



International Centre for Trade
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CONTENT

Intellectual Property	1
WIPO Committee Considers Traditional Knowledge, Folklore Provisions	
Fisheries	3
WTO Rules Group Discusses Next Steps To Curb Fisheries Subsidies	
Biotechnology	3
CEC Report On GM Maize In Mexico Sparks Controversy	
World Conservation Congress	5
IUCN Congress: Exploring Trade And Biodiversity Linkages	
In Brief	6
Events & Resources	8

Intellectual Property

WIPO COMMITTEE CONSIDERS TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE, FOLKLORE PROVISIONS

The World Intellectual Property Organisation's (WIPO) Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore (IGC) convened from 1-5 November in Geneva to consider a set of draft provisions outlining policy objectives and core principles for the protection of traditional knowledge (TK) and folklore against misappropriation and misuse. Delegates considered key questions such as the relation between TK and the patent system, the appropriate balance between national and international measures for the protection of TK and folklore, and the appropriate legal form of protection for TK and folklore.

Policy objectives, principles and options

The IGC examined the first draft of a document setting out the policy objectives and core principles for the protection of TK (WIPO/GRTKF/IC/7/5, available at <http://www.wipo.int/tk/en/>) and the first draft of the equivalent document (WIPO/GRTKF/IC/7/3) on folklore, pursuant to a decision made in the Committee's March meeting to launch work on concrete policy-making on TK and folklore, with outcomes expected before the end of 2005 (see *BRIDGES Trade BioRes*, 2 April 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/04-04-02/story1.htm>). In order to further the substantive work, the Committee agreed to invite written comments on the existing draft proposals before 25 February 2005. WIPO Deputy Director General Francis Gurry, responsible for these questions, said that that the working proposals "served as a springboard for a

concentrated, focused debate on the appropriate content of international protection of traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions," and that progress had been made, although "significant issues remain to be resolved by member states".

Delegates raised questions about the relationship of any specific TK or folklore protection to the existing intellectual property (IP) system. They also raised issues related to possible reforms of the IP system, such as strengthened patent disclosure requirements for TK and genetic resources. In particular, participants highlighted the need for a better understanding of the systems required to ensure that illegitimate patent rights are not granted. As well, the Committee discussed how to determine the beneficiaries of protection, the need to take account of the underlying rights of indigenous peoples, the appropriate legal form of protection, how a system that protects TK against misuse could cover past use retrospectively, and the relationship of protection with other legal systems and policy areas. Some delegations suggested the documents had a "pro-intellectual property rights bias" because, for example, they state that any measures to protect TK and folklore have to be consistent with current IP instruments. One delegation suggested this could have adverse implications for sustainable development given that such instruments "can be supportive of biopiracy".

The question of international versus national approaches was central to the meeting, especially given the WIPO General Assembly's instructions to the IGC in 2003 to "accelerate its work" and "focus on the international dimension" of genetic resources, TK and folklore. Delegates raised questions on how to set an appropriate boundary between international and national legal measures. Paragraph 9 in document 7/5 affirms that the draft is only a collection of suggestions, and that countries must decide which elements are best considered at the international level and which at the national level. Some member countries fear that the desire to create a harmonised, predictable international system could risk the creation of an inappropriate "one size fits all" approach to TK and folklore approaches that would ignore the diversity of meanings around the world of "traditional knowledge" and "protection".

No consensus was reached on the need to draft guidelines on contractual agreements on genetic resources, and some delegates suggested that a binding international instrument was needed. However, delegates will continue to consider two documents, on patent disclosure (WIPO/GRTKF/IC/7/10) and genetic resources guidelines for access and equitable benefit-sharing (WIPO/GRTKF/IC/7/9), for the next meeting.

Efforts to increase civil society participation continue...

The number of NGOs specially accredited to the IGC rose to more than 100 at this session, most of them representing indigenous traditional and local communities. The Committee spent a considerable amount of time discussing the involvement of indigenous communities. The IGC agreed on several procedural steps to enhance the involvement of these groups and to give representatives greater influence in the Committee's work. To address the need for funding to facilitate this enhanced participation, the IGC agreed to develop plans for a voluntary fund. The next meeting of the IGC will consider a full proposal on this question, and in the interim voluntary donors were urged to provide funding in support of community participation.

