Brazil that GIs cannot stop biopiracy. The Organisation Africaine de la Propriété intellectuelle (African Organization of Intellectual Property) asserted that GIs might be useful for expressions of folklore or agricultural products, but shared Brazil's reservations on their appropriateness for TK.

Geographical indications, as defined in the WTO TRIPs Agreement, are identifications of the country or region where the quality, reputation or other characteristic of a product is essentially attributable to the geographical region. Some believe that by giving value to biological resources, GIs can provide an incentive to preserve native varieties, the environment in which the respective resources are grown, and the traditional knowledge associated with them. The suitability of GIs for TK protection has also features in discussions at the TRIPs Council, including the most recent session on 25-27 June. BRIDGES Trade BioRes will report on the outcome of this meeting in the forthcoming issue.

The WIPO Committee is scheduled to meet for the fourth time in December 2002, where deliberations on these subjects will continue.

## Background

The protection of traditional knowledge is being discussed in the WTO TRIPs Council and was explicitly listed for examination by the Council in the Doha Ministerial Declaration (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 22 November 2001; <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/01-11-22/story3.htm>). Many developing countries, such as India, Brazil and the Africa Group, would like to see the TRIPs Agreement and in particular Article 27.3(b) (patentability of life forms) broadened to include issues such as disclosure requirements, benefit-sharing arrangements and prior informed consent. Most developed countries, however, oppose such a broadening of scope, arguing that these issues should not be discussed at the WTO, but in other relevant forums, such as WIPO.

## Additional Resources

The official documents on the third WIPO Intergovernmental Committee can be downloaded from the WIPO website: [http://www.wipo.int/eng/meetings/2002/igc/index\\_3.htm](http://www.wipo.int/eng/meetings/2002/igc/index_3.htm).

ICTSD reporting.

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## Environment at the WTO

### WTO ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE STALLS ON MEA OBSERVERSHIP, TRIPS-CBD

The WTO Committee on Trade and Environment (CTE) held its second regular session for 2002 on 13-14 June, including an information session with multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). Focusing on the CTE mandate from the Doha Declaration, Members addressed a wide variety of submissions on areas, including the MEA-WTO relationship, and the interface between the WTO Agreement on Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs) and the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The question of how MEAs could be included as observers in the CTE's special session, which deals with the Doha negotiations on environment, continued to dog discussions around the MEA-WTO interface.

The question of how to address the relationship between WTO rules and relevant provisions of MEAs formed the core of the special (negotiating) session of the CTE that immediately preceded the 13-14 June regular session (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 13 June 2002, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/02-06-13/story3.htm>). At that meeting, Members were still in disagreement over whether MEAs could gain observer status at the CTE negotiating sessions. Currently, four MEAs -- including the CBD -- are accredited as observers at the regular CTE.

### MEA info session

Building on a 19-20 March workshop on technical assistance and capacity building, MEA secretariats reported on their activities in these areas, as well as on enhancing information exchange between MEAs and the WTO. According to sources, a number of the MEA delegates expressed disappointment that they were still not able to participate in the CTE special session meetings, where talks are progressing on, inter alia, the relationship between WTO rules and specific trade obligations set out in MEAs (BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 13 June 2002; referenced above).

Referring to a paper submitted to the CTE special session (TN/TE/S/2, available at <http://docsonline.wto.org/>), some MEA representatives contrasted their lack of access to WTO negotiations on trade and environment with the fact that the WTO regularly attends the UN Environment Programme's (UNEP) Governing Council, as well as the main meetings of MEAs which contain trade-related measures.

According to sources, UNEP Executive Director Klaus Töpfer declined an invitation to attend on the grounds that the meaningful negotiations were taking place in the special sessions, not in the regular CTE.

The issue of authorising other bodies as observers to negotiating sessions remains blocked at the General Council/Trade Negotiations Committee level. As a compromise to the observership impasse, the CTE had previously agreed to hold an additional special session in November that would be exclusively an MEA information session. Some observers remarked that this would still not constitute real negotiations, or go far enough given the Doha environment mandate, which also includes establishing procedures for regular information exchange between MEA Secretariats and the relevant WTO committees.

