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LEAD STORIES

SMALL ECONOMIES SEEK ATTENTION, SPECIAL TREATMENT

The Committee on Trade and Development (CTD) held the eighth Dedicated Session on Small Economies on 3 November as part of the 1-5 November WTO Geneva Week for Non-Resident Members. At the meeting, Members agreed that the work on small economies -- characterised by the dual constraints of small economic size and vulnerability -- would be included in the General Council's report to the Sixth Ministerial Conference, scheduled for December 2005 in Hong Kong. Delegates reviewed work to date and exchanged views on the July Framework agreement on the way forward in the Doha Round (see BRIDGES Weekly, 3 August 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-08-03/story1.htm>). They also discussed the Work Programme for Small Economies, considering the constraints of the mandate from Paragraph 35 of the Doha Declaration, which states, "The objective of this work is to frame responses to the trade-related issues identified for the fuller integration of small, vulnerable economies into the multilateral trading system, and not to create a sub-category of WTO Members".

"The time is now"

On behalf of a group of small economies, Barbados interpreted Paragraph 1(h) of the July Package (see WT/L/579, available at <http://docsonline.wto.org>) as setting the timeframe of the Hong Kong Ministerial Conference for the submission by the General Council of recommendations for action. Barbados noted that the first two components of the group's mandate, namely, the identification of issues or problems constraining the trade of small economies and the framing of responses or solutions to these constraints, have been completed. Barbados further said that the third component, the formulation of recommendations for action to address trade-related issues pertaining to small, vulnerable economies, was outstanding and must be completed before Hong Kong. The Solomon Islands' permanent representative to the WTO, Robert Sisilo, said, "the time is now" for the concerns of small island countries to be meaningfully addressed, while Saint Lucia and the US stressed that there should be no duplication of

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work, especially in regard to special and differential treatment. They said that therefore only the non-negotiation issues and problems affecting small economies should be addressed by the dedicated session.

Paraguay expressed its support for the start of the trade facilitation negotiations (see related article, this issue), noting that these negotiations were crucial for landlocked countries. It also expressed concerns regarding a decision that certain aspects of issues from past Dedicated Sessions would be relegated to other negotiating bodies, such as the groups on agriculture and non-agricultural market access, saying that it preferred to see these issues dealt with in the Dedicated Session.

Background

While the meeting focused mainly on procedural issues and the need to create recommendations for action, discussions were informed by earlier proposals offered by two groups of small economies in previous meetings (see BRIDGES Weekly, 13 May 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-05-13/wtoinbrief.htm#1>). The first group -- including Barbados, Fiji, Mauritius, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Trinidad and Tobago -- in their original 2002 communication (WT/COMTD/SE/W/3) made a number of proposals for a work programme for small economies, and in their May 2004 communication (WT/COMTD/SE/W/11), the group focused on the need to maintain trade and investment preferences and to ensure market access. A second group of countries, namely, Bolivia, Mongolia and Paraguay, have identified themselves as "landlocked developing countries" that are also small economies and presented a communication (WT/COMTD/SE/W/10) in April of this year.

Proposals have centred upon a range of issues including market access for small economies, the flexibilities necessary for small economies to participate effectively in and secure benefits from multilateral trade negotiations and measures to address the constraints, disadvantages and vulnerabilities of small economies.

The sub-category question

Underlying the discussion in the CTD dedicated session is the question of the status of small economies within WTO rules. The Doha Declaration expressly states that a sub-category is not to be created of small economies, but several WTO Members who are landlocked, small islands, and/or geographically isolated have argued that they have particular problems such as distance and transportation requirements and vulnerability that need to be specifically addressed by WTO rules. Trade sources suggest that some developed country

Members, including the EC, have indicated their interest in addressing the particular problems of small developing economies, but realise that under current WTO rules this sub-category does not exist. At the meeting, the Chair suggested that the Doha mandate is "conflictual" in that it forbids the creation of a new sub-category while calling for action on the needs of small economies. According to some observers, this has led to difficulties with the Quad countries (Canada, the EC, Japan and the US), who have pointed to the difficulties in specifying who would benefit from provisions for small economies without engaging in constructive dialogue on how to define and reach the group of countries who need such provisions. One option small economies hope to use is a "characteristic-specific" approach to link the needs of small economies with action-oriented provisions in the WTO and thereby surmount the sub-category issue. The issue of differentiation amongst developing countries is a contentious issue within the CTD, with LDCs currently the only group granted special treatment beyond that provided to developing countries as a whole.

