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Cancun Ministerial Meeting

ENVIRONMENT @ CANCUN

WTO Members have forwarded their Draft Cancun Ministerial Text to be discussed at the next WTO Ministerial Conference 10-14 September 2003, in Cancun, Mexico. The only environment issue likely to attract Members' attention at the conference is the question of observership for MEA (multilateral environmental agreement) secretariats and other intergovernmental organisations. Other environment-related issues included in the Doha mandate, such as the relationship between MEAs and WTO rules, eco-labelling, fisheries subsidies and environmental goods and services, are not expected to feature high on the Cancun agenda.

In general, observers of the WTO trade negotiations foresee that the EC is not likely to push environment discussions at the Ministerial Conference in Cancun, Mexico, but will instead focus on negotiations of the "Singapore Issues". Some environmental groups fear that the environment negotiations will be used as a bargaining chip to secure headway of discussions under for example agriculture and urge governments to ensure that international environmental governance, through the MEAs, is not made subject to economic and trade rules.

Draft Ministerial Text finalised and forwarded to Cancun

On 31 August Supachai Panitchpakdi, Director General of the WTO, and Carlos Perez del Castillo, Chair of the WTO General Council, forwarded the Draft Cancun Ministerial Text to the Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Mexico. In their comments, Members focused mainly on agriculture, non-agricultural market access and the so-called Singapore issues -- investment, competition, transparency in government procurement and trade facilitation. Some Members expressed their disappointment with the text, pointing out that it was not faithful to the so-called "Doha Development Agenda" nor met its mandate, that it was unbalanced and that it reflected the position of certain country groups better than others. Chair Castillo concluded that no greater convergence on the text had appeared and that discussions in Geneva had now been finalised and large divisions between Members would have to be worked out in Cancun by the ministers.

No headway on observership

The EC, the main driver of the environment negotiations at the WTO, has so far been unsuccessful in achieving a result with regards to the participation of certain MEAs in special (negotiating) sessions of the WTO Committee on Trade and Environment (CTE, see BRIDGES Weekly, 28 August 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/03-08-28/story6.htm>). The EC, supported by Norway, Switzerland, South Africa, the US, Japan, Chile, Australia and Canada would like to see a formalisation of the participation of MEA Secretariats, which so far have only been invited on an ad-hoc basis. However, developing countries including Egypt, China, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines decided to await an agreement on the observer status at the General Council. Furthermore these countries would like to keep the current practice to invite MEA Secretariats on an ad hoc basis.

Due to the lack of agreement on this issue, the Draft Ministerial Text does not mention negotiations on inviting MEA Secretariats to CTE special sessions (CTESS). Instead the paragraph on the environment negotiations (Paragraph 9) states: "We take note of the progress made by the CTESS in developing a common understanding of the concepts contained in its mandate in paragraph 31 of the Doha Ministerial Declaration. We reaffirm our commitment to these negotiations". Instructions for the CTESS to accelerate its work were dropped from the latest draft.

To date ad-hoc invitations to attend the CTESS have been extended to UNEP, UNCTAD, Basel, UNFCCC, Montreal Protocol, CBD, CITES and International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO). Apart from discussions on how the above MEA Secretariats and IGOs should be invited, Members also disagree on which MEAs should be invited.

Environment issues not on the Cancun agenda

Of all Doha trade and environment issues, the WTO-MEA relationship negotiations have attracted most attention and discussion among Members. There are no deadlines mandated for Cancun under paragraph 31(i), and the EC, which continues to push for a wide interpretation of the mandate, is hoping to avoid any further discussions at the Ministerial meeting and move directly into the next negotiating phase following Cancun. However, at Cancun, the issue is likely to be raised by civil society groups, who have repeatedly expressed concerns that the outcome under 31(i) could establish a hierarchy in international trade and environment regimes by placing WTO rules above MEAs. These groups can be expected to push the EC to avoid any such outcome and pursue related discussions on the MEA-WTO relationship in forums outside the WTO.

Another issue under discussion at the CTE is eco-labelling, which has also not made no progress since the last proposal by the EC to hold three dedicated non-negotiating sessions of the CTE in 2004 on voluntary eco-labelling schemes was rejected by mainly developing countries as much too ambitious.

