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Biotechnology

BT COTTON REMAINS HIGHLY CONTROVERSIAL IN INDIA

Controversy continues to rage over the cultivation of Bt cotton in India following serious doubts raised by the Agriculture Ministry's Standing Parliamentary Committee regarding the crop's efficacy. The cotton variety, genetically modified to resist bollworm, has also come under strong criticism from civil society groups who released findings to show that the crop had failed to deliver the promised results. Meanwhile, India's Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) rejected an application to plant a new variety of Bt cotton in the North of the country.

According to a report tabled by the Standing Parliamentary Committee in the Indian Parliament on 25 April, Bt cotton appeared to perform "only marginally" better than conventional varieties, both in terms of productivity and resistance to bollworm infection. "Taking into consideration the high cost of Bt cotton seeds and the need for more application of fertiliser and water for its cultivation, the Committee finds that farmers who have grown Bt cotton have been put to loss in most of the places," the report concluded. The Committee asked the government to set up an independent team of experts to re-evaluate the variety's economic viability and possible environmental impact. The cotton variety -- the first commercially grown GM crop in India -- had received conditional approval for cultivation in March 2002 amid widespread protests by anti-GM activists.

Ten days earlier, the India-based non-governmental organisation Gene Campaign presented field data showing that the first harvest of Bt cotton had failed. The study was conducted in 16 villages and involved interviews with 100 farmers in Andhra Pradesh and Yavatmal in Maharashtra. According to Gene Campaign, the Bt cotton plant had proven to be weaker than traditional cotton, with a smaller and lower-quality yield, and according to the group, "angry cotton farmers are vowing that they will not grow Bt cotton again". The Gene Campaign study also showed that Bt cotton proved to be significantly more expensive than traditional varieties, leaving farmers in debt. Calling the failure of Bt cotton "bitter and widespread", Gene Campaign further noted that mandatory regulatory authorities had not been set up in Indian states allowing the cultivation of Bt cotton, and called for a criminal investigation into the matter. The group also demanded that Monsanto pay compensation to farmers that had suffered losses due to Bt cotton. The demands were echoed

by G. Ananthapadmanabhan, Executive Director of Greenpeace India, who called for "Bt cotton [to] be withdrawn in time for the next season to be GM-free".

The above findings contradict conclusions reached by Mahyco-Monsanto (India) Ltd, the company that developed the first GM cotton grown in India. The company claimed that the use of the three Bt cotton varieties approved for commercial release had increased farmers' incomes by Rs 7,000 per acre (approx. Rs 17,500 per hectare), and had led to a reduction in pesticide use by 65-70 percent while increasing yields by 30 percent.

In related developments, the GEAC has rejected an application for commercial cultivation of a new variety of Bt cotton, developed by Mahyco-Monsanto, in India's North. The decision was based on concerns that the variety was highly sensitive to the leaf curl virus, which was common in that region. Regarding the performance of already approved Bt cotton varieties, GEAC chairperson Sushma Choudhary confirmed that reports had been received showing that Bt cotton had not performed well in some areas. However, she added that GEAC would not withdraw its conditional approval for cultivation at this stage as "more time should be given to assess the performance of Bt cotton in the regions where it has been approved".

"Field Data On India's First Bt Cotton Harvest," GENE CAMPAIGN PR, 15 April 2003; "Monsanto Unfazed over Rejection of Genetically Modified Cotton," AP, 26 April 2003; "Regulator says no to Bt cotton cultivation," FINANCIAL EXPRESS, 25 April 2003; "Panel questions efficacy of Bt cotton," HINDU, 26 April 2003; " 'Bt cotton raised farm income'," REDIFF, 23 April 2003.

GMO UPDATE: EU-US, PHILIPPINES, MEXICO, BRAZIL

Possible EU-US biotech dispute still brewing

Following the end of the Iraq war, voices are again growing louder in the US calling on the administration to challenge the continued EU de facto moratorium on the approval of genetically modified organisms (GMO) at the WTO. In a letter to USTR Robert Zoellick, Senator Cuck Grassley (Rep), Chairman of the Committee on Finance, reiterated concerns that the EU's refusal to approve new GMOs violated WTO rules and had contributed to the "spread of anti-biotechnology hysteria to other parts of the world", referring in particular to Southern Africa. "I understand that some in the Administration wanted to postpone a WTO case until after Iraq was liberated," Grassley wrote. "Saddam Hussein's regime has now been deposed. Accordingly I see no reason for putting off a WTO challenge."