ICTSD Reporting; "WTO urged to help small island countries," SOLOMON ISLANDS BROADCASTING CORPORATION, 5 November 2004.

RULES GROUP DISCUSSES NEXT STEPS TO CURB FISHERIES SUBSIDIES

At an informal meeting of the WTO Negotiating Group on Rules on 3 November, Members discussed a new proposal by Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, New Zealand, the Philippines and Peru on a comprehensive approach to disciplining fisheries subsidies. 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 all subsidies with the exception of specifically prohibited ones.

Chile presents framework for negotiations

Chile, speaking for the group that made the latest proposal on disciplining fisheries subsidies, presented the ideas behind it (TN/RL/W/166, available at <http://docsonline.wto.org>). The 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 broader prohibition of fisheries subsidies, and notes commonalities between proposals submitted by different Members for such an approach.

Specifically, the submission spells out an approach that would be based on a prohibition on all subsidies that benefit the fishing industry. 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 notes as the next logical step 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.

Japan, Korea, Chinese Taipei speak out against the submission

In their reactions to the new proposal, Japan, Korea, and Chinese Taipei said they disagreed with the approach. Japan strongly favoured the 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 not that "artisanal fishing" should not be covered by disciplines.

UN report highlights threats to artisanal fisheries

In related news, a recent report by the UN Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights notes that the right to food of poor fishing communities worldwide is being jeopardised. Among the reasons listed are subsidies to the fishing industry, greater privatisation and export orientation of the fishing industry. These factors are leading to the loss of livelihoods and access to food of poor fishing communities, according to the report. Developed country subsidies to their fishing fleets and fishing industry -- estimated to be at least US\$15 billion

annually -- lead them to demand greater access rights in developing countries, resulting in control over former traditional fishing grounds. Also, the report suggests that inequities in bilateral fishing negotiations can lead to the neglect of equity concerns and potential impacts on poor fishing communities, artisanal fishers and small-scale fisheries. Poorer countries also have less capacity to monitor their fisheries, and government budgets in this area may be constrained by "globalised economic policy".

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

To access the Interim report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the right to food visit <http://ods-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N04/525/17/PDF/N0452517.pdf?OpenElement>

ICTSD reporting; "Rights And Resources Of Artisanal Fishing Communities Should Be Respected, Says UN Report," SUBLEGALS, Vol. 10, No. 13, 29 October 2004; "The Right To Food," UN, Interim Report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights, September 2004; "Sri Lanka: Deep Sea Fishing Policy Threatens The Livelihood Of One Million Fisher Folk," FIAN, 9 October 2004.

DSU UPDATE: GMOS, BEEF HORMONES

GMO dispute deadline extended again

In a statement dated 2 November, the WTO panel hearing the challenge by the US, Argentina and Canada against the EC's de facto moratorium on the approval of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) postponed its issuance of the final report from March 2005 until June 2005. According to the panel, the delay -- the third since the inception of the dispute -- is due to the time-consuming process of identifying and selecting experts, and, more importantly, a joint request by all four parties that they be granted additional time to prepare further submissions to the panel. This development comes against the backdrop of recent reports that the EC will be persuading five member states, targets of the GMO case, to lift their bans on four GM varieties of corn and rape seeds meant for cultivation, import and processing, which have been approved by the EC. Furthermore, on 26 October, the EC approved Monsanto's 'Roundup Ready' maize for human consumption and market sales, leading critics to point out that this action was motivated by pressure from the case (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 5 November 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/04-11-05/story3.htm>).

The panel announced the first delay in the case on 26 August, when it indicated that it would seek expert advice on technical and scientific issues raised in the dispute. Shortly before this, the panel had postponed the timing of its final report from September this year until March 2005 (see BRIDGES Weekly, 1 September 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-09-01/wtoinbrief.htm>). Trade observers had predicted that the scientific hearings could result in further delays, mirroring an earlier case against the EC involving a ban on imports of beef raised with growth hormones (see below).