One developing country source expressed his disappointment with the 13 June MEA session, saying that much of the information was repetitive, and that there had not been much progress to report, particularly in the area of technology transfer. He further noted a lack of coordination between the chairs of the special and regular sessions. "We already have so many meetings to cover," he said, "we can't afford to lose time by duplicating work."

### **TRIPs-CBD debate stagnates**

The focus of the discussion around para. 32 of the Doha Ministerial Declaration was on the interface between the TRIPs agreement and the CBD. On 10 June, the CBD Secretariat submitted a paper reviewing the provisions of TRIPs article 27.3(b) (protection of invention of plant varieties) and protection of traditional knowledge and folklore (WT/CTE/W/210). The note provided background information on relevant provisions of the Convention that address the issues of benefit-sharing and traditional knowledge, the role of intellectual property rights in these arrangements, and the historical relationship between the CBD and TRIPs.

Those attending the CTE noted that there was "no change" in the traditional positions of Members around the CBD-TRIPs interface. On the one hand, Brazil, India and Pakistan want this discussion to take place in the TRIPs Council, and have previously highlighted what they see as possible conflicts between the CBD and the TRIPs Agreement, suggesting these could be resolved through a revision of Article 27.3(b) or of Article 29 (on conditions on patent applicants). Such a revision would incorporate requirements that patent applicants disclose the source of genetic material and relevant traditional knowledge, and that they provide evidence of fair and equitable benefit-sharing and prior informed consent. Most developed countries, notably Canada, Switzerland and the US, view TRIPs and CBD as mutually supportive and resist revising the TRIPs Agreement. They further prefer this discussion to take place in the World Intellectual Property Organization.

MEA Secretariats in attendance for the information session included the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES), UNEP-Chemicals, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the CBD, the Basel Convention on the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes, the International Tropical Timber Organization, the UN Forum on Forests, the UN Fish Stocks Agreement and the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Other papers submitted to this CTE session included: Issues on Forestry Products, Trade and Environment -- submission by Japan (WTO/CTE/W/211); Labelling -- submission by the EC (WT/CTE/W/212); Enhancing Synergies and Mutual Supportiveness of MEAs and the WTO -- contribution by UNEP (WT/CTE/W/213); and MEA Session on Technical Assistance, Capacity Building and Enhancing Information Exchange -- input from the WTO, UNEP and MEA Secretariats (WT/CTE/W/209).

The next meeting of the regular CTE is scheduled for 8-9 October.

ICTSD reporting.

## EUROPEAN REGULATIONS ON COSMETICS AND GMOS UNDER SCRUTINY AT WTO

Much attention at the formal meeting of the WTO Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) on 20-21 June focused on various forthcoming labelling schemes of the EC, including for cosmetics tested on animals and genetically modified organisms (GMOs). Discussion on the European and Chinese GMO regulations also continued at the WTO Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) on 25-26 June.

### EC asked to delay animal testing regulation

At the TBT Committee, Canada, supported by Japan, expressed concern regarding an EC regulation that would ban the import of cosmetics containing ingredients tested on animals. Canada requested the EC to postpone the legislation and notify it under the TBT Agreement, arguing that the considerable uncertainty currently facing the cosmetics trade was harming exporters. Following an amendment to the Council Directive 76/768/EEC in 1993, the marketing of such cosmetics was supposed to have been prohibited in the EU since 1998, but the ban has not come into effect due to a lack of alternative testing methods and potential problems of WTO compliance. It is now scheduled to enter into force on 1 July 2002. The European Parliament is currently debating another amendment to the Directive -- proposed by the European Commission in an effort to alleviate trade concerns -- which would ban animal testing, but not the marketing of cosmetics ingredients and products tested on animals.

