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CONTENT

Biotechnology	1
US Takes Next Step In Eu Biotech Challenge	
Agriculture	3
EU CAP Reform Deal Hoped To Spur Ag Negotiations, NGOs Sceptical	
Marine Resources	4
Whaling Commission More Split Than Ever	
New WTO Proposal From Chile On Fisheries Subsidies	
In Brief	6
Events & Resources	8

Biotechnology

US TAKES NEXT STEP IN EU BIOTECH CHALLENGE

The US on 19 June announced it would request the establishment of a WTO dispute settlement panel to examine its complaint against the EC's continued de facto moratorium on the approval of genetically modified organisms (GMOs), after the US-EC consultations had proven inconclusive (see BRIDGES Weekly, 15 May 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/03-05-15/index.htm>). Pressure is also growing on Egypt to launch a dispute, after it decided to not join the US case as a third party.

US to request panel

The US in a statement noted it was "disappointed but not surprised that these consultations have not resulted in any changes to the EU's five year old illegal and unscientific moratorium". The US is likely to submit its request at the next meeting of the Dispute Settlement Body on 21 July. If the request is rejected by the EC as expected, the second request, which would automatically lead to the establishment of the panel, could be submitted on 29 August. The US pointed out that a panel request would not prevent the EU from "following through on their promises to reverse course and end the moratorium".

According to EU sources, the US Office of the Trade Representative has told the EU that it would drop the case if the EU adopted its traceability and labelling regulations that would result in a lifting of the moratorium. These regulations have been submitted to the European Parliament for a second reading on 3 July, and could be adopted by October 2003. Adoption, however, might be delayed if the Parliament approved a different version of the regulations than that adopted by Ministers in late-2002 (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 11 December 2002, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/02-12-11/inbrief.htm>).

Egypt under pressure to launch dispute

In a letter to the European Consumers' Organisation, Egypt declared its intention not to join the motion of arbitration launched by the US. It remains unclear, however, whether Egypt will launch a separate dispute as announced by the US on 13 May (see BRIDGES Weekly, 14 May 2003, referenced above). Egypt is reportedly engaged in internal consultations to determine whether the country is actually negatively affected by the EU's moratorium and whether it has an interest in launching a dispute.

Meanwhile, pressure on Egypt to join the dispute is growing in the US. In a letter to Egypt's Minister of Foreign Affairs Ahmed Maher, US Senator Chuck Grassley, chair of the Committee on Finance (R, Iowa), suggested that a decision against a complaint might harm Egypt's prospects for a free trade agreement (FTA) with the US. "One of the criteria that ought to be used to determine with whom the United States negotiates future FTAs is whether a country shares the same vision of the global trading system as does the United States," he noted. "I certainly would like to be able to include Egypt in that camp."

EC responds to consultation requests

Australia, Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, India, Mexico, New Zealand and Peru have joined the US request as third parties. Argentina and Canada, which are also undertaking separate proceedings, have yet to announce whether they will request a panel. The consultations initiated by the US and Argentina were held jointly, while the Canada-EC consultations were held separately.

In its response to the requests to join consultations, the EC noted that it was not aware of any exports from Australia, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, New Zealand and Peru being affected by EC biotech measures. The EC also pointed out that several Australian states had enacted different types of 'moratoria' on commercially-grown GM crops while Mexico had suspended authorisation for large-scale commercial growing of GM corn due to concerns over potential impacts on wild relatives and traditional crops. In addition, the EC highlighted that "no living modified organisms can at present be grown or introduced into New Zealand" under the country's legislation and noted that transgenic foods and GMOs were not allowed for import, sale, production or marketing in Peru. The EC concluded that the dispute "may therefore have important implications" for these countries.

US Biotech Push Gathers Headlines

The US Department of Agriculture organised a ministerial conference on agricultural science and technology in Sacramento, California, from 23-25 June. Ministers from 75 countries -- mainly developing -- attended. At a parallel industry event in Washington DC, US President Bush spoke on the issue of biotechnology, stating that "acting on unfounded, unscientific fears, many European governments have blocked the import of all new biotech crops". Referring to the famine in Africa, he went on to urge Europe to accept genetically modified (GM) food, and said "we should encourage the spread of safe, effective biotechnology to win the fight against global hunger". Critics, however, gathered to protest around these events, noting links between the Bush administration and big agribusiness that stands to gain from promotion of their GM crops, and stressing that there is sufficient food to feed the world -- fair distribution is the problem. Walter Kessler of the Family Farm Defenders said that US family farmers have suffered losses from GM products, "but the truth ... is being buried in the slick multi-million dollar public relations campaign being waged by the biotechnology industry and promoted by the USDA, primary sponsors of this conference".

