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Intellectual Property Rights

CANCUN CASTS SHADOW OVER WIPO ASSEMBLIES

The effects of the trade talk collapse at the WTO Ministerial meeting in Cancun last month could also be felt at the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Assemblies (22 September - 1 October, Geneva, Switzerland), in particular during discussions on the mandate of the Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore (IGC), where developed countries appeared much less willing to make concessions than before the Cancun meeting. WIPO members also discussed the controversial Patent Agenda, which continues to attract strong criticism from many developing countries and civil society groups.

IGC mandate extended

The mandate of the IGC was extended for another two years (see *BRIDGES Trade BioRes*, 20 December 2002, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/02-12-20/story1.htm>). The Committee was requested to accelerate its work and to focus in particular on the international dimension of intellectual property and genetic resources, traditional knowledge and folklore. Among the most contentious points was the possible outcome of the IGC's work that should be included in the mandate. Many developed countries, such as the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, continued to resist demands by the African Group for including references to a legally binding instrument. Several members from Asia and Latin America, including Brazil and the Andean and Caribbean states, reiterated their call for joint recommendations as the outcome. In the end, members agreed on vague language saying "no outcome of its work is excluded, including the possible development of an international instrument or instruments".

In what many developing countries saw as the most important concession, the mandate states that discussions in the IGC should be without prejudice to the work in other forums. One trade source noted that developed countries, such as the US and Canada, had in the past used the existence of the IGC as an excuse for deflecting discussions on these issues in the WTO Council for Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual

Property Rights (TRIPs). The reference to other forums might provide an opening for developing countries to counter this argument and work towards advancing their agenda in the TRIPs Council, which one source said provided a better forum for developing countries, being a much more member-driven body than the "Secretariat-driven" ICG.

One trade source accused the WIPO Secretariat of heavy manipulation during the meeting in an effort to break up developing countries. This, the source speculated, reflected concerns by the Secretariat over a possible impasse in discussions similar to what occurred in Cancun. The effects of the Cancun collapse could also be observed in the hardened position by some developed countries. While these countries had had an interest in strengthening the ICG mandate prior to Cancun, the collapse at Cancun and the almost inevitable delay in the completion of the trade round had reduced the threat of proposals in the TRIPs Council and consequently the need for a strong forum in WIPO, one trade source speculated.

The next meeting of the ICG is currently secluded for March 2003.

WIPO Patent Agenda remains controversial

In the context of discussions on the WIPO Patent agenda, which is aimed at launching worldwide discussions for the purpose of preparing a strategic blueprint for the future evolution of the international patent system (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 10 October 2002, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/02-10-10/story1.htm>), four studies on the impact of the international patent system on developing countries were presented. The studies had been commissioned by WIPO Director-General Kamil Idris at the request of developing countries, which had called for an assessment of the Patent Agenda's impact on development and how it responded to concerns raised in the report of the UK Commission on Intellectual Property Rights (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 26 September 2002, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/02-09-26/story2.htm>).

Many developing countries strongly criticised the studies for being too one-sided in favour of developing countries supporting the Patent Agenda, and as lacking a multi-disciplinary approach. These countries continue to be wary of the Patent Agenda, which they regard as too heavily weighted towards the interests of transnational corporations as the main users of the patent system. Criticism of the studies was also heard from the EC -- which several trade sources noted had presented very balanced views throughout the Assemblies. In its statement on the Patent Agenda, the EC stressed the importance of not only taking account the interests of the users of the patent system, but also those of civil society.

In a report published on 1 October, the non-governmental organisation Genetic Resources Action International (GRAIN) levelled strong criticism at WIPO's Patent Agenda and in particular at the Substantive Patent Law Treaty (SPLT), which it termed "the most difficult piece of the puzzle for WIPO". In contrast to the TRIPs Agreement, which sets only minimum standards for intellectual property protection, the SPLT would "raise the floor and add a ceiling" by introducing a maximum standard, GRAIN warned. One of the key issues in this context is the question of whether to ban additional patentability criteria. Such criteria, which are currently allowed under the TRIPs Agreement, could include requirements for the disclosure of the origin of genetic resources and traditional knowledge or evidence of prior informed consent and benefit-sharing, as repeatedly called for by many developing countries (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 26 September 2002, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/02-09-26/story1.htm>). Instead of accepting US and EU standards, developing countries should roll the harmonisation agenda back, GRAIN stressed. "Cancun gave a glimpse that this is possible," they added.

