

To subscribe to *BRIDGES Trade BioRes*, send a blank email to subscribe_biores@ictsd.ch

CONTENT

Biotechnology	1
GMO update: US-EU biotech dispute; EU regulations; Thailand	
Intellectual Property	2
Argentina and Brazil propose 'Development Agenda' for WIPO	
Water	3
Experts highlight impacts of food production on water use	
In Brief	5
Events & Resources	6

Biotechnology

GMO UPDATE: US-EU BIOTECH DISPUTE; EU REGULATIONS; THAILAND

Biotech Case: Scientists to be heard, final decision postponed

On 26 August, the WTO panel assessing the complaint brought by the US, Argentina and Canada against the EC's de facto moratorium on genetically modified organisms (GMOs) announced it would seek expert advice on technical and scientific issues raised in the dispute. Shortly before this, the panel had postponed the timing of its final report from September 2004 to March 2005.

The decision to set up an expert panel was seen by trade commentators as a victory for the EC, which had requested such a panel to be established. The EC's defence has focused on the scientific uncertainty surrounding GMOs, and possible risks to human health and the environment (see *BRIDGES Trade BioRes*, 11 June 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/04-06-11/story1.htm>). The US, on the other hand, has stressed that GMOs pose no additional risks as compared to traditional crops, and has argued that appointing scientists and technical experts to provide testimony is unnecessary because the crux of the matter -- the fact that the EC refuses to apply its own approval mechanisms for biotech products -- is not a scientific issue. According to sources, a first scientific hearing will take place in November. Some observers have expressed concern that the scientific hearings could result in further delays, mirroring an earlier case against the EC involving a ban on imports of beef raised with growth hormones (see *BRIDGES WEEKLY*, 13 November 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/03-11-13/story3.htm>).

For further information, submissions and amicus curiae briefs, see <http://www.trade-environment.org/page/theme/tewto/biotechcase.htm>.

Commission postpones decision on GM seed rules, approves GM maize

At their 8 September meeting, the European Commission postponed a decision on a new draft directive for GM seeds, which would have set a labelling threshold of 0.3 percent below which seeds would not need to be labelled as containing GMOs. According to Commission spokesman Reijo Kemppinen, the Commission felt that more information was needed on the "economic impact" of the 0.3 percent threshold, which industry groups claim would be costly to implement. Environmental groups welcomed the delay, reiterating their calls for a 0.1 percent threshold, which is already applied in Denmark's biotech legislation.

Also at the meeting, the Commission decided to add 17 varieties derived from Monsanto's MON 810 maize in the Common EU Catalogue of Varieties of Agricultural Plant Species, thereby clearing the way for the varieties to be planted across Europe. The parent variety of the insect-protected maize had already been approved in 1998, but had so far only been listed in Spain's and France's national catalogues, allowing only farmers in those countries to access the seed. In addition, the Commission has for the third time asked Ministers to decide on the approval of a GMO -- Monsanto's Roundup Ready oilseed rape. The European Food Safety Authority had judged the GM variety to be as safe as conventional oilseed rape, but concerns have been raised by the UK Advisory Committee on Releases to the Environment over adverse effects on arable weed populations resulting from herbicide management (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 22 January 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/04-01-22/story1.htm>).

Thailand extends GMO ban

Thailand's cabinet has overturned a decision by Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra to lift a three-year ban on GMOs, deciding instead to keep the ban in place until national biosafety regulations had been developed. According to Science Minister Korn Dabbaransi, the cabinet plans to set up a panel to hear the pros and cons of biotechnology. "We will have academics from all universities to hear their view on three options - 1) to promote GMOs [genetically modified organisms] freely in Thailand, 2) to allow the co-existence of GM and non-GM crops, or 3) to ban GMOs completely," Korn said. Following an earlier announcement by the Prime Minister on 20 August that the ban would be lifted, opponents to the introduction of GMOs in Thailand had raised concerns, stating that allowing GMOs into the Thai market could further impoverish farmers because of the high prices demanded by large GMO multinationals. They also warned that the modified genes would contaminate the natural environment, and cautioned about possible unknown effects of GM products, such as the production of new allergens or toxins. Other opponents argued that Thailand had crumbled under the pressure of pending free trade talks with the US, thus putting GMOs on the bargaining table -- a charge strongly denied by Thaksin.

