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CONTENT

FISHERIES

'Friends Of Fish' Call For Reducing Harmful Subsidies	1
---	---

FORESTS

WTO Members Comment On Indigenous Amicus Brief In Lumber Dispute	3
--	---

BIOTECHNOLOGY

Discussions On Biotech Labelling At Codex Move Ahead At A Snail's Pace	5
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IN BRIEF

EVENTS & RESOURCES

Events	8
Resources	10

Fisheries

'FRIENDS OF FISH' CALL FOR REDUCING HARMFUL SUBSIDIES

WTO Members continued negotiations on fisheries subsidies at the second formal meeting of the WTO Negotiating Group on Rules on 6 May. Discussions focused on a joint communication tabled by New Zealand and other fish exporting countries that aimed to address developmentally and ecologically harmful fisheries subsidies.

At the Fourth WTO Ministerial Conference in Doha, Qatar in November last year, Members agreed to conduct negotiations on clarifying and improving WTO disciplines on fisheries subsidies "in the context of" negotiations on 'WTO Rules' (i.e. anti-dumping, subsidies and regional trade agreements). Reference to negotiations on fisheries subsidies is also included in the Trade and Environment section (para. 31) of the Doha Declaration. The decision to include fisheries subsidies as a separate negotiating item marks a significant change from the previous WTO mandate that had restricted discussions on this issue to the WTO Committee on Trade and Environment (CTE), which prior to Doha did not function as a negotiating forum. Fisheries subsidies are being discussed as a sub-item under the general "subsidies" topic in the Group on Rules, which was established at the Fourth WTO Ministerial Conference in November last year as one of seven negotiating bodies (see *BRIDGES Trade BioRes*, 7 March 2002; <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/02-03-07/story3.htm>).

Fisheries subsidies distort both trade and production, 'friends of the fish' say

The so-called 'Friends of Fish' -- Australia, Chile, Ecuador, Iceland, New Zealand, Peru, Philippines and the US -- put forward a communication at the Rules meeting aimed at

"providing some early direction to discussions" on fisheries subsidies. The paper was also supported by Norway, Barbados, Mexico, Malaysia and Thailand. Stating that government transfers to the fisheries industry were boosting the "race for fish" in the fisheries sector, the submission asserted that overcapacity and trade distortions resulting from fisheries subsidisation would "impede the sustainable development of many countries with significant fisheries resources".

The group of countries further argued that fisheries subsidies, unlike subsidised production in other sectors, would not only distort the competitiveness of traders in markets, but would also distort "access to shared fish stocks" and limit "productive access by other participants by depleting an exhaustible resource." As another damaging consequence, competition from subsidised distant-water fishing fleets would act as a disincentive for developing countries to establish their own fishing industries. As the current provisions on subsidies and countervailing measures (SCM) were mainly concerned with the effects of subsidies in markets but not with the trade and production distortions that subsidies in the fisheries sector can generate, the paper concluded that the WTO SCM Agreement needed to be improved.

As anticipated by trade sources, Japan and Korea vehemently rejected the 'Friends of Fish' paper, questioning whether the WTO was the appropriate forum to address fisheries. Japan said the group was overstating the problem as 95 percent of fish were caught in national waters, and only 5 percent caught on the high seas. This 5 percent, it said, should be tackled by the UN Convention of the Law of the Sea, and not by the WTO. One trade source said the EC occupied a middle ground position, as it took note of the points put forward but cautioned that Members needed to see how far the raised issues could really be tackled within the SCM framework. Canada objected to a 'sectoral' approach of discussing fisheries subsidies as a separate item, which it said could fragmentise the SCM Agreement.

While expressing disappointment with the lack of progress in the meeting, the environmental NGO WWF commended the 'Friends of Fish' submission for highlighting the link between fisheries subsidies and the resulting harm to the marine production base, rather than focusing only on the trade distorting effects. WWF also questioned the validity of Japan's 5 percent estimate, stressing that fishing in international waters will also affect domestic stocks of migratory fish. WWF has repeatedly highlighted the damaging consequences of fisheries subsidies, calling on governments to consider substantial new WTO language dealing specifically and separately with fishing subsidies in an effort to eliminate environmentally-harmful subsidies while taking into account the needs of developing countries and the environmentally-beneficial types of subsidies.