In response to similar calls made previously by House Speaker J. Dennis Hastert (Rep), Günter Burghardt, who heads the European Commission's office in Washington D.C. cautioned against launching a dispute which he said would "create a significant setback as far as consumer confidence is concerned" and could deal a "possibly fatal" blow to the European biotech industry. Burghardt stressed that a legislative framework was being put in place in the EU that could lead to a lifting of a moratorium and that a WTO case could damage the "positive momentum".

Anti-GM protest continues in the Philippines

Six members of the NGO Network Opposed to Genetically Modified Organisms (NO to GMO!) began an indefinite hunger strike on 22 April in front of the Philippine Department of Agriculture in an effort to halt the distribution on genetically modified Bt corn. The insect-protected corn variety, approved in December 2002 as the first biotech crop for commercial release in the Philippines, is set to be distributed nationwide by its producer Monsanto in May or June. Anti-GMO campaigners have voiced concerns over possible health and environment-related impacts of the corn. During a meeting with the group, Art Salazar, head of the Department of Agriculture's Corn Program, conceded that contamination of the country's agricultural crops had already occurred resulting from field testing of Bt corn, despite the Department's earlier claims that

native corn varieties and other plants would not be contaminated. So far, the Department has not committed to halting the distribution of Bt corn.

Mexico, Brazil move on biotech regulations

The Mexican Senate on 24 April passed new legislation designed to be compatible with the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. The legislation would allow the limited release of genetically modified crops, requiring GM seeds to be declared risk-free before they are released for human consumption or commercial planting. The legislation would also require GM products to be labelled in an effort to ensure consumer information on nutritional characteristics, composition and advantages of GM crops. To this end, the legislation sets out general criteria that the labels must be truthful, objective, clear, understandable and useful for the consumer. The legislation is based on a precautionary approach, which "serves as a parameter to assume precautionary decisions, in case of lack of scientific certainty of the magnitude of the possible adverse effects that the GMOs could cause to biological diversity and to the human health". While the legislation includes safeguards on the experimental planting of GMOs and seeks to protect native maize varieties, environmentalists said that the safeguards were not adequate, but that the legislation was instead weighted in favour of corporate interests. The law now has now been submitted to the lower house of Congress for approval.

Brazil on 31 April published a decree that requires all foods or food ingredients with a GM content of more than 1 percent to be labelled. The decree comes as part of a broader government measure aimed at combating Brazil's large black market in illegal GM soy planting. The decree was met with widespread criticism from all sides for being confusing or insufficient. "No labelling norm is rational, given the current scenario in the country, if there is not certification of the [entire] production chain," said Leila Oda from the National Biosecurity Association. She also criticised the decree as unclear on the standards that should be used for determining levels of GM content and noted that processing of GM grains into meal and oil would make it impossible to detect the GM contents. While conceding that the decree went some way towards ensuring consumer information, the consumer group Idec expressed doubts whether it was adequate. Specifically, Idec pointed out that labelling would not be required for GM-derived products where the GM content was no longer detectable. They furthermore noted that consumers would not know whether a food product was GM-free.

ICTSD reporting; "EC urges Hastert to reconsider call for WTO case over EU moratorium on GMOs," WTO REPORTER, 18 April 2003; "Mexico approves GM release regulations," BINAS, April 2003; "Mexican Senate approves bio-security law to regulate genetically modified organisms," WORLD MARKET ANALYSIS, 25 April 2003; "Brazil labelling plan for GM foods draws criticism," REUTERS, 1 May 2003; Hunger strike against GM crops in the Philippines By Network Opposed to Genetically Modified Organisms! (NO GMOs!), OCA, 22 April 2003.