Additional Resources

Documents of the WIPO meeting: <http://www.wipo.org/documents/en/document/govbody/index03.htm>.

"Disclosure requirements concerning genetic resources and traditional knowledge", 2003, by the WIPO Secretariat for CBD COP-7, http://www.wipo.org/documents/en/document/govbody/wo_gb_ga/pdf/wo_ga_30_7.pdf.

"One global patent system? WIPO's Substantive Patent Law Treaty", GRAIN, October 2003.
<http://www.grain.org/publications/wipo-splt-2003-en.cfm>.

ICTSD reporting; "Think there's trouble at WTO? WIPO's global patent system could be a lot worse," GRAIN, 1 October 2003.

Biotechnology

GMO UPDATE: BRAZIL, EU, UGANDA, US**Brazil authorises planting of GM soy for this season**

Last week, Brazil authorised the planting of genetically modified (GM) soy until the end of the year and the sale of GM soy crops until the end of 2004. This emergency measure was necessary to address the shortage of conventional soybeans for this harvest, Rio Grande do Sul Governor Germano Rigotto noted. The government, however, has not given permission to sell or import GM soy seed in Brazil; rather farmers can only plant the previously illegal GM seed stocks they already possess. "It would still be two to three years before we can go to the producer with any significant volume of GM seeds," said Caio Vidor, Director General of Embrapa Soja, the government's crop research body. Many see this decision as a victory for the US based company Monsanto, which wants to sell its Roundup Ready soybean seeds to the second largest soy producer after the US and regain lost profits from widespread illegal use of their product, estimated to amount to over USD 60 million a year.

The environmental group Greenpeace has already announced its intention to challenge the government's decision as unconstitutional. They argue that it contravenes a court order in 2000 that requires environmental studies to be carried out before GM crops could be planted. These studies were never done, Greenpeace alleges. "We will go to court immediately and so will the Green party and the public prosecutor," said Tatiana Carvalho, Co-ordinator of the consumer rights campaign with Greenpeace Brazil. Opponents of the legalisation are also frustrated with the turnaround of the current government, which had resisted GM crops when it was in opposition.

EU member states divided over co-existence

At the 29 September meeting of the Council of Agriculture Ministers, EU member states were divided over how to address the coexistence of GM and conventional crops. The most controversial issues included thresholds for genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in organic produce, civil responsibility thresholds for GMOs in seeds and the possibility of setting up GM-free zones. Austria and Luxembourg insisted on strict EU legislation to limit the spread of GMOs from biotech crops to organic and conventional varieties. Both countries criticised the European Commission's guidelines released last July (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 25 August 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/03-08-25/story2.htm>) as too vague, providing too much flexibility for countries on how to sow GM crop.

France, on the other hand, was pushing for maximum flexibility. French maize farmers are expected to quickly adopt new GM strains once they become available. In addition to the EU-wide de facto moratorium on the approvals of new GMOs (in place since 1998), France also bans the commercial planting of maize varieties already approved in the EU. These restrictions are expected to be lifted once the new labelling and traceability regulations come into effect (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 3 August 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/03-08-25/story2.htm>). "It certainly won't happen next year. But once it takes off, I see exponential growth in their use and it will happen quite quickly," said Gregoire Berthe, President of the maize seed growers union SEPROMA.

The UK also appears willing to accept the flexibility proposed by the Commission. In a 5 September letter to Cabinet colleagues, Environment Secretary Margaret Beckett proposed "that we broadly support the [European] Commission's guidelines as providing a reasonable basis to address the issue". Her perspective is in stark contrast with the views of Britain's general public, whose main concern over GMOs relates to the risk of cross contamination of non-GM crops, according to a 24 September report assessing public opinion on GMOs in the UK (see below).

The Agriculture Council will continue its debate at its meeting on 13-14 October, but it will await the opinion of the Standing Committee on Seeds scheduled for 26-27 October.

Uganda to import GMOs

Last month, Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni announced that he would allow the future importation of GM crops that had already been processed and could not contaminate native plants. He emphasised the benefits of the technology, citing GM coffee, which gives five times as much yield as the traditional coffee. Museveni's decision, however, has raised concerns that Uganda might alienate various countries, in particular the EU. Tensions could also arise with other Sub-Saharan African countries, such as Malawi and Zambia, which continue to oppose GM foods and had put up the strongest resistance to the import of GM food aid last year. Dr John Aluma from the National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO) attributed the President's decision to pressure from the US. "There has never been pressure on any other technology," he said. "When it came to GM, the whole US government is behind it. That is how it has attained a political pressure."