For additional information on the US-EC biotech dispute, see http://www.ictsd.org/issarea/environment/biotech_case.htm.

ICTSD reporting; "Global Ag Ministers Assemble for Biotech Promotion," ENS, 23 June; "Global Biotech Food Fight Moves to California," REUTERS, 23 June; "US in new global GM push", BBC NEWS, 23 June; "Africa Becomes Battleground in Global Biotech War", Reuters, 25 June 2003; "E.U. says Bush's accusations on biotech policy are untrue," ENN, 25 June 2003.

Agriculture

EU CAP REFORM DEAL HOPED TO SPUR AG NEGOTIATIONS, NGOS SCEPTICAL

After a 16-hour negotiating marathon -- and concluding more than a year of heated internal debate -- EU farm ministers, on 26 June in Luxemburg, finally agreed on a compromise deal outlining the future of the European Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). While trading partners such as the US, New Zealand and Brazil have cautiously welcomed the EU's decision, civil society groups rejected the reform plan as being half-hearted and not going far enough to curb over-production in Europe or to halt dumping of agricultural produce on developing countries.

Original Fischler decoupling proposal watered down

While the European Commission in its original proposal had suggested to fully de-couple agricultural subsidies as of 2004, the compromise reached allows EU member states to maintain a limited link between subsidy and production under defined conditions so as to avoid the abandonment of production. Supporters of de-coupling have blamed the linking of subsidies and output for Europe's notorious wine lakes and butter mountains, while opponents believe that de-coupling would expose European farmers to market forces and would put many of them out of business (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 7 February 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/03-02-07/story1.htm>).

Most of the old premia paid under the CAP will be merged into a 'single farm payment' which will be independent from production and will be linked to the respect of environmental, foods safety and animal welfare standards (cross-compliance). The single farm payment will enter into force in 2005, although member states can apply for a transitional period until 2007 at the latest. Funds saved through cutting support to big producers will be shifted to the rural development pillar of the CAP (modulation). However, overall EU support paid to its farming sector is not likely to decrease significantly. Rather, the changes will allow most subsidies to be shifted to the 'green box' under the WTO Agreement of Agriculture. Green box subsidies are exempt from reductions as they are considered to be not or minimally trade distorting.

EU Agriculture Commissioner Franz Fischler described the minister's decision as "the beginning of a new era". "We are saying goodbye to the old subsidy system which significantly distorts international trade and harms developing countries," adding that the EU would now be in a much stronger position in the current Doha Round negotiations. However, he also stressed that the EU could only use its increased negotiating capital if they got something in exchange. "Unilateral disarmament is not on," he warned. "The ball is now in the camp of other countries, such as the US, whose agricultural policies continue to be highly trade-distorting and have even become increasingly so," referring to the 2002 US farm bill, which is estimated to increase subsidies to the agricultural sector by 80 percent to the tune of at least \$US 82 billion over the next decade.

Lukewarm support by trading partners...

While most trading partners cautiously welcomed the reform package, they were reluctant to speculate what impacts the EU decision would have on the ongoing negotiations. Carlos Perez del Castillo, Chair of the WTO General Council, described the reformed CAP as "a step in the right direction", noting that deeper analysis was needed to determine the effects it would have on the WTO agriculture talks. Australian Trade Minister Mark Vaile welcomed the move as a small but positive step. Fellow Cairns Group member Brazil called the EU farm minister's decision as "a sign of flexibility", whereas Canada's Trade Ministry found the deal "encouraging" and expressed its hope that it could lead to progress in the Doha Round negotiations. The Director General of the WTO welcomed the agreement saying that it could help breaking the current deadlock in the agriculture negotiations.

