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CONTENT

Intellectual Property	1
TRIPS Council Zooms In On Disclosure Requirements	
Trade in Endangered Species	2
CITES Expected To Broaden Coverage Of Heavily Traded Commodities	
Biotechnology	4
GMO Update: Thailand; Brazil; EU Regulations	
Environment At The WTO	6
EC's Lamy Advocates Value-Based Trade Relations	
In Brief	7
Events & Resources	9

Intellectual Property

TRIPS COUNCIL ZOOMS IN ON DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS

Meeting on 21 September, the Council for Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) considered a proposal by Brazil, India, Pakistan, Peru, Thailand, and Venezuela to advance discussions on the relationship between the TRIPS Agreement and biodiversity issues and traditional knowledge. Members remained locked in their positions, so no substantive progress was made and the meeting closed after one day rather than the scheduled two.

The meeting was the first TRIPS Council held after the WTO agreed on a "July package" to move the Doha Round forward. The TRIPS Agreement was only briefly mentioned in the July package -- with Members reaffirming their commitment to progress in line with the Doha mandate -- with the focus of the package on other areas of the Doha Round, such as agriculture. Discussions at the TRIPS Council therefore continued where they had left off at the previous session of the Council in June (see *BRIDGES Trade BioRes*, 25 June 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/04-06-25/story2.htm>).

The new proposal (IP/C/W/429, available at <http://docsonline.wto.org>), endorsed also by Cuba and Ecuador, followed on a broader proposal made by a number of developing countries in March 2004 (IP/C/W/420), which suggested a checklist of issues to be covered in the negotiations on biodiversity, traditional knowledge and folklore. Members continue to disagree on whether to use this checklist as a basis for discussion. The US

and Japan again voiced their opposition to using the checklist, which they felt did not reflect their views. In the new proposal, the group of developing countries elaborates on possible disclosure requirements in patent applications relating to the source and country of origin of a biological resource and/or traditional knowledge used in an invention.

The proposal first considers ways that disclosure requirements could improve patent examination and prevent "bad" patents. In this regard, it provides examples of "bio-piracy" in which, for example, traditionally used herbal remedies have been patented by multinationals, with no revenues flowing back to the communities where the genetic material was sourced. The countries note that processes for improving patent examination have been proposed, but they either lack cultural sensitivity or are voluntary and provide no guarantees. Therefore, the proposal suggests "a legally binding obligation to disclose the source and country of origin of biological resource and/or traditional knowledge". In addition, disclosure requirements would be helpful in cases of patent challenges, which usually are long and costly processes, and would help ensure patent quality.

The proposal then goes on to discuss the meaning of disclosure, dealing with questions such as whether the obligation would be a substantive or formal requirement relating to patentability; what level of use of the resource in the invention would be sufficient to trigger the obligation; and what the administrative and cost burdens would be. According to the paper, the obligation would be both substantive and formal. Even incidental use would trigger the disclosure obligation. The proposal indicates that costs would not be substantial in relation to the patent application process as a whole, as some Members already have a disclosure requirement in place.

The proposal also discusses the legal implications of non-compliance and wrongful disclosure, noting that the application process could be suspended or penalties imposed. If non-compliance was discovered after a patent had been granted, the patent could be revoked or the rights could be transferred back to the original sources. The burden of proof would lie with the patent applicant, and, according to the proposal, the disclosure obligation could be introduced into the TRIPS Agreement through an amendment.

The next TRIPS Council is scheduled for 1- 2 December.

ICTSD reporting.

Trade in Endangered Species

CITES EXPECTED TO BROADEN COVERAGE OF HEAVILY TRADED COMMODITIES

The upcoming October Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES) in Bangkok is expected to move further into regulating trade in economically valuable species, including a number of fish, timber and medicinal plant species. Also on the table is the recurring question of whether conservation is best achieved through restrictions or sustainable use (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 21 November 2002, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/02-11-21/story1.htm>).

CITES is one of the multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) that contain specific trade obligations. WTO Members are currently involved in negotiations on the relationship between such obligations and multilateral trade rules. While the trade and environment regimes are frequently exhorted to be 'mutually supportive', conflicts can arise, particularly between those WTO Members that are party to an MEA and those who are not. Furthermore, the membership of CITES itself is often divided between commercial and environmental interests. Like its predecessors, the 13th Conference of the Parties (COP-13) has a number of important decisions to make in balancing these issues.

Fish: Shark and wrasse

The meeting is called upon to decide whether to list the valuable white shark and humphead wrasse in Appendix II (limited trade under strict controls). If the proposal to list the white shark, put forward by Madagascar and Australia, is adopted, it would become the third shark species placed in Appendix II, following the decision to list the whale and the basking sharks at COP-12. The humphead wrasse has been proposed for listing by Fiji, the EU and the US in an effort to combat over-fishing for use in Southeast Asian luxury restaurant food markets.