2 biotech surveys, 2 continents, 2 contrasting results

US citizens' knowledge of GM foods remains limited, according to the results released by the Pew Initiative on Food and Biotechnology. In 2001, 44 percent had heard a 'great deal' or 'some' about biotechnology use in food production. Today, that number is 36 percent, a nine percent decline. 58 percent of Americans believe that they have not eaten GM foods, although GM ingredients are contained in approximately 70-75 percent of processed food in grocery stores. Respondents were split in their opinion on GM foods: 29 percent said GM foods were safe, whereas 25 percent believed they were unsafe. Most consumers are uncomfortable with the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) voluntary consultation program with the biotech industry, supporting a more active role by the FDA to ensure GM food safety. "A very strong 89 percent of the respondents supported the idea that the FDA should have a mandatory process under which they find the (genetically engineered) foods are safe before they can be marketed," said Michael Rodemeyer, Executive Director of the Pew Initiative, in Washington, D.C.

The British perspective on this issue drastically contrasts the US one. In a report published on 24 September based on the largest official government sponsored consultation to gauge British public opinion on this issue, the British public revealed their uneasiness with genetic modification. The findings of the "GM Nation?" debate said most people were "cautious, suspicious or outrightly hostile" towards GM crops. 54 percent of people were against commercialisation of GM crops, while only 2 percent said GM crops were acceptable "in any circumstances", 18 percent said they would find it acceptable only if there was no risk of cross-contamination, and 13 percent wanted more research. The findings of the report also suggest that attitudes become more negative as the public acquires more knowledge of the GM issues. Moreover, the document highlights a widespread mistrust of the government and multinational corporations involved in the technology.

Additional Resources

Pew Initiative survey: <http://pewagbiotech.org/>

Results of "GM Nation?": <http://www.gmpublicdebate.org/>.

"Brazil removes block on GM soya," CHECKBIOTECH, 26 September 2003; "Brazil's president to decide whether to legalize genetically modified crops," SIOUX CITY JOURNAL, 19 September 2003; "Brazil agrees to grow GM crops," GUARDIAN, 26 September 2003; "Museveni finally gives in to GM food production," THE EAST AFRICAN, 24 September 2003; "Farmers oppose Museveni over GM foods," NEW VISION, 9 September 2003; "Uganda's push for GM," BBC NEWS, 11 October 2003; Americans' knowledge of genetically modified foods remains low and opinions on safety split, PEWAGBIOTECH, 18 September 2003; French maize farmers seen embracing GM, eventually, REUTERS, 19 September 2003, Divided EU to debate ways to grow GMO crops, REUTERS, 26 September 2003; Leaked letters show government backs commercial growing of GM crops, INDEPENDENT, 23 September 2003; The GM debate has raised some legitimate concerns, CHECKBIOTECH, 25 September 2003.

Chemicals

FIERCE BATTLE OVER REVIEW OF EU CHEMICAL POLICY CONTINUES

In response to comments received during the public consultation period (see BRIDGES Trade, BioRes, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/03-07-11/story2.htm>), the European Commission is in the process of revising its proposal for the EU's new chemicals legislation REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restrictions of Chemicals). The revised (and as yet unofficial) proposal introduces some key changes regarding, inter alia, the scope of the system, safety assessment requirements, substances in articles, and substitution with less dangerous chemicals. The revision is fast becoming one of the most fought over policy developments in EU history, pitching civil society groups and industry against each other in an effort to strike a balance between safety and competitiveness concerns.

Some key changes

The May proposal attracted severe criticism from industry groups for being overly burdensome and harmful to industry competitiveness. These concerns found strong backing from the governments of the UK, Germany and France. In a joint letter to European Commission President Romano Prodi, Tony Blair, Jacques Chirac and Gerhard Schröder noted that the proposed legislation was "still a long way from being the fast, simple and cost-efficient procedure that was promise". They called for less bureaucratic and complicated rules, a complete assessment of the proposal's potential effects on industrial competitiveness, and a decisive role for the EU's Competitiveness Council.