The US called on the EU to translate the reform package into new and ambitious negotiating proposals at the WTO. "It is crucial that the EU press forward with significant trade reform promptly," US Trade

Representative Robert Zoellick stated. Only then could the US "work with the EU and others to advance the WTO negotiations at the next ministerial meeting in Cancun in September," Zoellick added. According to an EU spokesman, however, Fischler does not see a need to get a new negotiating mandate for the WTO negotiations, although he said he would explore this issue further with EU member states.

...while several civil society groups condemn CAP reform deal

In their reactions to the freshly released compromise agreement, numerous European and international environment, development and consumer groups expressed their deep dissatisfaction with the decision made by EU agriculture ministers that they said would bring no benefits to developing countries. "These proposals confirm our worst fears," said Phil Bloomer, Head of Advocacy at Oxfam GB. "European agriculture will still be subsidised to the tune of GBP 30 billion creating vast surpluses that will be dumped on poor countries." Barry Coates, Director of the World Development Movement, noted that the reform package "falls short of what is needed to stop the agricultural dumping that destroys the livelihoods of small farmers in the poorest countries." For its part, Consumer International accused the EU of contradicting its commitment to development issues, describing the deal as "anti-development, anti-trade and anti-consumer".

Additional Resources

For further information on the CAP reform, see http://europa.eu.int/comm/agriculture/mtr/index_en.htm

ICTSD reporting; "WTO chief says EU farm deal to help trade talks," REUTERS, 26 June 2003; "Lamy: EU to bargain hard for Ag concessions in Doha talks," DOW JONES, 26 June 2003; "US says EU farm reform needs second act," REUTERS, 26 June 2003; "Australia, NZ: Eu farm policy may revive world trade talks," AP, 27 June 2003; "Brazil says EU farm reform may aid WTO talks," REUTERS, 26 June 2003; Canada says EU reform deal could spur WTO progress," REUTERS, 26 June 2003; "EU fundamentally reforms its farm policy to accomplish sustainable farming in Europe, EU PRESS RELEASE, 26 June 2003.

Marine Resources

WHALING COMMISSION MORE SPLIT THAN EVER

On 19 June the annual meeting of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) ended in Berlin and left the 51 members in deep disagreement over the objectives of the Commission. During the one-week long conference member countries discussed proposals on whale sanctuaries, whaling quotas and a conservation committee.

No Go For Whale Sanctuaries Or For New Quotas

Australia and New Zealand proposed, for the fourth time, to establish a whale sanctuary in the South Pacific. For the fourth time the proposal failed to gain the necessary three-quarters majority by a vote of 24 to 17 (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 13 June 2002, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/02-06-13/story2.htm>). The proposal from Argentina and Brazil to establish a whale sanctuary in the South Atlantic suffered the same fate and was defeated by the same vote. The Japanese put forward two proposals to increase their whaling quota. One proposal was for another 150 minke whales, the other for 150 Bryde's whales. Both proposals were supposed to increase the quota for the coastal fishing communities in Japan. However, both proposals were turned down.

The voting on the four proposals was representative of the political split within the IWC. Regarding the whale sanctuaries, the pro-whaling nations headed by Japan, Norway and Iceland argued that whale populations were abundant and therefore there was no need for sanctuaries. At the same time the anti-whaling nations, headed by the US and European countries, led the opposition against the Japanese proposals. Japan reacted angrily to the rejection of its proposals, arguing that the US had received a quota for

its fishing communities at an IWC meeting last year (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 24 October 2002, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/02-10-24/inbrief.htm>) and was thus unreasonably taking a strong position against the Japanese proposal.

A Go Ahead For The Conservation Committee

Despite the traditional disagreements on whaling quotas and the dominance of arguing over old disputes, IWC members agreed to establish a conservation committee by simple majority vote. The conservation committee will address, inter alia, the impact of marine pollution, climate change, and bycatch in fishing nets. The establishment of the committee was seen as a major breakthrough for the anti-whaling nations as well as for the conservation community. A representative from the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) said "Campaigners fighting for the survival of whales and dolphins around the world will remember Berlin 2003 as a historic turning point".

