



International Centre for Trade  
and Sustainable Development

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## **Biotechnology**

### **EC RELEASES FIRST SUBMISSIONS IN GMO DISPUTE - US RESPONDS**

The EC has defended its policies on genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in its first written submission in the dispute launched by the US against a 'de facto' EC moratorium on the approval and marketing of biotech products (see *BRIDGES Trade BioRes*, 30 April 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/04-04-30/story2.htm>). The US gave an oral response to the EC's submission during the first panel hearing on 2 June.

In the 17 May submission (available at [http://www.trade-environment.org/output/theme/tewto/EC\\_submission\\_biotech.pdf](http://www.trade-environment.org/output/theme/tewto/EC_submission_biotech.pdf)), the EC highlighted risks associated with GMOs identified in various scientific reports and assessments, such as UK field trials concluded in September 2003 (see *BRIDGES Trade BioRes*, 3 October 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/03-10-03/story2.html>). It also drew attention to stricter precautionary measures adopted by other countries, including total bans on GMOs. This, according to the EC, demonstrated the reasonableness of the EC's more nuanced approach. Moreover, to counter the US argument that biotech products are safe (see [http://www.trade-environment.org/output/theme/tewto/US\\_submission\\_biotech.pdf](http://www.trade-environment.org/output/theme/tewto/US_submission_biotech.pdf)), the EC underscored that the practice and reports of institutions such as the World Health Organisation, international conventions such as the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and national regulatory (biosafety) frameworks pointed to a contrary conclusion. Finally, the EC questioned whether the WTO was the appropriate forum for resolving all the GMO issues raised in this dispute. According to the EC, 'international cooperation' would have been the appropriate channel for building a sound international framework for addressing some of the issues.

### **'The measure at issue'**

The EC claimed that it had not adopted any 'moratorium' on the approval of GMOs or suspended the application of its GMO legislation. According to the EC, the fact that the complainants had not been able to identify an instrument or text in which a 'moratorium' is brought into effect was proof of this assertion. Moreover, a practice not laid down in any document cannot be a challengeable measure. This being the case, the EC argued, the consistency of the EC GMO legislation, its approval systems and the ban on marketing were not within the jurisdiction of the panel and the panel must confine its findings to the 'measures' identified in the US panel request.

In its panel request, the US asked the panel to consider the EC's "general and product specific moratoria" (WT/DS291/23, available at <http://docsonline.wto.org>).

### **Scope of the SPS Agreement**

The EC argued that GMOs were too complex to be covered by the WTO Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement) alone. It did, however, concede that some aspects of its GMO approach fell within the scope of the SPS Agreement -- specifically, the US assertion that the 'measure' was causing 'undue delay' in the approval of GMO products in the EC. Other aspects of its GMO policies, according to the EC, fell within the purview of the WTO Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), and Article XX of GATT 1994 (General Exceptions). Particularly, the EC argued that the environmental risks, certain health risks and the conservation of biodiversity -- all of which its legislation seeks to address -- were not covered by the SPS Agreement, and should instead be properly regulated by the Biosafety Protocol. Therefore, the EC urged the panel to interpret and apply the relevant WTO agreements against the background of relevant norms in international law outside the WTO context.

### **'Undue delay'**

The US argued in its submissions that the EC was in contravention of its obligations under the SPS Agreement, which provides that control, inspection and approval procedures should be undertaken without undue delay. The EC denied any 'undue delay', saying that its approval process was slow because requests for additional information had been put to applicants at different stages. These requests, the EC claimed, were justified on the basis of risk assessment, risk management and risk communication endorsed by the international community. Furthermore, the EC noted that its procedures were merely provisional and justified on the basis of the insufficiency of scientific evidence and the adaptation of its directives in light of the evolving science, political and social debate on GMOs.

### **Risk assessment**

The EC pointed out that the US had not challenged the risk assessment that EC member states' safeguard measures were based on. Nevertheless, the EC made the point that the measures were consistent with the SPS Agreement's provisions on risk assessment, i.e. they were provisional, temporary and based on the precautionary principle, pending a full assessment at the EC level. They were also maintained by the member states on the basis of available scientific information and in light of insufficient scientific evidence. The EC emphasised that it was in the process of seeking additional information necessary for a more objective assessment of the risk posed by GMOs.

### **The US response to the EC submission**

During the first panel hearing in the GMO case on 2 June 2004, the US dismissed the EC's defence that the complainants had failed to identify the 'moratorium' at issue in any document. According to the US, evidence confirming its existence include statements by leading EC officials and the Commission itself. Furthermore, according to the US the failure by the EC to publish it, only added to the lack of transparency, which the EC should not be "permitted to profit from." Regarding the EC's claim that its policy is consistent with the Biosafety Protocol, the US pointed out that the Protocol explicitly provides that parties may not disregard their existing international obligations. Thus, the US argued, the Biosafety Protocol did not absolve the EC from complying with its WTO obligations. The US also countered the EC's argument that issues raised in this case fall outside the scope of the SPS agreement by highlighting the point that the SPS

Agreement explicitly requires the consideration of relevant ecological and environmental conditions in an SPS risk assessment.