To address some of these concerns, the revised proposal would no longer apply to polymers -- a wide range of plastics used in packaging, bottles, toys, pipes, CDs and other products -- thereby removing an estimated 30,000 substances from the system (although registration might be required for "certain" polymers at an unspecified date). Moreover, the requirements for undertaking chemical safety assessment have been considerably reduced in the revised proposal. Also, the obligation to prepare chemical safety reports and pass them down the supply chain have been abandoned for quantities of less than 10 tons per year and for downstream users (except when their use of the substance is not known to the upstream supplier).

In an effort to address concerns expressed by the EU's main trading partners, the previously vague provisions for chemicals in imported articles have been clarified and softened. Thus, importers must now register substances in articles only if the substances have hazardous properties, are intended to be released from the products, and are present in the "article type" in quantities over 1 ton per year. For substances that are released incidental to the use of the article, a simple notification is required, provided that the quantity of the substance released "may adversely affect human health or the environment". In the previous proposal, importers were required to register chemical substances "if during normal use and disposal they are released in quantities of over 1 tonne [per article type] and may adversely affect human health or the environment".

In a response to environmentalists' complaints that the May proposal did not incorporate a strong substitution test to assess whether dangerous substances could be substituted by less dangerous ones where suitable alternatives are available, the revised proposal now includes a clearer reference to substitution in the provisions on authorisation. Companies will be encouraged to present substitution plans that will influence the authorisation decision.

Civil society groups reject revised proposal

Environmental and consumer groups -- including the European Consumers Association (CEUC), the European Environmental Bureau, Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace and WWF -- strongly criticised the revisions, which they said revealed the European Commission's plan "to make far-reaching concessions to industry". They called on the Commission to "stand up to member state interference and industry pressure and take the necessary measures to protect European citizens, wildlife, and the environment from harmful chemicals". Specifically, they criticised the watering down of requirements for providing safety data for "two-

thirds of all chemicals", excluding chemicals in consumer products from any effective control, continuing to allow the use of hazardous chemicals even when safer alternatives are available, and granting businesses new and excessive confidentiality rights. "REACH is a once-in-a-generation chance to tackle [the impacts of chemicals on wildlife and people] and restore confidence in chemicals," said Tony Long, Director of WWF's European Policy Office.

The Commission is expected to finalise its proposal by 29 October. Further changes might still be introduced into the (unofficial) proposal discussed here. The legislative proposal will then have to be discussed by the Council and the European Parliament in a co-decision procedure.

Background

The REACH legislation, which is based on a White Paper adopted by the Commission in June 2001, would replace 40 different pieces of current legislation. Among the most fundamental changes are provisions that would shift the burden of proof for the safety of chemicals from public authorities to companies that produce, import and use chemicals. The legislation would be administered by a new European Chemicals Agency. Direct and indirect costs for industry and society could amount to ca EUR 15-33 billion, while the occupational health benefits are estimated to reach EUR 18-54 billion over the next 30 years. Registration and approval procedures would vary depending on the amount of chemicals manufactured or imported, and the level of risk. While the vast majority of all chemicals would only need to be registered, authorisation would be required for substances of "very high concern," such as carcinogens, mutagens and reproductive toxicants, subject to a risk assessment. To obtain authorisation for a specific use, the applicant would have to show that the risk from the use was adequately controlled or that socio-economic benefits outweighed the risks.

Additional Resources

For the revised proposal and further information, see <http://www.euractiv.com/cgi-bin/cgint.exe/1?204&OIDN=1506288&-home=home>.

"Chemicals: Commission modifies legislative plans after successful consultation," EURACTIV, 25 September 2003; "European Chemicals Authorization Plan Changed to Suit Industry," ENS, 24 September 2003; "WWF slams Chirac-Schroeder-Blair letter against draft EU chemical law," WWF, 23 September 2002; "NGOs call on European Commission to stop reversing on chemicals reform," NGO PRESS RELEASE, 25 September 2003.

In Brief

US SHRIMP FISHERS SEEK PROTECTION AGAINST ASIAN IMPORTS

Shrimpers from eight US states recently asked the government to impose a tariff to protect them from low-cost Asian competitors. Shrimp is now the most popular US seafood and more than 85 percent of US shrimp is imported, at a value of USD 3.4 billion a year. While US shrimp imports almost doubled from 1996 to 2002 and have increased by 14 percent in the first half of 2003, US shrimp production has remained flat. Correspondingly, US domestic prices of shrimp have almost halved since 1998. The long-established American fishing industry has been unable to compete and so has leveled allegations of dumping against several countries. The case could damage relations with several of the US' largest Asian trading partners, including Thailand, Vietnam, and India. Trade relations with Vietnam are already tense as a result of US tariffs placed on imported catfish earlier this year (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 25 August 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/03-08-25/inbrief.htm#2>). At the time Vietnam feared that its shrimp industry might be the next target of the US fishing industry. Vietnam has denied dumping shrimp into the US market and has developed a cynical view of US views on free trade. "It seems totally unfair that [the US] can insist on free trade and opening of the Vietnamese market and whenever there is a successful Vietnamese export,