For the pro-whaling nations the establishment of the committee marks a major setback, which they did not accept quietly. On the last day of the meeting the group of pro-whaling countries, which consists of 17 countries headed by Japan, Norway and Iceland, delivered a letter to the commission expressing their deep concern over the latest developments, in particular the establishment of the conservation committee, and threatened to leave the Commission and look into alternative bodies to regulate the sustainable use of abundant whale resources. The letter furthermore stated that the Berlin Initiative was "an attempt to change the fundamental objectives and subvert the purpose" of the IWC.

The IWC will meet again in June next year in Sorrento, Italy.

"Whales Win No Sanctuary From Acrimonious Commission" ENS, 19 June 2003; "End in Sight for the IWC" High North News, 19 June 2003.

ICTSD Internal Files

NEW WTO PROPOSAL FROM CHILE ON FISHERIES SUBSIDIES

Chile -- a member of the "Friends of Fish" group, which also includes the US, Argentina, Iceland, New Zealand, Norway and Peru -- presented a new proposal to the WTO Negotiating Group on Rules (18-19 June) on possible approaches to improved disciplines on fisheries subsidies (TN/RL/W/115, searchable at <http://docsonline.wto.org>). The paper identifies fisheries resources as a classic example of the 'tragedy of the commons,' and observes that fisheries subsidies act as a barrier to trade to non-subsidising countries, as these countries cannot participate in the exploitation of shared, and sometimes their own, fishery resources on equal terms. The subsidisation of fleets, allowing them to exploit fish stocks under pressure, also has a negative impact on conservation measures put into place by other WTO Members.

To address these problems, and considering submissions previously made by the US (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 3 April 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/03-04-03/story4.htm>) and the EU (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 15 May 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/03-05-15/story3.htm>), the paper outlines a "red box" of banned fisheries subsidies and an "amber box" of subsidies that would be allowed as long as notification requirements were fulfilled. The "red box" of banned subsidies would include all subsidies that promote overcapacity and overfishing, such as subsidies to: transfer a country's ships to the high seas or the local waters of another country; purchase new or used ships; modernise the fleet; and reduce the costs of production factors. Subsidies in the form of positive discrimination in tax treatment or access to credit would also be banned. The "amber box" would include all other subsidies that do not cause injury to other Members and have been duly notified. These subsidies would include social subsidies designed to assist small-scale fisheries and coastal communities, and to improve fisheries management to ensure the sustainability of the fisheries.

During the Negotiating Group meeting, members of the "Friends of Fish" group supported the proposal from Chile, and Members briefly discussed technical details related to the notification requirement. Japan and Korea, who the Friends of Fish say provide their fishing fleets with substantial capacity-linked subsidies, retained a cautious stance.

The next, and final meeting pre-Cancun of the Negotiating Group on Rules, will be held from 21-23 July. An informal meeting is taking place on 25 June to consider the Chair's report to Cancun on the status of discussions. The Trade Negotiations Committee will consider this report on 14 July.

ICTSD reporting.

In Brief

BIOSAFETY PROTOCOL TO ENTER INTO FORCE

The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety -- a protocol under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) -- will enter into force on 11 September this year. On 13 June, the island state of Palau became the 50th country to ratify the Protocol, thus triggering entry into force 90 days later. The aim of the Protocol is to control the transboundary movement of living modified organisms (LMOs) and the adverse effects their release into the environment might have on countries' ecosystems and human health. The Protocol, which is seen by many as the first operationalisation of the precautionary principle, establishes an advance informed agreement (AIA) procedure for import of LMOs. A Biosafety Clearinghouse will be used by Parties to exchange information, including on implementation issues. Regarding the trade implications of the Protocol, Klaus Töpfer, UNEP Executive Director, said that, "avoiding potential conflicts between trade laws and the biosafety regime will require good will and careful management". WTO Members are in the process of negotiating the relationship between specific trade obligations in multilateral environmental agreements and WTO rules (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 15 May 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/03-05-15/story4.htm>). While a number of WTO Members, such as the EU, will be Parties to the Protocol, the US has not ratified the CBD and will not be a Party to the Protocol when it enters into force.

"Treaty on international trade in GMOs to become law: Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety will enter into force in September," SEEDQUEST RELEASE, 13 June 2003; "Ratification of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety -- Countdown to Entry into force," CBD PRESS RELEASE, 13 June 2003.