Talks on fisheries subsidies also remain blocked at the WTO, as the 'Friends of Fish' group continues to face opposition from Japan and Korea in its efforts to tighten fisheries subsidies disciplines. In the Draft Ministerial Text the Negotiating Group on Rules is instructed to "accelerate its work on anti-dumping and subsidies and countervailing measures, including fisheries subsidies, with a view to shifting emphasis from identifying issues to seeking solutions". The Rules Negotiating Group Chair, on his own responsibility, is preparing a compilation document of all issues and proposals tabled so far, which would serve as the basis for the next phase of work post-Cancun. At this stage, delegates do not foresee fisheries subsidies to gain much attention in Cancun, but to move with the rest of the Rules issues in accordance with the overall package.

With regards to environmental goods, negotiations have so far focussed on how to define an environmental good and in particular on how to also include goods of particular interest to developing countries, without bringing up the debate on process and production methods (PPMs). Currently Members are eagerly awaiting a proposal by Kenya scheduled to be presented during the next session of the CTE special session on 30-31

October to include organic agricultural products as environmental goods, in which developing countries have a comparative advantage. However, most Members do not foresee major discussions on this issue during Cancun.

Little progress has been made on a possible broadening of the current definition of environmental services. Currently the definition is still based on a list from 1991, which includes certain "core" environmental services (sewage, refuse disposal, sanitation and others) with a focus on remedial approaches. Many countries, notably the EU, have called for a revision moving away from a remedial focus into a list that incorporates preventive solutions. This debate is currently stuck in the WTO's Committee on Specific Commitments. Within trade circles most believe that not much will happen in Cancun on this issue.

Additional Resources

Draft Cancun Ministerial Text: <http://www.ictsd.org/ministerial/cancun/docs/Job.03.150.Rev.1.pdf>

ICTSD-IISD Doha Round Brief No. 9, Trade and Environment available at:
http://www.ictsd.org/pubs/dohabriefings/cancun_updates/V2_09_T&E.pdf

ICTSD reporting; "What's on the WTO's agenda in Cancun: an overview of the WTO's fifth Ministerial Conference, Cancun, Mexico, 10-14 September 2003," FOEI, available at:
<http://www.foei.org/cancun/what.html>

ICTSD reporting.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS @ CANCUN

Discussions on intellectual property rights (IPRs) in the lead-up to Cancun were clearly dominated by the last-minute deal reached on IPRs and public health in the WTO. Geographical indications (GI) are most likely the IPR-issue which will receive most attention at the WTO Ministerial meeting in Cancun, in particular the extension of additional GI protection for products other than wines and spirits, which the EC is expected to push in the context of the agriculture negotiations. In contrast, discussions on issues related to biodiversity and traditional knowledge are unlikely to be high on the Cancun agenda unless developing countries make a renewed effort at the meeting to advance the debate.

Last-minute deal on TRIPs & health

After a flurry of eleventh hour negotiations, WTO Members on 30 August adopted the 16 December Decision on paragraph 6 of the Doha Declaration on the Agreement on Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs) and Public Health together with a statement by the TRIPs Council Chair Ambassador Vanu Gopala Menon of Singapore. The Decision spells out the conditions under which countries without pharmaceutical manufacturing capacity can import generic versions of drugs still under patent. Earlier attempts to adopt the Decision had foundered due to US opposition arising from pharmaceutical companies' fears that it could be abused (see BRIDGES Weekly, 20 December 2002, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/02-12-20/story1.htm>). Civil society groups expressed disappointment with the final deal, describing it as "a new model for explicitly endorsing protectionism," according to James Love of Consumer Project on Technology. Nevertheless, they applauded developing countries for not compromising on the coverage of diseases, as called for by the US.

For further details on the TRIPs & health deal, see BRIDGES Weekly, 28 August 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/03-08-28/story2.htm>. The final Decision and the Chair's statement are available at <http://www.ictsd.org/iprsonline/index.htm>.

EC likely to push for GI extension

Geographical indications found three mentions in the draft Cancun Ministerial text. Two key outstanding issues which remain to be resolved, include "legal effect" -- whether Members should be required to protect registered terms -- and "participation" -- whether those who do not register a term are nevertheless obliged to protect registered terms.

Least-controversial among the three GI issues are negotiations on a multilateral register for GIs for wines and spirits, which were set to be finalised by the Cancun meeting, but will continue post-Cancun until a date to be agreed upon at the meeting.

The controversial question whether to extend the additional protection already provided for wines and spirits to other products (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 6 December 2001, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/01-12-06/story1.htm>) is likely to come up in the agriculture negotiations and in discussions on outstanding implementation issues. The discussions on GI extension had effectively blocked progress on other implementation issues under Article 12(b) of the Ministerial Declaration. In contrast to other implementation issues, which have been put forward by developing country Members, GI extensions have also found strong backing from the EC and Switzerland which, along with a number of developing countries including India, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Kenya, have been calling for negotiations on this issue. Their call is strongly opposed by the US, Australia and other Members mainly from the Americas, all of which are bulk exporters of agricultural products. Ahead of Cancun, the EC has finalised a list of 41 products for which it will seek additional protection in Cancun. The EC is planning to negotiate the list in the context of the ongoing agriculture talks.