the Americans slap it down," says Tony Foster, chair of the Hanoi chapter of the American Chamber of Commerce in Vietnam. Vietnam is the second largest exporter of shrimp to the US after Thailand.

"US shrimp fishermen seek tariffs safety net," FT, 29 September 2003.

WTO MEMBERS LOOK FOR GUIDANCE AFTER CANCUN COLLAPSE

In contrast to the last frantic hours in Cancun, Mexico, following the collapse of trade talks on 14 September (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 19 September 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/03-09-19/story1.htm>), the journey back to Geneva has been quiet and gradual. For now, all negotiating sessions for agriculture and non-agricultural market access have been cancelled, while Members are awaiting guidance from the next General Council session, currently scheduled for 20-22 October. Agriculture is likely to become the most pressing issue with the 'peace clause' set to expire by the end of the year. Under the 'peace clause', WTO members have agreed not to challenge agricultural subsidies in the WTO. While Members of the G-22 group of developing countries regard the expiration of the 'peace clause' a non-issue completely decoupled from the ongoing agriculture negotiations, others, such as the EC (which has benefited from the 'peace clause'), consider its renewal a precondition for continuing negotiations.

Also likely to be of relevance here are continuing efforts within the EU to reform the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), including new proposals by the European Commission for decoupling subsidies for products previously not covered by the CAP, such as sugar, cotton, tobacco and olive oil -- some of which are of major export interest for developing countries (see BRIDGES Weekly, 25 September 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/03-09-25/story2.htm>). Geneva sources cautioned that the failure of ministers to agree on a framework for agricultural reform in Cancun could lead to the more conservative voices in the EU gaining ground and pushing for smaller reforms.

ICTSD reporting.

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.

Coming up in the next two weeks

1-4 October, Boulder, Colorado, US: SUSTAINABLE RESOURCES 2003 - SOLUTIONS TO WORLD POVERTY. The event is organised to promote sustainable development by connecting grassroots leaders with engineers, entrepreneurs, inventors, vendors and philanthropists. It will provide opportunities for non-profits/NGOs, foundations, government agencies, and for-profit businesses to share technical expertise, connect, collaborate and establish cross-border partnerships. Conference themes include: economic development, education, water and food. For further information contact Lili Francklyn, tel: (1 303) 998-1323; email: lili@sustainablevillage.com; Internet: <http://www.sustainableresources.org>.

3-5 October 2003, Loccum, Germany: ENVIRONMENT FOR PEACE: THE ROLE OF THE BUSINESS SECTOR. This international conference is organised by Inwent (International Capacity Building) and supported by the UNEP Finance Initiative. The goal of this high-level international consultation is to identify and put into motion practical and effective strategies for helping the private sector, government and civil society work together to address the links between environmental precaution and conflict prevention. For

more information, contact: Demetrio Polo-Cheva, tel: (49-30) 25482-109; fax: 25482-103; email: demetrio.polo-cheva@inwent.org.

5-8 October, Marburg, Germany: **WORKSHOP ON BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES AND MIGRATION.** This international 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. It will serve as a discussion forum for scientists from various disciplines and responsible politicians in OECD and EU member countries. For further information contact Dietrich Werner, Philipps-Universität Marburg, tel (49-6421) 28 21546; fax: 28 28997; email: werner@mail.uni-marburg.de; Internet: <http://www.biol-resource-migration.de>.

6-10 October, Vienna, Austria: **INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON APPLICATION OF GENE-BASED TECHNOLOGIES FOR IMPROVING ANIMAL PRODUCTION AND HEALTH IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.** This symposium is organized by the joint FAO/IAEA Division, Animal Production and Health Section. For more information contact: email: h.makkar@iaea.org; Internet: <http://www.fao.org/ag/age/d3/mtc/symposium2003.html>

13-17 October, Lisbon, Portugal: **CONSUMERS INTERNATIONAL WORLD CONGRESS 2003.** This event, organised every three years by Consumers International, will focus on the theme of 'The future of consumer protection: representation, regulation and empowerment in a world economy'. It will consist of a series of plenary sessions, workshops, training sessions, and fringe meetings on the changes in the global economy and their implications for consumer rights. For more information, see: <http://www.consumersinternational.org/homepage.asp>.