BRAZIL, INDONESIA ACT TO PRESERVE FORESTS

Earlier this month, the Brazilian government announced that mahogany could only be logged if a sustainable management plan was in place. Such a plan will probably include a clause that only old trees can be harvested and only in such a way that other trees are not destroyed. At the same time it was announced that confiscated illegally logged mahogany stored by the government will be sold on the international market and the revenue used for financing conservation projects. The decisions were prompted by new figures showing a drastic rise in deforestation rates in Brazil. Between July 2001 and June 2002 25,500 square kilometers of rainforest have disappeared in the Amazon area. This is the highest rate of deforestation since 1994 - 1995 and has caused strong reactions and warnings from conservation and environmental groups. In an unexpected move, the Brazilian government also agreed to make the deforestation data public in order to secure a thorough identification of deforestation causes and ensure the involvement of all affected stakeholders in developing an emergency plan.

On the other side of the world, the Indonesian government has made a new move to halt deforestation and illegal logging by its decision to sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) next week with the EU, which aims at restricting the import of illegal logs from Indonesia. The Indonesian government will provide the European customs with a list of companies that are licensed to export timber. Furthermore Indonesia will

monitor logging activities to ensure that the timber has been harvested in a sustainable manner. A similar MOU has already been signed by China, Malaysia and the UK and will be presented to Japan in July.

"Brazil Allows Sustainable Mahogany Harvest," ENS, 24 June 2003; "Urgent measures needed to stop shocking deforestation rate in the Amazon," WWF, 27 June 2003; "Indonesia to curb illegal logging," Sustainable Development Newsletter, 20 June 2003; "Satellite View Shows Amazon Rainforest Shrinking Fast," ENS, 27 June 2003.

CLIMATE CHANGE NEGOTIATIONS ADDRESS FUTURE OF KYOTO PROTOCOL

Climate change negotiators met in Bonn, Germany, from 4-13 June for their biannual meetings on scientific, technological and implementation issues under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Their talks focused heavily on preparations for the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol to UNFCCC, including discussions on the role of forestry activities under the Clean Development Mechanism. A key question on delegates' minds relating to the future of the Kyoto process was whether, and when, Russia would ratify the Protocol. Russia's, and only Russia's, ratification would trigger entry into force, since the US, the world's largest emitter of greenhouse gases, has rejected the Kyoto Protocol, choosing instead to implement its own domestic measures (see BRIDGES Weekly, 19 February 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/03-02-19/inbrief.htm#2>). Joke Waller-Hunter, Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC, said she believed that Russia would possibly submit its instrument of ratification in conjunction with the Third World Conference on Climate Change in Moscow in September. In related developments, the European Parliament agreed last week on a climate emissions trading system, which puts further pressure on Russia to ratify. It is expected that the legal framework for the European system will enter into force at the end of this year.

For further information on the meeting, see BRIDGES Weekly, 18 June 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/03-06-18/story4.htm>. For daily briefings and a detailed summary of the meeting, see IISD'S Earth Negotiations Bulletin at <http://www.iisd.ca/linkages/climate/sb18/>.

"Russia must end uncertainty over Kyoto, says U.N.," REUTERS, 11 June 2003; "Rich countries see higher greenhouse gas emissions," UNFCCC PRESS RELEASE, 3 June 2003; "Bonn Climate Conference Ends on Upbeat Note," DEUTSCHE WELLE, 14 June 2003; "Summary of the Eighteenth Sessions of the Subsidiary Bodies of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change," ENB, 16 June 2003; "EU reaches Climate Emissions Trading Breakthrough," ENS, 25 June 2003.