Timber: Ramin and Agarwood

After the inclusion of big-leafed mahogany in Appendix II at COP-12, Parties at this year's meeting will have to decide on the treatment of two other heavily trade timber species. Indonesia has proposed including in Annex II the agarwood and ramin trees (it has already listed the latter in Annex III, which contains species protected within the borders of a member country). Native to Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines, the ramin tree has long been one of Southeast Asia's major export timbers. The proposed listing would include all ramin species, as well as their parts and derivatives. Found in Borneo, Malaysia and Sumatra, the agarwood tree produces the valuable 'agar' oil used for making incense, perfumes and medicines. The listing would cover all species (one of which has been listed since 1995).

Medicinal plants: Hoodia cactus

Among the medicinal plants, South Africa and Namibia have proposed the inclusion of the Hoodia cactus in Appendix II. The cactus has long been used by Africa's San people for its appetite-suppressing qualities. In 1996, the South African Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) patented the chemical entity extracted from hoodia and licensed the British pharmaceutical company Phytopharm to develop the plant's commercial potential. Phytopharm in turn sold the development and marketing rights to the Pfizer Corporation. The San peoples have high hopes for a share of the profits, should a drug be successfully marketed. Following lengthy negotiations, the CSIR concluded a memorandum of understanding with the San tribes in April 2002, which will serve as a basis for benefit-sharing, specifying that the San peoples will receive six percent of the royalties incurred.

Mammals: Elephants and whales

As at COPs past, elephants and whales will again make an appearance at COP-13. After the Parties in 2002 allowed one-off ivory sales for Botswana, Namibia and South Africa (which have yet to take place pending the establishment of baseline data on poaching and wild populations), Namibia is now requesting an annual export quota of two tonnes of ivory, and has proposed (supported by South Africa) to trade elephant leather commercially in addition to ivory. Opponents and supporters have been divided over the possible benefits of trade in ivory products to local communities and conservation programmes as weighed against concerns that such sales may encourage poaching. The supporters argue that resuming controlled trade would provide an economic incentive to sustainably use a valuable natural resource.

Among other controversial issue, Japan has again put forward a proposal to move three populations of minke whale from Appendix I to Appendix II, arguing that these populations have sufficiently recovered to no longer be at risk. Japan and Norway have made similar proposals at past CITES meetings, all of which have been rejected. For the past 18 years, commercial whaling has been subject to a general ban by the International Whaling Commission (IWC). Given that CITES decisions on trade in great whales must be consistent with the decisions of the IWC (pursuant to a CITES resolution adopted in 2000), many Parties feel that trade cannot resume until the ban has been lifted.

Cross-cutting issues

Underlying tensions regarding the pursuit of conservation objectives through restrictions or sustainable use are also likely to surface in a number of cross-cutting areas. In addition to its proposal on elephants, Namibia

has put forward a submission regarding synergies between CITES and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), focusing on the Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines on sustainable use adopted at CBD COP-7 in early 2004 (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 20 February 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/04-02-20/story1.htm>). Namibia would like to see the Principles integrated into the work of CITES, including a definition of sustainable use when assessing whether trade will be detrimental to a species. The CITES Secretariat in its comment notes that "the term 'sustainable use' is not used in CITES and therefore requires no definition".

Parties will also again discuss 'economic incentives', i.e. favouring positive measures to encourage range countries to preserve endangered species rather than establish CITES-plus controls in the importing countries. In this context, the Secretariat has proposed to conduct a review of Parties' national trade policies, including, the use of economic incentives, market access strategies and benefit-sharing arrangements.

Additional Resources

Documents of the COP-13: <http://www.cites.org>.

"Monitoring of Illegal Hunting in Elephant Range States", CITES Secretariat, 2004: <http://www.cites.org/common/cop/13/docs/E13-29-2A.pdf>.

Further information is also available on the TRAFFIC website at <http://www.traffic.org/cop13/>.

"CITES 2004 Press Kit," CITES, September 2004; "Culprits of the illegal ivory trade identified," WWF, 16 September 2004.

Biotechnology

GMO UPDATE: THAILAND; BRAZIL; EU REGULATIONS

Thai government confirms GM papaya finding

On 14 September Thailand's Agriculture Minister Somsak Thepsuthin said that at least one of the papaya trees grown from seeds distributed by the Thai government's Khon Kaen experimental research station has been found to be genetically modified. On 21 September, after collecting 1,164 samples from Khon Kaen, he admitted that genetically modified papayas had been found on eight more farms. Thailand has had a ban on genetically modified organisms (GMOs) for three years. It continues to prohibit their introduction after the national cabinet overturned Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra's decision to repeal the ban (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 10 September 2004 <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/04-09-10/story1.htm>). The finding of one GM papaya amongst 239 tested led the government to destroy all the papaya on the farm, impose a containment zone to prevent spread of GM contamination, and stop plantation tests of GM papaya.

Greenpeace Southeast Asia issued a warning as early as July 2004 that the Khon Kaen station was distributing papaya seed packets containing some GM seeds. The local anti-GM group Biodiversity and Community Rights Action, Thailand (BIOTHAI) and other consumer groups pledged to take papaya samples in coming weeks to find out the extent of the contamination and its impact on genetic contamination of Thai papayas, Thailand's current GMO ban as well as papaya exports. Concerns about GM papaya contamination have prompted European importers to cancel orders of Thai fruit cocktails. Thai farms produced 300,000 tons of papaya fruit in 2002. About 1 percent of that, worth US\$1 million, was exported abroad.