14 October, University of Maryland, US: **FIRST ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON WORLD HUNGER.** Sponsored by the University of Maryland's Center for Sustainable Development, Office of International Programs, and Joint Institute for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (JIFSAN). The conference will explore potential solutions to world hunger, including biotechnology and international food policy. For more information, see <http://www.intprog.umd.edu/hunger.html>.

15 October, Montreal, Canada: **SYMPOSIUM ON INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' CONTRIBUTIONS TO UNDERSTANDING GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE.** This international symposium is organised by the Center for Indigenous Peoples' Nutrition and Environment. For more information, see: <http://dietetic.mcgill.ca/cine/CINE%20Symposium.htm>.

15-17 October, Geneva, Switzerland: **CIVIL SOCIETY MEETING IN PREPARATION FOR UNCTAD XI.** The civil society meeting, organised by UNCTAD, will follow up on the discussions and outcome of the Strategic Group Meeting, which was held in September 2002 and will provide an opportunity to discuss and exchange views among civil society representatives and UNCTAD secretariat with regard to pertinent organisational and substantive preparations of the civil society dimension for UNCTAD XI. For further information contact Amel Haffouz of the UNCTAD secretariat, tel: (41 22) 907 5048; fax: 907 0122; e-mail: amel.haffouz@unctad.org.

16 October, Basel, Switzerland: **FOOD SECURITY AND BIODIVERSITY SYMPOSIUM.** Hosted by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, the Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture and the International Plant Genetics Resources Institute. The event will examine practical approaches and varied perspectives on what constitutes reasonable sharing under the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources. For further information visit: http://www.benefitsharing.org/index_en.asp?br=ns.

Other Forthcoming Events

24 October, Geneva, Switzerland: **WIPO-UPOV SYMPOSIUM ON INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS IN PLANT BIOTECHNOLOGY.** Organised by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV). The Symposium will examine the role of intellectual property in plant biotechnology at the international, regional and national levels. It will focus on how patents and breeders' rights are effectively used and managed in this field. For more information, see: <http://www.upov.int/en/news/index.html>.

30-31 October, Berlin, Germany: MOVING FORWARD FROM CANCÚN - A CONFERENCE ON THE GLOBAL GOVERNANCE OF TRADE, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: Hosted by Ecologic - Institute for International and European Environmental Policy. The conference assesses the current trade and environment nexus at the interface of policy and research. It is the first major conference to follow the WTO Ministerial Conference at Cancun and will be an important opportunity to take stock in light of the crucial negotiations to be concluded in 2005 and beyond. For more information contact: Markus Knigge; tel: (+49-30) 8688-0100; email: knigge@ecologic.de; Internet: <http://www.ecologic-events.de/Cat-E/en/background.htm>.

5-6 November, Brussels, Belgium: EUROPEAN FOOD SUPPLY CHAINS '03. Organised by Ethical Cooperation. High-level meeting between policy makers and the food industry that will look at ways of making Europe's food supply chain environmentally sustainable. For more information, contact: Keith Thomas, tel: (+44 207) 375 757; email: kthomas@foodsupplychain.com; Internet: <http://www.ethicalcorp.com/foodsupplyconference/>.

10-14 November, Cavite City, Philippines: SOUTHEAST ASIAN CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT AND TRADE. Organised by Oxfam International in cooperation with Tambuyog Development Center, Philippines. The participants are expected to engage in critical analysis of current state of negotiations on fisheries subsidies and market access following the Cancun Ministerial in September and shall develop a common standpoint. For more information, see <http://www.ictsd.org/ministerial/cancun/docs/10-14Nov.pdf>.

13 November, Edinburgh, UK: PRECAUTION AND PROGRESS: LESSONS FROM THE UK GM CROPS DIALOGUE. Co-sponsored by the Scottish Executive and the Agriculture and Environment Biotechnology Commission. The conference will consider the components of the recent UK dialogue on GM crops and how these might be integrated in the policy decision-making process. For more information, contact: INNOGEN, email: innogen@ed.ac.uk; tel: (+44 131) 650 9113; Internet: <http://www.innogen.ac.uk>.