REGIONAL BIODIVERSITY FORUM CONSIDERS TRADE LINKAGES

During the third Regional Session of the Global Biodiversity Forum for South Asia in Dhaka, Bangladesh, which was held from 16-18 June 2003, participants discussed various issues at the intersection of sustainable development and biodiversity. Themes included; trade and intellectual property rights on access to genetic resources and genetically modified organisms; sustainable development and livelihoods; and people and protected areas. The result of the meeting was a list of recommendations, which will feed into international negotiations and processes, including the World Parks Congress, in Durban, South Africa from 8 to 17 September 2003; the Fifth WTO Ministerial Conference in Cancun, Mexico, on 10-14 September 2003; and the seventh Conference of Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in March 2004. With regards to national linkages between access and benefit sharing the forum recommends, amongst others, to integrate MEAs and the WTO and the linkages among them into existing non-formal capacity building systems; and to adopt a multidisciplinary approach to developing policy and administering the issues of access to genetic resources and benefit sharing, traditional knowledge and intellectual property rights, and biosafety. Furthermore, participants recommended to develop a regional position on conflicts between the WTO, the CBD and other biodiversity related MEAs. At the international level participants would like to see

special and differential treatment for biotech goods and services as well as they will recommend to promote the inclusion of environmentally friendly goods in the list of environmental goods discussed at the WTO.

The Global Biodiversity Forum-18 will be held from 5-7 September in Cancun, Mexico just prior to the fifth Ministerial Conference of the WTO. The GBF-18 will focus on themes relating to: the relationship between the TRIPs Agreement and the CBD; Risk, Precaution and Biosecurity; and Trade and Sustainable Livelihoods.

For more information on the meeting please visit Internet: <http://www.gbf.ch/>

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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/html/calendar.htm>. 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.

29 June - 3 July, Ravello, Italy: INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PUBLIC GOODS AND PUBLIC POLICY FOR AGRICULTURAL BIOTECHNOLOGY. Organised by the International Consortium on Agricultural Biotechnology Research (ICABR). This 7th conference will focus, inter alia, on the impact of agricultural biotechnology and science; biotechnology, trade and development. For further information contact Vittorio Santaniello, tel: +3906 7259 5843; fax: 7259 5705; e-mail: icabr@economia.uniroma2.it; Internet: <http://www.economia.uniroma2.it/conference/icabr2003/Default.htm>.

30 June, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE. For further information contact: the WTO Information and Media Relations Division, Geneva; tel: +41 22 739 5007; fax: 739 5458; e-mail: enquiries@wto.org

30 June - 7 July, Rome, Italy: SESSION OF CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION. For further information on the 26th session of the commission contact the Secretariat of the joint FAO/WHO Food Standard Programme, tel: +39 06 5705 1; fax: 5705 4593; e-mail: codex@fao.org; Internet: <http://www.codexalimentarius.net>

1- 4 July, Rome, Italy: AD HOC TECHNICAL EXPERT GROUP ON MOUNTAIN BIODIVERSITY. This meeting is organised by Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. For further information contact Hamdallah Zedan, Executive Secretary, tel: +1 514 288 2220; fax: 288 6588; e-mail: secretariat@biodiv.org; Internet: <http://www.biodiv.org>.

2 July, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO COMMITTEE ON TECHNICAL BARRIERS TO TRADE. For further information contact: the WTO Information and Media Relations Division, Geneva; tel: +41 22 739 5007; fax: 739 5458; e-mail: enquiries@wto.org

2-3 July, Geneva, Switzerland: SPECIAL SESSION OF THE COUNCIL FOR TRADE-RELATED ASPECTS OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS. For further information contact: the WTO Information and Media Relations Division, Geneva; tel: +41 22 739 5007; fax: 739 5458; e-mail: enquiries@wto.org

3-5 July, Geneva, Switzerland: WORKSHOP ON BIODIVERSITY, TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES: THREATS AND CHALLENGES. This international workshop is organised by the Indigenous People's International Centre for Policy Research and Education. For more

information contact: Ellen Bangoa; tel: +63 74 444 7703; fax: 443 9459; e-mail: tebtebba@skynet.net; Internet: <http://www.tebtebba.org>

7 July, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND ENVIRONMENT. For further information contact: the WTO Information and Media Relations Division, Geneva; tel: +41 22 739 5007; fax: 739 5458; e-mail: enquiries@wto.org

7-17 July, Geneva, Switzerland: FIFTH SESSION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE ON INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND GENETIC RESOURCES, TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND FOLKLORE. The meeting is organized by WIPO. For further information contact the WIPO Secretariat; tel: +41 22 338 9111; Internet: http://www.wipo.org/documents/en/meetings/2003/igc/index_5.htm

7-11 July 2003, Montreal, Canada: MEETING ON THE FURTHER ELABORATION AND GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ECOSYSTEM APPROACH. This event is organised by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Environment Programme. For further information, tel: +1 514 288 2220; fax: 288 6588; email: secretariat@biodiv.org; Internet: <http://www.biodiv.org>.