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. Additional protection of GIs already exists for wines and spirits (e.g. Champagne, Bordeaux and Cognac), and some countries (mainly Asia, Europe and Africa) are calling for this protection to be extended to other products (e.g. Basmati rice, Darjeeling tea or Camembert cheese). Some believe that by giving value to localised natural products and associated know-how, 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. Others, however, are concerned that GIs will only bring new obligations for developing countries while the benefits will mainly go to developed countries that are better prepared at the national level to take advantage of GI extensions and that might use GIs as a trade barrier against developing countries' exports.

Biodiversity and TK: Non-issues in Cancun?

While momentum has been building recently on discussions related to the review of Article 27.3(b) (patentability of life forms), traditional knowledge and biodiversity following submissions by Switzerland, the African Group and India on behalf of Brazil, Bolivia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Thailand, Peru and Venezuela at the last June TRIPs Council meeting (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 13 June 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/03-06-13/story1.htm>), the issues are not expected to be high on the Cancun agenda and are not mentioned in the draft Ministerial text. It will be up to developing countries as the key demandeurs to raise the issue in Cancun. However, even if no significant progress can be made in Cancun due to the many other negotiating issues up for discussion, developing countries remain confident that there will be further room for debate and agreement at a later stage in the Doha round.

Additional Resources

For a detailed account of IPR-related discussions at the WTO, see the ICTSD-IISD Doha Round Brief No. 5, Intellectual Property Rights, http://www.ictsd.org/pubs/dohabriefings/cancun_updates/V2_05_IPRs.pdf.

EC list of GIs: http://www.ictsd.org/ministerial/cancun/docs/EC_GIs.pdf.

ICTSD reporting.

In Brief

NEPAL READY TO ENTER WTO WITHOUT UPOV MEMBERSHIP

The last meeting of the WTO Working Party handling Nepal's membership negotiations approved all documents containing Nepal's commitments on 15 August. The final approval of Nepal's membership will be made at the fifth WTO Ministerial Conference in Cancun in September. Nepal concluded bilateral talks for the entry with India, New Zealand, the US, Australia, Japan, the EU, Canada, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, and others. The tariff rates for Nepal have been bound at around 42 percent for agricultural products and around 24 percent for other products. During talks, the US argued for Nepal to become a member of the International Union for the Protection of New Plant Varieties (UPOV) to fulfil requirements under Article 27.3 (b) of the Agreement on Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) to provide protection for new plant varieties. Dinesh Pyakural, Nepal's Chief Negotiator, said Nepal rejected the kind of "WTO-plus" commitment the adoption of UPOV 91 would entail. NGOs from Nepal and India have warned that a UPOV membership would jeopardise the current livelihood dynamics of Nepalese farmers, which depend on saving, exchanging, reusing and selling seeds freely. This practice would be restricted under UPOV legislation (Article 15.2) that allows farmers to reuse protected material only if the breeder has been paid royalties. Instead Nepal seeks to adopt an "effective sui generis system" for the protection of plant varieties, as provided for under Article 27.3(b). Prachanda Man Shrestha, joint secretary at the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies, pointed out that "each of our commitments are made only after leaving enough room for our policy flexibility."

Nepal will become the 148th WTO Member 30 days after ratifying the agreement. Nepal and Cambodia, whose accession process was finalised in July (see BRIDGES Weekly, 28 July 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/03-07-28/story/wtoinbrief.htm#2>), will be the first two least-developed countries to become WTO members. China, Kyrgyzstan and Cambodia have all accepted the UPOV membership as part of their accession negotiations.

"Nepal nears WTO membership," NEPALNEWS.COM, 16 August 2003; "We rejected WTO-plus terms: Commerce Secretary," NEPALNEWS.COM, 18 August 2003; "Nepal set to join WTO at Cancun Ministerial Conference," WTO PRESS RELEASE, 18 August 2003; "HYDRA-HEADED UPOV," KATHMANDU POST, 15 August 2003.