ICTSD reporting; "GM trade war outcome delayed," FOE, 26 August 2004; "WTO ruling delayed in transatlantic row over GMOs," REUTERS, 26 August 2004; "Inscription of MON 810 GM maize varieties in the Common EU Catalogue of Varieties," EUROPEAN COMMISSION, 8 September 2004; "Europe rejects looser labels for genetically altered foods," NYT, 8 September 2004; "Thais lift ban on GMO planting, to regulate trials," REUTERS, 21 August 2004; "Asia heads toward use of GMO foods despite activist protests," AFP, 27 August 2004; "POLICY REVERSAL/ Green light for GMOs," THE NATION, 24 August 2004; "Thai Cabinet Overturns GMO Approval," AFP, 27 August 2004.

Intellectual Property

ARGENTINA AND BRAZIL PROPOSE 'DEVELOPMENT AGENDA' FOR WIPO

Over the last week, Argentina, Brazil and Bolivia informally circulated a proposal to establish a "development agenda" at the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). The proposal, to be officially presented at the upcoming 31st session of the WIPO General Assembly, scheduled for 27 September to 5 October, is expected to be controversial. Some developing country trade observers have

characterised it as "groundbreaking", and as an important step in the rethinking of the role of developing countries in WIPO.

The proposal criticises the general nature of WIPO, arguing that it is time for the institution to integrate the UN-wide development agenda in its mandate, including the commitments set out in the Millennium Development Goals. It also touches on the basic principles and structure of WIPO, and questions the role WIPO has played in promoting development. While the Doha Declaration on the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) and Public Health has been a milestone for one aspect of intellectual property, the proponents consider that it is time to turn attention to what arguably is one of the most important institutions in setting future intellectual property policy.

Apart from the challenge of incorporating a development perspective in WIPO, the proposal highlights certain specific areas of concern. These include a proposition for the establishment of a new subsidiary body in WIPO that would look at what measures could be undertaken within the intellectual property system to ensure an effective transfer of technology to developing countries, mirroring parallel bodies in UNCTAD and the WTO. Other concerns relate to negotiations surrounding the Substantive Patent Law Treaty (SPLT). The proposal argues that so far the treaty has failed to incorporate the interests and proposals of developing countries. Specifically, the proposal discusses the difficulty developing countries would have in implementing the stringent intellectual property standards contained in such a treaty. Argentina, Brazil and Bolivia argue that public interest flexibilities and policy spaces in member countries should be preserved, and that the SPLT and other WIPO treaties should include the contents of Articles 7 and 8 of the TRIPS Agreement. (Articles 7 and 8 highlight the principles of promoting technological innovation, transfer and dissemination, bearing in mind the importance of social and economic welfare, the protection of public health and nutrition and the necessity to prevent the abuse of IPRs in this context.)

According to trade sources, developing countries have welcomed the emergence of a discussion on a "development agenda" at WIPO. It is, however, too early to expect many co-sponsorships of the proposition, as the proposal has yet to reach all developing states and be included in the agenda of the General Assembly. Reportedly, Argentina, Brazil and Bolivia will meet with other developing countries in the near future to go over the details and create a stronger support base for the upcoming WIPO General Assembly.

To access the proposal by Brazil and Argentina, visit
http://www.iprsonline.org/resources/docs/BrazilArgentina_WIPO.pdf

ICTSD reporting; "Brazil, Argentina to Push at WIPO Meeting to Put Development Issues Higher on Agenda," WTO REPORTER, 3 September 2004.

Water

EXPERTS HIGHLIGHT IMPACTS OF FOOD PRODUCTION ON WATER USE

The annual World Water Week gathered experts from business, government, water management, science, inter-governmental organisations, non-governmental organisations and United Nations agencies in Stockholm from 15 to 21 August to discuss a wide range of critical water and development issues. Organised by the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI), this year's conference primarily focused on food production, including issues related to agricultural subsidies and trade in water rights.

Water and agriculture -- the "big issue"

According to Professor Jan Lundqvist of the Stockholm International Water Institute, "food preferences are changing, with significant increases in demand for meat and dairy products" which require far more water than grain production. These "production patterns are simply unsustainable, involve large scale groundwater overexploitation and widespread river depletion, and pose a major threat to biodiversity and aquatic ecosystems," warned Frank Rijsberman, Director General of the Colombo-based International Water

Management Institute. These changes are further exacerbated by the world's population growth, which also puts pressure on food production.

At the conference, particular emphasis was placed on water for agriculture, described as the "big issue in the next few decades". Globally, agriculture uses between 70 to 90 percent of developed water supplies and the livelihoods of 70 percent of the world's poor depend largely on farming. According to a report by David Molden and Charlotte de Fraiture assessing water management in agriculture, large-scale irrigation systems have led to aquatic ecosystem degradation and the drying up of wetlands. Agricultural subsidies are seen as one of key factors contributing to these problems, a report by SIWI and IWMI points out. Such subsidies stimulate production while depressing food prices, making it difficult for those farmers who do not receive subsidies to compete while at the same time removing incentives for farmers to invest in improved practices.