Little action on genetic resources

The IGC heard updates on the process adopted by the WIPO General Assembly to respond to the invitation by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to examine and address certain specific questions relating to disclosure requirements in intellectual property systems for genetic resources and associated TK (see PR/2004/397). The invitation was forwarded to the General Assembly following dialogue during the March IGC meeting, in which some members had suggested that the IGC was not the appropriate forum to consider the request. The EU announced that it would be submitting a proposal in this area, and Switzerland updated the Committee on its related proposal within the Patent Cooperation Treaty (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 28 November 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/03-11-28/story2.htm>), but no decision was reached by the IGC itself on the topic.

Additional Resources

Documents from the meeting are available at http://www.wipo.int/meetings/en/details.jsp?meeting_id=6183.

ICTSD reporting; "WIPO Member States Get To Grips With Protection Of Traditional Knowledge And Folklore," WIPO, 9 November 2004; "IGC Seventh Session Analysis of Selected Documents," CIEL, 25 October 2004.

Fisheries

WTO RULES GROUP DISCUSSES NEXT STEPS TO CURB FISHERIES SUBSIDIES

At an informal meeting of the WTO Negotiating Group on Rules on 3 November, WTO Members discussed a new proposal by Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, New Zealand, the Philippines and Peru on a comprehensive approach to disciplining fisheries subsidies (TN/RL/W/166, available at <http://docsonline.wto.org>). The proposal stirred some debate, with the EC and US generally supporting the comprehensive approach, while Japan, Korea and Chinese Taipei favoured a bottom-up approach that would allow countries to maintain all subsidies, with the exception of specifically prohibited ones.

The new proposal discusses the benefits of a comprehensive approach to the creation of new disciplines on fisheries subsidies over a more piecemeal bottom-up approach, as proposed by Japan at the last rules meeting (see BRIDGES Weekly, 6 October 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-10-06/story5.htm>). It notes that the Japanese approach, which would entail defining a set of subsidy programmes to be prohibited or permitted, would take Members into areas foreign to the WTO, such as defining what constitutes a "properly managed" fishery. Instead, the submission advocates a broad prohibition of fisheries subsidies, and notes commonalities between proposals submitted by different Members on such an approach.

Specifically, the submission spells out that all subsidies that benefit the fishing industry would be prohibited. Members would then negotiate exceptions to this rule. The benefits of this approach, according to the proponents, are its simplicity, enforceability, transparency and flexibility. In terms of next steps in the negotiating process, the submission suggests the identification of subsidies that would not be prohibited. The submission provides an indicative list in this regard, including expenditures related to: fisheries management; general infrastructure; social insurance programmes; and decommissioning. The submission also notes the need for special and differential treatment for developing countries.

In their reactions to the new proposal, Japan, Korea, and Chinese Taipei said they disagreed with it. Japan strongly favoured a bottom-up approach, and felt that negotiating a general prohibition would go beyond the mandate for the Doha Round. Korea felt it would undermine the subsidies agreement, and reminded Members that efforts at the OECD to negotiate such an agreement to discipline steel subsidies had ended in deadlock because participants were not able to agree on the exceptions.

The US, on the other hand, supported the transparency benefits it saw in the approach proposed in the submission, and felt it could help move the negotiations forward. The EC, Norway and Australia also supported the submission. Several developing countries highlighted the importance of including provisions on special and differential treatment, and India and Pakistan noted that "artisanal fishing" should not be covered by disciplines.

The next meeting of the Negotiating Group on Rules is scheduled for 14-17 December.

ICTSD reporting.

Biotechnology

CEC REPORT ON GM MAIZE IN MEXICO SPARKS CONTROVERSY

The North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) on 8 November released a controversial report entitled "Maize and Biodiversity: The Effects of Transgenic Maize in Mexico". The report examines likely effects of current and future uses of transgenic maize, as compared to non-transgenic maize production, on the genetic diversity of landraces and wild relatives of maize, agricultural and natural biodiversity, human health, and social values and cultural identity. The report was sharply criticised by the US government as "fundamentally flawed and unscientific", while civil society groups hailed the findings.