EC challenges US on beef hormones, tax law amendment

In a press release issued on 8 November, the EC announced it had initiated a WTO dispute against the US and Canada, challenging their continued imposition of sanctions against EC exports in retaliation against an EC ban on beef containing growth-promoting hormones found to be WTO-inconsistent in a dispute dating from 1997. The crux of the EC's complaint was that these sanctions, in place since 1999, were unjustified because the EC had effectively complied with the WTO ruling. In the words of EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy, "there is no reason why European companies should continue to be targeted by sanctions when they export to Canada and the US. The EC ban on certain growth promoting hormones is now in full respect of our international obligations. We have put in place revised legislation based on a thorough and independent scientific risk assessment."

A WTO panel -- and subsequently the Appellate Body -- ruled in 1997 and 1998 respectively that the EC ban on beef hormones was not based on a proper scientific risk assessment and that the supporting scientific evidence was insufficient. Since the ruling, the EC has sought to prove that it has fixed those errors by basing a new directive that entered into force in October 2003 on a scientific risk assessment (see BRIDGES Weekly, 13 November 2003, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/03-11-13/story3.htm>).

According to the EC's press release, apart from refusing to lift the sanctions, Canada and the US had also refused to avail themselves of a special WTO dispute settlement process meant to resolve compliance problems. Under WTO dispute settlement rules, both countries could have requested a WTO panel to examine the compliance measures taken by the EC. On this issue, Lamy noted: "if Canada and the US disagree with the EC measures, they should suspend their sanctions and refer their apparent disagreement to the WTO as the EC has done recently in the FSC case".

In the Foreign Sales Corporations (FSC) case initiated by the EC, WTO panels had ruled that the US maintained illegal tax exemptions for certain US corporations located abroad. On 22 October, the US President adopted a new law that repealed the former WTO-inconsistent FSC legislation (see BRIDGES Weekly, 27 October 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-10-27/WTOinbrief.htm#2>). As highlighted by the EC in its press release, the EC has now initiated compliance proceedings in the WTO regarding aspects of the new FSC law that it still has concerns with and "has indicated its readiness to suspend sanctions while dispute settlement proceedings are ongoing".

While compliance proceedings -- such as those initiated by the EC in the FSC case -- normally require the panel to issue a ruling within 90 days, the timeframe for regular panels to deliver their decisions, such as in the beef hormones dispute, is six to nine months. Trade observers have noted that taking into account the probability of a subsequent appeal process, the EC's new beef hormones challenge could drag on beyond 2006.

The EC's press release, IP/04/1345, is available at: <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/04/1345&format=HTML&aged=0&language=en&guiLanguage=en>

ICTSD reporting; "EU to WTO: U.S., Canada Sanctions Illegal", Reuters.com, 8 November 2004; "EU Challenges U.S., Canada Retaliation for Beef Ban", Bloomberg, 8 November 2004; "EU to Seek WTO Ruling Requiring U.S. To Lift Sanctions in Beef-Hormone Dispute", WTO Reporter, 9 November 2004.

IN BRIEF

EU PROPOSES RULES ON GENERIC DRUGS FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

On 29 October, the European Commission proposed new regulations to implement the WTO decision of 30 August 2003 allowing manufacturers of generic pharmaceuticals to produce patented medicines for export to developing countries to combat the spread of diseases such as HIV-AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis. The regulations, which must be approved by the bloc's 25 national governments and by the European Parliament, would enable generic medicine companies to apply to national authorities for the grant of a compulsory license from a patent holder who has

exclusive rights over the manufacture and sale of the products concerned, thus enabling essential medicines to be exported to developing countries in need. "The WTO decision and the new regulation will help save lives by helping countries in need to acquire affordable medicines without undermining the patent system which is one of the main incentives for the research and development of new medicines," said Internal Market Commissioner Frits Bolkestein. Most national laws in Europe at present do not allow compulsory licences for export because until recently the WTO TRIPS Agreement provided for compulsory licences only "predominantly for the supply of the domestic market". The Doha Declaration on trade and health adopted in November 2001 agreed to address the difficulties raised by this restriction, and in their 30 August 2003 decision WTO Members agreed on a waiver giving these countries access to generics by allowing compulsory licensing for export. Canada was the first country to pass a law implementing the WTO decision in May of this year (see BRIDGES Weekly, 13 October 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-10-13/story4.htm>).