Increasing productivity

Given such constraints, experts in Stockholm discussed means through which both the developed and developing world could address the challenges associated with water. Among the top priorities, experts identified improvements in water productivity as a crucial means to extract more value from each drop of water used. Moreover, improved crop varieties, together with better tillage methods and more precise drip or micro irrigation, could also reduce water consumption and increase crop yields. "If we can improve water productivity by 40 percent over the next twenty-five years, we'll be able to reduce the global need for extra water for irrigation to zero," explained Professor Frank Rijsberman, Director General of IWMI.

Looking towards trade for a solution?

Trade in "virtual water", i.e. increased trade in food from water-abundant to water-scarce regions, was also cited as a possible option. Molden and de Fraiture note that trade could reduce water consumption in agriculture if exporters were able to achieve higher water productivity than importers. In reality, however, no relationship currently exists between countries' available water resources and their volume of trade, the authors note. Moreover, a heavy reliance on imported food might not work in areas without money or market infrastructure to distribute food. Nevertheless, given the adverse effects of intensive irrigated agriculture on the environment, Molden and de Fraiture call for any evaluation of the social and environmental impacts of WTO Agreements to also include the monitoring of virtual water flows associated with agricultural trade.

Another strategy would be to increase the use of "water markets", which Roger Bate of the American Enterprise Institute claims would be more efficient, equitable and better for the environment. As an example, he points to Chile, which allows water rights to be traded between those holding quotas and as a result has seen a substantial effect on flexibility and hence productivity. Australia has also experienced success in terms of market sophistication. Water markets will eventually have to be legalised to enable farmers to secure title over water so they can provide for the massive and growing populations of India and China, Bate adds. This alternative, however, is expensive, he warns, especially for low-income countries and may have negative implications for poor farmers.

Additional Resources

"World Water Week" website: <http://www.siwi.org/waterweek/worldww.html?meny=3>

"Investing in Water for Food, Ecosystems and Livelihoods," David Molden and Charlotte de Fraiture, 2004: <http://www.iwmi.cgiar.org/Assessment/files/pdf/BluePaper.pdf>

"Water - More Nutrition Per Drop," SIWI and IWMI, 2004: http://www.siwi.org/downloads/More_Nutrition_Per_Drop.pdf.

"Overarching Conclusions And Comments From The 2004 Stockholm Water Symposium," SIWI, 20 August 2004; "Water Markets May Prove the Way to Stave off Water Wars," THE TELEGRAPH, 30 August 2004; "Amplifying Every Drop the Focus of World Water Week," ENS, 17 August 2004; "Priceless," THE ECONOMIST, 17 July 2003; "World Scientists Issue Wake-up Call on Water and Food," ONEWORLD UK, 19 August 2004.

In Brief

KENYA WILDLIFE SERVICE LAUNCHES CLAIM AGAINST PROCTER & GAMBLE

The Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) has launched a claim against Procter & Gamble and the biotechnology firm Genecor International for a share of the profits acquired from enzymes extracted in Kenya. During a 1998 research mission by scientists from Genecor and the University of Leicester, research samples from the soda flats of Lake Bogoria, Kenya, were taken without the approval of the KWS. Genecor later found the samples to contain valuable extremophiles, so called because of their ability to thrive in extreme conditions. Genecor cloned the highly alkaline enzymes and later sold them to Procter & Gamble, who went on to use them as a key ingredient in Tide Alternative Bleach Detergent and "stonewashing" material. KWS has enlisted the scientific support of the International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (Icipe) and legal assistance from the Public Interest Intellectual Property Advisors (PIIPA) in launching the claim under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The CBD affirms the sovereign rights of signatories over the biological resources found on their territories and commits parties to "fair, equitable sharing of the benefits accruing from the utilisation of genetic resources". The claim could involve millions of dollars and could also put a halt to the illegal extraction of the country's biological resources.

"KWS Seeks Millions from Procter & Gamble," EAST AFRICAN, 23 August 2004; "Extremophiles: they like it hot, cold, salty, and acid," EAST AFRICAN, 23 August 2004; "Kenya to Sue Two US Companies," NATION, 26 August 2004.