On the issue of risks assessment, the US asserted that the EC's submissions failed to prove that the general or product specific moratoria are based on a risk assessment. Finally, on the issue of "undue delay" the US emphasised that "it is hard to think of a situation that involves undue delay more than a moratorium on approvals", particularly when many of the products caught up in the moratorium have been positively assessed by the EC's own scientific committees.

The GMO panel hearings will continue in the coming weeks.

Various civil society groups and academics have submitted unsolicited documents to the WTO panel, outlining their legal arguments and various interests and concerns in this case see BRIDGES, Trade BioRes, 28 May 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/04-05-28/story3.htm>. For the full texts of these amicus curiae briefs, see <http://www.trade-environment.org/page/theme/tewto/biotechcase.htm>

ICTSD reporting.

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## Agriculture

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### AGRICULTURE NEGOTIATIONS: MEMBERS STILL DIVIDED OVER MARKET ACCESS

The special (negotiating) session of the WTO Committee on Agriculture (CoA) convened from 2-4 June for another 'agriculture week' in an effort to establish a negotiating framework agreement for the Doha agriculture talks, before delegates adjourn at the end of July for the annual WTO break. In his summary, CoA special session Chair Tim Groser said that market access remained "by far the most difficult" negotiating pillar, while -- in contrast -- he was already able to draft language on domestic subsidies which would be "80 percent" right. The discussions mainly focused on new proposals tabled by the G-20, G-33 and G-10 negotiating groups. The G-90 of least-developed and other vulnerable countries has not yet presented a revised position, but aims at adopting a joint agriculture proposal at a forthcoming G-90 ministerial meeting in Mauritius to be held in mid-July. Meanwhile trade ministers will convene at UNCTAD XI for a 'mini-ministerial', to be held from 13-18 June in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Key actors such as the EU, US, G-20 and the Cairns Group hope to reach internal agreement of the main elements of the framework for the agriculture talks at the Sao Paulo meeting.

#### G-20, G-33 and G-10 table new proposals

The recent market access proposal by the G-20 group of developing countries, including Brazil and South Africa, which presented general principles of a future tariff reduction formula rather than proposing an alternative tariff cut methodology (see BRIDGES Weekly, 2 June 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-06-02/story1.htm>), was generally welcomed by key Members. Also the EC welcomed the proposal although iterating concerns with the lack of detail in particular with regards to how developed countries were to achieve tariff cuts.

For its part, the G-10 -- Bulgaria, Chinese Taipei, Korea, Iceland, Israel, Japan, Liechtenstein, Mauritius, Norway and Switzerland -- tabled a new informal submission addressing all three pillars in the agriculture negotiations: market access, domestic support and export competition. In its preliminary reaction to the G-20 proposal, the G-10 expressed its concerns including the requirement for developed countries to provide effective new market access also for "sensitive" products without any flexibility to take into account non-trade concerns. However, the group highlighted its preparedness "to discuss various types of tariff reduction formulas". G-10 members such as Japan had previously stated that they would not be ready to accept any methodology for tariff cuts other than the EC and US approach, which could shield some sensitive products from radical cuts.

Indonesia -- the leader of the G-33 group of developing countries advocating the concepts of special products (SPs) and a special safeguard mechanism (SSM) -- presented a new non-paper on behalf of the group (JOB(04)/65, not yet derestricted) on market access. The G-33 group reiterated in its submission that it was not willing to accept new import quota commitments for developing countries. The group also pointed out that developing countries should be able to self-designate 'special products' (SPs) which should be exempted from any reduction commitment. The special safeguard mechanism (SSM) to be established for developing countries should automatically apply to SPs. The recent G-20 proposal left most of these issue open.

The next set of agriculture talks at the WTO are to take place from 23-25 June.

ICTSD reporting; "G-90 mini-ministerial adopts comprehensive proposals on Doha programme," TWN INFO SERVICE, 9 June 2004; "US applauds efforts on farm trade talks," AP, 4 June 2004.

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## **Fisheries**

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### **JAPAN AND WWF ENGAGE IN FISHERIES SUBSIDIES DISCUSSION**

The WTO Negotiating Group on Rules, which focuses on the review and improvement of WTO rules that govern issues such as dumping, antidumping measures, subsidies and countervailing measures, met from 7-8 June to consider, among other things, a surprise proposal by Japan focusing on how to discipline fisheries subsidies. As a contribution to the process, WWF simultaneously launched a new book featuring innovative ideas on how fisheries subsidies could be changed to be more supportive of sustainable development.

#### **Japan proposes a bottom-up approach**

In its proposal (TN/RL/W/159, available at <http://docsonline.wto.org>), Japan stressed that the task of the Negotiating Group was to clarify and improve WTO disciplines relating to fisheries subsidies, to prohibit "really problematic" subsidies driving illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and leading to overcapacity; ensure sustainable development; take into account the importance of the fishery sector to developing countries; ensure transparency; and encourage cooperation with other international organisations. In this regard, Japan called for a "balanced approach," rejecting a proposal tabled by New Zealand in the last meeting of the Negotiating Group (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 30 April 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/04-04-30/story4.htm>).