US, CANADA BOTH CLAIM VICTORY IN LUMBER DISPUTE

On 29 August, both Canada and the US claimed victory, after the WTO released a panel report on a Canadian complaint against the US on countervailing duties imposed on softwood lumber from Canada. The WTO panel sided with the US and ruled that the Canadian stumpage programme constitutes a "financial contribution" to the Canadian lumber industry (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 15 May 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/03-05-15/inbrief.htm>). US Trade Representative Richard Mills said "this is a victory for both the US lumber industry and the environment. The WTO has once again rejected the Canadian argument that its natural resource subsidies do not fall within the disciplines of the WTO and therefore cannot be subject to countervailing duties under any circumstances". However, the panel also sided with Canada by saying that the basis on which the US calculates its duty of 18.79 percent (i.e. a cross-border comparison) is inconsistent with WTO rules. John Allen, president of the British Columbia Lumber Trade Council, said: "The US Department of Commerce has invented a subsidy where none exist [...]. The WTO panel has again agreed with Canada that cross-border comparisons are invalid under international trade law". Both countries have 60 days to appeal the WTO panel ruling.

"Both Sides Again Claim Victory As WTO Officially Releases Lumber Decision," WTO REPORTER, 2 September 2003; "US Canada say WTO lumber ruling a victory," REUTERS, 29 August 2003.

GERMANY CALLS FOR SIMPLIFIED EU CHEMICALS LEGISLATION

The German government and the main German chemical industry association (VCI) and trade union (IG BCE) released a common position on 21 August, calling for a simplification of the proposed EU chemicals legislation -- termed REACH (registration, evaluation and authorisation of chemicals ' (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 5 March 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/03-05-15/story5.htm>) -- which they described as "still too bureaucratic and costly". They also demanded less stringent requirements on small and medium sized enterprises, more protection of industrial secrecy and a third-party assessment of the legislation's impact on the chemical industry. The statement comes soon after a report released by German Council of Environmental Experts -- an independent body advising the German government -- on 24 July, calling industry's concerns "systematically exaggerated". Instead, the Council concluded that the REACH system would also be beneficial for the competitive position and innovation of the chemical industry itself. The European Commission is expected to present its final legislative proposal in autumn 2003.

The Council of Environmental Experts' report (in German) is available at http://www.umweltrat.de/03stellung/download03/stellung/Stellung_Reach_Juli2003.pdf.

"German government experts blast industry's attacks on EU chemicals review," EURACTIV, 30 July 2003; "Germany demands simpler EU chemical Rules," ENS, 25 August 2003.

CALL FOR COMMENTS ON BIOTECH PEST STANDARDS

The International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) has issued draft guidelines for governments on the risk assessment of living modified organism (LMO) imports. In particular, it focuses on invertebrates, plants and microorganisms that present potential plant health risk. The guidelines provide recommendations for governments on how to handle: the identification of presenting potential risk to plant health; assessing the potential risk associated with LMOs; and minimising this risk. The draft standards are available online (<http://www.ippc.int/En/default.htm>) and the IPPC is accepting comments from the public until 24 October 2003 through national official contact points. The IPPC is recognised by the WTO as the standard-setting body for international phytosanitary standards and WTO Members are required to base their phytosanitary measures on IPPC standards.

"Pest Risk Analysis for Living Modified Organisms," IPPC Website, 29 August 2003.

EU TO RENEW ITS SUPPORT FOR FISHERIES IN REMOTE REGIONS

On 25 August, the European Commission proposed to renew a scheme that helps the fishing industry in the Portuguese regions of Azores and Madeira, the Canary Islands and the French departments of Guyana and Reunion to compensate for the costs incurred in the marketing of certain fishery products. First introduced in 1992, the scheme was renewed in 1994, 1995, 1998 and 2002. The EC proposal for a Council Regulation explains that these regions, which are highly dependent on fisheries, suffer from higher production and marketing costs, mainly due to their remoteness. These additional costs weaken their competitiveness compared with the fisheries industry on the European mainland. "The renewal of the EU compensation scheme will enable fisheries producers [...] to overcome the constraints they face because of their geographical situation," said Franz Fischler, European Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries. "By bringing marketing conditions of fisheries products into line with those prevailing on the mainland, it will help the fisheries industry of these regions to compete on an equal footing within the single market," he added. Under the proposed scheme, approximately 15 million Euro per year are to be made available for four years from the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund.

"Renewal of EU scheme to help the marketing of fishery products from the Azores and Madeira, the Canary Islands and the French departments of Guyana and Reunion," and "Proposal for Council Regulation," EUROPEAN COMMISSION, 25 August 2003.

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.