EXPANSION OF SOYBEAN CULTIVATION THREATENS ENVIRONMENT - REPORT

The expansion of soybean cultivation threatens to destroy almost 22 million hectares of forest and savannah in South America by 2020, a WWF study reports. The high demand for soybeans in the EU and China -- where soybeans are used to feed pigs, chickens and cattle -- has nearly doubled production in the past 10 years in countries such as Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil and Paraguay. This expansion further increases the threat to the Atlantic Forest in South Brazil, which nearly disappeared in the 1970s and '80s. Also threatened are millions of hectares of Argentine's Chaco and Brazil's Cerrado savannahs as they are quickly converted into soy plantations. WWF expects the demand for soy to increase by 60 percent in the next 20 years, which would mean the destruction of an additional 16 million hectares of savannah and 6 million hectares of tropical forest. The report suggests that this expansion could be reduced to 3.7 million hectares by growing soy on existing pastures and alternating soybean cultivation with cattle ranching, stressing that for such an initiative to work, soy producers, investors, buyers and regulators should support, adopt and promote more sustainable practices.

The report "Managing the Soy Boom: Two scenarios of soy production expansion in South America" is available at <http://www.panda.org/downloads/forests/managingthesoyboom.pdf>.

Soy Boom: Doom or Boon for South America's Forests and Savannah," WWF, 3 September 2004; "South American Soya Explosion Threatens Forests," REUTERS, 6 September 2004.

BRAZIL MAPS COFFEE GENOME, HOPES TO CUT COSTS AND IMPROVE QUALITY

After two years of research, Brazil -- the world's largest coffee producer -- has cracked the code and created the first DNA map of the coffee plant. The success of the Coffee Genome Project is expected to help reduce production costs and create bigger beans with a richer flavour. Experts say that genetically engineered plants could double coffee production per hectare, enabling Brazil to reduce production costs by 20 percent. The DNA map contains information on the 200,000 DNA sequences and 35,000 genes that create different aromas and caffeine levels in coffee beans. Armed with such information, Brazil intends to increase production of gourmet, organic and new caffeine-free beans within two years. Initially only six Brazilian

public institutions will have access to the genome database. After five or six years, the private sector and possibly foreign companies will be able to access the database.

Lowering the production costs through DNA mapping may also help coffee producing countries such as Brazil to better confront the current coffee crisis. While the coffee industry in developed countries has prospered in recent years, today's rock bottom prices are causing hardship in countries where coffee is a key economic activity. While the value of retail sales of coffee, largely in industrialised countries, has increased from US\$ 30 billion to 70 billion over the last decade, earnings by coffee producing countries fell from US\$ 10-12 billion to 5.5 billion. Prices on world markets, which averaged around 120 US cents/lb in the 1980s, are now around 50 cents, the lowest in real terms for 100 years.

"Brazil Maps Coffee Genome to Create 'Super Beans'," REUTERS, 12 August 2004; "Brewing Better Coffee with DNA," AP, 11 August 2004; "Coffee Crisis," ICO, September 2004.

CITES GRANTS CAVIAR LICENSES TO BLACK SEA COUNTRIES

On 7 September officials from the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) published 2004 caviar export quotas for a number of Black Sea countries. Contrary to news coverage that suggested otherwise, Romania, Bulgaria, and Serbia and Montenegro were all granted licences to export caviar from sturgeon stocks monitored by CITES. CITES Secretary-General Willem Wijnstekers said that it was "encouraging that these sturgeon range States have collaborated successfully in order to comply with the conservation requirements that governments must now meet before they can obtain their annual quotas". A number of other shared sturgeon basins, including the Caspian Sea, the Great Lakes of North America, the Azov Sea and the Amour River, have yet to supply the required conservation information and thus have not received 2004 export licences from CITES. Lisa Speer, senior policy analyst for the Natural Resources Defense Council and spokesperson for Caviar Emptor, a coalition of three organisations seeking to protect and restore endangered Caspian Sea sturgeon, said the coalition was "very concerned that critically needed long-term conservation measures have yet to be implemented in the Caspian region". In November 2002, the member governments of CITES developed a list of conservation measures that now apply to all of the world's sturgeons and the Caspian states were granted quotas under these measures for both 2002 and 2003 (see <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/04-04-02/story3.htm>, 2 April 2004).

"CITES authorizes sturgeon export quotas for the Black Sea," CITES, 7 September 2004; "Caviar Faces a Ban," NYT, 1 September 2004; "U.N. agency says nations need to improve conservation," MSNBC, 1 September 2004; "Wildlife Officials Shut Down Global Caviar Trade," CAVIAR EMPTOR RELEASE, 1 September 2004.