13-17 July 2003, Baltimore, US: COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT THROUGH TIME. Organised by NOAA Coastal Services Centre, the Coastal Zone conference series is the premier international gathering of ocean and coastal management professionals. For further information contact: Ms. Gale Peek, tel: +1 843 740 1231; e-mail: Gale.Peek@noaa.gov; Internet: <http://www.csc.noaa.gov/cz2003>.

16-18 July, Maastricht, Netherlands: SEMINAR ON CHALLENGES AND RISKS OF GMOS - WHAT RISK ANALYSIS IS APPROPRIATE? This Seminar will present a multinational framework determining scope and restrictions for national policies and border protection with regards to the options for future policy making towards integrated agro-food systems. In particular the seminar will focus on the relevant WTO-Agreements on Standard Setting, Labeling Requirements and Intellectual Property Rights. Parallel Multinational Agreements, such as the CBD, are presented and their respective relation to WTO Agreements clarified. For further information contact Ruggero Lala, tel: +31 20 620 0225; fax: 624 9368; email: ruggero.lala@amsu.edu; Internet: <http://www.amsu.edu/courses/law/publ12003.htm>

16-18 July, Geneva, Switzerland: INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE IMPACT OF GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS ON CONTINENTAL AND COASTAL MARINE WATERS. Organised on behalf of the Network for Environmental Assessment and Remediation (NEAR) by the "Centre d'Etudes en Sciences Naturelles de l'Environnement" (CESNE) and the Institute F.-A. Forel, University of Geneva, the conference is co-sponsored by the World Health Organization. For further information contact: email: morawel@tinyworld.co.uk; Internet: <http://www.unige.ch/sciences/near/>.

Other Forthcoming Events

10-16 August, Stockholm, Sweden: WORLD WATER WEEK. The World Water Week and the 13th Stockholm Water Symposium seminars and events organized in collaboration with different organizations and institutions. It truly serves as an interdisciplinary platform to focus global attention on key water issues, facilitate dialogue, seek constructive solutions to pressing problems, highlight outstanding achievements in the field, and inspire future water leaders. For further information contact: the Stockholm Convention Bureau; tel: +46 8 5465 1500; fax: 54651599; email: Stocon@Stocon.se; Internet: <http://www.siwi.org/waterweek2003/frameset.html>

18-22 August, Esbjerg, Denmark: MEETING OF PARTIES TO UNEP/CMS AGREEMENT ON CONSERVATION OF SMALL CETACEANS OF BALTIC AND NORTH SEAS (ASCOBANS). The Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic and North Seas (ASCOBANS) was concluded in 1991 under the auspices of the Convention on Migratory Species (UNEP/CMS or Bonn Convention) and entered into force in 1994. The aim of the Agreement is to promote close cooperation

amongst Parties with a view to achieving and maintaining a favourable conservation status for small cetaceans. For further information contact ASCOBANS Secretariat, tel: +49 228 815 2416; fax: 815 2440; Internet: <http://www.ascobans.org>.

25-27 August, Dubna, Russia: TUNZA INTERNATIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCE. The The Tunza International Youth Conference has been organised since 1985 for young people (15-24 years) to learn from one another and share experiences and ideas on community-based environmental actions. The main objective is to strengthen links between UNEP and youth organizations and to facilitate youth participation in the implementation of the UNEP long-term strategy for young people. For more information contact Mr. Theodore Oben, email: theodore.oben@unep.org; Internet: http://www.unep.org/children_youth/tunza/.

29 September - 3 October, Moscow, Russia: WORLD CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE. The main goal of the Conference is a comprehensive discussion of the scientific aspects of natural and anthropogenic climate change; impacts; measures for adapting human society, economies and ecosystems to on-going and future climate change; and integrated approaches to reducing anthropogenic interference with the climate system. The Conference is convened by the Russian Federation and supported by International organizations involved in climate change problems. For more information visit: http://www.wccc2003.org/index_e.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 Marianne Jacobsen, mjacobsen@ictsd.ch.