Brazilian vote imminent on regulating GM food

On 16 September Brazil's Senate delayed voting on a bill to regulate GM foods and stem cell research because not enough people were present to vote. The bill, which was approved by the lower house of Congress in February, will be voted on in the Senate the week of 5 October. The current draft shifts power to approve GM products from the environment ministry, which is resistant to GMO products, back to the National Technical Commission on Biotechnology (CTNBio), which consists of 36 scientists. Although Brazil is one of the last major agricultural exporters to restrict the commercial use of GM soy and food, illegal GM seed stocks are popular amongst farmers, in particular in Brazil's south where GM soy seeds have been illegally brought in from Argentina. Last year the government issued a temporary authorisation of GM soy planting until the end of the year and the sale of GM soy crops until the end of 2004 to address harvest shortages (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 3 October 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/03-10-03/story2.htm>). Analysts acknowledged that the legislative delay would not have any impact on planting decisions as soy farmers had already bought seeds to plant. Daniel Dias, soy analyst at FNP Consultoria, noted that in Rio Grande do Sul state nearly all the soybean area was transgenic and that "farmers are already committed".

GM seed companies such as Monsanto are looking forward to the passing of the bill, as they would then be able to charge royalties for the technology that currently is being used under the table. Although legislators had considered issuing a government decree authorising the planting and sale of GMO soybeans for this season, a statement from the president's office said that they would instead urge the Senate to speed up passage of the legislation.

EU experts delay decision on GM Maize

On 20 September environment experts from EU countries met to discuss and vote on whether to allow imports of GM maize made by US firm Monsanto, but postponed a formal vote on Monsanto's application because disagreement within the meeting demonstrated that there was not enough sentiment for or against the proposal. The particular strain of maize, called MON 863, has been altered to be resistant to the corn rootworm insect. An exact date for the next meeting of the group of experts had yet to be determined, though an official at the European Commission stressed that member countries had postponed the decision in order to seek clarification and more information. The failure of the expert group to reach a decision comes less than six months after the EU ended its de facto moratorium on imports of GM products by approving genetically modified Bt-11 sweet maize made by Syngenta (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 28 May 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/04-05-28/story3.htm>). Should the group of experts fail to vote conclusively, responsibility for approval or rejection passes to EU ministers who have three months to vote for or against approval, after which it moves to the European Commission for approval.

European groups campaign for GM-free zones

On 14 September the Assembly of European Regions (AER) and Friends of the Earth Europe (FoE) launched a campaign that aims to protect traditional crops and products in the face of new genetic technology. AER and FoE hope to lobby for a European legal framework on the coexistence of traditional and transgenic crops as well as for the legal recognition of GM-free zones and regions in Europe. At the launch of the campaign in Strasbourg, Welsh Euro-MP and Plaid Cymru deputy leader Jill Evans said that all regional authorities across the EU should have the legal right to decide whether or not to permit production of GM crops. The Welsh Assembly has already declared that it wants Wales to be GM-free, but the Labour government has not acted to implement the decision, said Evans. Scotland authorities insist that current EU rules do not allow them to declare Scotland as GM-free and the European Commission continues to oppose the possibility of GM-free regions (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 11 November 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/03-11-14/story1.htm>). Since 1999, almost 2,000 local and regional authorities across Europe have declared themselves GM-free areas despite the lack of clarity on their legal power to do so. They cite the slow response of their national governments to public opposition to GM crops as the rationale for the introduction of GM-free zones.

"Thailand Halts GM Tests After Contamination Scandal," AFP, 14 September 2004; "Thailand: Government Admission: GM Papaya Found in NE," THE NATION, 14 September 2004; "Brazil Senate delays vote on

GMO food bill to Oct.," REUTERS, 16 September 2004; "EU experts fail to agree on GMO maize imports," REUTERS, 20 September 2004; "Campaign for GM free zones and regions gathers force," INDYMEDIA UK, 14 September 2004; "Call for EU Law on Gm-Free Zones," THE SCOTSMAN, 15 September 2004.

Environment At The WTO

EC'S LAMY ADVOCATES VALUE-BASED TRADE RELATIONS

In a speech delivered in Brussels on 15 September, European Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy presented a case for consideration of so-called 'collective preferences' (or 'collective choices') in trade relations. When communities make practical decisions based upon their social values -- for example, a government could decide to ban the sale of certain drugs -- the value that prompted the decision, in this case health, can be called the community's 'collective preference'. Thus, collective preferences can be thought of as social values that are implied in a community's practical decisions and concrete results that can be seen by those inside and outside the community. Lamy described trade as the "natural point of intersection for different systems of collective preferences", bringing two legitimate demands into potential conflict, namely the need to honour WTO commitments and the right to exercise legitimate social choices based upon collective preferences.