Events & Resources

EVENTS

For a more comprehensive list of events in trade and sustainable development, please refer to ICTSD's web calendar, <http://www.ictsd.org/cal/2004calendar.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

9-11 September, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA: NATIVE FOOD SUMMIT 2004, FIRST FOOD NATIONS: CREATING A RECIPE FOR CHANGE. Organised by the First Nations Development Institute. Intended for Tribal leaders, traditional farmers, and advocates for Native culture, food and health, the summit aims to educate participants about how Native food systems can help improve the health and economic issues facing Native America, while facilitating networking and partnership-building among those building and sustaining food systems in Native America. For further information, contact Megan Hunter, tel: (+1 540) 371 5615 ext. 33; fax: 371 3505; email:

nter@firstnations.org; Internet: http://www.firstnations.org/narc/initiatives/Nafsi/nafsi-summit/NAFSI_food_summit_frame.html

12-15 September, Cologne, Germany: AGRICULTURAL BIOTECHNOLOGY INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2004 (ABIC 2004). Set up by the ABIC Foundation, the conference aims to enable scientists, industrial managers, investors and policy makers to come together for an intensive exchange of information in order to further the development of agricultural biotechnology particularly in a European context. For further information contact Phytowelt-ABIC 2004, tel: (+49 2162) 77859; fax: 89215; email: contact@phytowelt.com; Internet: <http://www.abic2004.org>.

13 September to 9 October, Berlin, Germany: TRAINING COURSE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE OF FOODS OF ANIMAL ORIGIN: ADAPTATION TO INTERNATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS. Organised by InWEnt. Intended for participants from Asia, this course aims to contribute to the modernisation of existing national food safety and security programmes through boosting the competitiveness of countries in the global trade of foods of animal origin according to the WTO globalised regulations, standards and rules for veterinary public health and preventive consumer protection. For further information contact Bruno Schuler; fax: (+49 8157) 938 777; email: bruno.schuler@inwent.org; Internet: <http://www.dse.de/zell/zellprog/A810200000.rtf>

14 September, Brussels, Belgium: MEETING ON SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF WTO NEGOTIATIONS – FOCUS ON FORESTRY AND DISTRIBUTION SERVICES. This meeting is organised by the European Commission and will include a presentation by the Institute for Development Policy and Management (IDPM) at Manchester University. The presentation of mid-term reports on its work on forestry and distribution services is part of a sustainability impact assessment of proposed WTO negotiations. For further information and to register contact Belgin Bingol, email: Belgin.Bingol@cec.eu.int; Internet: http://trade-info.cec.eu.int/civil_soc/meet.php?action=consult&critere=158

19-24 September, Marrakech, Morocco: WORLD WATER CONGRESS. Organised by the International Water Association. For further information, contact Tom Williams, tel: (+44 20) 7654 5500; fax: 7654 5555; email: 2004marrakech@iwahq.org.uk; Internet: <http://www.iwa2004marrakech.com/>

20-21 September, Washington, DC, US: BIOTECH BUGS: A LOOK AT SCIENCE AND PUBLIC POLICY SURROUNDING THE RELEASE OF GENETICALLY MODIFIED INSECTS. Organised by the Pew Initiative. This two-day multidisciplinary workshop will provide an exploration of the potential benefits and risks of genetically engineered insects and the public policy and ethical implications of releasing them. Representatives of government, academia, consumer and environmental groups, and policy leaders are encouraged to attend. For further information, contact the Pew Initiative, tel: (+1 202) 347-9044; fax: 347-9047; Internet: <http://pewagbiotech.org/events/0920/>

20-22 September, Aberdeen, United Kingdom: LITTORAL 2004 - SEVENTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION: DELIVERING SUSTAINABLE COASTS: CONNECTING SCIENCE AND POLICY. This Conference is organised by Eurocoast and Eucc (the Coastal Union) and attracts an international audience of coastal researchers, managers, practitioners, and others interested in the coastal environment. Scientists, environmentalists, and others participate in plenaries, workshops, field events, and exhibitions on topics ranging from environmental standards to salt marshes. For further information, contact the conference office, tel: (+44 1223) 333438; fax: 333438; email: enquiries@littoral2004.org; Internet: <http://www.littoral2004.org>

20-24 September, Rome, Italy: 30TH SESSION OF THE FAO COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY. The Committee on World Food Security (CFS) serves as a forum in the United Nations System for review and follow-up of policies concerning world food security, including food production and physical and economic access to food. For further information, contact Margarita Flores, Secretary, Committee on World Food Security; email: margarita.flores@fao.org; Internet: http://www.fao.org/unfao/govbodies/wfsfinal_en.htm