### European and China's GMO labelling still contentious

Several WTO Members raised concerns regarding the EC's GMO regime at both the TBT and SPS Committees. At the TBT Committee, Canada and the US reiterated their previous concerns with respect to the EC's proposed regulation on labelling and traceability of GMOs (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 21 March 2002; <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/02-03-21/story1.htm>). Regarding the continued EU de facto moratorium on the approval of new GMOs, the US told the SPS Committee that it would decide next week whether to formally challenge the de facto moratorium at the WTO. The EC said it would respond to the comments in detail soon. Earlier this month, the European Parliament's Environment Committee had supported amendments to the proposed EC regulation that would lower the threshold for accidental presence of GMOs from 1 to 0.5 percent; would require products such as meat, cheese and eggs from animals fed with GMO feed be labelled; and would keep in the place the de facto moratorium on the approvals of GMOs at least until the new regulation became effective. According to a EU source, the final version of the regulation is expected to be closer to the original Commission proposal as many of the stricter amendments are unlikely to be passed by the Parliament's plenary session in July.

Discussions also continued at the SPS Committee meeting regarding China's import regulations for GMOs. In addition to the previously announced regulation, which requires importers of agricultural biotechnology products to apply for official safety verification approval from China's Ministry of Agriculture (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 21 March 2002; referenced above), the Health Ministry recently issued a second set of rules scheduled to enter into force on 1 July, which would require importers to also obtain permits from the Health Ministry. The US criticised China for not yet having notified the regulation at the WTO and called for the regulation's entry- into-force to be delayed. Similarly to the rules issued by the Agriculture Ministry, the second set of rules did not spell out specifics, again creating confusion among traders. Subsequent to the SPS Committee meeting, the Ministry of Health clarified that permit applications for GMO foods covered by the Agriculture's Ministry's regulation should be filed with the Health Ministry after 1 July, but permits would only be required from 1 January 2003.

The next meeting of the TBT Committee is currently scheduled for 15-17 October, including a workshop on technical cooperation on 16 October.

ICTSD reporting; "Parliament's Environment Committee rejects effort to weaken traceability, labeling rules," IER, 19 June 2002.

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**Agriculture**

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**CIVIL SOCIETY GROUPS STRESS PRIMACY OF FOOD SOVEREIGNTY OVER TRADE AT FOOD SUMMIT**

Described by one press source as a "low-impact conference", the UN Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) World Food Summit: five years later (WFS-FYL; 10-13 June, Rome, Italy) ended with delegates emphasising the key role of trade as well as the potential of biotechnology research (BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 13 June 2002, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/02-06-13/inbrief.htm>) to achieve the goal set at the 1996 Food Summit of halving the number of hungry people by 2015. In their final statement, civil society groups sharply criticised the outcomes of the Summit as "more of the same failed medicine", calling on governments to shift their focus from trade liberalisation to achieving food sovereignty. Their campaign is set to continue at the upcoming World Summit for Sustainable Development (WSSD), to be held on 26 August - 4 September in Johannesburg, South Africa, as well as the fifth WTO Ministerial Conference in September 2003 in Cancun, Mexico.

**Civil society groups call for food sovereignty and agro-ecological production**

In their political declaration adopted at the parallel NGO-CSO Forum for Food Sovereignty (8-13 June), civil society groups expressed their "collective disappointment in, and rejection of" the summit Declaration (see BRIDGES Weekly, 12 June 2002; <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/02-06-12/story2.htm>). Current efforts to reduce hunger had not failed because of a lack of political will and resources, the statement argued, but rather because governments continued to pursue "policies that lead to hunger, policies that support economic liberalisation for the South and cultural homogeneity". NGOs also condemned the summit's endorsement of biotechnology as a means to fight hunger, saying, "The imposition of intensive, externally dependent models of production has destroyed the environments and livelihoods of our communities. Furthermore, it has created food insecurity and has put the focus on short-term productivity gains using harmful technologies such as GMOs." Alternatively, NGOs called for a shift towards "agroecologically based production systems", comprising organic, ecological, biological and natural agriculture.