Japan, on the other hand, supported a bottom-up approach to defining harmful fisheries subsidies. While problematic subsidies should be banned, others, which served to promote sustainable development in the fishery sector, should be allowed. Japan also supported further discussion of notification requirements and of special and differential (S&D) treatment for developing countries, noting however the diverse interests and situations among developing countries. The Japanese paper also highlighted the situation in Japan regarding fisheries, and fisheries subsidies. Japan made the point that although it subsidises its fishing fleet heavily, most of its subsidies are not trade distorting, and Japan has no export subsidies in the fisheries sector.

At the meeting, the "Friends of Fish" group, including the US, Iceland, Chile, New Zealand, Norway and Peru, which traditionally has taken a proactive approach on disciplining subsidies, also welcomed the engagement of Japan in this area. New Zealand was more cautious, stressing that Japan proposed an overly strong focus on overcapacity, and downplayed other important factors, including price support, operating costs and infrastructure. In fact, New Zealand said 90 percent of Japanese fisheries subsidies would be exempt from any reduction commitments under the proposal. The EC, which only has taken a proactive approach to disciplining subsidies over the last year, also welcomed the Japanese proposal, but felt that Japan would have to move further in its position to ensure sustainability. China supported the proposal to use a positive, rather than negative list approach, and said it would like to see further discussion of S&D.

#### **WWF bringing new ideas to the subsidies discussion**

Timed to coincide with the Rules Negotiating Group, environmental group WWF released a new book, entitled "Healthy Fisheries, Sustainable Trade: Crafting New Rules on Fishing Subsidies in the WTO," which proposes specific changes to WTO rules, in order to eliminate subsidies that drive overfishing. The research feeding into the book took place over the past two years and involved extensive consultations with all players in the field. In terms of solutions, WWF proposes a number of new ideas, including suggestions to: regulate subsidies programmes on a fishery-by-fishery basis; find a balanced solution with regard to the special needs of developing countries; institute a bold institutional reform, allowing the WTO to share authority for regulating fishing subsidies with intergovernmental bodies such as the FAO and regional fisheries management organisations. Commenting on the current situation, Simon Cripps, Director of WWF's Global Marine Programme, said "It's time for the WTO to move beyond its traditional preoccupation with the interests of the export-oriented business sector. Fishermen in every ocean are watching their catches decline while governments hand out the kind of irrational subsidies the WTO was created to curb".

To access WWF's paper, visit

[http://www.panda.org/about\\_wwf/what\\_we\\_do/policy/trade\\_and\\_investment/news.cfm?uNewsID=13582](http://www.panda.org/about_wwf/what_we_do/policy/trade_and_investment/news.cfm?uNewsID=13582)

ICTSD reporting; "WTO Fishing Subsidies Negotiations at a Critical Point: WWF Tables Detailed Proposal as WTO Talks Progress," WWF RELEASE, 8 June 2004.

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## In Brief

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### WORLD'S HIGH SEAS IN DEEP TROUBLE

A group of environmental NGOs recently urged the UN to establish a moratorium on bottom trawling on the high seas in order to protect deep sea coral and sponge communities. The call was issued during the fifth meeting of the UN Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (UNICPOLOS), held from 7-11 June in New York. The option of establishing such a moratorium was discussed at the UNICPOLOS. The results are still pending. However, so far no countries have voiced strong opposition against the proposal. According to the environmental groups, the overall value of high seas bottom trawling amounts to only 0.5 percent of global marine fish catch and therefore has no major economic value. Furthermore, 95 percent of bottom trawling is being undertaken by only eleven countries: Spain, Russia, Portugal, Norway, Estonia, Denmark, Japan, Lithuania, Iceland, New Zealand and Latvia. So far only Norway has taken steps to stop the practice. The High Seas are the least protected areas of the world as they lie beyond the territorial sea and Exclusive Economic Zones of countries and fall outside of national jurisdiction. Commenting on the weak legal status of the high seas David Kemp, Australian Environment Minister, said "this has the potential to lead to a classic tale of the tragedy of the commons unless we can put in place sustainability structures to ensure the oceans wealth is there for future generation as well as for today".

"World Environment Day 2004: Conservation of Seas and Oceans, an Imperative for the Humanity," IUCN, 4 June 2004; "World Oceans Day Brings Honors, Warnings," ENS, 8 June 2004; "NGOs Press UN to Protect Deep Ocean Species," TERRAVIVA, 9 June 2004.

### NEW IPPC RISK ANALYSIS GUIDELINES FOR BIOTECH PLANTS

On 1 June the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation published new guidelines for assessing the potential risk to plants and plant products posed by living modified organisms (LMOs). These guidelines were adopted in April by the Interim Commission on Phytosanitary measure, the governing body of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC). The guidelines were developed to protect the plant and crop ecosystems from potential risks arising from the introduction of LMOs. For example, through the introduction of some LMOs there is a potential risk of introducing a gene that could cause a normal plant to become a weed. The guidelines also cover LMOs that may be harmful to plants, such as insects, fungi and bacteria. The guidelines stress that measures to manage pest risks caused by LMOs should be cost-effective, feasible, not more trade restrictive than necessary and non-discriminatory.

