



International Centre for Trade
and Sustainable Development

BRIDGES **Trade BioRes**



19 March 2004

Volume 4, N°5

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

CONTENT

Biotechnology	1
Gm Maize Under Scrutiny In Europe And North America	
Intellectual Property Rights	3
TRIPs Council: Renewed Calls For Moving Ahead On Biodiversity	
Marine Resources	4
To Whale Or Not To Whale - New Arguments?	
In Brief	5
Events & Resources	7

Biotechnology

GM MAIZE UNDER SCRUTINY IN EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA

In an effort to respond to consumer concerns while not abandoning biotechnology, the UK government on 9 March approved the commercial growing of genetically modified (GM) corn, but placed stringent conditions on its release. The decision attracted criticism from both the supporters and opponents of biotechnology, leading civil society groups to call for the approval to be reversed while industry groups rejected the planned liability scheme.

In the meantime, the North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) released the first draft of the report "Maize and Biodiversity: The Effects of Transgenic Maize in Mexico" for public comments. The report examines issues related to gene flow from transgenic varieties of maize to Mexican land races and their wild relatives, and the conservation of biodiversity in this centre of origin.

UK conditionally approves GM maize

The UK decision followed a series of field trials, which showed that herbicide-tolerant GM maize did not have a harmful effect on biodiversity compared with conventional maize varieties. Farmers will be required to grow the crop under the same conditions as the trials and carry out scientific analyses in order to renew their planting rights. The monitoring will be necessary to assess changes in herbicide use given that the weed killer used during the trials is being phased out across Europe. Also, the GM crops will be subject to a liability scheme that would require the biotech companies or GM farmer to pay compensation to organic farmers in case of contamination due to malpractice. GM crops are unlikely to be grown before spring 2005, leaving some time for the government to set up the scheme.

The actual listing of the GM variety in the National Seed List will also need to be approved by Scotland and Wales. Scotland has already decided to back the approval, but will advise farmers not to grow the variety in an effort to keep Scotland GM-free. Wales, in contrast, insists that they would not agree to the listing unless a range of other measures are in place, including co-existence measures, voluntary GM-free zones and the finalisation of the liability scheme.

The approval comes despite widespread consumer opposition to the commercial growing of GM crops in the UK (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 3 October 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/03-10-03/story2.htm>). Several civil society groups have called on the government to reverse the decision. "Tony Blair must not ignore the threat GM poses to our food, farming and the environment," said Tony Juniper of Friends of the Earth. The government has so far left it open whether the location of the sites would be publicly released.

For their part, industry groups rejected the plan that biotech companies or GM farmers would be required to pay compensation. "We have not been asked to do anything of the kind anywhere else in the world, we do not intend to start in the UK," said Paul Rylott, head of BioScience UK at Bayer CropScience which owns the GM maize variety. Nevertheless, industry groups signalled their willingness to "talk to the government and see if some suitable arrangement can be made," according to Bernard Marantelli of the Agricultural Biotechnology Council.

GM maize up for vote in the EU

EU Agricultural ministers will have to decide by the end of April to take a decision on Syngenta's genetically modified Bt-11 corn, approved by the European Commission on 28 January (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 6 February 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/04-02-06/story3.htm>). EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy appeared confident that new GMOs would soon be authorised in the EU, thereby ending the continued de facto moratorium on approvals. "There will be new authorisations," Lamy said. "It has to be agreed by a majority of member nations, but in the end it's the Commission that decides."

At the WTO, the examination of the de facto moratorium, challenged by the US, Canada and Argentina, is now set to get underway with the establishment of the panel last week (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 5 March 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/04-03-05/inbrief.htm>). The US is also coming under increasing pressure from domestic farm groups to bring a WTO dispute against the EU's new labelling and traceability regulations, which will come into effect in April. The rules have come under attack at the WTO during the 17-18 March meeting of the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, when the US, Canada, Argentina and Australia reiterated their concerns that the regulations were too restrictive (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 27 June 2002, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/02-06-27/story3.htm>).

CEC seeks comments on GM maize study

The CEC study, which features ten chapters from a range of experts, was presented on 11 March at a Symposium held in Oaxaca, Mexico. The study was undertaken 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>). The study notes that the Mexican government's food aid program, distributing GM maize imported from the US, was the "most likely culprit for disseminating the transgenic maize" and that the de facto moratorium on commercial growing of the maize was insufficient to prevent its dissemination. "The lack of policy concerning the nature of imported maize acted as a missing link to the moratorium," the study notes.