The next meeting of the Group on Rules is currently scheduled for 8-9 July.

Country positions on fisheries subsidies

The elimination of environmentally-harmful and trade-distorting fisheries subsidies is widely regarded as a "win-win-win" situation, i.e. beneficial for trade, the environment and development. This position is most strongly advocated by the so-called 'Friends of Fish' which in addition to the above mentioned countries also includes Argentina, Bangladesh, Colombia, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, Singapore, Thailand and Venezuela. While acknowledging that some fisheries subsidies might have beneficial effects for the environment and development, these countries see a clear role for the WTO to address subsidies that can lead to overcapacity (and consequently to overfishing) and trade distortions.

In contrast, Japan and Korea have so far resisted discussions on fisheries subsidies at the WTO, arguing that they should be addressed in other fora, including the UN Food and Agriculture Organization. They advocate a broader approach that looks at the various factors influencing overexploitation, such as illegal fishing, and also takes into account socio-economic aspects.

The EC has traditionally occupied a middle ground, stressing that only some fisheries subsidies lead to overcapacity while others do not, but instead support R&D and help the industry to downsize. While not opposed to discussions on this issue at the WTO, the EU stresses the need for a mandate "that makes sense", and that negotiations should take into account the importance of the sector to developing countries, the role of international fishery conventions and work underway in other relevant international fora (see <http://europa.eu.int/comm/trade/miti/envir/doha.htm>). Within the EU the self-declared 'friends of fishing' -- made up of France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, and Spain -- have been most reluctant to address fisheries subsidies.

Additional Resources

The following documents are searchable at <http://docsonline.wto.org/> using the document symbol:

'Friends of the Fish' submission to the WTO Group on Rules, TN/RL/W/3, 2002.

"Environmental benefits of removing trade restrictions and distortions," CTE Secretariat, WT/CTE/W/67, 1997.

Forests

WTO MEMBERS COMMENT ON INDIGENOUS AMICUS BRIEF IN LUMBER DISPUTE

Last week, Canada, the US, the EU, Japan and India submitted comments to the WTO Panel regarding the "amicus curiae" brief submitted by the Canadian First Nations group Interior Alliance in relation to the ongoing US-Canadian dispute over softwood lumber (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 2 May 2002; <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/02-05-02/inbrief.htm>). In related news, the Canadian province British Columbia has developed a new forest management code, which would lead to a competitive market-based forest industry in British Columbia

A brief history of the softwood lumber dispute

The Canada-US lumber dispute has been going on for almost 20 years, during which time US softwood lumber producers have repeatedly alleged that the stumpage fees -- a tax on each harvested tree -- levied by Canada's provincial governments are below market value and therefore constitute a subsidy to Canadian lumber producers. The US furthermore alleges that Canada allows its industry to illegally "dump" lumber in the US at artificially low prices. As a result, the US Department of Commerce on 9 August 2001 imposed preliminary countervailing duties amounting to 19.3 percent. On 2 May, US International Trade Commission (ITC) ruled that US industry "is threatened with material injury" by subsidised softwood lumber imported from Canada and sold in the US "at less than fair value", allowing the US Department of Commerce to issue countervailing duties averaging 27 percent on imports of softwood lumber products from Canada. However, the ITC ruled that the interim preliminary duty, which the US Department of Commerce had imposed in August last year, was not justified.

Following a Canadian request filed on 25 October in which Canada alleges that the 9 August interim duty violates a series of provisions in the WTO Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures (SCM) and in the GATT, a WTO panel was set up on 5 December 2001 to resolve the dispute (see BRIDGES Weekly, 12 December 2001; <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/01-12-12/wtoinbrief.htm>). The panel is expected to report by 30 August this year. Canada has furthermore requested a binding panel to be established under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) to review the US' countervailing duty

determination. A final panel report is expected by 31 December 2002. Canada supplies about one third of the US market for construction lumber, with 75 percent of lumber produced in British Colombia and Quebec.