Lamy acknowledged that defining collective preferences could be ambiguous and open to dispute given that they were not always rational and evolved over time from cultural and religious values, political considerations, historical factors and the level of development. By way of example, he outlined certain European 'collective preferences', including multilateralism, environmental protection, food safety, cultural diversity, public provision of education and healthcare, precautions in the field of biotechnology, and welfare rights. He said that different collective preferences among countries are essentially complementary although experiences have shown that conflicts can arise. Differing attitudes to assessing and managing risks related to biotech products, which have surfaced in the ongoing WTO dispute between the US/Argentina/Canada and the EU (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 10 September 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/04-09-10/story1.htm>), were a "case in point" for highlighting differences in collective preferences, he added.

Trade presented a particular challenge in this area, he noted, since the underlying stakes are considerable (i.e. the exporting countries' trade interests may run counter to the importing country's collective preferences), and trade was the only area in which there was an effective and binding mechanism for settling disputes. Yet it might be difficult to say just who the community is that governments are giving voice to by representing their 'collective preferences' in international forums; many fear that special interest groups could use the term to justify protecting uncompetitive industries. "Liberals might see it as opening a Pandora's box of arbitrary barriers; the Southern countries as protectionism and euro-centrism in disguise; and environmentalists and human-rights activists might see it as representing an unacceptable status quo because it fails to put pressure on those who infringe social standards and destroy the environment," he acknowledged.

Lamy commended the WTO's Appellate Body for being a "faithful guardian" of collective preferences under the WTO system by balancing wider public concerns with WTO principles such as non-discrimination as well as with rules of international public law. However, he said that both WTO rules and case law are incomplete and leave room for interpretation. "That is one of the reasons Europe wanted WTO negotiations to include discussions on clarifying the relationship between the WTO and multilateral environmental agreements", he said.

Lamy argued that sustainability impact assessment could help to reveal trading partners' collective preferences. "This, in turn, would make it possible to anticipate any conflicts that might arise from greater openness, by revealing incompatibilities between collective preferences before greater openness made them apparent, and by examining possible solutions," he said. He also suggested the use of a special safeguard clause to clarify how collective preferences might be integrated into WTO rules, thereby ensuring that "trade

integration will not pose a threat to legitimate collective preferences". Such a clause would be subject to two conditions, namely a requirement to demonstrate that there really was a coherent underlying social demand to justify the measure, and that the measure complied with the basic principles of the trading system, such as non-discrimination proportionality, national treatment and transparency. The clause would also have to be accompanied by a compensation mechanism, which would serve to partially compensate the affected exporters, thereby placing the responsibility on communities to bear the external cost of measures that reflect their societal choices.

Lamy's speech is available at

http://europa.eu.int/comm/commissioners/lamy/speeches_articles/spla242_en.htm.

In Brief

ASBESTOS SPARKS CONTROVERSY AT ROTTERDAM CONVENTION MEETING

Delegates at the first Conference of the Parties of the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent (PIC) Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, meeting from 20-24 September in Geneva, agreed to add 14 new toxic chemicals, including a lead additive for petrol, to the PIC list. However, chrysotile asbestos -- which accounts for 94 percent of the commercial asbestos production and is known to cause cancer -- was again blocked from the list by a number of producing countries, including Canada and Russia (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 28 November 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/03-11-28/story1.htm>). Blue and brown asbestos had already been added to the list previously. Chrysotile asbestos is the first chemical to face significant opposition at the Rotterdam Convention. Many observers raised concerns that this decision might set a precedent for future discussions on economically important chemicals, fearing that economic and trade interests would override environmental and health concerns. "Canada and Russia's objections to listing chrysotile asbestos are embarrassingly self-interested, protecting domestic exporters interested in selling this dangerous chemical abroad," said Clifton Curtis, director of WWF's Global Toxics Programme. The Canadian government defended its action, saying "If added to (the list), that might be perceived by some countries as a signal to ban chrysotile".

In 2001 Canada lost a WTO dispute that it had brought against France's ban on chrysotile (see BRIDGES Weekly, 13 March 2001, <http://www.ictsd.org/html/weekly/story1.13-03-01.htm>). The appellate body for the case found that France's ban was justified under Article XX(b) of the 1994 General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), which provides a general exception to WTO rules for measures considered necessary to protect human health, and in their ruling said that "carcinogenicity, or toxicity, constitutes, as we see it, a defining aspect of the physical properties of chrysotile asbestos fibres".

The Rotterdam Convention, which entered into force on 24 February this year, enables member countries to add chemicals to the Convention's list of toxic chemicals by consensus voting. Chemicals on the list can only be exported from one country to another with the permission of the government of the importing state.

"Treaty Curbs Trade in More Dangerous Chemicals," REUTERS, 22 September 2004; "Canada blocks asbestos type from global toxic list," REUTERS, 22 September 2004; "Up to 15 hazardous chemicals and pesticides to be added to trade watch list," PIC ROTTERDAM CONVENTION, 16 September 2004.