Highlighting trade liberalisation as "the greatest force undermining livelihoods around the world", the NGOs called for a shift of focus to the "unifying concept of Food Sovereignty", i.e. "the primacy of people's and communities' rights to food and food production, over trade concerns", including the promotion of local markets and producers over production for export and food imports. This could be achieved by, inter alia, putting an end to the "neoliberal economic policies" imposed by the WTO and other multilateral and regional free trade agreements, and by removing agriculture from the WTO while working towards a Convention on Food Sovereignty.

**Discussions set to continue at WSSD and WTO**

Hopes now rest on WSSD to come up with concrete steps towards combating hunger as an integral part of sustainable development. In this context, one FAO official stressed the need for agriculture and environment to be tackled together by looking at the entire supply chain from farmers to consumers. "You cannot save the planet if you cannot feed its peoples," the official pointed out. Some, however, cautioned against too high expectations of WSSD, pointing to the deep divisions apparent at WFS-FYL and the lack of high-level attendance. Discussions are also underway at the WTO, most recently at 17-20 June special (negotiating) session of the WTO Committee on Agriculture, where WTO Members -- as part of the ongoing negotiations launched at Doha in November 2001 -- continued negotiations, inter alia, on how to further reduce the use of agricultural export subsidies (BRIDGES Weekly, 26 June 2002, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/02-06-26/story1.htm>). At the forthcoming early-September special session of the Agriculture Committee, Member will discuss market access issues.

## Additional Resources

Further information on WFS-FYL and the NGO forum can be found at <http://www.fao.org/worldfoodsummit/> and <http://www.forumfoodsovereignty.org/>.

The NGO Declaration is available at <http://www.foodfirst.org/progs/global/food/finaldeclaration.html>.

ICTSD reporting; "After Summit, Outlook for easing hunger stays poor," IPS, 14-17 June 2002; "South Africa says farm subsidies obstacle to UN summit," REUTERS, 11 June 2002; "Curtain falls on controversial UN food summit," REUTERS, 14 June 2002.

## In Brief

**NORWAY TO RE-COMMENCE TRADE IN MINKE WHALE PRODUCTS.** Norway has announced that it will resume exports of whale meat and whale blubber for the first time since 1988. Norway intends to export 10-15 tonnes of frozen minke whale meat and blubber to Iceland. In order to be able to resume the export and import of whale products, Norway had asked Reykjavik to set up a DNA checking system which enables the importing and the exporting country to test any whale product in the market and trace its origin and whether it was sold legally; this system is now in place and exports can begin. "This is a happy day. The resumption of whale meat exports is one important step towards normalisation of the whaling issue," said Ole Mykleburst from the export company Mykleburst Trading Ltd. The High North Alliance, a pro-whaling lobby group, expects that the exports to Iceland will reopen exports -- mainly of whale blubber -- to Japan as well. Trade in whale meat and whale products is controlled by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES), while the International Whaling Commission (IWC) controls the hunting of whales. Japan, Norway and Iceland are partly exempted from the rules of both organisations regarding the commercial hunting of whales and the trade in whale products. Norway set its own catch quota to 671 minke whales for this season, and as Japan and Iceland are exempted from the trade ban on minke whales they can buy and sell products from minke whales. The issue of hunting whales and selling whale products has repeatedly been discussed in both of the international fora and is causing major political disagreements between the pro-whaling and the anti-whaling nations (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 13 June 2002; <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/02-06-13/story2.htm>). The shipment from Norway to Iceland with the frozen whale meat is expected to take place during the summer.

"Norway to define ban, resume whale exports to Iceland," REUTERS, 24 June 2002; "Iceland, Norway Resume International Whale Meat Trade," 21 June 2002.