WTO Members comment on amicus brief

In the brief submitted by the Interior Alliance, the group backs the US claim that Canadian lumber is heavily subsidised. However, the group goes further, alleging that the non-recognition of Aboriginal land rights constitutes a subsidy under international trade law. That is, the group argues that the Canadian government's refusal to redistribute part of the revenue collected from the forest exploitation to indigenous peoples allows Canadian forest companies to sell their timber under market value and thereby provides a subsidy in addition to the artificially low stumpage rates. In its submission, the group calls on the WTO Panel to "maintain the present trade remedies necessary to restore fair competition and ensure that fundamental conditions for fair trade such as environmental protection and the recognition of indigenous rights, especially Aboriginal Title, be respected and met by the Canadian government and Canadian forest companies in the future."

In an unprecedented move, the Panel ruling in the softwood lumber dispute had asked state parties involved in the dispute to comment on the brief. As trade sources pointed out, the comments submitted by WTO Members showed that the governments did not want to get involved in a domestic matter, in this case disagreements between indigenous people and the Canadian government, but preferred the WTO Panel to decide on the legal matters of the dispute. However, Member positions varied in relation to the importance they gave to the issues raised in the amicus brief. One trade source stated that the Panel should consider the argument raised in the paper, namely whether the non-recognition of Aboriginal land rights constitutes a subsidy under international trade law, by looking at the legal issue of whether the Canadian Indians under Canadian civil law have property rights to the timber in question. In contrast, countries that have consistently opposed "amicus briefs" in the past are unlikely to comment on the brief at all, according to a developing country source. Similar to previous WTO cases where "amicus curiae" briefs were accepted, some countries disagreed with the Panel's decision to accept the brief.

The comments by the Member States are confidential until the Panel report is released, and none of those involved has made an official statements at this stage.

Amicus briefs at the WTO

While WTO panels are not obliged to take into account "amicus curiae" briefs, i.e. unsolicited submissions by non-parties of the dispute at issue, they can do so if they consider it appropriate. The acceptance of "amicus curiae" briefs has been a point of intense debate at the WTO and Member States' positions differ widely on this matter. The issue has recently received renewed attention after the EC filed a submission on 13 March to the improvement of the DSU (TN/DS/W/1), which also included regulations of "amicus curiae" briefs submissions, stating that panels should be encouraged to seek information from competent international organisations (see BRIDGES Weekly, 16 April 2002; <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/02-04-16/story5.htm>). India, in response to the EU paper submitted a communication on 7 May, which reflected India's general opposition to Panels or Appellate Bodies considering submissions by third parties (TN/DS/W/5). One of India's main arguments is that it would disadvantage developing country Members in disputes with developed countries, as very few entities from developing countries are in a position to make submissions.

The (de)regulation of Canadian forests

On 1 May the government of British Columbia (BC) presented a new code for the management of forests. The new forest requirements would be "science based" and "result oriented", and companies would have leeway to decide on how to meet the required environmental standards and management practices. The Sierra Club of BC, an environmental NGO, criticised the new code for deregulating forest management, selling out publicly-owned forests to forest corporations and further stirring the trade dispute with the US. According to the BC Coalition for Sustainable Forest Solutions -- a broad coalition of citizens, First Nations, labour and environmental organisations --, increasing the rights of forest corporations over publicly-owned forests without acknowledging the rights of other interest groups would lead to more opportunities for subsidies and the selling of timber under market value and would thus further the trade dispute between Canada and the US. The new code should instead promote significant tenure reforms, encourage companies to support local economy, as well as obtain fair market value for the public timber from BC. This would then also help to settle the current lumber dispute with the US as timber from BC would then again achieve fair market prices, it is argued. The government of British Columbia is seeking inputs on the new code from the public and experts on "gaps and issues of high risk" until autumn 2002 when the legislation will be introduced with the code coming into effect in spring 2003.