"Access to essential medicines," EC, 29 October 2004; "EC Offers Rules to Allow Generic Versions of Patented Drugs to Battle Disease in LDCs," WTO REPORTER, 2 November 2004.

REPORT ON GM MAIZE IN MEXICO MEETS CONTROVERSY

On 8 October, the North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) released a report entitled "Maize and Biodiversity: The Effects of Transgenic Maize in Mexico". The report suggests that genetically modified maize imports into Mexico should be restricted so as to preserve genetic diversity given the "significant cultural, symbolic and spiritual value" maize has for most Mexicans. While the report notes that there is "no reason to expect" that a genetically modified organism (GMO) would have a greater or lesser effect upon the genetic diversity of Mexican maize, it suggests that given the fact that Mexico is a centre of origin for maize and that campesinos (smallholder producers in Mexico that make up over two-thirds of the maize producers in the country) "consider the presence of any transgenes in maize as an unacceptable risk to their traditional farming practices, and their cultural, symbolic, and spiritual value of maize," a number of efforts should be made to restrict the spread of GMOs through Mexico. The US Trade Representative condemned the report, calling it "fundamentally flawed and unscientific" and saying 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". The report is the result of a 2002 petition from 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 Mexico.

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.

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

To access the US Trade Representative's reaction, visit http://www.ustr.gov/Document_Library/Press_Releases/2004/November/U.S._Calls_NAFTA_Environmental_Report_Flawed,_Unscientific.html

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

EC APPROVES ANOTHER GM MAIZE VARIETY

On 26 October the EC approved Monsanto's Roundup Ready Maize NK-603 for human consumption and placing on the market. The maize variety, which is tolerant to Monsanto's herbicide glyphosate ("Roundup"), is the second genetically modified (GM) product authorised for food use in the EC since the de facto moratorium on GMO approvals effectively ended in May (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 28 May 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/04-05-28/story3.htm>). The decision by the European Commission to put the maize on the market, though not to cultivate it domestically, follows a decision in July to allow the variety to be imported for animal feed, and in August to allow it to be imported and processed. The EC authorisation met with hostility from consumer and environmental groups across the continent. Geert Ritsema, GMO campaigner at Friends of the Earth Europe, said, "despite scientific disagreements over its safety and huge public rejection the Commission decided instead to put the interests of corporate America before the safety of Europeans". Monsanto, on the other hand, applauded the EC decision.

For a detailed account of the approval, see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/04-11-05/story3.htm>

"Genetically modified NK603 maize authorised for both food and feed," EU, 26 October 2004; "WTO Panel Announces Further Delay In Decision on EU's GMO Restrictions," WTO REPORTER, 8 November 2004.

PUTIN SIGNS OFF ON KYOTO PROTOCOL; GLOBAL EMISSIONS SET TO INCREASE

On 4 November, Russian President Putin signed a bill endorsing Russia's ratification of the Kyoto Protocol to combat climate change. The Russian parliament had voted in favour of ratification on 27 October (see BRIDGES Weekly, 27 October 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-10-27/inbrief.htm#1>), leaving Putin to complete the process. Russia had been stalling on ratification for over two years, leaving observers to question what the final fate of the Protocol would be. Only Russia could trigger the Protocol's entry into force after the US -- the world's largest greenhouse gas emitter -- pulled out in 2001. Russia's ratification has been linked to EU support for Russia's WTO accession, formalised at a summit in May (see BRIDGES Weekly, 2 June 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-06-02/story5.htm>). Once the ratification documents are delivered to the UN, the Kyoto Protocol will enter into force after 90 days.