In Brief

CHINA CRACKS DOWN ON ENDANGERED SPECIES TRADE TO COMBAT SARS

The Chinese government has begun to crack down on trade in endangered species as part of its battle to halt the global spread of the SARS virus, which some experts believe might have originated from wild game consumed in China although the link has yet to be proven. As part of the campaign, Chinese authorities raided tens of thousands of markets, restaurants and kitchens, confiscating hundreds of thousands endangered animals and arresting almost 1,500 suspects. In the past, China has been strongly criticised by animal protection groups for its lax dealing with illegal wildlife trade, which constitutes a lucrative business in the country.

"SARS virus hits China trade in endangered animals," REUTERS, 1 May 2003.

US ATTACKS EU OVER TUNA FISHING

In a letter to EU officials dated 25 April, US Commerce Secretary Don Evans warned the EU that its continued "overfishing" of Atlantic tuna stocks could lead to new trade frictions between the US and EU, raising the possibility of trade sanctions if the EU did not reduce its harvest. "I am concerned that overfishing by EU member states is reducing stocks of ICCAT [International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tuna] species below sustainable levels," Evans noted. He also expressed disappointment with ICCAT's decision to raise quotas for Atlantic bluefin to a level that exceeded recommendations of the groups' scientific advisers. The letter marks a victory for the Recreational Fishing Alliance, which has long been campaigning for the US administration to take action. The fishing group's spokesman Herb Moore noted that EU member states had long dominated the ICCAT, enabling them to set quotas that contravened US interests. He also accused Spain and Portugal of routinely exceeding annual allocations.

"US warns EU tuna fishing could hit trade relations," REUTERS, 30 April 2003.

G-8 ENVIRONMENT MINISTERS SET PRIORITIES FOR UPCOMING SUMMIT

The Environment Ministers of the G-8, the eight major industrialised countries plus the EU, met in Paris on the weekend to discuss environmental priorities for the upcoming G-8 Summit to be held in Evian, France, on 1-3 June. As the "priority fields for action", Ministers identified access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation, access to energy, reducing air and water pollution, combating climate change through mitigation and adaptation, desertification and deforestation, as well as biodiversity conservation. Ministers "strongly" supported the successful completion of the current trade round at the WTO, noting specific opportunities in the negotiations on environmental goods and services. However, France failed to garner support for its proposal to set up a World Environment Organization as a balance to the WTO.

"G8 environment heads focus on water, energy, Africa," ENS, 29 April 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.

Coming up in the next two weeks

28 April - 2 May 2003, Ottawa, Canada: 31ST SESSION OF THE CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD LABELLING. For further information see http://www.codexalimentarius.net/ccfl31/fl03_01e.htm.

28 April - 2 May, Geneva, Switzerland: FIRST MEETING OF THE OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP (OEWG 1) OF THE BASEL CONVENTION ON THE CONTROL OF TRANSBOUNDARY MOVEMENTS OF HAZARDOUS WASTES AND THEIR DISPOSAL. For further information, contact the Basel Convention Secretariat, tel: (41 22) 917 8218; fax: 797 3454; email: sbc@unep.ch; Internet: <http://www.basel.int/meetings/oewg/oewg1/home.htm>

28 April - 2 May, Copenhagen, Denmark: 6TH GOVERNING BOARD MEETING OF THE GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY INFORMATION FACILITY. Organised by the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF). In addition to the Governing Board meeting, there will be an inauguration for the new GBIF Secretariat building, a presentation of the Ebbe Nielsen Prize, and the first GBIF Science Symposium on

Biodiversity Informatics. For more information contact: Mr. James Edwards; tel: (45) 3532-1470; fax: 3532-1480; email: gbif@gbif.org; Internet: <http://www.gbif.org>.

28 April - 9 May, New York, US: UNITED NATIONS' COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, 11TH SESSION. This will be the first meeting on sustainable development since the Johannesburg Summit. It will seek to give political direction to the implementation of the Johannesburg outcomes, Agenda 21, and the next phase of the Commission's work. For more information visit: http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd11/csd11_2003.htm.