The report also highlights the special importance of maize for Mexico's agricultural sector, culture and environment, all of which need to be taken into account when deciding on the risks and benefits of biotechnology in the country. The study notes that the maize per se -- provided it has no drastic effects -- should have no more impact on farmers' choice and rights than previous maize improvements, nor should

transgenic seeds have an impact on traditional practices of seed exchange among Mexican farmers. The report adds that transgenic maize is one more pressure on an already stressed sector, which is impacted by other socio-economic and political factors including poverty, migration, the effects of trade liberalisation and the economic threats resulting from subsidies paid to US farmers.

Background

The CEC was created by Canada, Mexico and the US under the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation, which complements the environmental provisions of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The CEC Secretariat is compiling the study to assess the main social, economic, agricultural, environmental, ethical and trade issues related to transgenic maize. The study is overseen by a trinational multidisciplinary advisory group of all stakeholders involved to define the scope and breadth of the work. The Commission is seeking public comments on the study until 12 April, which will be taken into account by the advisory group in its recommendations, to be submitted to the three governments.

For further information, including the draft study, see
<http://www.cec.org/news/details/index.cfm?varlan=english&ID=2596>.

"Green light for GM crop, but rift threatens planting," GUARDIAN, 10 March 2004; "Wales may still hold GM maize veto," WESTERN MAIL, 16 March 2004; "Ministers face GM showdown," SCOTSMAN, 15 March 2004; "EU's Lamy says Europe may ease access for GM foods," REUTERS, 17 March 2004.

Intellectual Property Rights

TRIPS COUNCIL: RENEWED CALLS FOR MOVING AHEAD ON BIODIVERSITY

At the 8 March meeting of the WTO Council for Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs), a group of developing countries renewed their efforts to speed up discussions on resolving potential conflicts between the TRIPs Agreement and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) by putting forward a checklist of issues for further discussion. While the EC, Norway and Switzerland signalled their willingness to proceed with the debate in the TRIPs Council on the basis of their proposal, the US and Japan opposed further discussions on the points raised in the checklist.

In their submission, the group of countries, including Bolivia, Brazil, Cuba, Ecuador, India, Peru, Thailand, Venezuela and Pakistan, highlight concerns that the TRIPs Agreement allows the granting of patents for inventions that use genetic material and associated knowledge without requiring compliance with the CBD provisions (IP/C/W/420, available at <http://docs.wto.org>). To address this gap and the resulting problem of bio-piracy, the countries put forward a checklist of three issues and related questions raised in previous proposals, namely disclosure of origin and evidence of prior informed consent and benefit-sharing related to genetic material and traditional knowledge (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 28 November 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/03-11-28/story2.htm>).

While the EC did not necessarily agree with all three points, such as evidence of prior informed consent, it was willing to pursue the discussions along those lines. It also stressed that in order to avoid duplication, the TRIPs Council's work on traditional knowledge should await the outcomes of the WIPO Intergovernmental Commission on Intellectual Property Rights and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore. Switzerland and Norway also signalled their openness to discussions. In contrast, the US opposed the checklist, arguing that there was no conflict between the TRIPs Agreement and the CBD and that the CBD should not be enforced through patent law. The US, along with Japan, called for the discussions to take place in WIPO. In response, the India-led group, supported by other developing countries, insisted that discussions should continue in the TRIPs Council pursuant to the mandate set out in para. 19 of the Doha Declaration.

Also at the meeting, the EC responded to an earlier submission by the African Group on the review of Article 27.3(b) (patentability of life forms) of the TRIPS Agreement (IP/C/W/404; see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 13 June 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/03-06-13/story1.htm>). In general, the EC supported the submission's suggested approach to identify and focus on areas where agreement could be reached. However, the EC noted that the African Group's call for a ban on patenting of life was likely to be opposed by countries with biotechnology industries. Moreover, the EC thought the African proposal to provide indefinite protection for TK was "rather unacceptable", given that so far only names (i.e. trademarks and geographical indications) received lifelong protection while patents were subject to a 20-year time limit.

The special session on the multilateral register for wines and spirits will be held on 7 April. The next TRIPS Council is currently scheduled for 15-17 June. The Chair will hold informal consultations on health and biodiversity in the meantime.

The WIPO Intergovernmental Committee is meeting from 15-19 March in Geneva. BRIDGES Trade BioRes will report on the outcomes of the meeting in the next issue.