The CEC is an independent body established by Canada, Mexico and the US under the 1994 North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation (NAAEC), a side agreement under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The NAAEC seeks to foster conservation, protection and enhancement of the North American environment in the context of increasing trade and social links among the countries under NAFTA. The CEC undertook the study in response to concerns over potentially negative effects of transgenic varieties on land races in Mexico, following allegations that native varieties of corn grown in remote regions of Mexico had been contaminated by transgenic DNA (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 6 December 2001, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/01-12-06/story3.htm>).

CEC report recommends import measures for GM maize

The report, which was prepared independently and using an extensive public consultation process, concludes that gene flow between domestic varieties of maize and transgenic maize has been demonstrated "experimentally and descriptively" to occur despite the Mexican moratorium on planting transgenic maize -- most likely through grain imports from the US. Nonetheless, the report states that "there is no reason to expect that a transgene [i.e. a genetically modified organism (GMO)] would have any greater or less effect on the genetic diversity of landraces than other genes from similarly used modern cultivars," thus implying that from a scientific point of view, transgenic maize does not threaten genetic diversity more than other methods of modern agriculture such as hybridisation.

At the same time, the report stresses the cultural, symbolic and spiritual values of maize for most Mexicans (in particular the campesinos, or small-holder farmers). "That sense of harm is independent of its scientifically studied potential or actual impact upon human health, genetic diversity, and the environment," the report adds. Based on these findings, and taking into account the lack of public education on the means of contamination and the sentiments expressed in the consultations, the report recommends that the "Mexican government should strengthen the moratorium on commercial planting of transgenic maize by minimizing the import of living transgenic maize grain from countries that grow transgenic maize commercially", potentially by milling transgenic grain at the point of entry. Mexico currently imports some six million tons of maize from the US, of which approximately 30 percent is thought to be transgenic.

Moreover, the report recommends that the parties to the NAAEC "should adopt policies to reduce the risks identified to a level 'as low as is reasonably achievable'". This could be achieved by implementing a requirement that maize imported from the US be labelled as potentially containing GM maize or else be certified as GM-free, creating programmes to educate farmers to avoid planting seeds that may contain GM maize and implementing procedures to ensure involvement of smallholder farmers in the development of new Mexican biotechnology policies. Other recommendations include the improvement of regulatory agencies in Mexico and the encouragement of regulatory harmonisation on biosafety risks between the three North American countries, along with efforts to provide both in situ and ex situ conservation of the genetic diversity of maize.

US sharply criticises report...

In response to the report, the US government said they were "deeply disappointed," complaining that "no economic analysis of their recommendations was conducted, and that many of these recommendations are based solely on socio-cultural considerations" while "failing to consider the potential benefits of biotechnology". Furthermore, they argued that "implementing many of the report's recommendations would cause economic harm to farmers and consumers in all NAFTA countries and restrict international trade". For

example, the US suggested, "requiring US corn exports to Mexico to be milled at the border would increase the cost of US corn significantly, negatively affecting Mexico's livestock producers and consumers," while doing nothing to preserve maize biodiversity.

Canada, on the other hand, described the scientific findings as "balanced and consistent," but noted that "some of the report's recommendations do not appear to be supported by the scientific evidence presented in the key findings". The government said that in decisions on importing transgenic maize, the sovereign right of a country to set its own level of protection -- using its own scientific assessment and regulatory system -- should be respected.

Greenpeace, on the other hand, hailed the report's findings (which were leaked in mid-October). "It is highly significant that another trade body has now confirmed that there are unique risks to genetically engineered organisms," said Doreen Stabinsky, genetic engineering campaigner for Greenpeace International, in reference to the current WTO case on GMOs. "There is scientific backing for a precautionary approach on genetic engineering," she added.

Background

The report is the result of a 2002 petition under Article 13 of the NAAEC from 21 indigenous communities in Oaxaca, Mexico, that asked the CEC to prepare a report on the potential direct and indirect environmental impacts on biodiversity caused by the release of genetically engineered maize in Oaxaca. In 2001 and 2002, Mexican government officials found that maize in the area -- considered to be a centre of origin of maize globally -- was contaminated by transgenic ("genetically modified") traits (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 19 March 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/01-03-19/story1.htm>). The three countries have been quick to clarify that the report was prepared independently and does not constitute endorsement by the council of the CEC or the governments of Mexico, Canada or the US.

To access the report, visit <http://www.cec.org/maize>.

ICTSD reporting; "U.S. Calls NAFTA Environmental Report 'Flawed, Unscientific,'" USTR, 8 November 2004.