The IPPC is recognised by the WTO Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) as the international organisation responsible for standard-setting related to plant health. WTO Members "shall base" their measures related to human and plant health on IPPC standards, guidelines or recommendations. Such measures "shall be deemed to be necessary to protect human, animal or plant life of health, and presumed to be consistent with the relevant provisions" of the SPS Agreement. The other two international standard-setting bodies recognised in the SPS Agreement are the Codex Alimentarius Commission for food safety and the Office International de Epizooties (OIE) for animal health and zoonoses.

The IPPC standard is available at

[http://www.ippc.int/servlet/BinaryDownloaderServlet/ISPM\\_11\\_2004\\_En.pdf?filename=1086078360577\\_ISPM\\_11\\_2004.pdf](http://www.ippc.int/servlet/BinaryDownloaderServlet/ISPM_11_2004_En.pdf?filename=1086078360577_ISPM_11_2004.pdf)

"Living modified organisms: new guidelines for risk assessment," FAO PRESS RELEASE, 1 June 2004.

### **NEW BIODIVERSITY ACT FOR SOUTH AFRICA**

On 31 May Thabo Mbeki, the President of South Africa, signed the country's new Biodiversity Act, providing political clout to the protection of the country's biodiversity. The Act regulates the sharing of benefits derived from biodiversity products with local communities, thus protecting traditional knowledge and regulating bio-prospecting. It further requires full environmental impact assessment prior to the introduction of genetically modified organisms, and includes provisions dealing with alien invasive species. For example, under the Act landowners and the government are obliged to clear alien invasive vegetation from their properties. Concurrently with signing the act, the new South African Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) was established, with a comprehensive mandate to coordinate bio-regional efforts and promote scientific research and biodiversity economy. In addition, under the new Biodiversity Act "bio-regions" will be given legal recognition, streamlining environmental impact assessments in the particular region. Environmental Affairs and Tourism Director General Crispian Olver welcomed the Act commenting that, "Up to now, we have had no specific legislation dealing with biodiversity, this [the new act] is probably the most exciting biodiversity move we have made in years".

"Law now protects SA's biodiversity," CAPE ARGUS, 3 June 2004

### **REPORT HIGHLIGHTS ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS IN KENYA**

The recent State of Environment Report of Kenya -- a new publication produced by the Kenyan National Environment Authority (Nema) -- highlights a number of environmental problems in the country. These include deforestation, waste disposal problems, biodiversity loss and pollution issues. Due to inadequate capacity and financial constraints, solid waste -- including radioactive waste -- poses an environmental and health threat to Kenya, according to the report. Poor sanitation and drainage not only affect the ground water due to leachates from the garbage dumps in urban areas, but also favours the breeding of mosquitoes, increasing malaria prevalence. Pollution contributes to the degradation of marine resources, the erosion of coastlines and the introduction of unknown fungal diseases affecting corals. The report also points out the effects poverty has on the environment through unsustainable livelihood practices and the continued unsustainable use of natural resources. In addition, the danger of flooding has increased, due to continued deforestation causing erosion and uncontrolled water run off. Biodiversity loss is also of concern, as traditional agriculture systems are being replaced by high input agriculture. The report notes that 50 percent of the soils in the country have been affected by salination. Kenya's lakes suffer from siltation, reduced inflow, over-fishing and introduction of new species. For example, the introduction of the Nile perch into Lake Victoria -- the world's second largest fresh water lake -- has caused an increased growth in algae that deplete oxygen levels. "Without oxygen, any aerobic life such as fish cannot exist in the deeper parts of the lake, forcing all life to exist within a narrow range depth and exposing them to a diverse range of hazards," notes the report. One reason identified for these environmental problems was the low priority given to environmental issues, and the lack of financial resources to initiate environmental activities.

"Environment report raises red alert for Kenya," EAST AFRICAN STANDARD, 6 June 2004.

### **'COPENHAGEN CONSENSUS' CHALLENGED BY GLOBAL CONSCIENCE CONFERENCE**

A group of economists participating in the Copenhagen Consensus conference from 24-28 May ranked preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS, fighting hunger, and promoting free trade as the top three areas to take action in. The conference, organised by the Danish Environmental Assessment Institute, headed by Bjorn Lomborg, aimed at prioritising proposals for confronting ten global challenges from a cost-benefit perspective. Responding to the question "if we had an extra US\$50 billion to spend to improve the world, what should we do first?" the economists were guided by ten background papers. On the promotion of free trade, the participants stressed that costs would be low and benefits as high as US\$2400 billion a year. Nobel Laureate Robert Fogel, University of Chicago, said "trade barriers do not require a big investment to produce a large return. Here, we need political will -- and the return will be huge. The entire world's economy will benefit from free trade, and more wealth will mean that we can afford to solve more of the world's greatest challenges". The conference also concluded that reducing carbon emissions and implementing the Kyoto Protocol would have higher costs than benefits.

In a countermove, a consortium of Danish non-governmental organisations held a concurrent Global Conscience conference aimed at confirming and further developing a strategy towards global sustainability. The conference speakers argued that "it is possible to combat poverty while at the same time safeguarding the environment considering social, human and environmental aspects of global development". UNEP Executive Director Klaus Töpfer said that world's problems "must not be diminished to an economic machinery". The Global Conscience conference criticised the Copenhagen Consensus for, inter alia, not including enough voices from the South. The conference outcomes entitled "Sustainable Development is possible and necessary" include recommendations in relation the sustainable use of natural resources, climate change, implementing the precautionary principle, the right to clean water, and poverty eradication.