"COMMUNITY, FARMERS' AND BREEDERS' RIGHTS IN AFRICA: TOWARDS A LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR SUI GENERIS LEGISLATION". By Patricia Kameri-Mbote (2003). The paper analyses international and Kenyan legal frameworks for the protection of biodiversity and plant varieties. It seeks to identify issues and trends pertinent to the protection and enforcement of community, farmers' and breeders' rights through sui generis systems. The paper is available at: <http://www.ielrc.org/Content/A03021P.pdf>.

"THE ECONOMICS OF GENERATING AND MAINTAINING PLANT VARIETY RIGHTS IN CHINA". By Bonwoo Koo, Philip G. Pardey, Keming Qian, and Yi Zhang (February 2003). The paper examines the pattern of plant variety protection applications in China since its PVP laws were first introduced in 1997. The authors place those PVP rights in the context of China's present and likely future seed markets to identify the economic incentives and institutional aspects that influence decisions to develop and apply for varietal rights. The paper can be accessed at: <http://www.ifpri.org/divs/eptd/dp/eptdp100.htm>.

"ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ISSUES IN AGRICULTURAL BIOTECHNOLOGY". By R E Evenson, V Santaniello, and D. Zilberman (July 2002). This book is composed of several papers on topics like intellectual property and genetic resources, technological exchange public-private issues, and developing country biotechnology experience. The publication can be accessed at <http://www.cabi-publishing.org/Bookshop/Readingroom/0851996183.asp>.

"IP AND BIOTECHNOLOGY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA". By Lerson Tanasugarn (September 2002). This article was presented at the BOILAW 2002 International Conference in Bangkok, Thailand. It reviews the status and trend of intellectual property issues with respect to biotechnology in Southeast Asia. The paper examines the general situation of biotech IP, the legal infrastructure of biotech IP, and other infrastructures, such as human resource and institutional resource. To access the paper see: <http://lerson.org/IP/2002BioLawSEAdoc.pdf>.

THE USE OF GENETICALLY MODIFIED CROPS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. By S. Thomas, D. Burke, M. Gale, M. Lipton, and A. Weale (2003). This discussion paper is a follow-up to the 1999 Report, Genetically modified crops: the ethical and social issues. It aims to assess the potential risks and benefits

associated with the use of genetically modified (GM) crops in developing countries in relation to improving food security and economically valuable agriculture. The authors draw on a variety of case studies from developing countries. The paper is available at: <http://www.eldis.org/biodiversity/index.htm>.

GROUNDWATER AND ITS SUSCEPTIBILITY TO DEGRADATION: A GLOBAL ASSESSMENT OF THE PROBLEM AND OPTIONS FOR MANAGEMENT. By the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and the Belgian Development Corporation (DGDC) (2003). The publication provides an overview of groundwater occurrence and of the main issues affecting its quantity and quality. Numerous examples illustrate the consequent resource management issues and underline the need for active management. The review can be accessed at: <http://www.unep.org/Documents/Default.asp?DocumentID=67>.

Electronic Resources

FAO-BIOTECHNEWS WEBSITE. By the FAO-Working Group on Biotechnology (June 2003). This website is a major initiative for the dissemination of science-based, neutral information about agricultural biotechnology. FAO-BiotechNews is an e-mail list containing news and events items that are relevant to applications of biotechnology in food and agriculture in developing countries. Its aim is to inform policy makers and technical decision-makers about current developments and issues in agricultural biotechnology. This website is available in French and Spanish and can be accessed at: <http://www.fao.org/biotech/index.asp>.

The UNEP-GEF Global Project on Development/Implementation of National Biosafety Frameworks - Newsletter. This newsletter overviews the continuing progress of UNEP/GEF projects that are aimed at developing and implementing national biosafety frameworks in developing countries. Amongst others it reports that there are now 117 countries participating in the development project. With regards to the implementation project, the article describes "start-up" activities that each country must fulfill, such as submitting draft biosafety legislation to a review panel of international legal experts. Electronic copies of UNEP/GEF's Biosafety Newsletter can be downloaded at <http://www.unep.ch/biosafety/documents.htm>

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