17-19 November, Miami, Florida: AMERICAS TRADE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FORUM (ATSDF). The ATSDF is a two-day forum being planned for the November 2003 meeting of the hemisphere's Trade Ministers in Miami. The ATSDF will be held within the "security perimeter" to facilitate informal dialogue and substantive exchanges between civil society organizations and government officials working on the proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). The ATSDF will convene workshops, panels, and roundtables to discuss social, economic, political and practical concerns relating to trade liberalisation in the Americas. For more information, contact: North-South Center, University of Miami, email: nscenter@miami.edu; Internet: <http://www.miami.edu/nsc/pages/FTAA.html>.

Position Vacancies

For vacancies in the fields of corporate social responsibility and socially responsible investment, see <http://www.ethicalperformance.com/recruitment/index.shtml>.

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.

ADOPTION OF GENETICALLY CROPS ON THE US. By the Economic Research Service, US Department of Agriculture, 2003. This product summarises the extent of adoption of herbicide-tolerant and insect-resistant crops since their introduction in 1996. Three tables devoted to corn, cotton and soybeans cover the 2000-2003 period by State. Available at <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data/BiotechCrops/>.

"North American Agricultural Market Integration and Its Impact on the Food and Fiber System," by Thomas L. Vollrath in AGRICULTURE INFORMATION BULLETIN (AIB784, 2003). Available at <http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/aib784/>.

PROGRESS OR RETREAT IN THE DOHA ROUND? ANALYSING UNDERLYING POLICIES IN THE WTO AND THE HARBINSON PROPOSAL. By Christian Bjørnskov and Kim Martin Lind. This paper tracks the very few changes in members' negotiation positions in the WTO since their last study, Bjørnskov and Lind (2002), in the period November 2001 until September 2003. They assess that there is no convergence towards a consensus and therefore ask two questions: has chairman Harbinson's draft proposals reflected a genuine compromise effort; and have the drafts been balanced? Available at <http://www.sjfi.dk/Publikationer/wp/2003-wp/Doha-2.pdf>.

WORLD DEVELOPMENT REPORT 2004: MAKING SERVICES WORK FOR POOR PEOPLE. By the World Bank, 2003. The report says that too often, key services fail poor people - in access, in quantity, in quality. This imperils a set of development targets known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which call for a halving of the global incidence of poverty, and broad improvements in human development by 2015. For more information, see: <http://econ.worldbank.org/wdr/wdr2004/>.

A 2020 VISION FOR FOOD, AGRICULTURE, AND THE ENVIRONMENT. By the Initiative of the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). IFPRI tries to develop a shared vision and consensus for action on how to meet future world food needs while reducing poverty and protecting the environment. This set of 17 Focus briefs presents technical research results that encompass a wide range of subjects drawn from research on policy-relevant aspects of agriculture, poverty, nutrition, and the environment. Available at <http://www.ifpri.org/2020/focus/focus10/focus10.pdf>.

"Agricultural Biotechnology Development and Policy in China," by Jikun Huang and Qinfang Wang in *AGBIOFORUM* 5(4, 2003). This article provides an overview of China's agricultural biotechnology development policies. Research goals, strategies, priorities, commercialisation, and China's organizational framework for agricultural biotechnology development are presented. Included is a description of the evolution of China's biosafety regulations as well as China's research capacity building and public investment. Available at <http://www.agbioforum.org/v5n4/v5n4a01-huang.htm>.

ECOSYSTEMS AND HUMAN WELL-BEING BY THE UNITED NATIONS. This is the first product of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, a four-year international work program designed to meet the needs of decision-makers for scientific information on the links between ecosystem change and human well-being. The book offers an overview of the project, describing the conceptual framework that is being used, defining its scope, and providing a baseline of understanding that all participants need to move forward. For more information, see: <http://www.millenniumassessment.org/2/products.aspx>.

POLICY THAT WORKS FOR FOREST AND PEOPLE: REAL PROSPECTS FOR GOVERNANCE AND LIVELIHOODS. By James Mayers and Stephen Bass, foreword by Jag Maini (*Earthscan/IIED* 1, 2004). Forestry can be a real force for better livelihoods and good governance. But a pattern of forest problems common to many countries including loss of natural forests, inequitable access, lack of information and resources and ossified institutions. Policy is at the root of most of most of the problems. This book is a study of policy processes that affect forests. For further information, see: www.earthprint.com/go.htm?to=9276IIED

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