Additional Resources

For an account of related discussions at the last meeting of the CBD in Kuala Lumpur (9-20 February), see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 20 February 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/04-02-20/story1.htm>.

For further details on discussions related to TRIPs & health at the Council meeting, see BRIDGES Weekly, 10 March 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-03-10/story1.htm>.

ICTSD reporting; "Developing Countries call for focus on bio-piracy in TRIPs/biodiversity talks," WTO REPORTER, 4 March 2004.

Marine Resources

TO WHALE OR NOT TO WHALE - NEW ARGUMENTS?

An international coalition of animal welfare organisations has released a new report on the animal welfare implications of modern whaling activities, attempting to inject the aspect of cruelty into a discussion, which has so far mainly concentrated on scientific arguments. Concurrently the German parliament hosted a public hearing aimed at clarifying scientific knowledge on whale management in the lead-up to the next meeting of the International Whaling Commission (IWC).

Animal welfare - a new argument in an old debate?

The recently released report "Troubled Waters" aims at clarifying whether commercial whaling operations are incompatible with animal welfare standards and should raise animal welfare concerns based on aspects of cruelty and unnecessary suffering. The report thus underlines the amount of animals that do not die instantaneously and inadequate out-dated killing methods, criticising the current IWC criteria for determining the exact time of death in cetaceans. The report singles out Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling as one of the gravest welfare concerns, which -- according to the report -- so far has been inadequately addressed by the Commission. The study also points to that no regulations -- similar to those existing for farm animals -- currently exist to protect the welfare of whales during the hunt. Peter Davies, Director General of the World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA) argues that "the cruelty behind whaling has become obscured in recent years by abstract arguments over population statistics. The fact is that, whether it is one whale or a thousand, whaling is simply wrong on cruelty grounds alone".

The report forms part of a new joint initiative by 140 non-governmental organisations to lobby the IWC to maintain a moratorium on commercial whaling from 1986 (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 13 June 2002, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/02-06-13/story2.htm>) and ban all other whaling. The initiative was launched in a

reaction to a Japanese campaign arguing for the sustainable use of whales through sustainable hunting. Several African countries are supporting the Japanese campaign, arguing that sustainable whaling is needed to protect other economically important marine resources.

In Germany the discussion on scientific knowledge continues....

On 10 March the German parliament Committee for Consumer Protection, Food and Agriculture held a public hearing aimed at determining whether Germany -- traditionally a strong anti-whaling nation -- should support the end of the commercial whaling moratorium in the IWC. Scientists from Germany, Norway and Iceland as well as representatives from non-governmental organisations were invited to the hearing to give their expert views on issues such as the level of whale stocks and extinction threats. The parliament described the outcomes of the meeting as "inconclusive" and maintained that scientists did not agree on whether sustainable whaling is a reasonable concept or not.

The arguments supporting the lifting of the commercial whaling moratorium were highlighted by Nordic experts, arguing that Minke whales for example were abundant and could be hunted in a sustainable manner without threatening whale stocks. An expert from Iceland also argued that the export of marine resources was of critical importance to Iceland's economy and that Iceland would continue to investigate the impact of whales on fish stocks and the marine environment. A representative from Greenpeace on the other hand pointed out that the "whale watching" industry has contributed more to Iceland's economy than whaling, which however was questioned by other experts. Finally, a representative from IUCN said that because discussions at the IWC had been entirely politicised, and because countries have shown no willingness to compromise, the IWC had not been able to develop a good control system for whaling based on sound scientific arguments.

The IWC will meet for its 56th Session in Sorrento, Italy from 13-22 July 2004.

Additional Resources

The report "Troubled Waters" is available at:

http://www.wspa.org.uk/data/080304_173035_TroubledWatersWhaleReport.pdf

"Suffering of Whales Prompts Global Anti-Whaling Campaign," ENS, 9 March 2004; "Sinnhaftigkeit eines nachhaltigen Walfangs bei Experten umstritten," DEUTSCHER BUNDESTAG, 15 March 2004; "Global anti-whaling campaign launched," WSPA, 9 March 2004.