For further information on the Copenhagen Consensus see <http://www.copenhagenconsensus.dk>; and for more information on the Global Conscience see at <http://www.globalconscience.dk>

ICTSD reporting.

### **POSITIVE OUTLOOK FOR INVESTMENT IN RENEWABLE ENERGY**

The International Conference for Renewable Energies, "Renewables 2004" was held in Bonn, Germany, from 1-4 June. Key outcomes of the conference included the adoption of a political declaration, an international action program and policy recommendations. In the declaration, countries reaffirmed their "commitment to substantially increase with a sense of urgency the global share of renewable energy in the total energy supply". During the conference, participants stressed that investments in renewable energy were beneficial both environmentally and economically. The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) Finance Initiative estimates a market potential of nearly US\$2 trillion in renewables in the next 15 years, with details outlined in a recent report by its Climate Change Working Group. On the practical side, the international action programme adopted at the conference comprises concrete actions and commitments by governments and other actors. It contains 165 projects in renewable energy put forth by different groups ranging from civil society to government initiatives.

At the meeting, German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder committed the German government to set up a special facility for renewable energies and energy efficiency with a volume of up to EUR500 million. "Starting in 2005, over a period of five years the facility will be used to offer low-interest loans for investments in developing countries to public and parastatal institutions, banks and also private sector organisations," According to Schroeder. The Global Environment Facility (GEF) will allocate an additional EUR100 million a year for renewable energy projects and the World Bank announced it would also increase lending by about 20 percent a year for renewable energies. However, according to Friends of the Earth International, Greenpeace, the International Rivers Network and WWF International, the World Bank proposal was "marginal at best and does nothing to address the bank's ongoing bias towards fossil fuels". The

groups were referring to World Bank's continued funding of non-renewable energy projects that have been deemed environmentally damaging, such as the Chad-Cameroon oil pipeline. The organisations also pointed out that the current World Bank proposals do not take up the recommendations from the Extractive Industries Review to "phase out investments in oil production by 2008" (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 6 February 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/04-02-06/inbrief.htm#2>).

"The age of renewables has arrived," ENS, 4 June 2004; "International Conference for Renewable Energies - a resume," NOTICIAS.INFO, 4 June 2004; "World Bank offers more, not enough," OTHER NEWS, 4 June 2004.

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## Events & Resources

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### EVENTS

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

17 June, Sao Paolo, Brazil: INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS - CHALLENGES FOR DEVELOPMENT. This ICTSD/UNAIDS Policy Dialogue, organised as a UNCTAD XI side event, will serve to provide a platform for a strategic discussion between relevant stakeholders on possible solutions for moving forward the debate on IP and public health issues and find options for implementing the Doha Declaration on TRIPS and Health; as well as to discuss new trends at the multilateral, regional and bilateral level in the area of intellectual property and their implications for sustainable development, including technology transfer and innovation policies. For further information, see: [http://www.ictsd.org/dlogue/2004-06-17/ICTSD\\_Event\\_AT\\_UNCTAD\\_XI\\_Concept\\_Note.doc](http://www.ictsd.org/dlogue/2004-06-17/ICTSD_Event_AT_UNCTAD_XI_Concept_Note.doc)

#### Coming up in the next two weeks

9-11 June, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania: THE EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA REGIONAL BIODIVERSITY FORUM. A joint initiative of World Conservation Union's (IUCN) Regional Office for Southern Africa, IUCN South Africa, and ResourceAfrica. The fourth Regional Session of the Global Biodiversity Forum for Africa will focus on the overall theme of Biodiversity and Livelihoods in Africa: Delivering on the Millennium Development Goals. Its aim is to gather and review regional experiences and perspectives on the precautionary approach in natural resource management and biodiversity conservation, review and discuss early drafts of case studies, and contribute to the development of best-practice guidance on implementation of the precautionary principle. For further information, contact: Kule Chitepo, ResourceAfrica, tel: (+27-12) 342-9252; email: [kule@resourceafrica.org](mailto:kule@resourceafrica.org); Internet: [http://www.gbf.ch/present\\_session.asp?no=37&lg=EN](http://www.gbf.ch/present_session.asp?no=37&lg=EN)

9-11 June, New York, US: THE BUSINESS AND SUSTAINABILITY CONFERENCE: BUILDING LEADERSHIP AND COMMITMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. Presented by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD). Topics to be covered during this conference include: convergence of the public policy and business agendas, ways corporate leaders can change their thinking and actions in a sustainable marketplace and implementing sustainable development in retail, services and manufacturing sectors. The future of sustainability, accountability, evaluation and reporting in sustainability will also be discussed. For further information, contact: The Conference Board, tel: (+1-212) 339-0345; fax: 836-9740; Internet: [http://www.conference-board.org/pdf\\_free/agendas/285004.pdf](http://www.conference-board.org/pdf_free/agendas/285004.pdf)