ICTSD events

5-7 September, Cancun, Mexico: 18TH GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FORUM - BIODIVERSITY, TRADE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. This session of the GBF is jointly organised by ICTSD, IUCN, SEMARNAT, CEESP and others. The GBF is a mechanism to bring together governmental and non-governmental representatives to foster dialogue and information sharing on key biodiversity issue. Key issues to be addressed will include: The relationship between the TRIPs Agreement and CBD; risk, precaution and biosecurity; and trade and sustainable livelihoods. For further information, see: http://www.gbif.ch/present_session.asp?no=31&lg=EN

11-12 September, Cancun, Mexico: CANCUN TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT SYMPOSIUM. The Conference seeks to provide a platform for intellectual enquiry and dialogue on issues related to trade and development and to address key concerns afflicting development in the trade policy arena. The main objective of the CTDS is to encourage innovative thinking on issues related to trade and development to be translated into inputs for negotiations. For further information, contact: ICTSD, Bernice Lee; tel: (41-22) 917-8492; fax: 917-8093; email: tds@ictsd.ch; Internet: <http://www.ictsd.org/ministerial/cancun/tds/index.htm>

Coming up in the next two weeks

1-7 September, Stara Zagora, Bulgaria: YOUTH WATER PARLIAMENT. This event will convene youth, local authorities, school authorities and NGOs in the municipality of Stara Zagora, as well delegates from developed countries and European countries in transition. The aim of the conference is to raise youth leaders' awareness and strategic decision-making skills in the water and sanitation sector. For more information contact: Earth Forever Foundation; tel: (359) 42-46050; fax: 42-46050; email: earth-forever@mbox.digsys.bg; Internet: <http://www.gwpforum.org/servlet/PSP?iNodeID=204&itemId=3174>

3-5 September, Albacete, Spain: ENVIROWATER 2003 - VI INTER-REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT. Topics for this meeting include strategies and technologies to improve the use and sustainable management of water resources for achieving improved productivity and sustainable rural development. For more information contact: José M. Tarjuelo, University of Castilla-La Mancha; tel: (34-967) 599-200; fax: 599-269; email: envirowater2003@uclm.es; Internet: <http://crea.uclm.es/envirowater2003.php>

4 September, Berlin, Germany: 30TH SESSION OF THE IPCC BUREAU. For more information contact: IPCC Secretariat, C/O World Meteorological Organization; tel: (41-22) 730-8208; fax: 730-8025; e-mail: ipcc_sec@gateway.wmo.ch; Internet: <http://www.ipcc.ch/calendar.htm>

4-5 September, Bogota, Colombia: INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON THE USE OF CLEAN ENERGY IN ENERGY PROJECTS IN THE UNCONNECTED ZONES OF COLOMBIA. The Institute for the promotion of Energy Solutions for the non-integrated Zones (IPSE) is hosting an international congress to identify possible energy and integrated development solutions to improve quality of life for the non-integrated communities of Colombia. For more information contact: IPSE; tel: (571) 622-4010; fax: 622-3898; email: congreso@ipse.gov.co; Internet: <http://www.ipse.gov.co>

4-6 September, Honolulu, Hawaii, United States: INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CLIMATE POLICY AFTER MARRAKECH: TOWARDS GLOBAL PARTICIPATION. Hosted by the East-West Center, the conference aims to convene senior technical bureaucrats, policy analysts and experienced practitioners to: discuss and share views on recent developments in climate policies and initiatives around the globe; advance understanding of the actions and policy frameworks that can contribute to compliance with Kyoto emissions targets; and facilitate discussion on how, when, and under what conditions a climate regime can move from where we are now to a global regime of wider participation and deeper emissions cuts. For more information contact: Penny Higa; tel: (1-808) 944-7131; fax: 944-7380; email: higap@eastwestcenter.org; Internet: <http://ewcraql.eastwestcenter.org/~marrakech/>

6-7 September, Helsinki, Finland: WIDER CONFERENCE ON SHARING GLOBAL PROSPERITY. Over 100 economists and development experts will meet in Helsinki, present papers and discuss specific topics including external finance, international trade, foreign investment and foreign aid. Conference topics will include: innovative sources of development finance, private capital flows & foreign aid, international trade & foreign investment, globalisation's development impact. The conference is intended for researchers from the academic, government, and development communities. Programme, papers, participant list, press release are now available on the website: <http://www.wider.unu.edu>.