In related news, projections from the International Energy Agency (IEA) -- released in the "World Energy Assessment 2004" on 26 October -- show that under the status quo, world primary energy demand is set to rise by 59 percent from now until 2030. About 85 percent of the increase is projected to be in the form of carbon-emitting fossil fuels such as coal, oil and natural gas; two-thirds of the new demand would come from developing countries, primarily from China and India. The IEA also provides an alternative scenario based on vigorous government action to steer the world onto a sustainable energy path. Claude Mandil, Executive Director of the IEA, stressed however that ultimately, "achieving a truly sustainable energy system will depend on technological breakthroughs that radically alter how we produce and use energy". This will be a monumental task both for countries that have ratified the Kyoto Protocol, and those that remain outside.

To access the World Energy Assessment 2004 visit <http://www.worldenergyoutlook.org>

"Putin clears way for Kyoto pact," CNN, 5 November 2004; "Russia's upper house backs Kyoto," BBC, 27 October 2004; "Russia ratifies Kyoto protocol," ITAR-TASS, 27 October 2004; "Russian Parliament's Kyoto Ratification Underlines Bush Isolation," ONEWORLDUS, 25 October 2004; "IEA Director

Releases Latest World Energy Outlook, Says Current Energy Trends Call for Urgent and Decisive Policy Responses", IEA RELEASE, 26 October 2004.

WTO IN BRIEF

INFORMAL TALKS ON TRADE FACILITATION KICK OFF

On 2 November, WTO Members held an informal meeting on trade facilitation. The meeting was the first one following the decision by Members on 1 August (WT/L/579, available at <http://docsonline.wto.org>) to launch talks on trade facilitation, while dropping the rest of the controversial Singapore issues (investment, competition policy and transparency in government procurement). During the informal meeting, delegates focused on a draft work programme and schedule of meetings for the upcoming negotiations proposed by Chair Yacob Muhamed Noor (Malaysia). Topics proposed for the formal sessions included: the clarification and improvement of relevant aspects of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade; enhancement of technical assistance and support for capacity-building in developing countries; effective cooperation between customs and other appropriate authorities on trade facilitation; customs compliance issues; cooperation with relevant international organisations on the issue; and special and differential treatment for developing countries. Members also wanted to discuss concerns related to cost implications of proposed measures. They generally supported the Chair's approach.

The first formal session of the negotiating group will be held on 15 November, and an additional session has been scheduled for 22-23 November. According to sources, the 15 November meeting is set to take a decision on the work plan and schedule. The detailed schedule of meetings for 2005 will be decided at a later date. Reportedly, the Chair proposed scheduling trade facilitation meetings back to back with the Negotiating Group on Non-Agricultural Market Access (NAMA), as the two areas are closely linked and the trade facilitation meetings could benefit from the presence of capital-based officials attending NAMA meetings.

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/cal/index.htm>. If you would like to submit an event, please email events@ictsd.ch.

Coming Up: 11-17 November

18 October to 15 November: ONLINE CONFERENCE ON BIOSAFETY CONSIDERATIONS IN THE USE OF GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS FOR MANAGEMENT OF ANIMAL POPULATIONS. The Biosafety Clearing-House is hosting this online conference to facilitate exchange of views on a range of issues such as the use of genetically modified microorganisms, nematodes and insects for biological control (including those used to cause sterility in pest species for conservation and/or commercial purposes); the use of genetically modified viruses to protect mammal populations against disease; and the use of genetically modified insects for reducing disease transmission rates. For further information see <http://www.biodiv.org/doc/notifications/2004/ntf-2004-081-bs-en.pdf>. To subscribe, visit <http://bch.biodiv.org/onlineconferences/GMOAM.shtml> or send an email to bchlistserv@biodiv.org with the subject line blank and the message "Subscribe GMOAM FirstName LastName" in the message body.