COFFEE COMPANIES AGREE TO CODE OF CONDUCT

On 10 September an international alliance of more than 70 representatives of coffee farmers, commerce and industry, non-governmental organisations and unions concluded a draft Common Code for the Coffee Community (CCCC) in Hamburg, Germany. While Swiss-based food giant Nestle, US firms Kraft Foods and Sara Lee, as well as German-based Tchibo presented the voluntary code of conduct, it remains unclear as to when the pact will be signed. Signatories will commit to pay minimum salaries, stop using child labour,

allow trade union membership and adhere to international environmental standards on pesticide and water pollution. The agreement comes in response to concerns from consumer and environmental groups that companies are exploiting low prices and poor working conditions in a world coffee market glutted with excess supply. Nestle welcomed the coffee code, saying, "The code is an excellent idea. It is in our own interest because it helps to guarantee supplies and quality standards". Ian Bretnam, deputy director of the Fairtrade Foundation, said anything that improved workers' conditions had to be welcomed. However, he also noted that the code "seems to be largely focused on plantation workers and doesn't address the fundamental problem of the slump in prices". According to Oxfam International, coffee prices are at the lowest in thirty years. Adding to the controversy, the prominent environmental group Greenpeace has withdrawn from the initiative, owing to the failure of the pact to commit to the exclusion of gene technology in favour of sustainable and ecological coffee production.

In related developments, the US announced its intent to rejoin the International Coffee Organisation, ICO (see BRIDGES Weekly, 22 September 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-09-22/story3.htm>). The ICO is the main intergovernmental organisation for coffee, bringing together producing and consuming countries to tackle the challenges facing the world coffee sector through international cooperation. Coffee producers globally are in a state of crisis owing to low prices and oversupply of coffee beans. The decision by the US to join the ICO is seen by many as a gesture in support of the ICO dialogue as well as a recognition of the need to engage not only producing but also consuming countries.

For further information see <http://www.sustainable-coffee.net/>

"Coffee industry agrees code of conduct," SWISSINFO, 10 September 2004; "United States to Rejoin the International Coffee Organization," ICO, 16 September 2004.

WTO PANELS SIDE WITH BRAZIL IN COTTON, SUGAR CASES

On 8 September, the WTO panel hearing Brazil's challenge to US subsidies to upland cotton producers issued its final decision in favour of Brazil on all major claims (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 30 April 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/04-04-30/story3.htm>). The panel found that certain US payments to farmers amounted to trade distorting domestic support. The panel further ruled that 'export credit guarantees' and 'step 2 marketing payments' the US offered to its cotton producers were prohibited export subsidies and had to be withdrawn "without delay". On other aspects of the case, the ruling was mixed. The panel did not, for example, rule in favour of Brazil's claim that certain US measures had caused it "serious injury".

On the same date, the panel on Brazil's case against the EC's export subsidies for sugar issued its confidential final ruling to the parties to the case. Here as well Brazil largely won the case. This final report confirmed the ruling in favour of Brazil, made in an earlier interim report released on 4 August (see BRIDGES Weekly, 1 September 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-09-01/story1.htm>). Commenting on the ruling, EC spokesperson on agriculture Gregor Kreuzhuber indicated that the EC's new sugar reform proposals (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 23 July 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/04-07-23/story2.htm>) would in any event substantially reduce "EU sugar exports and export refunds, abolish intervention, reduce EU production and the internal sugar price".

For a more detailed description of the cases, see BRIDGES Weekly, 15 September 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-09-15/story1.htm>. To access the final cotton panel report see http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news_e.htm.

ICTSD Reporting: "WTO issues final decision finding EU sugar subsidies exceed quotas," WTO REPORTER, 9 September 2004; "WTO Rules Against EU Sugar, U.S. Cotton Support, Backing Brazil," BLOOMBERG, 8 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

25-26 September, Ithaca, N.Y., USA: GROWING INEQUALITY IN CHINA: CAUSES, CONSEQUENCES AND RESPONSES. The objective of this conference at Cornell University is to take stock of growing inequality in China, focusing on its causes, its consequences, and policy responses to it in the future. It will bring together international research on the subject in terms of theoretical, empirical and policy analysis. Submissions of completed papers, or extended abstracts are invited (to be submitted by 15 April). For further information, contact Xiaobo Zhang, email: x.zhang@cgiar.org; Internet: <http://www.ifpri.org/events/conferences/2004/20040925Cornell.pdf>

26-30 September, Montpellier, France: EIGHTH INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON THE BIOSAFETY OF GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS. Organised by the International Society for Biosafety Research, this symposium will be held under the theme "How Scientific Research Informs Biosafety Decisions". A special workshop will discuss North-South issues related to biosafety of GMOs. For further information, contact the International Society for Biosafety Research, tel: +33-1-30-83-37-30; fax: 83-37-28; e-mail: isbgmo@versailles.inra.fr; Internet: <http://www.inra.fr/gmobiosafety/aboutsymposium.php>

28-30 September, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO NEGOTIATING GROUP ON RULES. For further information contact the WTO Information and Media Relations Division, Geneva; tel: (41-22) 739- 5007; fax: (41-22) 739-5458; email: enquiries@wto.org

2-14 October, Bangkok, Thailand: 13TH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES OF WILD FLORA AND FAUNA. For further information, contact the CITES Secretariat, tel: + 4122 917 8139 /4; fax: 797 3417; email: cites@unep.ch; Internet: <http://www.cites.org/>