Additional Resources

The WTO documents referred in the article are available at <http://docsonline.wto.org/>, using the document symbol. "Economics of the US-Canada Softwood Lumber Dispute: A Historical Perspective," by SM Osman Rahman and Stephen Devadoss. Available at <http://128.233.58.173/estey/>.

"Forest Subsidies Report," by L. Matthaues & T. Green. Available at <http://www.forestsolutions.ca/Issue1.htm>.

"Ad campaign accuses BC Government of Softwood Sellout," Forest Solutions, 25 April 2002; "New code to govern British Columbia Forest Industry," ENS, 1 May 2002; "Trade panel OKs lumber tariffs," AP, 2 May 2002; "Canadian firms say lumber ruling not total loss," REUTERS, 2 May 2002; Softwood lumber from Canada threatens U.S. industry with injury says, ITC," ITC PRESS RELEASE, 2 May 2002; ICTSD Internal Files.

Biotechnology

DISCUSSIONS ON BIOTECH LABELLING AT CODEX MOVE AHEAD AT A SNAIL'S PACE

Delegates at the meeting of the Codex Committee On Food Labelling on 6-10 May in Halifax, Canada, made virtually no headway on the contentious issue of the labelling of genetically modified (GM) foods, largely repeating previously stated positions (see BRIDGES Weekly, 8 May 2001; <http://www.ictsd.org/html/weekly/08-05-01/story3.htm>). While making some progress on the purpose of the draft recommendations, countries remained deeply divided over the recommendations' scope. Divisions were also apparent in the debate on 'country of origin' labelling.

Regarding the purpose of the draft recommendations on GM food labelling, countries agreed to include the facilitation of "consumer choice" as one of the objectives of GM food labelling, a point advocated in particular by the EU. It should be noted that the draft recommendations simply aim to set out guidelines that countries can follow if they choose to label GM foods, but do not imply that countries that adhere to the draft recommendations are required to label all GM foods covered by them. Nevertheless, several governments tried to limit the scope of the guidelines by opposing references to foods produced with, but not containing GM organisms. The inclusion of this category was also strongly rejected by the International Association of Plant Breeders (ASSINSEL) as its implementation "would have important cost implications without benefit to consumer's health [and] would particularly affect developing countries".

Labelling requirements for this type of GM foods have already led to disagreement between the US and EU over the EU's proposed labelling regulations for GM foods which also cover this category. The US argues that such requirements would be scientifically unjustified and unnecessarily trade distortive.

Divisions were also apparent on 'country of origin' labelling which several delegates argued should not be discussed in Codex at this stage, but should rather await finalisation of work in the WTO Committee on Rules of Origin, which is in the process of harmonising rules of origin to be applied by all WTO Members. Others, however, pointed out that the debate at Codex differed from that at the WTO as it was only concerned with labelling. Opponents of the discussion also pointed out that such labelling requirements would be impractical and burdensome for industry -- especially if required for different ingredients -- while not being of significant importance to consumers. In response, some stated that many NGOs had called for such labelling standards, stressing that they already existed for fruits and vegetables. As no consensus could be reached on whether to begin new work on 'country of origin' labelling, this issue will be taken up again at the next meeting of the Committee.

The Codex Committee on Food Labelling is currently scheduled to meet again on 20 April to 2 May 2003.

Background

The Canada-based Codex Commission on Food Labelling is a subsidiary body of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC). While Codex standards are only voluntary, the CAC is recognised by the SPS Agreement as the international organisation responsible for standard-setting related to food safety. WTO Members "shall base" their measures related to human and plant health on CAC's standards, guidelines or recommendations. Such measures "shall be deemed to be necessary to protect human, animal or plant life or health, and presumed to be consistent with the relevant provisions" of the SPS Agreement. While Codex standards only apply to food safety, they are likely to have far wider implications on discussions in the other standard-setting bodies as well as in related fora, including other Codex Committees, the WTO and bilateral negotiations. The other two international standard-setting bodies recognised in the SPS Agreement are the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) for plant health and the Office International de Epizooties (OIE) for animal health and zoonoses.