11-12 June, São Paulo, Brazil: UNCTAD CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM. Organised by the Brazilian Association of NGOs (ABONG). As part of the official UNCTAD XI programme, a Civil Society Forum will provide an opportunity for civil society organisations (CSOs) to discuss priority issues relevant to the overall theme, subthemes and topics of the conference; to exchange information and build consensus among CSOs; to facilitate and support CSO advocacy and lobbying; and to raise public awareness of the issues at



stake. CSOs are expected to present a final outcome document to UNCTAD XI. For further information, contact: ABONG, email: [abong@uol.com.br](mailto:abong@uol.com.br); Internet: <http://www.abong.org.br>

13-18 June 2004, Sao Paulo, Brazil: 11TH UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT. UNCTAD holds its ministerial-level conference every four years to set the organisation's priorities and guidelines for action. The conference is UNCTAD's highest governing body and also includes a high-level debate on current issues involving economics and development. The theme of the 2004 UNCTAD XI conference will be "Enhancing coherence between national development strategies and global economic processes towards economic growth and development, particularly of developing countries". For further information, contact: [snavarro@anhembi.com.br](mailto:snavarro@anhembi.com.br); Internet: [http://www.unctadxi.org/templates/Startpage\\_\\_\\_\\_103.aspx](http://www.unctadxi.org/templates/Startpage____103.aspx)

14-15 June, Tampere, Finland: TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE FUTURES - TOOLS AND STRATEGIES. Organised by the Turku School of Economics and Business Administration, Finland Futures Research Centre and Finland Futures Academy. The conference is aimed at both researchers and corporate representatives. The aim of the conference is to bring together those interested in sustainable development and futures oriented research. The participants will be offered new perspectives and methods for measuring sustainable development and creating strategies. The conference will also cast a look into how sustainability aspects are actually taken into consideration in corporations. For further information, contact: Paula Hakola, tel: (+358) 3223-8363; fax: 2481-4630; email: [paula.hakola@tukkk.fi](mailto:paula.hakola@tukkk.fi); Internet: <http://www.tukkk.fi/tutu/conference2004/default.htm>

14-25 June, Bonn, Germany: TWENTIETH SESSIONS OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODIES TO THE UNFCCC. Items on the agenda include: progress reporting, arrangements for intergovernmental meetings, capacity building and administrative and financial matters. For further information contact the UNFCCC Secretariat, tel: (+49-228) 815-1000; fax: 815-1999; email: [secretariat@unfccc.int](mailto:secretariat@unfccc.int); Internet: <http://unfccc.int/sessions/sb20/index.html>

17 June, Sao Paolo, Brazil: UNCTAD XI ROUNDTABLE ON PROMOTING TRADE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. UNCTAD's Trade, Environment and Development Branch will be hosting a "Roundtable on Promoting Trade for Sustainable Development" at UNCTAD XI. Key issues to be addressed by the Roundtable include: opportunities that growing global markets for environmentally preferable products may provide for export diversification, poverty alleviation and rural community development; opportunities for competitiveness gains and possible benefits from enhanced natural resource efficiency, and the role of environmental goods and services in the sustainable development process of developing countries. For further information, contact: Sophia Twarog, tel: (+41-22) 907-5082; fax: 917-0247; email: [sophia.twarog@unctad.org](mailto:sophia.twarog@unctad.org); Internet: [http://www.unctad.org/trade\\_env](http://www.unctad.org/trade_env)

17-18 June, London, UK: ILLEGAL LOGGING UPDATE AND STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION. Organised by the Royal Institute of International Affairs, Sustainable Development Programme. The meeting is free of charge but registration is essential. Topics include: Anti-money laundering developments, updates on illegal logging initiatives, private sector initiatives and procurement updates. For further information, contact: email: [illegal-logging@riia.org](mailto:illegal-logging@riia.org); tel (+20) 7957-5711; Internet: [http://www.illegal-logging.info/events/June\\_2004\\_Update\\_and\\_Stakeholder\\_Consultation.doc](http://www.illegal-logging.info/events/June_2004_Update_and_Stakeholder_Consultation.doc)

17-19 June, Washington, D.C., US: GLOBAL ECONOMIC ANALYSIS - TRADE, POVERTY AND THE ENVIRONMENT. Organised by the World Bank and the Centre for Global Trade Analysis the seventh annual conference aims to promote the exchange of ideas among economists conducting quantitative analysis of global economic issues. For more information, contact: Judy Connor, tel: (+1-765) 494-4267; email: [connerjr@purdue.edu](mailto:connerjr@purdue.edu); Internet: <http://www.gtap.agecon.purdue.edu/events/Conferences/2004/program.asp>

20-23 June, Durango, Mexico: CONFERENCE ON FOOD SCIENCE AND FOOD BIOTECHNOLOGY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. Organised by the Instituto Tecnológico de Durango (ITD), Universidad Autónoma de Coahuila (UAdeC), Universidad Autónoma Agraria Antonio Narro (UAAAN), Universidad