8-17 September. Durban, South Africa: FIFTH WORLD PARKS CONGRESS - BENEFITS BEYOND BOUNDARIES. The congress occurs once each decade and is sponsored by the IUCN. The Congress provides the major global forum for setting the agenda for protected areas. Previous Congresses have had a tremendous impact in assisting national governments to create new protected areas, and direct more resources towards biodiversity conservation. For further information, contact: Peter Shadie, IUCN Programme on Protected Areas, tel: (41-22) 999-0159; fax: 999-0025; email: pds@iucn.org; Internet: <http://wcpa.iucn.org/wpc/wpc.html>

9-12 Sept 2003, Delft, Netherlands: SIXTH WATER INFORMATION SUMMIT. This year, the Water Information Summit (WIS-6) will focus on strategies to overcome the "digital divide" between North and South and within the South as well as to share knowledge and information in support of the management of the water and sanitation sectors. WIS-6 will provide a forum to discuss the state of the art and trends in knowledge management, the application of web-based technologies and the formation of partnerships. For further information, contact: Ms. Ingeborg Krukkert (IRC), P.O. Box 2869, 2601 CW Delft, The Netherlands; tel: (31-15) 219-2985; fax: 219-0955; email: wis6delft@irc.nl; Internet: <http://www.irc.nl/news/wis6.html>

10-14 September, Cancun, Mexico: THE FIFTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE OF THE WORLD TRADE ORGANISATION. Over 10,000 people are expected to attend the 5th WTO Ministerial Conference: among them 3,000 journalists, 2,000 NGOs and 5,000 government delegates (including trade ministers and other ministers of agriculture, environment, finance and development). The meeting is the mid-term exercise for trade ministers to take stock of progress in the negotiations launched at Doha, Qatar in November 2001. For further information, see Internet: <http://www.wto.org> or <http://www.ictsd.org/ministerial/index.htm>

14-20 Sept 2003, Edinburgh, UK: INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON TROPICAL SAVANNAS AND SEASONALLY DRY FORESTS – ECOLOGY, ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT. The aim of this meeting is to bring together leading researchers in savanna and dry forest formations throughout the tropics. The conference will focus on four principal themes: Plant Biodiversity; Palaeo-ecology and Environmental Change; Vegetation and Environment; and Human Ecology and Development. For further information contact the Edinburgh Centre for Tropical Forests, tel: (44-131) 440-0400; fax: 440-4141; email: mail@ectf-ed.org.uk; Internet: <http://www.nmw.ac.uk/ectf/International>

15-19 Sept 2003, Hamburg, Germany: INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON EARTH SYSTEM MODELING. The programme will address global, regional and reduced complexity modelling. It will provide an opportunity to present new results in this field and to discuss recent developments and plans for

the future. For further information contact Annette Kirk, fax: (49-40) 41 17 33 66; email: mpi-conference2003@dkrz.de; or visit: <http://www.mpimet.mpg.de/en/web/index.html> or <http://www.mpimet.mpg.de/mpi-conference2003>.

15-18 September, St. Michielsgestel, The Netherlands: INFORMATION TO SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE WATER MANAGEMENT: FROM LOCAL TO GLOBAL LEVELS. Monitoring Tailor-Made IV is a conference dealing with strategies and practices for the collection and dissemination of information in support of integrated water resources management. It is the stage for scientists from different disciplines and policy makers alike and seeks to connect the different worlds of these groups. The conference aims to obtain new views on information for sustainable water resources management. For further information contact the Conference Secretariat Monitoring Tailor-Made IV, tel: (31-320) 298-894; fax: 2997-642; email: mtm@riza.rws.minvenw.nl; Internet: <http://www.mtm-conference>.

Other forthcoming events

14-21 September, Dehradun and New Delhi, India: INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ECORESTORATION. The main objectives of the Conference are inter alia: to review the existing knowledge on ecological, socio-economic and environmental dimensions of degradation of land and water resources, especially in the developing countries; to review the current policies and programs related to ecorestoration of degraded environments in different countries; and to provide a sound scientific basis for developing appropriate policy framework for ecorestoration in developing countries. For further information visit: <http://www.nieindia.org/Conference/conf03.htm>

21-28 September 2003, Quebec City, Canada: 12TH WORLD FORESTRY CONGRESS. The World Forestry Congress of 2003 welcomes everyone interested in forests and trees, and their future and sustainable management throughout the world. Organized under the auspices of the FAO, the congress is held every six years. For more information contact: World Forestry Congress 2003 Secretariat; tel: (1-418) 694-2424; fax: 694-9922; email: sec-gen@wfc2003.org; Internet: <http://www.wfc2003.org>

25-26 September, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil: BIOFACH CONFERENCE - DEVELOPMENT OF ORGANIC MARKETS. The event aims to promote the development of the organic markets in Brazil and in South America. For further information, contact Rosina Guerra, tel: (55-21) 2511-6870/2239 2395; fax: 2540-7707; email: biofach@planetaorganico.com.br; Internet: <http://www.biofach-brasil.com.br/conference.htm>