20-24 September, Ennis, County Clare, Ireland: 13TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES. Sponsored by the Institute of Technology, Sligo. This annual conference series will review accumulated scientific knowledge on the impacts of aquatic invasive species, presentation of the latest field research and related data, introduction of new technologies and advancements in control and mitigation, and discussion of policy and approaches to effective public education and outreach initiatives to prevent new introductions. For further information, contact the International Conference on Aquatic Invasive Species, tel: (+1 613) 732 7068; fax: 732 3386; email: profedge@renc.igs.net; Internet: <http://www.aquatic-invasive-species-conference.org/conference-home.htm>

20-24 September, Geneva, Switzerland: FIRST MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES (COP-1) TO THE ROTTERDAM CONVENTION. Organised by UNEP Chemicals. For further information, contact Jim Willis, tel: (+41 22) 979 9111, fax: 797 3460; email: pic@unep.ch; Internet: <http://www.pic.int/en/ViewPage.asp?id=354>

20-25 September, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso: COLLOQUE FRANCOPHONE SUR L'EVALUATION ENVIRONNEMENTALE. Organisé par le Secrétariat Francophone AIEI/IAIA. For further information, tel: (+1 514) 288 2663; fax: 987 1567; Internet: <http://www.aiei.org/>

21-22 September, London, UK: MEETING: CSR IN THE FOOD INDUSTRY. Organised by Agra. This conference on corporate social responsibility in the Food Industry aims to assist business to identify, understand and manage these and other stakeholder concerns. For further information, contact AGRA, tel (+44-1892) 533-813; Fax: 544-895; email: marketing@agra-net.com; Internet: <http://www.eldis.org/cf/rdr/rdr.cfm?doc=DOC14883>

21-23 September, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO COUNCIL FOR TRADE-RELATED ASPECTS OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS (TRIPS). For further information, contact the WTO Information and Media Relations Division, Geneva; tel: (+41-22) 739- 5007; fax: 739-5458; email: enquiries@wto.org

23 September, Geneva, Switzerland, WTO COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE. For further information contact the WTO Information and Media Relations Division, Geneva; tel: (+41-22) 739- 5007; fax: 739-5458; email: enquiries@wto.org

24 September, Rome, Italy: FEEDING THE HUNGRY WORLD: THE MORAL IMPERATIVE OF BIOTECHNOLOGY. Organised by the Pontifical Academy of Sciences in cooperation with the US Embassy to the Holy See, this conference will examine the current state of the global food crisis; the theological and moral case for genetically modified (GM) food; scientific advances in GM crops; how developing farmers have used GM crops; and myths concerning biotechnology. For further information contact Amy Roth Turnley, tel: (+39 06) 4674 3433; email: RothTurnleyAE@state.gov; Internet: <http://vatican.usembassy.it/Policy/Events/biotech.asp>

Other Upcoming Events

10-15 October, Bath, England: ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE: PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE. This international seminar will tackle the complexity of environmental governance as it relates to development, politics and economics. Main topics will include: defining and exploring environmental governance, economic and political incentives and barriers, practical application of environmental governance, environmental citizenship and participation, climate change and climate justice. For further information, contact Julia Winborn, tel: (+44 1865) 302713; fax: 516590; email: yellowteam.seminars@britishcouncil.org; Internet: <http://www.britishcouncil.org/seminars-science-0467.htm>

13-15 October, Cape Town, South Africa: INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY REDUCTION - THE MACRO-MICRO LINKAGE. Hosted by the University of Cape Town's Development Policy Research Unit (DPRU) and Trade and Industrial Policy Strategies (TIPS) in association with Cornell University, this conference will consider evidence-based policy recommendations on trade and investment that stem from analysis of macro-micro linkages in the African context. For further information, contact DPRU, tel: (+27 21) 650 5705; fax: 650 5711; email: dpruconf@commerce.uct.ac.za; Internet: <http://www.commerce.uct.ac.za/dpru/dpruconference2004/>

17-22 October, Santiago, Chile: 12TH INTERNATIONAL BIOTECHNOLOGY SYMPOSIUM AND EXHIBITION. The conference is one of the largest international scientific conferences in the field of biotechnology and will include 18 keynote speeches and oral presentations on plant and food biotechnology. For further information, contact the conference administration, email: IBS2004@conicyt.cl; Internet: <http://www.conicyt.cl/IBS2004/>