In Brief

KYOTO PROTOCOL IN FORCE IN THE EU

On 11 March, a decision by the European Parliament entered into force, making the Kyoto Protocol legally binding in the EU. The decision spells out how greenhouse gas emissions are monitored and reported, and was the final piece of legislation needed to operationalise all aspects of the Kyoto Protocol in the EU. EU Environment Commissioner Margot Wallström said that "as a strong bloc of soon-to-be 25 countries, the European Union has a special responsibility to show global leadership and pave the way for other countries to follow suit". While the Protocol is legally binding in EU countries, it has yet to enter into force internationally. After the US pulled out in 2001, only Russia's ratification can make this happen. At the EU level, some countries and ministers have questioned the rationale of going it alone, especially as most EU countries already are off track in meeting their Kyoto targets. In related news, the Swedish National Trade Board recently released a study on the relationship between climate and trade rules. The report concluded that the "friendly coexistence" between the two sets of rules should be possible. In conclusion, the report called for action to promote the mutual supportiveness of the two regimes at the national and international levels.

To access the report, entitled "Climate And Trade Rules - Harmony Or Conflict?" visit http://www.kommers.se/binaries/attachments/2501_Climate_and_Trade_Rules.pdf

"Kyoto Protocol Becomes Binding For European Union," UNWIRE, 11 March 2004; "All Kyoto Protocol Rules Now Legally Binding in Europe," ENS, 11 March 2004.

SOUTH AFRICA DEBATES FUTURE BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY

On 17 March South Africa held its first formal workshop to discuss its future national biodiversity strategy. Developing a national strategy for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and equitable sharing of benefits derived from genetic resources forms part of South Africa's commitments under the Convention on Biological Diversity. The participatory process to develop the strategy was initiated in 1997 and further refined during the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002 and during the World Parks Congress in 2003. Five task teams have been working on key thematic areas, including conservation, sustainable use, access and benefit sharing, alien invasive species and economic integration and poverty alleviation. Crispian Olver, head of the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism said, "the biggest issue facing the sustainable use of our natural resources is the issue of equity." So far the task teams have come up with draft national objectives, priorities and strategies for the thematic areas aimed at, *inter alia*, ensuring that biodiversity conservation is an integral component of all sectors of the economy and that benefits from biodiversity and costs from maintaining the flow of environmental goods and services are equitably shared. The strategy will be further developed and refined in a consultative process involving local authorities and provinces. A draft Action Plan will be discussed at a national workshop in July 2004.

"South Africa's National Biodiversity Strategy Takes Shape," ENS, 18 March 2004.

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY THREATEN BIRD POPULATIONS

The "State of the World's Birds 2004" report released by BirdLife International concludes that agricultural expansion and unsustainable forestry are the biggest threat to bird diversity. According to BirdLife International, one in eight of the world's birds faces extinction -- a total of 1,211 species. Several reasons for the extinction crisis are cited by the organisation. Thus, the report finds that 50 percent of important bird areas in Africa are at risk due to agricultural expansion, while 64 percent of globally threatened birds are endangered by unsustainable forestry. The report also identifies alien invasive species as a major risk for birds in particular on islands. However, the report also highlights positive examples showing threatened species that have recovered following the improvement of management practices. Thus, about a quarter of threatened bird species have already gained from conservation projects, implemented by various stakeholders. The report concludes that timely action based on sound science can reverse the decline of bird diversity and the extinction threat. Birds have been categorised as an "indicator species"; thus the report not only informs about the state of bird species but also on the state of biodiversity in general. In conclusion the report calls for coordinated action to both improve the state of birds and to halt the loss of biodiversity.

The report is available at: <http://www.birdlife.net/action/science/species/sowb/index.html>

"World's birds under threat," NEWS24, 8 March 2004; "Third of threatened birds still without help," BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL, 8 March 2004.

IVORY TRADE AGAIN UNDER DISCUSSION AT CITES

At the initiative of Kenya, the Standing Committee of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES), convening in Geneva from 15-19 March, is discussing whether to revert a decision from 2002 allowing South Africa, Namibia and Botswana to make one-off sales of their ivory stock piles (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 21 November 2002, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/02-11-21/story1.htm>). Kenya, supported by eight other African countries, claims that the three countries have not enforced the required monitoring and registering systems nor the necessary domestic laws to protect

elephants. The Standing Committee will discuss whether CITES should withdraw the approval based on fears that the one-off trade might trigger increased poaching of elephants and increased illegal trade of ivory. The amount of illegally traded ivory was recently assessed in a new report by the International Fund for Animal Welfare, which showed that the UK is one of major sources of illegal ivory entering the US -- despite its sophisticated control system. Furthermore, authorities in China confiscated over 1,300 pounds illegal ivory in southern China. The CITES Standing Committee is currently also considering whether to impose sanctions on Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti and Nigeria, where CITES authorities have found widely available ivory products on local markets.