Autónoma de Nuevo León and Sociedad Mexicana de Biotecnología y Bioingeniería. This conference is aimed at presenting and discussing research, carried out in developing countries, which is related to food science and biotechnology. For further information, contact: Instituto Tecnológico de Durango, email: [meeting\\_dgo@prodigy.net.mx](mailto:meeting_dgo@prodigy.net.mx); Internet: <http://www.itdposgrado-bioquimica.com.mx/congress2004.htm>

### Other Upcoming Events

28 June to 3 July, Rome, Italy: 27TH SESSION OF THE FAO/WHO CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION. The session is organised by the Codex Alimentarius Secretariat. Items on the agenda include: codex standards and related texts, programme and budgetary matters, policy and general matters. The Session is open to Member Nations and Associate Members of FAO and WHO, which are members of the Commission, and to observers. Member Nations and Associate Members of both organisations, which are not members of the Codex Alimentarius Commission may attend as observers. The Session is also open to the public subject to the availability of seats, and to the media. For further information contact the Codex Secretariat, tel: (+39-06) 5705-2287; fax: 5705-3369; email: [codex@fao.org](mailto:codex@fao.org); Internet: [http://www.codexalimentarius.net/codex/codex27\\_en.htm](http://www.codexalimentarius.net/codex/codex27_en.htm)

30 June, Washington, DC, US: TWO BY TWO....OR NOT? A LOOK AT TRANSGENIC ANIMALS, ETHICS AND REGULATION. Hosted by the Pew Initiative on Food and Biotechnology (PIFB). This policy dialogue will engage leaders on the ethical and regulatory issues raised by the introduction of genetically modified (GM) animals. The dialogue will look at some of the more compelling ethical arguments for and against GM animals (including patients rights and animal welfare concerns), what is known about consumer opinion on these “next generation” products of agricultural biotechnology as well as the role of regulation. Particular attention will be paid to the ability of the regulatory system to simultaneously guide producers and advance innovation, while safeguarding the food supply and the environment. For further information, contact: the Pew Initiative, tel: (+1-202) 347-9044; email: [animaldialogue@pewagbiotech.org](mailto:animaldialogue@pewagbiotech.org); Internet: <http://pewagbiotech.org/events/0630/>

16-20 August, Stockholm, Sweden: WORLD WATER WEEK: WATER SYMPOSIUM: DRAINAGE BASIN MANAGEMENT – REGIONAL APPROACHES FOR FOOD AND URBAN SECURITY. Organised by the Stockholm International Water Institute. The aim of the World Water Week is to serve as a link between practice, science, policy and decision-making in the search for sustainable solutions for water resources management. While the character of the World Water Week in Stockholm is comprehensive and reflective, the agenda also includes discussions on specific issues. The purpose is to secure a proper tie between problems and their main causes on the one hand, and technology and governance perspectives of problem solving on the other. As a venue for the awarding of distinguished prizes and honours, the World Water Week also focuses attention on outstanding efforts on different water issues. For further information, contact: the Secretariat, tel: (+46-8) 5221-3975; email: [sympos@siwi.org](mailto:sympos@siwi.org); Internet: [http://www.siw.org/downloads/WWW-Symp/2004\\_Water\\_Week.pdf](http://www.siw.org/downloads/WWW-Symp/2004_Water_Week.pdf)

10-12 October, Warsaw, Poland: EVALUATING FORESTRY INCENTIVE AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES IN EUROPE-CHALLENGES TO IMPROVE POLICY EFFECTIVENESS. Organised by Forest Research Institute in Warsaw (FRIW), European Forest Research Institute (EFI) with financial support from the Commission of the European Communities, DG - Research. There will be three themes for the conference: whether rational forest policy decision making is based on reliable information, SFM affected by economic, environmental and social impact, forest programmes and incentives and innovating economic instruments needing new information. Objectives of this conference include: providing a forum for dissemination of project results, discussion of project results and the state of the art in the field of policy evaluation and analysis, discussion of further research needs and challenges in policy evaluation and development and facilitation of future research co-operation and networking. For further information, contact: Krzysztof Kaczmarek, European Forest Institute, fax: (+358-50) 304-4818; email: [Krzysztof.Kaczmarek@efi.fi](mailto:Krzysztof.Kaczmarek@efi.fi); Internet: [http://www.efi.fi/events/2004/effe\\_conference](http://www.efi.fi/events/2004/effe_conference)

## 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 [mjacobsen@ictsd.ch](mailto:mjacobsen@ictsd.ch)

**BIOTECHNOLOGY APPLICATIONS IN FOOD PROCESSING: CAN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES BENEFIT?** By the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations. Produced by Electronic Forum on Biotechnology in Food and Agriculture (FAO), 2004. This document is the background paper for the 11th conference of the FAO Electronic Forum on Biotechnology in Food and Agriculture, 14 June to 11 July 2004. It provides a review of the application of biotechnology to the processing of food (including beverages) produced from agriculture, specifically focusing on its relevance for developing countries. For further information, see: <http://www.fao.org/biotech/C11doc.htm>