For the Codex Procedure, see <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/02-05-02/story2.htm>.

Additional Resources

Documents of the meeting: http://www.codexalimentarius.net/ccfl30/fl02_01e.htm

ICTSD Internal Files.

In Brief

ZAMBIA TO SEEK CITES APPROVAL FOR IVORY SALE. Zambia's Wildlife Authority announced on 8 May that it would ask the Convention International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES) to approve a one-time sale of Zambia's 17-ton ivory stockpile collected from poachers and culled elephants, arguing that the management of the stockpile had serious financial and security implications. South Africa also indicated that it might seek to sell its Kruger National Park stockpile. The request is likely to revive the ongoing controversy over the sale of ivory, banned under CITES since 1989. Southern African countries have in the past argued that proceeds of such sales were required for conservation efforts and Namibia, Botswana and Zimbabwe already held experimental auctions for Japanese buyers in 1999. Other countries, however, led by Kenya, are supposed to the sales,

arguing that the resulting demand would be filled by poachers. The 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties of CITES will be held on 3-15 November in Santiago, Chile.

"Zambia says to apply to CITES to sell ivory," REUTERS, 9 May 2002.

NEW US FARM BILL UPSETS WTO PARTNERS, COULD HURT DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. A new US farm bill signed into law by US President George W. Bush on 13 May has met with severe disapproval by a number of the country's trading partners. The bill is expected to raise total US subsidies to the agricultural sector to USD 180 billion over ten years which includes and increase in agricultural subsidies by 80 percent to the tune of at least USD 82 billion (see BRIDGES Weekly, 15 May 2002; <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/02-05-15/story2.htm>). Mercosur -- the largest trading bloc of agricultural exporting countries in Latin America -- is considering a challenge at the WTO of the US legislation. "The United States preaches free trade but then are the most obscene protectionists, " said Argentine President Eduardo Duhalde. Australia, Canada and the EU have also highlighted possible inconsistencies between the bill and the US' obligations under WTO rules. Others have also highlighted the development dimension of the new bill. The World Bank, which has persistently advocated cutting agricultural subsidies in OECD nations, called 13 May "a sad day for world farmers". According to its data, cotton exporters in West and Central Africa alone would gain further USD 250 million in revenues per annum if the US -- the world's biggest cotton producer -- stopped subsidising domestic cotton production. But the increase in US farm support, analysts forecast, could further depress world commodity prices, making imports cheaper than local products in the developing world and ultimately forcing domestic farmers out of business.

"Opponents Unite To Decry US Farm Subsidies," IPS, 14 May 2002; "Mercosur Prepares Offensive Against Increased US Farm Subsidies," EFE via COMTEX, 10 May 2002; "Australia To Check US Farm Bill Complies With WTO Rules," REUTERS, 13 May 2002; ICTSD Internal Files

AFRICANS CALLED ON TO PROTECT THEIR BIOLOGICAL HERITAGE. At the opening of the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) regional meeting on the protection of expressions of folklore and traditional knowledge in Lusaka, Zambia's Vice-President Enoch Kavindele made a strong plea to African countries to protect their heritage of biological and genetic resources, without which, he said, "Africa has no future". "Let it not be said of this generation that they had the knowledge and the means to protect their heritage, but they did not have the will to do so," he added. Kavindele urged African governments to enact national laws that recognise, protect and reward knowledge and innovations derived from traditional knowledge. He furthermore called on the international community to develop a legally binding international instrument that would reward traditional knowledge systems.

"Africa has no future unless it protects its heritage - Kavindele," THE POST, 9 May 2002.