World Conservation Congress

IUCN CONGRESS: EXPLORING TRADE AND BIODIVERSITY LINKAGES

The urgent need for greater coherence and interaction between trade and environment policy-making processes emerged as one of the main calls for action throughout the workshop "International Trade - Friend or Foe of Biodiversity?". The workshop was organised as part of the IUCN - World Conservation Union - Congress in Bangkok, Thailand, from 17-25 November. Many participants felt that IUCN in particular -- with its extensive network of governments, civil society groups, academia and increasingly businesses -- could help foster interaction among different communities, providing the knowledge necessary to move the debate forward. Thereby, IUCN could help empower the conservation community to take advantage of the windows of opportunity provided within the WTO's Doha mandate, as well as within trade talks at the regional and bilateral levels, to ensure that the outcomes are supportive of conservation objectives.

Trade - friend or foe?

At the workshop, Meena Raman of Friends of the Earth pointed to a clash of fundamentally different paradigms underlying free trade and environmental protection. For trade to become a 'friend' of biodiversity, a fundamental reform of the economic order was required, she stressed. Ernst-Ulrich von Weizsäcker, member of the German parliament, questioned whether the trade and environment regimes were really mutually supportive as often assumed, describing trade as "essentially a foe" of biodiversity. At the same time, participants generally felt that trade and trade impacts were a reality and that the conservation

community urgently needed to get engaged to make it "friendlier". Participants noted that this would require a better understanding and articulation of the links between trade and biodiversity within the community in an effort to come up with creative thinking, actions and priorities on trade.

Building coherence

Many participants pointed to a lack of communication and interaction between the trade and environment communities in multilateral negotiations, potentially leading to incoherent results in the various forums, which did not take into account the full range of concerns and priorities. This was seen to be particularly true for debates on access and benefit-sharing related to genetic resources and traditional knowledge and the interface with intellectual property rights that is being discussed in a variety of multilateral forums as well as at regional, bilateral and national levels. Concerns were also expressed over perceived imbalances in the international governance system, with seemingly disproportionate power given to private over public interests. However, rather than condemning the WTO, the solution might be to strengthen other parts of the system, thereby providing an alternative, complementary venue for discussing trade and environment issues as part of a systemic approach to the debate.

Putting the debate into a broader context

Many participants stressed the need to place the trade and biodiversity debate into the broader context of sustainable development, taking into account the special concerns of the South. Participants also identified a need to look beyond the WTO, towards other engines of international trade and economic growth that stand in the way of sustainability. Among them, Simon Upton, Chair of the OECD Roundtable on Sustainable Development, raised unsustainable exploitation of natural resources in general -- not only for the purpose of trade but also for domestic use -- as one of the biggest foes of biodiversity. To address unsustainable consumption patterns, he suggested linking the growing number of consumers and producers that are seeking a positive output. Participants also highlighted the realities of illegal trade, which is becoming an increasingly significant component of international trade due to the high profit margins and the generally low risk level.

ICTSD reporting.

In Brief

WORLD BANK WARNS OF 'SILENT FORESTS'

A World Bank report released on 19 November -- entitled "Protecting Asia's Biodiversity: From Crouching Tigers to Hidden Langurs" -- calls attention to the environmental degradation resulting from East Asia's economic growth. The report concludes that uncontrolled logging and illegal wildlife markets create 'silent forests' completely devoid of wildlife. The report notes that while personal wealth and standards of living have risen in the region, so too has environmental degradation, resulting from increased demand for natural resources such as land for non-timber forest resources. As a result, "the region has lost 95 percent of its primary forests; individual countries have lost 70 to 90 percent of their original wilderness; and deforestation continues to accelerate the seemingly inexorable fragmentation and loss of terrestrial and aquatic habitats". A great proportion of the blame is placed on China, where illegal logging has often compensated for insufficient legal imports to meet China's increased demand for wood. In addition, following China's accession to the WTO, tariffs for most timber imports were reduced to zero, thus fuelling imports of wood and expanding exports of wood products such as paper and furniture. East Asian consumption patterns also contribute to environmental degradation, as the region consumes wildlife derivatives ranging from tiger bone medicines to shark fin cuisine and serves as a key supplier to the international wildlife market, both legal and illegal. The World Bank's senior biodiversity specialist for East Asia and Pacific, Tony Whitten, notes that "this illicit trade certainly empties forests, even if we conserve forests, there might not be wildlife in them if we don't put a handle on the illegal wildlife trade".