The report "Elephants on the High Street" is available at:
<http://www.ifaw.org/ifaw/general/default.aspx?oid=81921>

"Kenya Leads Campaign Against One-Time Ivory Sales," UNWIRE, 8 March 2004; Kenya Asks for Southern African Ivory Sale Freeze, REUTERS, 8 March 2004; "IFAW And 7 African States Opposed to Ivory Trade," ENN, 7 March 2004; "Illegal Ivory trade booming in Britain," REUTERS, 1 March 2004; "UN Body Considers Action Over Ivory Trade," REUTERS, 19 March 2004.

COFFEE PRODUCERS COMPLAIN ABOUT GERMAN STANDARDS AT WTO

A range of coffee producing developing countries raised their dissatisfaction with German health standards for ocratoxin A (a microtoxin conaminant) in soluble and roasted coffee at the most recent meeting of the WTO Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS), held from 17-18 March.. Colombia, Papua New Guinea, Nicaragua, Brazil, Cuba, India, Guatemala, Mexico, Ecuador, Bolivia, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Costa Rica and Peru claim that the regulations are too strict, not based on science and inconsistent given that standards for wine and beer are lower. Ever since the German regulation for ocratoxin A was announced in June 2003, Colombia has complained that the scientific evidence related to human health risk was not complete. The German coffee market accounts for 17 percent of Colombia's total coffee export, and enforcing the standard could result in a rejection of up to 6 percent of Colombian coffee. In response, the EC noted that Germany could adopt its own standards, due to the fact that there was no EC wide standard for the toxin. The EC added, however, that it was discussing the issue and was planning to issue EC wide maximum levels for coffee, wines and fruit juices at the end of 2004. The issue will also be discussed at the next Codex Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants meeting scheduled for 22 to 26 March in Rotterdam.

ICTSD reporting.

Events & Resources

EVENTS

For a more comprehensive list of events in trade and sustainable development, please refer to ICTSD's web calendar at <http://www.ictsd.org/html/calendar.htm>. Please bear in mind that dates and times of WTO meetings are often changed, and that the WTO does not always announce the important informal meetings of the different bodies.

Coming up in the next two weeks

19 March, Geneva, Switzerland: EXPLORING THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DIMENSIONS OF GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS. Jointly organised with Institut de Développement Durable et les Relations Internationales (IDDRI). The meeting will assess the potential of geographical indications to contribute towards environmental protection and sustainable development, including the protection of traditional knowledge. Speakers will include Bernard Roussel, French National Museum of Natural History, Antony Taubman, WIPO, and Christian López Silva, CONABIO. The event will be held in Room B of WIPO. For further information, contact: Marie Chamay, ICTSD, tel: (41 22) 9178-497; fax: 9178-093; email: mchamay@ictsd.ch; Internet: <http://www.iprsonline.org/index.htm>

22 March, Geneva, Switzerland: NATURAL DISASTERS: IS CLIMATE CHANGE RESPONSIBLE? Organised by the Geneva Environment Network (GEN) and the UN/ISDR. Over the past years there has been an increasing recognition of the inter-linkages between disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. The aim of the roundtable is to identify these interlinkages and stimulate discussion among panelists and participants from varying backgrounds. For further information, contact: the GEN Secretariat, Sofie Flensburg; tel: (+41-22) 917-8310; fax: 797-3464; email: sofie.flensburg@unep.ch; Internet: <http://www.environmenthouse.ch/events.html>

22, 25 and 26 March, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE (SPECIAL AND REGULAR SESSIONS).

23 March, Geneva, Switzerland: WTO COMMITTEE ON TECHNICAL BARRIERS TO TRADE. An updated list of forthcoming WTO meetings is posted at: http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/meets.pdf

23 March, Brussels, Belgium: FAIR TRADE - A CONTRIBUTION TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT? The conference is jointly organised by EuroCoop, NEWS and EFTA. The day-long conference will open a dialogue on the Fair Trade contribution to sustainable development, options for support and promotion of Fair Trade in Europe, and the particular role of EU trade and development policies in overcoming the challenges and obstacles facing Fair Trade. Speakers include representatives from Fair Trade organisations, the European Commission and the European Parliament, consumer organisations and others. For further information, contact: email: Lousted_Olsen@eurocoop.coop; fax: (+32-2) 231-0757; fax: 231-0757; Internet: <http://www.eurocoop.org/home/en/conferencefairtrade/invitation.asp>