LONDON CONFERENCE DISCUSSES SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE. The question of how best to integrate sustainable development objectives into the world trade system was debated at a London conference on sustainable development. The conference, which took place from 13-14 May and was organised by the Royal Institute of International Affairs, was held to explore issues on the theme of sustainable development in the new trade round with a focus on trade, investment and the environment. Among the speakers were Dr Supachai Panitchpakdi, WTO Director-General designate and Klaus Töpfer, Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP). One of the most interesting topics for discussion was that of how best to make the international trade system more environmentally friendly but without hindering economic development. One proposal was to transform UNEP into a World Environmental Organization. It was felt that this would make it easier to harmonise the environment-related WTO Agreements with the twenty multilateral environmental agreements that contain trade-related provisions. But others thought it would be better to

integrate sustainable development objectives directly into the world trade system and that the creation of such a new organisation might actually hinder this. The links between trade liberalisation and the environment have attracted increasing attention in recent years. Since the WTO was created primary to reduce barriers to trade, the organization has become a focus for debate on the trade-environment relationship.

ICTSD Internal Files.

Events & Resources

EVENTS

For a more comprehensive list of events in trade and sustainable development, please refer to ICTSD's web calendar. 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. 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.

Coming up in the next two weeks

13-17 May, Leiden, Netherlands: 12TH MEETING OF THE CITES PLANTS COMMITTEE. For more information contact: CITES Secretariat; tel: (41 22) 917 8148; fax: 917 8139; email: cites@unep.ch; Internet: http://www.cites.org/eng/cttee/plants/12/general_info.shtml.

13-17 May, Maracay, Venezuela: BIOSAFETY 3 - ADVANCED ISSUES ON BIOSAFETY: RISK MONITORING AND PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF BIOTECHNOLOGY. Organised by Centro Nacional de Investigaciones Agropecuarias/CENIAP (Maracay, Venezuela) and Centro Tecnológico Polar (Caracas, Venezuela). Postponed from 12-16 November 2001. For further information, contact: Dr. Efraín G. Salazar Yamarte; tel: (58-43) 471066; fax: 471066, 831421; email: efra63@hotmail.com; Internet: <http://www.icgeb.trieste.it/~bsafesrv/bsfn0011.htm>.

17 May, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO INFORMAL SPECIAL SESSION OF THE COUNCIL FOR TRADE-RELATED ASPECTS OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS.

19-22 May, Quebec, Canada: WORLD ECOTOURISM SUMMIT. Organised by the World Tourism Organization, and hosted by the Canadian Tourism Commission and Tourism Quebec. The Summit aims to be a major landmark for the International Year of Ecotourism. Its global objective is in line with the philosophy of the United Nations in the field of sustainable development, and more particularly with UNEP Principles for Implementation of Sustainable Tourism. The Summit conclusions and recommendations are meant to be reported to the World Summit on Sustainable Development. For further information, contact the World Tourism Organization, Capitán Haya, tel: (34 91) 567 81 00; fax: 571 37 33; email: env@world-tourism.org; Internet: <http://www.ecotourism2002.org>

20-24 May, Shimonoseki, Japan: 54TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL WHALING COMMISSION. For further information contact: IWC Secretariat; tel: (44-12-2) 323-3971; email: secretariat@iwcoffice.org; Internet: <http://www.iwcoffice.org/>.

21-22 May, Barcelona, Spain: FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENTAL LIABILITY. This event will gather international experts from the addressed field with the aim of providing a forum for international encounter and discussion. For more information contact: Conference Secretariat, Arion Sponsoring; tel: 34-93-418-6810; fax: 34-93-211-9010; e-mail: arion@telefonica.net; Internet: <http://www.iidma.org/congresoprogrenl.pdf>

21 May, Geneva, Switzerland: IS THE WORLD TRADE SYSTEM RIGGED AGAINST THE POOR? At the occasion of the launch of its trade campaign, OXFAM is organising a debate on the findings of OXFAM's new report "Rigged rules and double standards: trade, globalisation and the fight against poverty" and its implications for on-going negotiations. The meeting will be held at the Centre de conférence de Varembe – CCV, Salle A, 9 rue de Varembe, Geneva. For further information contact: Romain Benicchio, tel: (41 22) 321 23 72; fax: 321 27 53; email: romain.benicchio@oxfaminternational.org.