4 October, Copenhagen, Denmark: SEMINAR ON DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS OF REGIONAL AND BILATERAL TRADE AGREEMENTS. This seminar is organised by the 'WTO, Trade & Development' network, an initiative based at the Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS). The aim of the network is to provide an international forum for the discussion and dissemination of research and policy-relevant information on trade and development issues. The seminar is part of the "Trade Mondays" series, with a seminar once a month at DIIS. For further information on the network and the "Trade Mondays", contact Stefano Ponte, Seminar Coordinator, email: spo@diis.dk

4-7 October, Boca del Rio, Veracruz, Mexico: YES MEXICO 2004 - A LEARNING SUMMIT. This event will evaluate global progress on youth employment, with the sharing of national strategies within the context of YES Framework for Action. Over 1000 youth delegates will deliberate on the issue of youth employment on the focal areas of: renewable energy, water and sanitation, on-farm & off-farm enterprises, ICT, HIV/AIDS and post conflict reconstruction. A global "State of the YES Campaign 2004" report will also be released. To register and to apply for partial scholarships, visit: <http://www.yesweb.org/mexico/register.html>; for further information, contact Gustavo Payan, YES Mexico Summit Coordinator, email: gustavo@yesweb.org; Internet: <http://www.yesweb.org/mexico/index.html>

4-15 October, South Africa: BUILDING COMPETENCIES FOR MAINSTREAMING TRADE & DEVELOPMENT WORK. DFID in collaboration with the Trade Law Centre for Southern Africa

(TRALAC) in South Africa will hold a two-week intensive training programme on trade and development topics for around 30 trainees. The course is aimed at programme managers and advisory staff interested in developing their competence to work on trade and development. The programme will focus on key trade and development issues for developing countries at the national level and in the context of the bilateral, regional and multilateral agenda. The course aims to give participants an understanding of, inter alia, the theory and evidence linking trade, growth and poverty reduction and the principles/practice behind mainstreaming trade within national strategies for poverty reduction and sustainable development. For further information and to apply, contact Hushe Mzenda, DFID, email: h-mzenda@dfid.gov.uk; or Paul Leenane, tel: +44 20 7023 0892; email: p-leenane@dfid.gov.uk.

5-9 October, Geneva, Switzerland: 62ND SESSION OF THE UNECE TIMBER COMMITTEE AND 32ND SESSION OF THE FAO EUROPEAN FORESTRY COMMISSION. For further information, fax: (+41 22) 917 00 41; email: info.timber@unece.org; Internet: <http://www.unece.org/trade/timber/docs/tc-sessions/tc-62/tc-62.htm>.

6-8 October, Zaragoza, Spain: INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON WATER -- A CATALYST FOR PEACE. Organised by UNESCO's from Potential Conflict to Cooperation Potential (PCCP) Project, one of UNESCO's contributions to the UN World Water Assessment Programme. This conference will bring together water managers, decision makers and a broad range of stakeholders to improve their conflict management skills and to facilitate the process towards cooperative basin management and conflict resolution. For further information contact Saskia Castelein, UNESCO PC-CP Project, fax: 33-1-45-68-58-29; email: s.castelein@unesco.org; Internet: http://www.unesco.org/water/wwap/pccp/pdf/zaragoza_programme_en.pdf

Other upcoming events

9 October, USA, Belgium, India, South Africa, and Scotland: EARTH CHARTER COMMUNITY SUMMITS. Organised by the Institute for Ethics and Meaning, community summits will be held across the United States and in several other countries as a grassroots effort to commemorate, celebrate, and implement the Earth Charter launched at the Hague in 2000. For further information, contact Jan Roberts, tel: (+1 813) 254-8454; email: info@earthchartersummits.org; Internet: <http://www.earthchartersummits.org>

9-12 October, Rome, Italy: SECOND ISRAEL-PALESTINE-INTERNATIONAL WATER CONFERENCE. The conference, sponsored by the Israel /Palestine Center for Research and Information (IPCRI) together with the International Water Resources Association (IWRA), aims to bring together water specialists to provide a basis for improved cooperation between the peoples of the region and the international community in developing, managing and protecting their scarce shared water resources. For further information, contact Robin Twite, Conference Coordinator, tel: 972-2-676-9460; fax: 972-2-676-8011; email: robin@ipcri.org; Internet: <http://www.ipcri.org/water-conference.html>

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/>

16 October, worldwide: WORLD FOOD DAY. Organised by the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), this year's theme is Biodiversity for food security. A variety of events are being planned around the globe. For further information, contact the FAO at tel: +39-06-570-53210; email: World-Food-Day@fao.org; Internet: <http://www.fao.org/wfd/>

18-20 October, Montreal, Canada: TECHNICAL GROUP OF EXPERTS ON LIABILITY AND REDRESS UNDER THE CARTAGENA PROTOCOL ON BIOSAFETY. The Group will undertake preparatory work

for the first meeting of the Open-ended Ad Hoc Working Group of Legal and Technical Experts on Liability and Redress. For further information contact the CBD Secretariat, tel: (+1 514) 288-2220; fax: 288-6588; email: secretariat@biodiv.org, Internet: <http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meeting.aspx?lg=0&mtg=BSTELR-01>