24-26 March, Geneva, Switzerland: 3RD MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP ON GMOS. Organised by the United Nations Economic Commission on Europe, Environment and Human Settlements Division. This meeting will continue to discuss the application of the Aarhus Convention to GMOs. For further information, tel: (+41 22) 917-2468; fax: 917-0107; email: public.participation@unece.org; Internet: <http://www.unece.org/env/pp/calendar.htm>

27-28 March, Jeju, Republic of Korea: FIFTH GLOBAL CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM
This Forum precedes and will present its results to the upcoming Special Session of the UNEP Governing Council. As in the UNEPGC/GMEF meeting, the GCSF will focus on the thematic issue cluster for the 12th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, namely water, sanitation and human settlements. For further information, contact: Ms. Kim Choony, Korean Federation for Environmental Movement; tel: (+82-2) 735-7000; fax: 730-1240; email: kimchy@kfem.or.kr; Internet: http://www.unep.org/dpdl/cso/global_csf/issues.html

1-3 April, Kampala, Uganda: ASSURING FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY IN AFRICA BY 2020. Organised by the International Food Policy Research Institute and the government of Uganda, this all-Africa conference will bring together the traditional and new actors and stakeholders to deliberate on how to bring about change and action to assure food and nutrition security. For more information, contact: Ms. Rajul Pandya-Lorch; tel: (+1-202) 862-8185; fax: 467-4439; email: r.pandya-lorch@cgiar.org; Internet: <http://www.ifpri.org/2020africaconference/index.htm>

Other Forthcoming Events

15-17 April, New Haven, Connecticut, US: FOOD SOVEREIGNTY, CONSERVATION, AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS FOR SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE IN THE AMERICAS. Organised by Yale University. This workshop will explore cutting-edge research, on-the-ground practice, and social movements that bring together agriculture, biotechnology, conservation, development, and food and trade policy. Representative from academia, civil society and farmers from various countries will speak at the workshop. For further information, contact: The Yale Center of International and Area Studies; tel: (+1-203) 432-3422; fax: 432-5963 or 432-9381 email: agroecology@yale.edu; Internet: <http://www.yale.edu/las/food/index.html>

26 April, New York, US: MEETING OF ECOSOC AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS. The UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) together with the Bretton Woods Institutions, the World Trade Organisation and the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) will hold a special high-level meeting at the UN headquarters in New York. The meeting will focus on specific issues within the integrated approach of the Monterrey Consensus. For more information, contact: email: esa@un.org; Internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/coordination/ecosoc/>

8-10 June, Georgia, US: G-8 SEA ISLAND SUMMIT. The government of the US will host the 30th G8 Summit, The G8 brings together Heads of States from Canada, Germany, Japan, France, Italy, Russia, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the European Union, to discuss international issues related to economy, security and policy. For further information, contact: the 2004 G8 Summit Planning Organisation; tel: (1-202) 647-4804; fax: 647-3079; email: info@G8USA.gov; Internet: <http://www.g8usa.gov>

5-6 July, London, England: CONSUMERS, FARMERS AND FOOD: RECONCILING THE FUTURE. Organised by The Royal Institute of International Affairs in partnership with NewScientist magazine. Consumers' concerns about animal welfare, food safety, GMOs, biodiversity and the environment have been central to the debate surrounding food production in Europe. The event will provide a forum to debate urgent issues related to food safety by all interested parties: consumer groups, food companies, NGOs, supermarket chains, governments and farmers' representatives. For further information, contact: Dino Ribeiro, tel: (+44-20) 7957-5753; email: dribeiro@riia.org; Internet: <http://www.riia.org/index.php?id=5&cid=55>

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 Marianne Jacobsen, email: mjacobsen@ictsd.ch

ICTSD TRADE & ENVIRONMENT WEB PORTAL. On 15 March, ICTSD launched trade-environment.org, a web portal at the crossroads of international trade and the environment. The site contains a wide range of key resources related to trade, environment and sustainable development. It includes the latest news on T&E, a calendar of T&E events, links to institutions working on T&E and relevant legal texts. The site is designed to facilitate access to a wide range of knowledge on trade and environment, thereby providing trade policy-makers and influencers with the means to effectively participate in relevant policy debates. To access the web portal, visit: <http://www.trade-environment.org>

AGRICULTURE AT THE WTO - 'FRAMEWORK PHASE' UPDATE REPORT. By ICTSD (March 2004). The aim of this report is to provide stakeholders in agriculture trade and sustainable development with a concise and user-friendly description and analysis of the current developments in the WTO agriculture negotiating process. The report also provides a future outlook on emerging and pressing issues that need to be resolved in order to break the deadlock in the agriculture negotiations. To access the report, visit: <http://www.ictsd.org/issarea/atsd/products/docs/AgricultureNegotiations10.pdf>