22-20 May, New Delhi, India: ASIA REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON RISK ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT IN IMPLEMENTING THE BIOSAFETY PROTOCOL. For more information contact: Balakrishna Pisupati, IUCN Regional Biodiversity Programme; tel: 94-74-710-439; fax: 94-1-682-470; e-mail: iucn-rbp@sltnet.lk; Internet: <http://www.rbp-iucn.lk/>

22-24 May, Victoria, Canada: FOURTH INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S CONFERENCE ON THE ENVIRONMENT. The conference is expected to bring together 800 children from 10-12 years of age from over 115 countries, who will learn about and discuss the state of the environment and showcase environmental initiatives by schools. The conference will also produce a statement from children to the world leaders who will meet for the WSSD. For information contact: Theodore Oben; tel: (254-2) 623-262; fax: 62-3927; email: theodore.oben@unep.org; Internet: http://www.unep.org/children_youth/

27 May-7 June, Bali, Indonesia: FOURTH PREPARATORY SESSION FOR THE 2002 WSSD. The meeting will include Ministerial and Multi-stakeholder Dialogue Segments, and is expected to result in elements for a concise political document to be submitted to the 2002 Summit. For further information contact: Andrey Vasilyev, DESA, New York; tel: (1 212) 963-5949; email: vasilyev@un.org; Major groups contact: Zehra Aydin-Sipos; tel: (1 212) 963 8811; email: aydin@un.org; Internet: <http://www.johannesburgsummit.org/>

Other forthcoming events

22-26 July, Guatemala City, Guatemala: CONTRIBUTION OF CRITERIA AND INDICATORS TO SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT: A WAY FORWARD. The conference is being organized as a follow-up to recommendations made by the Expert Meeting on Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management held in Rome in 2000. For information contact: Glenda Lee, Coordinator, Local Organizing Committee; tel: (502) 379-9830; fax: 475-4407; email: cici2002@inab.gob.gt; Internet: <http://www.inab.gob.gt>

14-19 July, Geneva, Switzerland: WORLD CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM. The aim of the forum is to strengthen international cooperation and is calling on the desire of the United Nations to work closely with civil society in its activities, as well as the request of several non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to strengthen cooperation among themselves as well as with the United Nations System. It will encompass the different areas of the international arena (the environment, health, human rights, humanitarian rights, education, peace, security, information technology, etc.) and will allow, in each of these areas, the promotion of cooperation. For information contact: World Civil Society Forum, fax: (41 22) 959 88 51; email: forum@mandint.org; Internet: <http://www.worldcivilsociety.org/pages/1/en/presfor.htm>
10-14 September 2003, Cancun, Mexico: FIFTH WTO MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE.

17-21 September, Quito, Ecuador: SECOND WORLD MEETING OF MOUNTAIN POPULATIONS. Representatives of 115 countries will discuss the challenges facing mountain communities worldwide. For more information contact: Association of Mountain Population of the World, tel: (593-258) 2-478; fax: 582-478; email: cedime@ecuanex.net.ec; Internet: <http://www.mtnforum.org/calendar/events/0209wmma.htm>

7-10 October, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: CONFERENCE ON BRINGING BACK THE FORESTS - POLICIES AND PRACTICES FOR DEGRADED LANDS AND FORESTS. The

international conference will address solutions to rehabilitation challenges in the forests and grasslands of Asia and the Pacific. For more information contact: Alias Abdul Jalil, Malaysia Forest Research Institute; tel: (60-3) 6272-2516; fax: 6277-3249; email: foreconf@apafri.upm.edu.my; Internet: <http://apafri.upm.edu.my/reconf/index.html>

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. Submissions of publications to ICTSD's documentation centre would also be welcome (contact Matteo Rizzolli, mrizzolli@ictsd.ch).

WSSD CHAIRMAN'S TEXT FOR NEGOTIATION. The newly revised Chair's text will form the basis for debate at the Fourth Preparatory Meeting for the World Summit on Sustainable Development (27 May - 7 June). Available at <http://www.johannesburgsummit.org/>.