29 April - 2 May, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND ENVIRONMENT (regular and special sessions). For further information, contact: the WTO Information and Media Relations Division, Geneva; tel: (41-22) 739- 5007; fax: 739-5458; email: enquiries@wto.org.

5-7 May, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO NEGOTIATING GROUP ON RULES. For further information, contact: the WTO Information and Media Relations Division, Geneva; tel: (41-22) 739- 5007; fax: 739-5458; email: enquiries@wto.org.

6-7 May, Athens, Greece: CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FOR LASTING PEACE: SHARED WATER, SHARED FUTURE, SHARED KNOWLEDGE: Jointly Hosted by the Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the World Bank, this conference's themes are: Shared Future: Developing A Common Vision for Peace, Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Development - Toward Diplomacy for Environment and Sustainable Development; Shared Water: Management of Shared Resources - Challenges, Opportunities and Constraints; and Shared Knowledge: Developing, Disseminating and Applying Knowledge. For further information contact: GWP-Med Secretariat; tel: (30 210) 3247490; fax: 3317127; e-mail: secretariat@gwpmed.org; Internet: <http://www.gwpforum.org/servlet/PSP?iNodeID=204&itemId=3172>

6-8 May, Leipzig, Germany: INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON UNDERUTILIZED PLANT SPECIES. Organised by Capacity Building International (InWEnt), Global Facilitation Unit (GFU) and the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ). For further information, see <http://www.inwent.org/ups>.

6-8 May, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: FOURTH WORKSHOP ON SUSTAINABLE USE. Organised by Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. For further information, contact the CBD Secretariat, tel: (1 514) 288 2220; fax: 288 6588; email: secretariat@biodiv.org; Internet: <http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meeting.asp?wg=WSSUSE-04>.

8-9 May, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO TRADE NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE. For further information, contact: the WTO Information and Media Relations Division, Geneva; tel: (41-22) 739- 5007; fax: 739-5458; email: enquiries@wto.org.

12-16 May, Rome, Italy: 29TH FAO COMMITTEE MEETING ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY. The Committee on World Food Security (CFS) serves as a forum in the UN system for review and follow-up of policies concerning world food security, including food production, sustainable use of the natural resource base for food security, nutrition, physical and economic access to food and other food security related aspects of poverty eradication, the implications of food trade for world food security and other related matters. For more information contact: FAO Economic and Social Department; tel: (39 6) 5705 4358; Internet: <http://www.fao.org/DOCREP/MEETING/006/Y8640e.HTM>

12-17 May, Panama City, Panama: INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER COUNCIL (ITTC), 34TH SESSION. The First Preparatory Committee for the negotiations of the Successor Agreement to ITTA, 1994, will also convene on these dates. For more information contact: Alastair Sarre, ITTO Secretariat; tel: (81-45) 223-1110; fax: 223-1111; email: editor@itto.or.jp; Internet: <http://www.itto.or.jp>.

8-9 May, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO GENERAL COUNCIL. For further information, contact: the WTO Information and Media Relations Division, Geneva; tel: (41-22) 739- 5007; fax: 739-5458; email: enquiries@wto.org.

11-16 May, Victoria, Canada: FIFTH INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE AND MANAGEMENT OF PROTECTED AREAS ASSOCIATION (SAMPAA) CONFERENCE. Organised by Science and Management of Protected Areas Association. For further information, see http://www.sampaa.org/sampaa_conference.htm.

12-23 May, New York, USA: 2ND SESSION OF THE PERMANENT FORUM ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES. Organised by United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. For further information, contact OHCHR; tel: (41 22) 917 9000; fax: 917 9010; email: webadmin.hchr@unog.ch; Internet: <http://193.194.138.190/indigenous/forum.htm>.

13-14 May, Geneva, Switzerland: 8TH MEETING OF THE EARTHWATCH WORKING PARTY. Organised by United Nations Environment Programme. For further information, contact Jaap van Woerden, UNEP Earthwatch Unit; tel: (41 22) 9178169; fax: 91 78176; email: woerden@grid.unep.ch; Internet: <http://earthwatch.unep.net/about/ewwp8.php>

13-16 May, Helsinki, Finland: AD HOC TECHNICAL EXPERT GROUP ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE. Organised by Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. For further information, contact the CBD Secretariat, tel: (1 514) 288 2220; fax: 288 6588; email: secretariat@biodiv.org.