11-12 November, Stellenbosch, South Africa: ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS (EPAS): MAXIMISING BENEFITS FOR THE ACP. The Trade Law Centre for Southern Africa (TRALAC) Annual Trade Law Conference will focus on EPAs forged between the EU and the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries. The conference intends to give an overview of the current status of EPA negotiations and to highlight the areas where ACP countries stand to gain from these negotiations. It will look at whether EPAs will achieve one of its main stated objectives, namely the promotion of regional integration as well as the development aspect of EPAs and the necessary domestic reforms that ACP countries will have to undergo in preparation for these negotiations. For further information see <http://www.tralac.org/scripts/content.php?id=2419>

17-18 November, Santiago, Chile: ANNUAL APEC MINISTERIAL MEETING. At this annual Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) event participants will consider, among others, trade and investment issues including regional trade agreements and free trade

arrangements, trade facilitation policies and APEC support for the WTO. For further information visit <http://www.apec2004.cl/>

17-21 November 2004, Geneva, Switzerland: FIRST CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE ROTTERDAM CONVENTION (COP-1). COP-1 of the Convention on Prior Informed Consent (PIC), preceded by a last meeting of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee in September, is tentatively scheduled for November 2004. For more information contact the Joint Interim Secretariat: Niek van der Graaff, FAO; tel: +39-6-5705-3441; fax: +39-6-5705-6347; e-mail: Niek.VanderGraaff@fao.org; or Jim Willis, UNEP Chemicals; tel: +41-22-917-8111; fax: +41-22-797-3460; e-mail: chemicals@unep.ch; Internet: <http://www.pic.int>.

17-25 November, Bangkok, Thailand: THE 3RD 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>

17-26 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://hq.unep.org/ozone/Meeting_Documents/mop/16mop/16mop.asp

WTO Events

An updated list of forthcoming WTO meetings is posted at: http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/meets.pdf. 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. Unless otherwise indicated, all WTO meetings are held at the WTO, Centre William Rappard, rue de Lausanne 154, 1211 Geneva,

Switzerland, and are open to WTO Members and accredited observers only.

11 November: WTO COMMITTEE ON REGIONAL TRADE AGREEMENTS.

11 November: WTO COUNCIL FOR TRADE IN GOODS - TEXTILES.

15 November: WTO NEGOTIATING GROUP ON TRADE FACILITATION.

16 November: WTO COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT.

17 November: WTO COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT.

Other Upcoming Events

20-21 November, Santiago, Chile: ANNUAL APEC ECONOMIC LEADERS MEETING. This annual Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) event will follow a number of meetings among APEC officials and business representatives. Participants will consider, among others, trade and investment issues including regional trade agreements and free trade arrangements, trade facilitation policies and APEC support for the WTO. For further information visit http://www.apec.org/apec/news___media/media_releases/101104_aelm2004.html

RESOURCES

AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF CHINA'S WTO ACCESSION: AN ANALYSIS OF SIX SECTORS. By IISD (November 2004). China's accession to the WTO has been the most important recent development in trade policy -- for China and for the WTO as a whole. The impact on China's economy has been profound. The impact on the environment has also been significant. This report by the Task Force on WTO and Environment of the China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development looks at six sectors where the environmental impacts are the most pronounced: agriculture, forestry, aquaculture, automobiles, energy and textiles. These sectoral studies represent the most comprehensive assessment of the environmental consequences of trade liberalisation policies undertaken by any country to date. For further information and to download a copy, visit <http://www.iisd.org/publications/publication.asp?pno=649>

GLOBAL AGRICULTURAL TRADE AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. Edited by M. Ataman Aksoy and John C. Beghin (World Bank, November 2004). This book presents research findings based on a series of commodity studies of significant economic importance to developing countries. First, the book sets the stage with background chapters and investigations of cross-cutting issues. The book follows with an analysis of product standards and costs of compliance and their effects on agricultural and food trade. An investigation of the impact of preferences given to selected countries and their effectiveness is next. The evidence on the attempts to decouple agricultural support from agricultural output is then reviewed. The last background chapter explores the robustness of the global gains of multilateral agricultural and food trade liberalisation. Given this context, the book presents detailed commodity studies for coffee, cotton, dairy, fruits and vegetables, groundnuts, rice, seafood products, sugar, and wheat. These markets feature distorted policy regimes among industrial or middle-income countries. The studies analyse current policy regimes in key producing and consuming countries document the magnitude of these distortions and estimates the distributional impacts-winners and losers-of trade and domestic policy reforms. For further information see http://publications.worldbank.org/ecommerce/catalog/product?item_id=3829969