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT IN THE WILDLIFE TRADE. Commissioned by WWF and TRAFFIC, 2002. According to the report, some of the world's most endangered animals are being pushed towards extinction by British traffickers who are encouraged by weak wildlife laws. As a result, WWF and TRAFFIC are calling for the maximum sentence for illegal wildlife trade in the UK to be increased from two to five years imprisonment; and sentencing guidelines to be issued to magistrates and judges on the appropriate penalties for wildlife crime. The report is available at http://www.wwf.org.uk/News/n_0000000557.asp.

"Conservation narratives in Costa Rica: conflict and co-existence" by Lisa M. Campbell in DEVELOPMENT AND CHANGE 33 (1, Jan. 2002): 29-56 This article examines narratives about nature conservation in Costa Rica, specifically those related to wildlife and biodiversity, and their evolution with the growth of tourism and bioprospecting industries. It outlines a traditional conservation narrative and two streams of an emerging counter-narrative, and discusses problems and prospects for each in contemporary Costa Rica. The article focuses particularly on the ways in which the narratives are increasingly drawing on, informing, and sometimes conflicting with one another; it is based on the author's research undertaken in various protected areas in Costa Rica since 1994 and on research published by others.

MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PROCESSES FOR GOVERNANCE AND SUSTAINABILITY - BEYOND DEADLOCK AND CONFLICT. By Minu Hemmati, 2002. This practical guide explains how multi-stakeholder processes can be organised and implemented in order to resolve the complex issues in and around sustainable forms of development, whilst recognising the rights of, and risks faced by, all parties. For further information see: <http://www.earthscan.co.uk/asp/bookdetails.asp?key=3589>

"An estimation of the social benefits of preserving biodiversity," by B. Desaiques & D. Ami in INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES, 1 (1, 2001): 73-86. The paper tries to evaluate the benefits of biodiversity restoration in the southwest of France, along the Garonne river. This particular riparian forest has been studied extensively by a group of ecologists belonging to the CNRS (National Center for Scientific Research) in Toulouse. A representative sample of 402 persons living in the surrounding region was asked in face-to-face interviews about their willingness-to-pay for the restoration programme.

THE FUTURE OF FOOD - BIOTECHNOLOGY MARKETS AND POLICIES IN AN INTERNATIONAL SETTING. Edited by Philip G. Pardey, 2001. The chapters in this book confront the controversy over biotechnology with new analyses and insights from economists and technologists. The topics covered include the differences in perceptions about biotechnology among rich and poor countries; the effects of rich-country restrictions on international trade in genetically modified crops on the welfare of poorer countries; the effects

of intellectual property rights on the bioscience done by public agencies the world over; and the economic impacts. For further information see: <http://www.ifpri.org/pubs/jhu/futurefood.htm>

"Race to the Top: The Biases of the WTO Regime," by Carl Pope in HARVARD INTERNATIONAL REVIEW 23 (4, 2002): 62-66. According to the author, environmentalists do not seek to use international trade to set air pollution standards for New Delhi, water pollution rules in Johannesburg, or standards for genetically modified foods in Italy and do not expect the WTO to solve the world's environmental problems. Instead, the paper argues, they hope it will not worsen those problems or tilt the playing field against efforts in other arenas to achieve planetary sustainability.

"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. According to the author, 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.

In connection with the "The World Food Summit: five years later" to be held in Rome, 10-13 June 2002, FAO has prepared a series of fact sheets on specific issues and topics (<http://www.fao.org/worldfoodsummit/fsheets.htm>). One of them is a 2-page pamphlet on "biotechnology and food security" (in Arabic, English, French, Italian and Spanish). Available at <http://www.fao.org/worldfoodsummit/fsheets.htm>.

Job Vacancy

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation is looking for a Project Assistant, to be based in Washington, D.C., who will support the Foundation's international and special programs, through grant administration and other tasks related to management of the Foundation's grant database; and complete projects of special need as determined by the supervisor. For further information contact: Karen Sprecher-Keating; email: karen.sprecherkeating@nfwf.org.

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