The report was released at the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Bangkok following the release last week of the World Bank East Asia Update that saluted the region's economic growth rate of seven percent and rapid recovery from the financial crisis of 1997-1998.

The report is available at <http://www.worldbank.org/biodiversity>

"Environment: Beware The 'Silent Forests', Warns World Bank," TERRAVIVA, 11 November 2004, "East Asia: Global Uncertainties Threaten to Mar 2005," WORLD BANK GROUP, 9 November 2004.

KYOTO CLOCK SET FOR FEBRUARY

On 18 November UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan received the Russian Federation's instrument of ratification of the Kyoto Protocol, thus triggering the 90 day countdown to the entry into force of the climate change agreement. "This is a historic step forward in the world's efforts to combat a truly global threat," said Annan. The Protocol will become legally binding on its 128 Parties on February 16, 2005, at which time 30 industrialised countries will be legally bound to reduce and limit their emissions of six greenhouse gases linked to global warming. The formal hand over of the accession papers on ratification follows a 27 October decision by the Russian Federal Council to ratify the Convention and the 4 November signing of the bill by Russian President Vladimir Putin (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 5 November 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/04-11-05/story4.htm>).

"UN Secretary-General receives Russia's Kyoto Protocol ratification," UN, 18 November 2004; "Russia Starts Kyoto Climate Clock Ticking," ENS, 18 November 2004.

COSTA RICA PROPOSES ACTION ON TROPICAL PRODUCTS AT WTO

On 17 November, Costa Rica, on behalf of Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru and Venezuela, presented a proposal at the WTO on tropical products and products providing an alternative to illicit narcotic crops. During the week of 15-19 November WTO Members convened in informal and formal meetings to continue talks on agriculture, the centrepiece of the ongoing Doha Round of trade negotiations. Among the many issues on the table was the Costa Rican proposal, which notes that full liberalisation of markets for tropical products would provide significant development benefits to countries, including in terms of job creation. The submission therefore proposes bringing down tariffs on these products, removing tariff peaks, abolishing quotas on the products, addressing non-tariff barriers and providing most-favoured nation (MFN) treatment. A number of developing countries responded positively to the proposal, and Peru, one of the co-sponsors, pointed out that it sought to show how special and differential (S&D) treatment could be operationalised in the Doha Round in a way that is positive and offensive, rather than defensive in providing developing countries with longer time periods for implementing agreements.

For full coverage of the 15-19 "agriculture week," see the upcoming issue of BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest on 24 November at <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/index.htm>

ICTSD reporting.

AARHUS CONVENTION: EXTENDING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TO GMOS

The UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (the Aarhus Convention) Working Group on Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) met from 18-20 October in Geneva, Switzerland, for a last-ditch attempt to resolve how to incorporate GMOs into the Convention through a legally binding amendment. When the Aarhus Convention was adopted in 2001, decisions on GMOs were expressly excluded from the binding requirements on public participation set out in Article 6 of the Convention, instead allowing Parties to apply Article 6 to decisions on whether to permit the deliberate release of GMOs into the environment "to the extent feasible and appropriate". Questions discussed during

the Working Group meeting included the scope of the Convention's applicability -- to areas such as deliberate release, placing on market and contained use -- and the flexibility accorded to members regarding the extent of the required participation. While countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia as well as environmental NGOs would like to see mandatory public participation on GMO-related decisions, the EU and industry associations favour a non-binding approach. The Working Group on GMOs forwarded four drafting options to the Working Group of the Parties to the Convention, which will discuss them at its next meeting on 1-4 February 2005. A concrete proposal is expected at the May 2005 Conference to the Parties to the Convention.

The UNECE is one of five regional commissions of the UN created by ECOSOC in 1947 to encourage greater economic cooperation among its member states. The Aarhus Convention seeks to strengthen the role of members of the public and environmental organisations in protecting and improving the environment for the benefit of future generations.

For more information see <http://www.unece.org/env/pp/gmo.htm>. For a more detailed account, see http://www.ciel.org/Tae/Aarhus_GMOs_Oct04.html.