20-23 October, Barcelona, Spain: AQUACULTURE EUROPE 2004: "BIOTECHNOLOGIES FOR QUALITY". Organised by the European Aquaculture Society, the meeting will provide a forum for presentations and debate/discussion of recent advances in different biotechnologies and their impact on the improvement of aquaculture production and seafood quality, and also on new products and methodologies. For further information, contact the EAS, tel: (+3259) 32 38 59, fax: 32 10 05; Internet: <http://www.easonline.org/agenda/en/AquaEuro2004/default.asp>

24 October to 6 November, Nicoya, Costa Rica: WORKSHOP AND FORUM ON GLOBALISATION AND FOOD SYSTEMS. This scientific workshop and science-policy forum, organised by the IHDP (International Human Dimensions Programme on Global Environmental Change) and IAI (Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research), will focus on interactions between globalisation and global environmental change, and the implications of these interactions for food systems and food security. For further information, contact the IAI, tel: +55-12-3945-6856; fax: +55-12-3941-4410; email: i2004-geci@dir.iai.int; Internet: <http://www.institutes.iai.int/2004GECI.htm>

3-5 November, Inverness, Scotland: SUSTAINABILITY -- CREATING THE CULTURE: SHAPING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR SCOTLAND. This conference will focus on a variety of issues relating to sustainability in Scotland, including Urban and Rural Sustainable Development, Renewable Energy and Community Development, Sustainable Corporations, and Future Policies for Sustainable Development. For further information, contact Fiona Aitken, phone: 01309 696807; email: Fiona@sustainableresearch.com; Internet: <http://www.sustainableresearch.com>.

7-11 November, San Francisco, USA: INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF NANOTECHNOLOGY. Organised by the International Association of Nanotechnology, Inc., this year's congress has the theme of "bridging to the next frontier". The Congress serves as a forum for scientists, engineers, nanotechnologists, business executives and policy makers to discuss the progress of nanoscience and Nanotechnology, their present and potential industrial applications as well as the societal and environmental impacts of the emerging technology. It includes speakers, the Nano World Expo 2004 featuring state-of the art products, and more. For further information, contact the International Association of Nanotechnology at tel: (+1 916) 529-4119; fax: (+1 916) 424-1650; email: info@ianano.org; Internet: <http://www.nanotechcongress.com>

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.

FOOD WARS: THE GLOBAL BATTLE FOR MOUTHS, MINDS AND MARKETS. By Tim Lang and Michael Heasman (August 2004). The food we eat is involved in a global politics of food and health in which questions of where and how food is produced, and how it has been produced, distributed, and processed, are important. Food Wars argues that two conflicting paradigms (one developing food around integrating the 'life sciences', the other around 'ecology') are battling to replace the dominant industrial-productionist model of the 20th century, both grappling to attract investment and to win the moral, social and political debate over the appropriate use of biology and food technology. For further information and to order the book visit <http://www.earthscan.co.uk/asp/bookdetails.asp?key=4083>

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY, BIOGENETIC RESOURCES AND TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE. By Graham Dutfield (August 2004). Biogenetic resources -- the critical biological and chemical materials that underpin so much of medicine, both modern and traditional, agriculture, and wider economic activity in so many fields -- are at the centre of heated debate regarding their use, development, and ownership, and the

issues of ethics and equity that impinge on all of these factors. This book is a comprehensive examination of the key issues. For further information and to order the book visit <http://www.earthscan.co.uk/asp/bookdetails.asp?key=4086>

EXPLORING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: GEOGRAPHICAL PERSPECTIVES. Edited by Martin Purvis and Alan Grainger (August 2004). Sustainable development has captured the attention of planners, business leaders, and politicians, and it is thus crucial that there be a clear definition of exactly what it means. This book provides a multifaceted introduction to key areas of study in this field, examining sustainability at the full range of spatial scales from the local to the global. Building on existing theory it demonstrates the unique contributions that thinking geographically about space, place and human-environment relationships can bring to the analysis of sustainable development. For further information and to order the book visit <http://www.earthscan.co.uk/asp/bookdetails.asp?key=4090>

FREE TRADE AND THE ENVIRONMENT: MEXICO, NAFTA, AND BEYOND. By Kevin P. Gallagher (September 2004). This book examines the impact economic integration has on the environment, focusing on Mexico, which transformed itself from one of the world's most closed economies to one of the most open. While some argue that free trade will raise incomes in developing countries, thus encouraging governments to protect the environment, others argue that free trade simply provides an incentive for heavily polluting firms to move to developing countries with lax environmental regulations. This volume shows that for Mexico neither position is correct, and concludes with a set of concrete recommendations for policies that couple environmental protection with economic integration. For further information and to order the book visit http://www.ase.tufts.edu/gdae/policy_research/FreeTradeEnvBook.htm

WORLD TRADE REPORT 2004: EXPLORING THE LINKAGE BETWEEN THE DOMESTIC POLICY ENVIRONMENT AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE. By the World Trade Organization (16 September 2004). This year's World Trade Report focuses on the effects of government policies upon international trade. It suggests that benefits from good trade policy may be attenuated or even undermined if governments pursue deficient policies in other areas of economic activity. For further information visit http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/pres04_e/pr385_e.htm