**'LITTLE TO CELEBRATE' ON ENVIRONMENT SINCE EARTH SUMMIT, BRAZIL SAYS.** As government officials and civil society groups met in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on 23-26 June for a symbolic handover of the torch of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit to South Africa, many were sceptical regarding environmental achievements since Rio and the difference that the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) can make. Officials from Brazil and other countries criticised the low rate at which the targets set in Rio had been fulfilled. "There is still a lot to be done and, unfortunately, very little to celebrate," Brazil's President Fernando Henrique Cardoso said. "The Rio legacy is being threatened," he added. Brazil's main objective at WSSD, according to Foreign Minister Celso Lafer, was the inclusion on the environmental agenda of three issues, namely technology transfer, development assistance and improved access for developing country's agricultural exports to developed country markets. However, while delegates agreed on two-thirds of the Plan of Implementation for WSSD at the Fourth Preparatory Meeting in Bali, Indonesia, on 27 May - 7 June, the outstanding issues remained deadlocked, including trade and finance, globalisation and the relationship between multilateral environmental agreements and WTO rules (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 13 June 2002; <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/02-06-13/story1.htm>). 65,000 participants are expected to attend the World Summit, which will be held on 26 August - 4 September in Johannesburg, South Africa.

"Brazil leader says much still needed on environment," REUTERS, 26 June 2002; "Environment stressed at Rio talks," UN WIRE, 24 June 2002; "Brazil passes torch to South Africa," ENS, 25 June 2002.

**ZIMBABWE CONCERNED THAT GM FOOD AID MIGHT JEOPARDISE BEEF EXPORTS TO EU.** An official from Zimbabwe's Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement said earlier this month that Zimbabwe's decision to reject several shipments of food aid, which had not been certified as free of genetically modified organisms (GMO), had been based on concerns that accepting the food donation of whole-grain maize might have a significant impact on the country's beef exports to the EU. Zimbabwe, which usually exports 9.100 tonnes of beef to the EU, pointed out that farmers often used whole-grain maize as seed and not for consumption. "This could have created many problems for us; biotech-maize if eaten by livestock, would have jeopardised future Zimbabwe's beef export to Europe," the official said. If the food donation had consisted of maize-meal, the country would not have had a problem with accepting the donation, he added. Zimbabwe's rejection of the food aid had evoked strong reactions from various sectors as the World Food Programme (WFP) has estimated that 12,8 million people in southern Africa are currently threatened by food shortages, with Zimbabwe being one of the worst affected countries (see BRIDGES Weekly, 4 June 2002; <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/02-06-04/inbrief.htm>). The food donations were redirected to other African countries facing food shortages. Zimbabwe's concerns come in the wake of a decision by the European Parliament's Environment Committee to support amendments to the proposed EC regulation on GM labelling which would require products such as meat, cheese and eggs from animals fed with GMO feed be labelled (see related story, this issue).

"Zimbabwe Rejects U.S. food Aid Consignment," REUTERS, 1 June 2002; "Official says GM maize would have hit country's beef exports," 17 June 2002.

**IVORY AND WHALE PRODUCTS EXPECTED TO BE CONTROVERSIAL AT CITES MEETING.** Member states of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) will discuss and decide over 54 submitted proposals on relaxing or strengthening the current restriction of trade in threatened plant and animal species. The two most controversial proposals submitted by the June deadline included a proposal by four African States to take up trade in ivory, and a proposal by Japan and Norway to restart trade in whale products. Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe requested one-time sales of ivory stocks between 10.000 and 30.000 kilos, as well as an annual quota between 2.000 and 5.000 kilo. Environmental NGOs and some countries, including India and Kenya, oppose legalising any form of ivory exports, fearing that it would trigger poaching. In 1997 CITES had waived its ban and had allowed Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe to make one-off sales of their ivory stocks. The proposal of Japan and Norway sought to re-commence the trade of some surplus whale meat and products stocked by Norway, including from north Atlantic and north Pacific minke whales and Pacific Bryde's whales. Both proposals are expected to cause long discussions at the 12th Conference of the Parties to CITES in Santiago, Chile, on 3-15 November.