13 May, Washington D.C., USA: GEF - NGO CONSULTATIONS. Organised by Secretariat of the Global Environmental Facility. For further information, contact the GEF Secretariat, tel: (202) 473 0508; fax: 522 3240/3245; email: gef@gefweb.org; Internet: <http://gefweb.org>.

13-14 May, Tokyo, Japan: EXPERT MEETING ON "AGRICULTURE FOR PEACE". Organised by The United Nations University. For further Information, contact: Prof A.H. Zakri, UNU Institute of Advanced Studies; tel: (81 3) 5467 2323; fax: 5467 2324; email: zakri@ias.unu.edu; Internet: <http://www.ias.unu.edu/index.cfm>.

Other forthcoming events

28 May, Brussels, Belgium: GMOs – CO-EXISTENCE OR CONTAMINATION? THE CHALLENGE TO ENSURE CO-EXISTENCE OF ORGANIC AND CONVENTIONAL FARMING WITH GENETICALLY MODIFIED CROPS. Organised by the Greens/EFA in the European Parliament, Friends of the Earth Europe, Euro Coop and the Heinrich Böll Foundation. For further information, contact: Geert Ritsema, FOEE, tel: (32 2) 542 01 82; fax: 537 55 96; email: geert.ritsema@foeeurope.org; Internet: <http://www.foeeurope.org/GMOs/conference/home.htm>

1-3 June, Evian-les-Bains, France: G8 SUMMIT. Delegates will discuss issues relating to globalisation. Among the proposed major themes are solidarity, with particular emphasis on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), and access to water for all. Other topics include government and corporate responsibility, security and democracy. For further information see <http://www.g8.fr/evian/english/home.html>.

16-20 June, Berlin, Germany: 55TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL WHALING COMMISSION. This meeting will be preceded by meetings of the Scientific Committee and various sub-groups. For further information contact: International Whaling Commission; tel: (44 1223) 233971; fax: 232876; email: iwc@iwcoffice.org; Internet: http://www.iwcoffice.org/2003_meeting.htm.

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>

Courses

16-18 July, Maastricht, The Netherlands: CHALLENGES AND RISKS OF GMOS - WHAT RISK ANALYSIS IS APPROPRIATE? OPTIONS FOR FUTURE POLICY MAKING TOWARDS INTEGRATED AGO-FOOD SYSTEMS. Organised by the Amsterdam-Maastricht Summer University. The workshop will present the multinational framework relevant for risk analysis, focusing on the relevant WTO-Agreements and relevant Multilateral Environmental Agreements. Case studies will be used to learn from success stories and to exchange experiences different national approaches to risk analysis and intellectual property protection. The workshop will feature a number of leading experts from international organisations, governments, academics, industry and NGOs. For further information, contact Ruggero Lala, Course Co-ordinator, tel: (31 20) 620 0225; fax: 624 9368; email: ruggero.lala@amsu.edu; Internet: <http://www.amsu.edu/courses/law/publ12003.htm>.

Call for Papers

As part of the CONCERTED ACTION FOR TRADE AND ENVIRONMENT project, Ecologic, the Institute for International and European Environmental Policy are holding a Conference "MOVING FORWARDS FROM CANCÚN" on the global governance of trade, environment and sustainable development in October 2003 in Berlin. This event will be the first major conference to follow the WTO Ministerial Conference in Cancún, making it an important opportunity to analyse and evaluate the outcomes of the negotiations. The conference will assess the current trade and environment nexus from a broad perspective at the interface of policy and research, designed to gain insights for both policymakers and the research community.