TRADE AND THE ENVIRONMENT: THEORY AND EVIDENCE. By Brian R. Copeland and M. Scott Taylor (2003). The literature on the relationship between free trade and the environment is often rich in rhetoric and low on results, but this book attempts to systematically investigate the subject using economic theory and empirical analysis. They examine the impact of international trade on local pollution levels, and use it to offer a uniquely integrated treatment of the links between economic growth, liberalised trade, and the environment. They find that for an average country, free trade is good for the environment. Results suggest that free trade will shift pollution-intensive goods production from poor countries with lax regulation to rich countries with tight regulation, thereby lowering world pollution. For further information and to purchase the book visit <http://pup.princeton.edu/titles/7605.html>

HOW TO IMPROVE CONSUMER INPUT IN SETTING INTERNATIONAL FOOD STANDARDS. By Steve Suppan (Consumers International and Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, August 2004). The Codex Alimentarius Commission is a global food standards setting body. It is not well known among most consumers, though Codex standards may be adopted as national food legislation designed to protect consumer health. This paper reviews current reform proposals in the Codex decision-making process and makes ten recommendations to Codex and its parent bodies, the World Health Organization and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, to enhance protection of consumer health and provide greater input from consumer organizations. To access the paper visit www.tradeobservatory.org

GLOBALIZATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT: LESSONS FROM THE AMERICAS. By the Working Group on Development and Environment in the Americas (July 2004). The Working Group, founded in 2004, brings together economic researchers from several countries in the Americas who have carried out empirical studies of the social and environmental impacts of economic liberalisation. This policy report calls into question prevailing political arguments that rapid integration into the world economy will automatically

lead to environmental improvement. The Working Group calls for increased attention to environmental safeguards and capacity-building in the liberalisation process. To access the report visit <http://ase.tufts.edu/gdae/WorkingGroup.htm>

AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES IN FREE TRADE AGREEMENTS. By Dale Colyer (2003). Agricultural trade negotiations in the WTO have environmental implications and the Doha Ministerial Declaration stated explicitly that environmental issues would play a key role in the upcoming round. This paper examines the role of environmental issues in international trade. To access the paper, visit http://cafri.usask.ca/estey/j_pdfs/colyer4-2.pdf

THE FRANKENFOOD MYTH: HOW PROTEST AND POLITICS THREATEN THE BIOTECH REVOLUTION. By Henry Miller and Gregory Conko (August 2004). This book traces the origins of genetic engineering, its applications, and "the backlash" against genetically modified (GM) crops from consumer groups and government agencies. The book suggests a variety of business and policy reforms to promote GM crops while ensuring that appropriate safeguards are in place. For further information and to order the book visit http://www.greenwood.com/books/BookDetail.asp?dept_id=1&sku=C7879

"The WTO and the environment: its past record is better than critics believe, but the future outlook is bleak". By Eric Neumayer in GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS 4 (3, 2004), pp 1-8. Abstract: Many have criticised the WTO's environmental record but it is argued that its jurisprudence has become increasingly environmentally friendly and many charges against the dispute settlement process are based on misunderstandings. WTO rules have, so far at least, not deterred any multilateral environmental agreements. The lack of ambitious environmental protection measures is not the fault of the WTO, but the responsibility of policy-makers from its member states. There is not enough support among member countries, particularly those from the developing world, to render the multilateral trade regime more environmentally friendly. The challenge is to green WTO rules in a way that is beneficial and therefore acceptable to developing countries.

"Trade and the environment: stuck in a political impasse at the WTO after the Doha and Cancun Ministerial Conferences". By Urs P. Thomas in GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS 4 (3, 2004), pp 9-21. This paper examines the political dynamics and the legal status of environmental concerns in WTO case law and in the recent WTO negotiations. It explains how the WTO's Dispute Settlement Body plays a crucial role in the determination of the profile of environmental concerns in a trade policy context.

"Trade and development: assessing the impact of trade liberalisation on sustainable development". By Clive George and Colin Kirkpatrick in JOURNAL OF WORLD TRADE 38 (3, 2004), pp 441-469. This paper describes a new methodology, sustainability impact assessment (SIA), for assessing the potential impact of trade policy reform on sustainable development. SIA uses an integrated approach that considers the economic, social and environmental impacts of policy, promotes assessment and adoption of measures to accompany liberalization to enhance positive impacts, and includes processes for consultation and involvement of stakeholders.

Fellowships

MARIE CURIE FELLOWSHIPS AT SATSU. The Science and Technology Studies Unit at the University of York is inviting applications from European research students (outside the UK) who wish to conduct part of their graduate research at the unit, all expenses paid. Fellowships are open to doctoral candidates who are researching the social dimensions of genetics and biotechnology. SATSU is a European Commission training site for "New Genetics: Integrating Science, Society & Policy". Fellowships are for periods between 3 and 12 months. For further information contact Dr Nik Brown, tel: (+44 1904) 434741; email: ngfb1@york.ac.uk; Internet: <http://www.york.ac.uk/org/satsu/MarieCurie/Sept2002Ad.prn.pdf>

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