ICTSD reporting; "Gaps in the Public Participation requirements of the EU Directive on GMOs as compared with the Aarhus Convention: A comparative analysis." EUROPEAN ECO-FORUM ANALYSIS, January 2004.

IMPLICATIONS OF BIOTECHNOLOGY FOR SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

A working paper by Kym Anderson and Lee Ann Jackson released by the World Bank Group in September concludes that there is a large potential for economic gains from using genetically modified (GM) crop technology in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). The gains stem mostly from nutritionally enhanced GM wheat, according to the report. The estimated benefits are diminished only slightly by the EU's current import regime for GM foods. A ban on GM crop imports in SSA countries, in deference to EU market demand for non-GM products, would result in losses to domestic consumers from protectionism that would exceed the small economic gain for domestic farmers that would gain access to the EU. The authors used the global economy-wide computable general equilibrium model known as GTAP for the study. Anderson and Jackson conclude that African countries need to assess whether they share the food safety and environmental concerns of Europeans regarding GM organisms. Otherwise, the authors note, they have much to gain from adopting GM crop varieties -- especially second generation ones, such as golden rice, which has been genetically engineered to contain a higher level of vitamin A.

The full paper is available at http://econ.worldbank.org/files/38750_wps3411.pdf

"Implications of GMF Tech for Sub-Saharan Africa," CROPBIOTECH UPDATE, 19 November 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.

IUCN-ICTSD Events

21 November: LINKING CONSERVATION PRACTICES AND TRADE POLICY. A Training Workshop for conservation practitioners, jointly organised by IUCN and ICTSD as part of the 3rd IUCN World Conservation Congress. The course will assist practitioners in understanding how trade policy affects

biodiversity-related activities on the ground. It aims to enable actors to implement and develop progressive ideas aimed at strengthening the mutual supportiveness between trade policy and biodiversity objectives. For further information contact Heike Baumüller; email: hbaumuller@ictsd.ch; Internet: http://www.ictsd.org/dlogue/2004-11-21/2004-11-21_agen.pdf.

Coming up in the next two weeks

17-25 November, Bangkok, Thailand: IUCN WORLD CONSERVATION CONGRESS: "PEOPLE AND NATURE, MAKING THE DIFFERENCE". Organised by the World Conservation Union (IUCN). The Congress will consist of a three-day World Conservation Forum and a four-day Members' Business Assembly. During the Forum, IUCN members, partners and interested stakeholders will debate options that safeguard the ecosystems upon which future prosperity depends. During the Assembly, IUCN members - governments and NGOs - will approve the 2005-2008 Programme Framework and Financial Plan, elect officers, consider resolutions and recommendations, and set the membership dues. For further information, contact: IUCN, tel: (+41 22) 999-0232; fax: (+41 22) 999-0020; email: ursula.hiltbrunner@iucn.org; Internet: <http://www.iucn.org>

22-26 November, Prague, Czech Republic: 16TH MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL. Delegates attending MOP-16 will continue their negotiations to phase out the use of various ozone-depleting substances such as hydrochlorofluorocarbons and methyl bromide. For further information contact the Ozone Secretariat, UNEP, tel: +254-2-62-3850; fax: +254-2-62-3601; email: ozoneinfo@unep.org; Internet: <http://www.unep.ch/ozone/index.asp>

24-26 November, Nairobi, Kenya: JOURNALISTS WORKSHOP ON CLIMATE CHANGE ISSUES. Organised by the United Nations Environment Program. For further information contact Mr. Arkadiy Levintanous, tel: + 254 20 623494; Fax: + 254 20 624300; email: Arkadiy.levintanus@unep.org; Internet: www.unep.org

25 November, London, England: EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BIOSAFETY PROTOCOL: KEY ISSUES AND CHALLENGES. Organised by the Sustainable Development Programme of Chatham House, this open discussion meeting will discuss a new Briefing Paper on the Cartagena Biosafety Protocol prepared to contribute to the debate in advance of the June 2005 Second Meeting of Parties. The Mid-Term Programme of Work adopted by the First Meeting of Parties to the Biosafety Protocol contains several important items aimed at ensuring effective implementation of the Protocol including the documentation requirements to accompany shipments of genetically modified crops (especially labelling thresholds); strengthening and coordinating capacity building initiatives; and the role of sanctions in the compliance mechanism. The meeting will focus on the key controversies, proposals, and political prospects in relation to labelling, capacity building, and non-compliance. For further information and to register contact Gemma Green, tel: +44 (0) 20 7957 5711; email: ggreen@chathamhouse.org.uk; Internet: <http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/pdf/research/sdp/M251104.doc>