For this event Ecologic invites to submit Papers on the following topics: WTO rules and MEAs, the dispute settlement system, investment liberalisation, subsidies, services, competition policy, government procurement, intellectual property rights, agriculture, public health, export credit guarantees, development, implementation procedures, consumer protection and fair trade. Please note, however, that the above is a non-exhaustive list, and authors may submit a paper on any topic relevant to the conference. We encourage submissions from policymakers, NGOs, and the research community. Papers should be original and previously unpublished. Abstracts of approximately 300-500 words in length should be submitted by 6 June 2003. The abstract should be submitted by email to cat-e@ecologic-events.de using the attached form. The abstracts will then be peer reviewed by an panel of international experts in the field. Successful submissions will be asked to submit the full paper and invited to be a presenter at the Berlin Conference. Accepted papers will be widely disseminated as part of the conference materials. For further information contact: Richard G. Tarasofsky, email: tarasofsky@ecologic.de; Internet: <http://www.cat-e.org/>

RESOURCES

If you have a relevant resource (books, papers, bulletins, etc.) you would like to see announced in this section, please forward a copy or review by the BRIDGES staff to Heike Baumüller, hbaumuller@ictsd.ch.

POST-MARKET OVERSIGHT OF BIOTECH FOODS - IS THE SYSTEM PREPARED? Commissioned by the Pew Initiative on Food and Biotechnology and prepared by Resources for the Future, April 2003. The report concludes that the current regulatory oversight system for agricultural biotechnology in the US is focused mainly on pre-market approval and that there are potential vulnerabilities in the system due to the relatively low priority and limited resources for post-market oversight. The report identifies some potential

vulnerabilities in the post-market oversight programs established under this regulatory framework. Available at: <http://pewagbiotech.org/research/postmarket/>.

THE EFFECTS OF INFORMATION ON CONSUMER DEMAND FOR BIOTECH FOODS. By the Economic Research Service of the US Department of Agriculture, April 2003. This bulletin presents empirical evidence on consumers' willingness to pay for biotech foods based on the presence or absence of labels advising that the food was prepared with the aid of biotechnology. The authors designed and conducted an experimental auction to elicit consumers' willingness to pay for "genetically modified" (GM)-labeled and standard-labeled foods under different information regimes. The evidence gathered for vegetable oil, tortilla chips, and potatoes shows that labels matter. In particular, under all information treatments, consumers discounted food items labeled "GM" by an average of 14 percent. For further information, see <http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/tb1903/>.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY DIPLOMACY - CONCEPTS AND ELEMENTS OF A WORK PROGRAMME. By the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, 2003. This paper argues that science and technology are prerequisites to effective international negotiations. Both increasing specialization of scientific knowledge and integration of diverse disciplines to solve problems must be expected and utilized in multilateral negotiations at all levels. Available at http://www.unctad.org/en/docs/itetebmisc5_en.pdf.

THE ECOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF FISHING IN MARINE ECOSYSTEMS OF THE UNITED STATES. By the Pew Oceans Commission, October 2002. The report argues that "understanding the ecological consequences of exploitation is a necessary component of ecosystem-based management," and recommends that "ecosystem-based management incorporate broad monitoring programs that directly involve fishers; ecosystem models that describe the trophic interactions and evaluate the ecosystem effects of fishing; and field-scale adaptive management experiments. Available at http://www.pewoceans.org/oceanfacts/2002/10/25/fact_29889.asp.

POLICY RESEARCH ON AFRICAN AGRICULTURE: TRENDS, GAPS, AND CHALLENGES. By S.W. Omamo, Research Report No. 21, 2003. The central argument in this report is that most policy research on African agriculture is irrelevant to agricultural and overall economic policy in Africa, and that the policy research community-and the agricultural economics profession in particular-must shoulder a significant part of the blame for this state of affairs. Available at <http://www.isnar.cgiar.org/publications/catalog/rr.htm>.

"Taking stock: management pitfalls in fisheries science" by Oran R. Young in *ENVIRONMENT* 45 (3, 2003): 24-33. Abstract: Scientific assessments are an inextricable part of the management of any natural resource. However, placing too much emphasis on their validity without taking other factors into account can result in poor policy. This is especially true in fisheries science; policy makers who have relied too heavily on even the most sophisticated estimates of fish populations have seen disastrous losses and fishery closures. Explorations into the community lead to applications in fisheries science and beyond.

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