COFFEE MARKETS: NEW PARADIGMS IN GLOBAL SUPPLY & DEMAND by B. Lewin, D. Giovannucci, P. Varangis, produced by the World Bank (2004). The report highlights the linkages between the decline of world coffee prices and agricultural subsidies in developed countries, in particular in the US. The report furthermore argues that coffee farmers should find new ways to diversify their production in order to gain improved market access as well as organise themselves with the support of international organisations and donors. The report is available at: Internet: <http://lnweb18.worldbank.org/ESSD/ardext.nsf/11ByDocName/PublicationsCoffeeMarketsNewParadigmsinGlobalSupplyandDemand>

"Nonstate Influence in the International Whaling Commission, 1970-1990". By Tora Skodvin and Steinar Andresen in GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS 3 (4, 2003) pp. 61-86. One main objective of this article is to develop a multi-level approach that allows analysis of nonstate influence channelled via the

domestic decision making level. The point of departure for the analysis is the relationship between the scientific community and the environmental and animal rights movement. The analysis shows that examining the role of the domestic channel is integral to understanding nonstate influence on international policy-making, and particularly how some nonstate actors acquire influence at the expense of others.

"The Persistence of the Kyoto Protocol: Why Other Annex I Countries Move On Without the United States". By Jon Hovi Tora Skodvin and Steinar Andresen in *GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS* 3 (4, 2003) pp. 1-23. This paper considers why many countries continue to pursue the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol despite the withdrawal of the US. In conclusion the paper states two explanations could relate to that EU climate institutions have generated a momentum that has made a change of course difficult. And that, Kyotos persistence may be linked to the European Unions desire to stand forth as an international leader in the field of climate politics.

"Climate change and sustainable development: expanding the options". By R. Swart, J. Robinson and S. Cohen in *CLIMATE POLICY* 3 (Sup. 1, 2004). Climate change and sustainable development have been addressed in largely separate circles in both research and policy. Nevertheless, there are strong linkages between the two in both realms. This paper focuses on the scientific linkages and discusses the opportunities they provide for integrated policy development, and the necessity to consider the risk of trade-offs. The arguments are supported by a range of examples for various economic sectors in the areas of both mitigation and adaptation, largely drawn from IPCC's Third Assessment Report.

BIOTECHNOLOGY AND GENETIC RESOURCE POLICIES: WHAT IS A GENE BANK WORTH? Edited by M. Smale and B. Koo (IFPRI, 2004). The volume contains a series of IFPRI briefs on biotechnology and genetic resource policies focussing on ex situ genebanks and related issues. The briefs present syntheses and synopses of research conducted by a team from IFPRI's Environment and Production Technology Division and several collaborators. The series is available at: Internet: <http://www.ifpri.org/pubs/rag/br1002.htm>

THE IMPACT OF GLOBALISATION ON THE AGRICULTURAL SECTORS OF EAST AND CENTRAL AFRICAN COUNTRIES. By P. Robbins, B. Ferris. Produced by International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA, 2003). This paper looks at the process and impact of globalisation on agriculture. It attempts to set these issues in a historical context, argues that East and Central African countries have not appreciated the scale and implications of the changes brought about by globalisation and that, without urgent action on their part, they may seriously weaken their economies in the years ahead. The paper is available at, Internet: http://www.iita.org/info/impact_globalization.pdf

FOOD POLICY OLD AND NEW. By S. Maxwell and R. Slater (ODI, 2003). This briefing paper looks at new issues emerging in the food policy arena, including the impacts of urbanisation, industrialisation and globalisation. Some of main concerns and challenges addressed include: imperfect competition, externalities: health and environmental costs, income distribution effects of changes in the food system, policy making and regulation are problematic, particularly in relation to new topics like biotechnology and to other issues that cut across national borders. The paper is available at, Internet: http://www.odi.org.uk/publications/briefing/bp_nov03.pdf

BIOTECH AND WORLD HUNGER. By A. Fish & L. Rudenko. Commissioned by The Pew Initiative on Food and Biotechnology, March 2004. This paper gives an overview of the debate on genetically modified (GM) crops and their potential to improve food security in developing countries. The paper argues that poverty and the uneven distribution of food are not, as some argue, the fundamental sources of global hunger. Solution to world hunger would have to address broad systemic problems such as weak governmental institutions and civil strife. The paper furthermore states that agricultural biotechnology "may" play an important role in addressing hunger. The paper is available at, Internet: <http://pewagbiotech.org/resources/issuebriefs/feedtheworld.pdf>