5-8 October, Marburg, Germany: "BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES AND MIGRATION". The conference will cover the migration of biological resources such as plants, animals, microorganisms and water and combine these fields with the migration of people in various countries and continents. An additional aspect of this conference is a discussion forum between scientists from various disciplines and responsible politicians in OECD and EU member countries. For further information contact Prof. Dr. Dietrich Werner, tel (49-64) 2128-21546; fax 2128-28997; email werner@mail.uni-marburg.de; Internet: <http://www.biol-resource-migration.de>

3-6 October: Sydney, Australia. INTERNATIONAL WILDLAND FIRE CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION. The Third International Wildland Fire Conference is designed to stimulate the wildland fire industry and provide impetus for ongoing global cohesion. For more information contact: Conference and Exhibition Managers; tel: (61-2) 9248-0800; fax: 9248-0894; email: wildlandfire03@tourhosts.com.au; Internet: <http://www.wildlandfire03.com/home.asp>

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, [mjacobson@ictsd.ch](mailto:mjacobsen@ictsd.ch).

HOW MUCH DOES IT HURT? THE IMPACT OF AGRICULTURAL TRADE POLICIES ON DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. By the International Food Policy Research Institute, August 2003. According to this study, protectionism and subsidies by industrialised nations cost developing countries about US\$24 billion annually in lost agricultural and agro-industrial income. Trade-distorting measures of industrialised nations (mainly EU, US and Japan) also displace more than US\$40 billion of net agricultural exports per year from developing countries. The study states that eliminating these measures would triple developing countries' net agricultural trade. The study is downloadable at:
<http://www.ifpri.org/media/trade20030826.htm>

US VERSUS. EU: AN EXAMINATION OF THE TRADE ISSUES SURROUNDING GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOOD. By the Pew Initiative on Food and Biotechnology, August 2003. The paper, originally published in June 2002, was updated in August 2003 to reflect recent activities relating to the trade dispute between the US and the EU on genetically modified food. It summarizes the history of the GM food issue in Europe, the recently adopted legislation, impacts on US-EU agricultural trade and other background issues dividing the US and the EU on the topic. The paper can be accessed online at:
<http://pewagbiotech.org/resources/issuebriefs/europe.pdf>

TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT AT THE WTO: ISSUES FOR CANCÚN. Published by the International Development Committee, UK Parliament, 2003. The report spells out three elements that are required to ensure that the development round is a success: development-friendly agreements; effective participation by developing countries; and flexibility for developing countries within the WTO rules. A copy of the report can be downloaded at: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmintdev.htm#reports>

THE WORLD COMMODITY SURVEY 2003-2004, THIRD EDITION. By UNCTAD, 2003. The World Commodity Survey examines the global factors that have had an impact on raw material markets. This survey is intended especially for policymakers in developing countries who wish to enhance the operation of the commodities sector. It analyses the principal trends in raw materials, the evolution of the oil market, the role of the state in the present international context and market instability as new risks emerge. The survey also addresses company governance through a detailed study of the Enron case. The report can be obtained from: <http://r0.unctad.org/infocomm/WorldCommSurvey/coverpage.htm>

RUNNING PURE. By the World Bank and WWF (2003). This new report shows that protecting forest areas provides a cost-effective means of supplying many of the world's biggest cities with high quality drinking water, providing significant health and economic benefits to urban populations. The report shows that more than a third of the world's 105 biggest cities - including New York, Jakarta, Tokyo, Mumbai, Rio de Janeiro, Los Angeles, Barcelona, Nairobi, and Melbourne - rely on fully or partly protected forests in catchment areas for much of their drinking water. Well-managed natural forests minimise the risk of landslides, erosion, and sedimentation. They substantially improve water purity by filtering pollutants, such as pesticides, and in some cases capture and store water. The report is available at:
<http://www.panda.org/downloads/freshwater/runningpurereport.pdf>

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND CLIMATE CHANGE: MAKING THE CONNECTION. By CERES, July 2003. Commissioned by CERES and written by Douglas Cogan of the Investor Responsibility Research Centre, this report looks at how 20 of the world's largest corporate emitters of greenhouse gases are factoring climate change into their business strategies and governance practices. A "Climate Change Governance Checklist" provides an analysis of the companies' actions in the areas of board oversight, management accountability, executive compensation, emissions reporting and material risk disclosure. The report finds that many companies are not adequately disclosing the financial risks posed by climate change and are not dealing with global warming issues in other key corporate governance areas. The report describes how investors can engage companies on climate change as part of the emerging corporate governance agenda, and includes recommendations for corporate boards/executives and policymakers. More information is available at: <http://ceres.org/newsroom/press/ceresirrcrel.htm>