"African states seek lifting ban on ivory trade," REUTERS, 17 June 2002; "Rising trade in endangered species," THE DAILY NEWS, 20 June 2002.

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## Events & Resources

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### 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>. For further information on WTO events, contact the WTO Information and Media Relations Division, Geneva; tel: (41-22) 739 5007; fax: 739 5458; email: [enquiries@wto.org](mailto:enquiries@wto.org).

### Coming up in the next two weeks

26-28 June, Geneva, Switzerland: UNCTAD EXPERT MEETING ON THE DIVERSIFICATION OF PRODUCTION AND EXPORTS IN COMMODITY-DEPENDENT DEVELOPING COUNTRIES - including single-commodity exporters, for industrialisation and development, taking into account the special needs of LDCs. Convened by the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). For further



information contact the UNCTAD secretariat, Intergovernmental Support Service, fax: (41 22) 917 0056; email: [correspondence@unctad.org](mailto:correspondence@unctad.org).

28 June, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO SPECIAL SESSION OF THE COUNCIL FOR TRADE-RELATED ASPECTS OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS. On the agenda: Negotiation of the establishment of a multilateral system of notification and registration of geographical indications for wines and spirits and observer status for Intergovernmental Organisations.

28 June, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE.

26-28 June, Rome, Italy: 50TH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION. For more information contact: Secretariat of the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards; tel: +39-06-5705-1; fax: +39-06-5705-4593; email: [codex@fao.org](mailto:codex@fao.org); Internet: [http://www.codexalimentarius.net/ccexec50/ex02\\_01e.htm](http://www.codexalimentarius.net/ccexec50/ex02_01e.htm).

1 July, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT (CTD). On the agenda: Technical cooperation and training including the Secretariat report on the 2002 Technical Assistance Plan and an update on the advanced training course for government officials on the WTO trade negotiations. A section of the meeting will also be dedicated to the issues of participation of developing countries in world trade (document to be issued), paragraph 51 of the Doha Declaration on identifying and debating developmental and environmental aspects of the negotiations.

1-2 July, Leeds, United Kingdom: CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE. Speakers will address such topics and Sustainable Development and Tourism, Environmental Management in SMEs, Biodiversity and Conservation, And Business and Sustainable Development. For further information contact: Elaine White; tel: (44 127) 453-0408; fax: 453-0409; email: [Elaine@erpenv.demon.co.uk](mailto:Elaine@erpenv.demon.co.uk); Internet: <http://erpenvironment.org/>.

1-4 July, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: EWC/EWCA INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE - THE IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION ON BUILDING AN ASIA-PACIFIC COMMUNITY. The East-West Centre Association, which represents 46,00 professionals throughout Asia, the Pacific, and the United States, is planning a major international conference in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. For information contact: tel: 808-944-7506; fax: 808-944-7502; email: [Malaysia2002@EastWestCenter.org](mailto:Malaysia2002@EastWestCenter.org); Internet: <http://www.eastwestcenter.org/Malaysia2002>

3-5 July, Geneva, Switzerland: UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT. The fourth session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Competition Law and Policy will be opened at the Palais des Nations, Geneva at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, 3 July 2002. For information contact: Secretary of the Meeting; tel: (41-22) 917 5637; email: [correspondence@unctad.org](mailto:correspondence@unctad.org)

9-10 July, Brussels, Belgium: CHANGING THE BALANCE OF TRADE: A SEMINAR ON SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENTS OF EU TRADE POLICY. Organised by WWF, Caroline Lucas MEP, and the Heinrich Böll Foundation. The seminar will focus on how to change the current balance of EU trade policies towards sustainable development through the use of Sustainability Assessments (SA). A key aim of the seminar will be to advance thinking on how Sustainability Assessments should fit in the policy-making mechanisms in the EU. The role of the Council, the Commission and the European Parliament will be discussed, as well as the involvement of civil society stakeholders in influencing negotiations of trade agreements through SA. For further information email [balancedtrade@wwfint.org](mailto:balancedtrade@wwfint.org), or register online at <http://www.panda.org/balancedtrade>.