20-24 October, Udine, Italy: MEETING ON THE ROLE OF MULTI PURPOSE AGRICULTURE IN SUSTAINING THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT. Organised by the University of Udine (Italy). The theme of the fourth Agro Environ symposium is "The role of multi-purpose agriculture in sustaining the global environment". It will address key environmental and agricultural issues and consider new technologies that aim at sustaining agricultural systems, monitoring the environment and conserving natural resources. For further information contact Giuseppe Zerbi, University of Udine, tel: (+39 43) 255 8670; fax: 255-8603; email: zerbi@dpvta.uniud.it; Internet: <http://www.dpvta.uniud.it/~agroenv/docs/brochure.pdf>

21-23 October, Geneva, Switzerland: ENVIROINFO CONFERENCE 2004 – INFORMATICS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION. The conference, organised by the "Gesellschaft für Informatik", is designed for the exchange of information among scientists, public administrations, and private and public companies involved in environmental information processing and environmental informatics end-users. This year's focus will be on "sharing" and will cover a wide scope of environmental information systems topics while showing the latest in research, development, and application. For further information, email: Philippe Minier, tel: +41 22 327 48 57; fax: 327 50 70; email: enviroinfo@etat.ge.ch; Internet: <http://www.enviroinfo2004.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.

MEASURING THE SUCCESS OF CONSERVATION PROGRAMS. By the United States Department of Agriculture, September 2004. This article provides an overview of the steps necessary for evaluating the success of conservation program. These steps must address two questions: 1) How do different farm operators in different circumstances decide what production and conservation practices to implement, in the presence and absence of the conservation program being evaluated, at different levels of incentives provided by that program; and 2) How do the farm practices attributable to conservation program incentives affect environmental quality? Available at <http://www.ers.usda.gov/AmberWaves/September04/Features/measuringsuccess.htm>

BIOMASS AND AGRICULTURE: SUSTAINABILITY, MARKETS, AND POLICIES. By the OECD, September 2004. This report examines the sustainability -- economic, environmental, social dimensions -- of agriculture biomass production and use; reviews current policy and market approaches used by OECD countries to promote agricultural biomass and use; and explores possible policy options and market approaches to address policy and market failures in agricultural biomass markets. The report 44 papers by leading international experts, and covers country case studies across Europe, North America, Korea, Japan, Australia and New Zealand. Available at <http://webdomino1.oecd.org/comnet/agr/BiomassAg.nsf>.

BUYING GREEN! A HANDBOOK ON ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC PROCUREMENT. By the Commission of the European Communities, August 2004. This handbook focuses on Green Public Procurement, a method for consumers to use their purchasing power to opt for goods and services that respect the environment, thus enabling them to make an important contribution towards sustainable development. Available at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/internal_market/publicprocurement/docs/keydocs/gpphandbook_en.pdf

BIODIVERSITY ACCESS AND BENEFIT-SHARING POLICIES FOR PROTECTED AREAS. By the United Nations University and Institute of Advanced Studies Joint Report, November 2003. This report considers the role and value of bioprospecting and its relation to protected areas, examines the potential of bioprospecting in tapping into non-traditional sources of funding, reviews the international and national policy context for ABS, and outlines some key issues that protected area managers need to consider in developing ABS policies. Available at http://www.ias.unu.edu/binaries/UNUIAS_ProtectedAreasReport.pdf.

COFFEE, CO-OPERATIVES, AND COMPETITION: THE IMPACT OF FAIR TRADE. By Anna Milford, Michelson Institute Development Studies and Human Rights, 2004. This report first introduces the international coffee market and the Fair Trade labeling system, then presents economic modeling to establish what conditions will bring about or hinder the co-operative's positive pro-competitive effect on a purchasing market situation, illustrates case studies, and gives a final summary with new research questions based on the findings of this report. Available at <http://www.cmi.no/publications/2004/rep/r2004-6.pdf>.

UPDATED FACT SHEET ON GM CROPS IN THE US: GENETICALLY MODIFIED CROPS IN THE UNITED STATES. By the Pew Initiative, September 2004. Available at: <http://pewagbiotech.org/resources/factsheets/crops>.

FINDING CURES FOR TROPICAL DISEASES: IS OPEN SOURCE AN ANSWER? By Stephen M. Maurer, Arti Rai and Andrej Sali, 2004. This report explores the convergence between computing and biology to suggest that open source methods can be used to organize early phase drug discovery. It argues that a new approach, called "open source drug discovery", would significantly reduce the cost of discovering, developing and manufacturing cures for tropical diseases. Available at http://salilab.org/pdf/136_MaurerBIOESSAYS2004.pdf.

IMPACTS OF EUROPE'S CHANGING CLIMATE. EEA Report, 2004. The impacts of climate change on Europe's environment and society are shown in this report. Past trends in the climate, its current state and possible future changes

are presented using 22 selected indicators. For almost all of these a clear trend exists and impacts are already being observed. The report highlights the need to develop strategies at European, national, regional and local level for adapting to climate change. Available at http://reports.eea.eu.int/climate_report_2_2004/en.