INEQUALITY AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE DURING THE TRANSITION. Edited by Vladimir Mikhalev, July 2003. The book studies and compares emerging social structures in transitional societies and discusses the life of the large majority of workers (farmers and state-sector employees as well as the bottom of socially deprived and marginalized people). The contributors look into causes of high inequality and poverty in Russia and other CIS countries, as well as more equal income distribution and higher levels of social welfare in Central Europe. For further information see:

http://www.palgrave.com/catalogue/catalogue.asp?Title_Id=140390801X#Description

WIDER Discussion Papers. The World Institute for Development Economic Research (WIDER) has published a series of discussion papers addressing various topics such as: the rural development in China, "Externalities in Rural Development: Evidence for China"; the impact of trade liberalisation on returns from land, "Impact of Trade Liberalisation on Returns from Land: A Regional Study of Indian Agriculture"; and the impact of trade liberalisation on least developed countries, "Developed Country Trade Barriers and the Least Developed Countries: The Economic Results of Freeing Trade". The papers are available for download at: <http://www.wider.unu.edu/publications/publications.htm>.

Electronic Resources

WEBSITE ON CIAT'S TROPICAL FRUITS PROGRAMME. The Tropical Fruits Program and CIAT's Eco-regional Network for Tropical Latin America (REDECO, its Spanish acronym) plan to create a thematic network with users interested in tropical fruits to generate a flow and exchange of pertinent, updated information. The thematic network will not only help determine the demand for specialized information, but will serve to collect and disseminate this information, while facilitating the dialogue between thematic network users. For further information see the website: http://www.ciat.cgiar.org/tropical_fruits/index.htm

WEBSITE OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION'S DIRECTORATE-GENERAL OF RESEARCH. This website focuses on endocrine disrupter research in Europe and aims to give an overview of the European Union's many activities in this field. Endocrine disrupters have been defined as exogenous substances that alter function(s) of the endocrine system and consequently cause adverse health effects in an intact organism, or its progeny, or (sub)populations. In 1999, the European Commission adopted a Communication to the Council and European Parliament on a Community Strategy for Endocrine Disrupters, with recommendations made for short-, medium- and long-term actions. The website is available at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/endocrine/index_en.html

WORLDWATCH LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE. The Worldwatch Institute has redesigned its website. Highlights of the new site include: a new homepage; an interactive map and guide to all global partners and foreign language editions of Worldwatch publications; a resource centre featuring links to Worldwatch research; a new Press Room, featuring a fully searchable archive of Worldwatch press releases; and Worldwatch live - an online discussion forum where visitors to the site can talk to Worldwatch researchers. The Worldwatch site is located at: <http://www.worldwatch.org/>

BRIDGES Trade BioRes© is published by the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD), <http://www.ictsd.org>, in collaboration with IUCN - World Conservation Union, <http://www.iucn.org>, and IUCN's Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy, CEESP, <http://www.iucn.org/themes/ceesp/index.html>. This edition of *BRIDGES Trade BioRes* was edited by Marianne Jacobsen, [mjacobson@ictsd.ch](mailto:mjacobsen@ictsd.ch). Contributor to this issue were Heike Baumüller, Cecile Giraud, Hugo Cameron, Mahesh Sugathan and Malena Sell. Managing Editor is Heike Baumüller, hbaumuller@ictsd.ch and the Director is Ricardo Meléndez-Ortiz, rmelendez@ictsd.ch. ICTSD is an independent, not-for-profit organisation based at: 13, ch. des Anémones, 1219 Geneva, Switzerland, tel: (41-22) 917-8492; fax: 917-8093. Excerpts from *BRIDGES Trade BioRes* may be used in other publications with appropriate citation. Comments and suggestions are welcomed and should be directed to the Editors or the Director. *BRIDGES Trade BioRes* is made possible in 2003 through the generous support of the Minister of Housing, Spatial Planning, and the Environment (Netherlands) and the Swiss Agency for the Environment, Forests and Landscape (BUWAL). It also benefits from ICTSD's core funders: the Governments of Finland, Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden; Christian Aid (UK), the Rockefeller Foundation, MISEREOR, NOVIB (NL), Oxfam (UK) and the Swiss Coalition of Development Organisations (Switzerland). ISSN 1682-0843

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