### **Other forthcoming events**

23-25 July, Montreal, Canada: 22ND OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL. For information contact: Ozone Secretariat; tel: (514-954) 8219; fax: 6077; email: [Michael.Grabner@unep.org](mailto:Michael.Grabner@unep.org); Internet: <http://www.unep.org/ozone/oewg/22oewg/22oewg.shtml>

21-28 August, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada: 2002 WORLD ORGANIC CONGRESS - CULTIVATING COMMUNITIES. Organized by the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM), the event is expected to be attended by farmers, researchers, advisors, food

processors, traders, certifiers, policy makers and consumers and others interested in organic agriculture and sustainable development. For more information contact: tel: (1-250) 655-5652; email: ifoam2002@cog.ca; Internet: <http://www.cog.ca/ifoam2002/>

22-25 August, Durban, South Africa: ENVIROLAW CONFERENCE. The conference will offer a platform for the international legal community to suggest mechanisms that will interlink international and regional treaties and conventions in order to improve their implementation and enforcement. For information contact: tel: (27-11) 269-7944; fax: (27-11) 269-7899; email: [info@envirolawsolutions.com](mailto:info@envirolawsolutions.com); Internet: <http://www.envirolawsolutions.com>

1-15 September, Bonn, Germany: CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES: SEVENTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES. Second Meeting of Parties, African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds Agreement (AEWA). Organised by Bonn Convention on Migratory Species For information contact: Mr. Arnulf Muller-Helmbrecht; Bonn Convention on Migratory Species; tel: (49-228) 815 2401/2; fax: 815 2449; email: [cms@unep.de](mailto:cms@unep.de); Internet: <http://www.wcmc.org.uk/cms>

3-5 September, Bangkok, Thailand: BIOLAW 2002: BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN SCIENTIFIC AND LEGAL WORLDS. This international conference, organised by a range of organisations and institutes, including FAO, aims to provide a forum for lawyers and scientists to share their knowledge and opinions on legal aspects (including intellectual property rights) of biotechnology applied to agriculture, food or medicine. For information contact: Dr. Tanit Changthavorn, Department of Business Development and BioLaw, National Center for genetic Engineering and Biotechnology; tel: 66 2564 6700 ext 3135, 3136; fax: 66 2564 6701; email: [biolaw@biotec.or.th](mailto:biolaw@biotec.or.th); Internet: <http://biolaw.biotec.or.th>

18-21 September, Edinburgh, United Kingdom: GENETIC ENGINEERING AND THE INTRINSIC VALUE AND INTEGRITY OF ANIMALS AND PLANTS. Organised by the International Forum for Genetic Engineering. The workshop deals with the public discussion of genetic engineering, which has been dominated by risk-benefit considerations. Both plants and animals will be considered in the workshop. For further information contact: David Heaf, tel: (44 1766) 523181; email: [101622.2773@Compuserve.Com](mailto:101622.2773@Compuserve.Com); Internet: <http://www.anth.org/ifgene/2002.htm>

## RESOURCES

If you have a relevant resource (books, papers, bulletins, etc.) you would like to see announced in this section, please forward a copy or review by the BRIDGES staff to Heike Baumüller, [hbaumuller@ictsd.ch](mailto:hbaumuller@ictsd.ch). Submissions of publications to ICTSD's documentation centre would also be welcome (contact Matteo Rizzolli, [mrizzolli@ictsd.ch](mailto:mrizzolli@ictsd.ch)).