25-27 November, Dhaka, Bangladesh: ASIA-PACIFIC PEOPLE'S CONVENTION ON FOOD SOVEREIGNTY. This conference, co-organised by the Asia Pacific Research Network, People's Food Sovereignty Network Asia-Pacific and the Policy Research for Development Alternative (UBINIG), hopes to provide analysis on current trends in food and agriculture, promote people's food sovereignty as alternative, to solve problems in food and agriculture, prepare people's intervention for the 6th WTO Ministerial Conference and other regional/bilateral agreements and to promote and strengthen local, national and popular movements and initiatives. For further information contact UBINIG, tel: (+880-2) 8111465, 8116420; fax: 8113065; email: nkrishi@bdmail.net; Internet: <http://www.peoplesfoodsovereignty.org/PFSCConv.htm>

25-28 November, Tunis, Tunisia: FOURTH FORUM AFRICA - LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN ON COMBATING DESERTIFICATION. The theme of this meeting organised by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification is sustainable agricultural farming systems. For further

information contact Mr. Hama-Arba Diallo, tel: 49-228-815-2800; fax: 49-228-815-2899; email: secretariat@unccd.int; Internet: <http://www.unccd.int/publicinfo/jointcalendar/>

29 November - 2 December, Beijing, China: UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR TRAINING PROGRAMME ON THE WTO AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. This 4-day training workshop is organized by the United Nations University - Institute of Advanced Studies (UNU-IAS), in collaboration with the World Trade Organization (WTO). The workshop will provide training on WTO and sustainable development issues for 40 university professors from North East Asia. Trainees will come from developing (China, Mongolia and Russia) and developed countries (Hong Kong, Taiwan, Macau, Japan and South Korea) in North East Asia. The workshop aims to provide participants with an understanding of the WTO's rules and regulations and their implications for sustainable development, including topics such as trade and environment, trade and health, etc... The program also aims to promote the integration of these topics into university curricula, in order to enhance developing countries' capacity to participate and negotiate in the multilateral trade system in a more meaningful way. For further information contact Dr. Joy Kim, UNU-IAS, tel: 81-45-221-2316; email: kim@ias.unu.edu.

29 November - 3 December, Dakar, Senegal: GLOBAL WASH FORUM 2004 - WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE FOR ALL - SOLUTIONS AND ACTIONS, LOCAL AND NATIONAL. Organised by the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC), the first Global WASH Forum aims to draw lessons on the success of water, sanitation and hygiene programmes, sector reforms and development partnerships in poverty eradication, and to strengthen regional and national partnership initiatives aimed at attaining the relevant goals of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the Millennium Development Goals. For further information contact Saholy Ravelojaona, tel: 41-22-917-8657; fax: 41-22-917-8084; email: wsscc@who.int; Internet: <http://www.wsscc.org/Dakar>

30 November - 2 December, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO COUNCIL ON 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: (41-22) 739-5458; email: enquiries@wto.org

30 November - 4 December, Penang, Malaysia: SEVENTH ASIAN FISHERIES FORUM. Organised by the Asian Fisheries Society, this Forum will include symposia, plenary and technical sessions to address the status of Asian fisheries. For further information contact the Forum Secretariat, tel: 60-4-653-3888 ex 3961; fax: 60-4-656-5125; email: usmpps@streamyx.com; Internet: <http://www.usm.my/7AFF2004>

Other Upcoming Events

6-9 December, Cairo, Egypt: WORLD CONFERENCE ON ENERGY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT - TECHNOLOGY ADVANCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES. Organised by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory and the Arab Academy for Science and Technology and Maritime Transport, this conference seeks to provide a forum for discussions between energy experts, technology users and manufacturers/suppliers, decision makers and planners, and interested business for the near-term deployment of sustainable energy technologies and concepts, particularly in relation to the Middle East. For further information contact Fuad Abulfotuh, Arab Academy, email: mceet@link.net; Internet: <http://www.aast.edu/mceet/confindex.htm>