LIVING PLANET REPORT 2004. WWF (October 2004). The Living Planet Report 2004 confirms that humanity is now consuming over 20% more natural resources than the Earth can produce, causing rapid declines in wild animal populations. It is possible to exceed ecological limits for a while, but this over-spend leads to the destruction of ecological assets, on which our economy depends. These are assets such as: depleted groundwater; collapsing fisheries; CO2 accumulation in the atmosphere; and deforestation. The Living Planet Report 2004 clearly defines humanity's challenge for the 21st century: to learn to live within the means of the one and only planet that we have. To access the report visit <http://www.panda.org/downloads/general/lpr2004.pdf>

TRADE LIBERALISATION TO BENEFIT SOUTH ASIA'S POOR. By Zaidi Sattar et. al. (World Bank, November 2004). This book describes key aspects of the current trade regimes in the five largest South Asian countries and concludes that, despite progress towards liberalisation, protectionist forces are still strong in the region, hampering growth and poverty reduction. The book looks into key aspects of the current trade regimes in India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka and offers recommendations on some of the key issues facing policymakers on trade reform. The report is the first comprehensive review of South Asian trade

regimes, examining policies within the countries and in light of the global context. The book concludes that trade policies of South Asian countries are now much more open than they were in the past. Most non-tariff barriers to imports have been removed and tariffs substantially reduced. Even though comprehensive trade liberalization reforms have been implemented in all the countries, protection and protectionist forces are still strong, difficult and challenging trade policy reform agenda lies ahead. For further information see <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/TRADE/0,,contentMDK:20279009~pagePK:64020865~piPK:149114~theSitePK:239071,00.html>

"The Canadian Wheat Board: Government Guarantees and Hidden Subsidies?" By Carol Goodloe in the ESTEY CENTRE JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW AND TRADE POLICY. The operations of the Canadian Wheat Board (CWB), a state trading enterprise, have generated controversy over the years, partly because of an alleged lack of transparency in its operations. This study examines one aspect of operations that is not well understood - the government guarantee of CWB borrowings and export credit sales. This special privilege allows the CWB to generate a "financial cushion", or non-market based revenue, that it can use to enhance returns to producers, discount export prices, or pay administrative expenses. Although recent WTO dispute settlement decisions concluded the CWB does not act inconsistently with some WTO rules, the July 31, 2004 WTO Doha Round framework agreement addresses these potential trade-distorting practices of the CWB. To access the article, visit <http://www.esteyjournal.com/>

"Crossing the River by Feeling the Stones: Where the WTO is going after Seattle, Doha and Cancun". By Robert Wolfe in the REVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ECONOMY (Vol. 11, Issue 3, August 2004) pp. 574-596. When we ask where the WTO is going after its debacle in Seattle its success in Doha, and the failure in Cancun, we find neither imminent collapse nor a new grand design. This analysis of the difference between these ministerial meetings separates the inter-linked themes of inadequate WTO procedure, the evolving trade policy agenda, and the changing role of developing countries. The first frame is the effort to make the institution stronger by improving internal and external transparency. The second frame is about the demands to deepen WTO disciplines in the era of globalisation, when the meaning of liberalisation moves from border measures to domestic regulations. The third frame is about making the WTO wider, where the context includes debates on the meaning of development. After exploring these frames, and their implications for where the WTO is going, the author speculates on what the Single Undertaking of the Doha round might contain, using a metaphor to simplify a

complex story about the difference between bargaining in incremental time and negotiating in conjunctural time: the WTO is 'crossing the river by feeling the stones'.

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Contributors to this issue of **BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest**© are Yvonne Apea, Sarah Mohan and Mahesh Sugathan. Editor: Malena Sell, msell@ictsd.ch. Director: Ricardo Meléndez-Ortiz, rmelendez@ictsd.ch. ICTSD is an independent, not-for-profit organisation based at: 7, ch. de Balexert, 1219 Geneva, Switzerland, tel: (41-22) 917-8492; fax: 917-8093. Excerpts from **BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest**© may be used in other publications with appropriate citation. Comments and suggestions are welcomed and should be directed to the Editor or the Director.

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