FROM RIO TO JOHANNESBURG AND BEYOND: GLOBALIZING PRECAUTION FOR GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS, by Volker Lehmann, published by the Heinrich-Böll-Foundation, April 2002. This study focuses on the regulation of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and traces back the history, components and future consequences of the precautionary principle. It scrutinises the criticism on the precautionary principle based on the premises of 'sound science' and how for GMOs, disputes around the precautionary principle dominate the conflict between the USA and Europe, but also rifts between trade and environmental law. For this, examples of the implementation of the precautionary principle in international agreements of the Rio Earth Summit and the WTO are discussed and an outlook is given, how the cause of precaution can be strengthened between Doha, Johannesburg and beyond. The report is available at: <http://www.boell.org/docs/PrecautioninWTOandRIO.pdf>. The author can be contacted at: [vlehmann@prodigy.net](mailto:vlehmann@prodigy.net)

REVIEWING THE SPS AGREEMENT: A DEVELOPING COUNTRY PERSPECTIVE. By Michael Friis Jensen, published by Centre for Development Research, February 2002. This paper evaluates the SPS Agreement from the viewpoint of developing countries. It is concluded that although developing countries have a high demand for an effective agreement of this sort, in practice they face a great number of difficulties when using the Agreement. A few larger middle-income countries appear to see clear benefits from the Agreement while most countries do not possess the financial, human, and technical resources necessary to use it. Some especially least developed countries are excessively burdened by the

implementation costs of the SPS Agreement. For more information, visit [http://www.cdr.dk/working\\_papers/02-3-abs.htm](http://www.cdr.dk/working_papers/02-3-abs.htm).

**STUMBLING TOWARD SUSTAINABILITY.** By J.C.Dernbach ed., published by the Environmental Law Institute, Washington, D.C, 2002. This book delivers a review of US efforts to achieve sustainable development since Rio. Several experts from diverse academic fields contributed to the book and made assessments of US law and policy concerning the environment. For further information see <http://www.eli.org>.

**ECONOMIC ISSUES IN AGRICULTURAL BIOTECHNOLOGY.** By US Department of Agriculture, 2001. The report analysis the economic aspects of several key areas where agricultural biotechnology is affecting the public policy agenda. Available at <http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/aib762/>.

"Can non-timber forest products match tropical forest conservation and development objectives?" by J.E. Michael Arnold & M. Ruiz Perez in *ECOLOGICAL ECONOMICS* 39 (3, 2001): 437-447. Abstract: The contributions that non-timber forest products (NTFPs) can make to rural livelihoods, and the fact that their use is less ecologically destructive than timber harvesting, have encouraged the belief that more intensive management of forests for such products could contribute to both development and conservation objectives, and have led to initiatives to expand commercial use of NTFPs. An approach that recognises such areas of conflict, and attempts to arrive at a realistic balance between development and conservation, is proposed.

"Global warming, forests, and biodiversity" by Jean-Daniel Saphores & Baishali Bakshi in *ENERGY STUDIES REVIEW* 10 (1, 2001): 49-56. The authors examine the role that terrestrial sinks of CO<sub>2</sub>, and more particularly forest, could play in reducing global warming. After a review of the most recent scientific evidence on global warming and its consequences, they highlight the contribution of deforestation (particularly tropical deforestation) to global warming and the importance of tropical forests in the preservation of biodiversity. The authors then argue for the need to include forestry projects in the options available to reduce atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations, provided they are inscribed in the larger context of sustainable development and the rights of indigenous people.

### Electronic Resources

The Meridian Institute has launched a **FOOD SECURITY AND AG-BIOTECH NEWS LISTSERV** to contribute to an open and constructive dialogue about agricultural issues. The listserv is directed at policy makers, industry representatives, NGOs, scientists, academics, and others who wish to be informed of the most recent and pertinent developments in agricultural biotechnology and food security. Subscribers will receive daily e-mails that summarise news and resources concerning food security, intellectual property rights, biosafety, liability, technology transfer, and sub-Saharan Africa. Food Security and Ag-Biotech News will also report on developments in agricultural research and development, international agricultural trade, environmental negotiations, economic development, agricultural policy and developing country issues that intersect with food security. For information visit [www.merid.org](http://www.merid.org). To subscribe to Food Security and Ag-Biotech News, please visit [www.merid.org/fs-agbiotech](http://www.merid.org/fs-agbiotech).

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