TRADE, ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATIONS AND THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATIONS: NEW EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE. By Matthias Busse, *Journal of World Trade*, 2004. This article empirically explores the linkages between environmental regulations and international trade flows. Using a large and comprehensive new database for environmental regulations across countries, a thorough empirical investigation of that linkage for 119 countries and five high-polluting industries is performed. The results indicate that concerns for a "race to the bottom" on environmental standards or a major move towards "pollution havens" cannot be supported. The article also discusses the issues of trade and environmental regulations within the context of the WTO framework.

Electronic Resources

BILATERALS.ORG is a collective effort to share information and stimulate cooperation against bilateral trade and investment agreements that are opening countries to the deepest forms of penetration by transnational corporations.

AGRICULTURAL BIOTECHNOLOGY INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY. By the United States Department of Agriculture: Economic Research Service, August 2004. The Agricultural Biotechnology Intellectual Property database identifies and describes US utility patents on inventions in biotechnology and other biological processes (with issue dates between 1976 and 2000) that are used in food and agriculture. The database also provides information about the ownership of these patents, whether patents are held in the public or private sector, and changes in patent ownership due to firm mergers, acquisitions, and spin-offs. Accessible at <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Data/AgBiotechIP/>.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT REPORTS: NEWS. By The Association Sustainable Development Reports Organization, September 2004. This web portal provides a link to reports of more than 700 firms accessible by alphabetical order, by business sector or by country, case studies presenting concrete actions taken on the field by NGOs and firms through successful partnerships, a feedback section allowing visitors to react, a sustainable development current events column, and a free Newsletter to keep visitors informed of new developments. The most recent reports are available at: <http://www.sustainabledevelopment-reports.org/en/index.htm>

NEW SECTION ON THE RULES NEGOTIATIONS. By the World Trade Organization, 2004. The section features an introduction to the topic (including ongoing discussions on fisheries subsidies), updates on the negotiations as well as links to relevant documents. Accessible at http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/rulesneg_e/rulesneg_e.htm.

WEBSITE LAUNCHED FOR WOMEN IN FISHERIES. By the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF), August 2004. ICSF has launched a website on issues relating to women and gender in fisheries. In most fishing communities, women play a key role in fisheries and in maintaining households and communities. Accessible at <http://wif.icsf.net>.

FOREST WEB PORTAL. By the Convention on Biological Diversity, August 2004. To further facilitate the implementation of the expanded work programme on Forest Biological Diversity and its review by the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, the Secretariat has developed this forest portal. The primary purpose of the portal is to allow Parties, other governments, NGOs, research practitioners, project managers and other actors in civil society to reflect on and analyse their common experiences in implementing the objectives of the expanded programme of work. Accessible at <https://www.biodiv.org/programmes/areas/forest/portal/home.shtml>.

BRIDGES Trade BioRes© is published by the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD), <http://www.ictsd.org>, in collaboration with IUCN - World Conservation Union, <http://www.iucn.org>, and IUCN's Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy, CEESP, <http://www.iucn.org/themes/ceesp/index.html>. This edition of *BRIDGES Trade BioRes* was edited by Heike Baumüller. Contributors to this issue were Heike Baumüller, Karen Martell, and Sarah Mohan. The Director is Ricardo Meléndez-Ortiz, rmelendez@ictsd.ch. ICTSD is an independent, not-for-profit organisation based at: 7, Chemin de Balexert, 1219 Geneva, Switzerland, tel: (41-22) 917-8492; fax: 917-8093. Excerpts from *BRIDGES Trade BioRes* may be used in other publications with appropriate citation. Comments and suggestions are welcomed and should be directed to the Editors or the Director. *BRIDGES Trade BioRes* is made possible in 2004 through the generous support of the Swiss Agency for the Environment, Forests and Landscape (BUWAL) and the State Secretary for Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment of The Netherlands (VROM). It also benefits from ICTSD's core funders: the Governments of Finland, Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden; Christian Aid (UK), the Rockefeller Foundation, MISEREOR, NOVIB (NL), Oxfam (UK) and the Swiss Coalition of Development Organisations (Switzerland). ISSN 1682-0843

To subscribe to *BRIDGES Trade BioRes*, please send a blank email to subscribe_biores@ictsd.ch.

To become a member of the CEESP Working Group on Environment, Trade and Investment, please send an email to: jvonbraun@ictsd.ch