14-16 December, Beirut, Lebanon: MEETING ON MODERN BIOTECHNOLOGY: TECHNICAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS IN THE NEAR EAST AND NORTH AFRICA REGION. This meeting is organised by the team on technology for Sustainable Development at the UN Economic & Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) in cooperation with FAO. It aims to provide policy and decision-makers in the region with the current state of knowledge on applications of biotechnology and genetic engineering, their challenges and opportunities, and a status of the institutional and enabling frameworks in the region. For further information contact Omar F. Bizri, tel: +961-1-978506; email: bizri@un.org; Internet: <http://www.escwa.org.lb/information/meetings/events/2004/14-16dec/main.html>

RESOURCES

TARGETING OF TRANSFERS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: REVIEW OF LESSONS AND EXPERIENCE. By David Coady, Margaret Grosh and John Hoddinott (World Bank and International Food Policy Research Institute). This joint book reviews the lessons learned from 122 antipoverty interventions in 47 transition and developing countries to quantify outcomes and their determinants and to inform the design and implementation of methods for targeting the beneficiaries of antipoverty programs. A comparative quantitative analysis of targeting outcomes is joined with a qualitative treatment of common targeting methods as well as a review of the benefits and costs of targeting in this book on the effective design of antipoverty interventions to reach the poor. For more information and to access the report, visit <http://www.ifpri.org/pubs/cp/targettransfers.htm#about>

INTERNATIONAL REVIEW FOR ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIES (IRES): SPECIAL ISSUE ON THE KYOTO PROTOCOL. The Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)' IRES journal this month features a survey of the varied effects of the Kyoto Protocol in a number of countries, regions and the world, to find out the impacts of the Kyoto Protocol to the society, its major issues, its barriers, and discusses how to incorporate their findings and perspectives into the future framework. Leading thinkers in the climate policy arena, such as Michael Grubb, Visiting Professor at Imperial College, and Michael Zammit Cutajar, Former UNFCCC Executive Secretary, give their views and assessments on the Kyoto Protocol, and its future implications, in this issue. For more information and to access the journal, visit <http://www.iges.or.jp/en/pub/ires/ires.html>

WATER GOVERNANCE IN WEST AFRICA: LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL ASPECTS. Edited by Madiodio Niasse, Alejandro Iza, Amidou Garane and Olli Varis (IUCN, 2004). This bilingual report by the IUCN Environmental Law Programme draws from the an IUCN workshop held in Burkina Faso in 2002. It addresses a wide range of global, regional and local issues relating to water resources governance in West Africa, and contributes information on meeting the challenges and targets set in the Millennium Declaration and the WSSD Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. For more information and to access the report visit http://www.iucn.org/themes/law/pdfdocuments/EPLP50FR_EN.pdf

A NET WITH HOLES: THE REGIONAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (Deep Sea Conservation Coalition, 2004). This document, by a coalition calling on the United Nations General Assembly to agree to a moratorium on bottom trawl fishing on the high seas, suggests that current attempts by regional fisheries management organisations to solve the problems posed to deep sea biodiversity and ecosystems by overfishing are fragmented, inconsistent and insufficient. For more information and to access the document, visit <http://www.savethehighseas.org/publicdocs/RFMO.pdf>

GENDER PERSPECTIVES ON THE CONVENTIONS ON BIODIVERSITY, CLIMATE CHANGE AND DESERTIFICATION (FAO, 2004). This paper provides a gender-sensitive perspective on the three Rio Conventions. It places the Conventions in their historical context and their administrative and financial framework, identifies the main gender issues relevant to the three conventions, and provides a comparative overview of the level of gender mainstreaming in each of the international instruments relating to the Rio Conventions. The essay concludes with a review of several key issues in convention implementation, with regards to gender. For more information and to access the paper visit http://www.fao.org/sd/dim_pe1/pe1_041002_en.htm

COMPREHENSIVE ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS: LINKIN ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE, SUSTAINABLE LAND USE, BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION AND WATER MANAGEMENT. By Ana Rojas. (BothENDS, 2004). This report examines the links between environmental policies and the development of comprehensive environmental projects, seeking to understand how climate change, sustainable land use, biodiversity conservation, and water management considerations can be linked to local actors' activities in order to help local communities develop comprehensive environmental projects. Special focus is given to the issue of climate change adaptation. To access the report visit http://www.bothends.org/service/Final_report_synergies.pdf

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