**5TH REPORT ON THE WORLD NUTRITION SITUATION: NUTRITION FOR IMPROVED DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES.** By United Nations Standing Committee on Nutrition (SCN). Produced by: United Nations (UN) Standing Committee on Nutrition (SCN), 2004. This report is part of a series of United Nations Standing Committee on Nutrition (SCN) reports initiated in the mid- 1980s on the nutritional status of populations in developing countries. The 5th Report asks how a nutrition perspective can accelerate the attainment of a comprehensive set of development goals? Inspired by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the report makes the case that the role of nutrition in development goes far beyond providing an indicator of progress towards the MDGs. For further information, see: <http://www.chronicpoverty.org/pdfs/Aid%20for%20the%20Poorest-%20CPRC-Nov.pdf>

**AID FOR THE POOREST? THE DISTRIBUTION AND MALDISTRIBUTION OF INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE.** By B. Baulch. Produced by Chronic Poverty Research Centre (CPRC), UK, 2004. This paper examines the extent to which the distribution of development assistance is directed towards the poorest countries. Based on analysis of data from 2001, the ways in which different donors distribute their development assistance is shown to differ markedly. For example, the paper points out that the two largest bilateral donors, the US and Japan, and the largest multilateral donor, the European Commission, spend large amounts of their aid budgets in small, relatively well-off countries, the Netherlands, the UK and the World Bank direct most of their aid to poorest countries while France, Germany and the UN System's aid programmes occupy an intermediate position. For further information, see: <http://www.chronicpoverty.org/pdfs/Aid%20for%20the%20Poorest-%20CPRC-Nov.pdf>

**THE COMMISSION ON INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS, INNOVATION AND PUBLIC HEALTH.** Established by the Director-General of the World Health Organization, Dr LEE Jong-wook, in February 2004. The Commission held its first meeting in April. The Commission's terms of reference are to "... produce an analysis of intellectual property rights, innovation, and public health, including the question of appropriate funding and incentive mechanisms for the creation of new medicines and other products against diseases that disproportionately affect developing countries..." For further information or to receive monthly mailings, please see: [www.who.int/intellectualproperty/contact/form](http://www.who.int/intellectualproperty/contact/form)

**REPORT OF THE TASK FORCE ON APPLICATION OF AGRICULTURAL BIOTECHNOLOGY.** Report forwarded by Professor M S Swaminathan, Chairman of the Task Force. Produced by the Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India, 2004. The Report contains recommendations on shaping India's agricultural bio-future based on integrated application of conventional and frontier biotechnologies. The Report is based on widespread consultations among the principal stakeholders, especially with State Governments. The recommendations are aimed at helping the Government in taking policy decisions on investment in different areas of biotechnology, streamlining of regulatory procedures and above all, inspiring public confidence on issues relating to biosafety and biosecurity. For further information, see: <http://www.mssrf.org/reports/tfaab/cover.html>

"The European Commission's regulations for genetically modified organisms and the current WTO dispute -- human health or environmental measures? Why the Deliberate Release Directive is more appropriately

adjudicated in the WTO under the TBT Agreement," in COLORADO JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND POLICY 15 (2, 2004) pp. 209-244. By Aaron A. Ostrovsky. This paper seeks to do two things. It first establishes that the challenged European Commission (EC) directive, as well as environmentally concerned measures in general, are better adjudicated under the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Agreement, regardless of whether the directives contain sanitary or phytosanitary elements. Secondly, it assesses the likelihood that the EC directives would prevail on a claim made under the TBT Agreement.

"Dirty Tariffication Revisited: The EU and Sugar" in THE ESTEY CENTRE JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE LAW AND POLICY, Volume 5, Number 1, (Winter 2004). By Alan Swinbank. (Department of Agricultural and Food Economics, The University of Reading). Some claim that a number of countries, including the EU, engaged in dirty tariffication during the Uruguay Round of trade talks. This article examines the EU's record on sugar and finds little evidence to substantiate the claim. However, world prices increased between the base period (1986-88) and the date of implementation (1995), and so tariffication resulted in an increase in the tax that would have been charged on sugar imports into the EU. As well, the Special Safeguard provisions meant that a substantial additional levy could be charged. To access the report, see <http://www.esteyjournal.com>

### Electronic Resources

PARTICIPATORY MANAGEMENT CLEARINGHOUSE (PMC). This is a joint initiative of the Bureau of the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar), IUCN (The World Conservation Union), and SIDA (The Swedish International Development Cooperation). It has been set up to facilitate the sharing of information concerning participatory management of natural resources, while disseminating Ramsar and IUCN field experiences on that topic. Classified thematically by ecosystems, regions, or themes, the posted documents, specific projects and case studies cover issues such as biodiversity and traditional knowledge, gender, water, equitable sharing, protected areas, or indigenous peoples. (Former address: <http://www.iucn.org/themes/pmns>) For further information, see: <http://www.PMCnet.org> or <http://www.pmcnet.org/indexflash.aspx>

FOOD SAFETY, ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH PORTAL. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has acted in association with organisations responsible for international standard-setting in sanitary and phytosanitary matters to create an online database that provides a single access point for authorized official international and national information across the sectors of food safety, animal, and plant health. The database is searchable by commodity, cross-sectorial issue, geographical location, and information source. It contains 1,086 national and international documents relating to the regulation of biotechnology. To access the database, see: <http://www.fao.org/newsroom/en/news/2004/43247/index.html>

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