US - EU FOOD AND AGRICULTURE COMPARISONS. By the US Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service, February 2004. This report provides information and analysis on a wide range of topics relating to agriculture in the United States and European Union (EU), including comparisons of farm

structure, production, agricultural productivity, risk management, environmental, commodity policy, trade, and food consumption, as well as implications of EU enlargement for bilateral relations. The report is available at, Internet: <http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/WRS0404/>

US DUMPING ON WORLD AGRICULTURAL MARKETS. By the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP, February 2004). This issue of the IATP dumping report concentrates on dumping from US-based multinational corporations in February 2004. Dumping is one of the most damaging of all current distortions in world trade practices. Developing country agriculture, vital for food security, rural livelihoods, poverty reduction and trade, is severely harmed by the competition from major commodities sold below cost of production prices in world markets. The report is available at Internet: http://www.tradeobservatory.org/library/uploadedfiles/US_Dumping_on_World_Agricultural_Markets_February.pdf

"Inserting GM products into the food chain: the market and welfare effects of different labeling and regulatory regimes". By M. Fulton and K. Giannakas in the AMERICAN JOURNAL OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS 86 (1, 2004). The purpose of this article is to examine the system-wide effects of the introduction of genetically modified products with and without labelling. For each regime, the decisions and welfare of consumers, producers, and life science companies are examined. The article explicitly incorporates the consumer response to the introduction of GM technology and considers different market structures of the life science sector.

TROPICAL WOOD - Guide for buyers, advertisers, salespersons and customers. This guide produced by WWF (2004) provides practical information on FSC certifications assists all those who have to make decisions regarding tropical wood products, such as garden furniture. Amongst others it also includes guidelines for recognising potentially endangered tree species. The guide is available at, Internet: <http://www.panda.org/downloads/forests/fscguideeng.pdf>

Electronic Resource

DATABASE: BIOTECH SAFETY STOREHOUSE. This database provided by the US government lists genetically modified (GM) crops approved in the US. The database can be searched by crop, type of modification, or developer. Furthermore, the page includes US government health and environmental risk assessments. The website is available at, Internet: <http://usbiotechreg.nbi.gov/>

Vacancies

Marie Curie Training Site Fellowships. The Fondazione Eni Enrico Mattei invites applications from doctoral students who wish to develop their studies on environmental policies, modelling and decision-making, focusing on water resources management. Fellows will be involved in the ENVIRON Project and will work within FEEM Research Programme on Natural Resources Management. FEEM is a non-profit, non-partisan research institution actively involved in the field of sustainable development. For more detailed information on the research activities and projects of FEEM please visit the FEEM web site: <http://www.feem.it/Feem/Pub/Programmes/Natural+Resources+Management/Activities/> For additional information, contact: Riccardo Tarquini, email: riccardo.tarquini@feem.it

BRIDGES Trade BioRes© is published by the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD), <http://www.ictsd.org>, in collaboration with IUCN - World Conservation Union, <http://www.iucn.org>, and IUCN's Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy, CEESP, <http://www.iucn.org/themes/ceesp/index.html>. This edition of BRIDGES Trade BioRes was edited by Marianne Jacobsen, mjacobsen@ictsd.ch. Contributors to this issue were Heike Baumüller, Marianne Jacobsen and Evelyn Kislig. The Managing Editor is Heike Baumüller and The Director is Ricardo Meléndez-Ortiz, rmelendez@ictsd.ch. ICTSD is an independent, not-for-profit organisation based at: 13, ch. des Anémones, 1219 Geneva, Switzerland, tel: (41-22) 917-8492; fax: 917-8093. Excerpts from BRIDGES Trade BioRes may be used in other publications with appropriate citation. Comments and suggestions are welcomed and should be directed to the Editors or the Director. BRIDGES Trade BioRes is made possible in 2004 through the generous support of the Swiss Agency for the Environment, Forests and Landscape (BUWAL). It also benefits from ICTSD's core funders: the Governments of Finland, Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden; Christian Aid (UK), the Rockefeller Foundation, MISEREOR, NOVIB (NL), Oxfam (UK) and the Swiss Coalition of Development Organisations (Switzerland). ISSN 1682-0843

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

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