



Bridges Trade BioRes

News, events and resources at the intersection of trade and biodiversity

Issue: 27 May 2005

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31 May, Montreal, Canada:

MULTILATERAL TRADE RULES AND THE CARTAGENA PROTOCOL: IS THERE SPACE FOR DOMESTIC PUBLIC POLICIES?

ICTSD Side-event at the second Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol
13h15 to 14h45, Room FII - Level 1.

Issues to be addressed will include the relationship between the biosafety and trade regimes; the implications of the WTO biotech dispute for domestic biosafety policy-making; and a Southern African perspective on the practical issue affecting biotech trade at the national level.

For further information, see <http://www.ictsd.org/dlogue/2005-05-31/2005-05-31-desc.htm>.

Biotechnology

TRADE @ MOP-2: LABELLING OF BIOTECH COMMODITIES UP FOR DECISION

Documentation requirements for shipments of living modified organisms (LMOs) are likely to emerge as one of the main bones of contention at the second Meeting of the Parties (MOP-2) to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety convening from 30 May to 3 June in Montreal, Canada. The Biosafety Protocol has mandated Parties to finalise these requirements, which have significant trade implications, within two years of its entry into force (that is, by MOP-2). However, some observers have

raised doubts that this deadline can be met in Montreal. Also up for debate are possible elements of a liability regime.

Documentation requirements in the spotlight

Discussions related to documentation requirements will focus on LMOs intended for direct use as food or feed or for processing (LMO-FFPs). Under Article 18.2(a) of the Protocol, countries agreed to label such shipments as "may contain" LMOs, but left detailed requirements, such as specification of their identity and any specific markings referring to the contained GMO, known as "unique identification", open for future negotiations.

At MOP-1 in February 2004, Parties adopted "interim" measures (see Bridges Trade BioRes, 5 March 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/04-03-05/story1.htm>) and charged an expert group with looking into some of the more contentious issues, including the need to establish threshold levels of LMO content for cases of co-mingling of LMOs with non-LMOs below which labelling would not be required; the "may contain" language; and the use of unique identification.

The draft Decision on LMO-FFPs, proposed by the Open-Ended Technical Expert Group on Identification Requirements for LMO-FFPs, leaves options open for many of the difficult issues, such as whether to use existing documentation systems or a stand-alone document, or what coding system to implement. The draft Decision distinguishes between shipments that are known to contain LMOs and those that are not. With regard to the former, it would require the documentation to state that the shipment contains LMOs and to include a code referring to the genetic modification or "transformation event" and/or the unique identifier. If not known, shipments should be marked as "may contain" LMOs. The draft Decision skirts the issue of thresholds for unintentional or "technically unavoidable presence" of LMOs by leaving them to be adopted and applied at the national level on a case-by-case basis under the Parties' domestic regulatory frameworks.

The EU has been pushing for stringent documentation requirements that would mirror its domestic regulations on biotech imports. Together with Switzerland, they would like to introduce "unique identification" into the requirements (i.e. a code identifying a transgenic plant line) and have raised the need to address labelling thresholds. In contrast, biotech exporters, including the US, Canada and Australia, have lobbied for minimising the documentation requirements as much as possible so as to avoid trade disruptions. While none of the biotech exporting countries has so far ratified the Protocol, Parties will need to take their concerns on board if they want to leave the door open for future ratification. Also, as pointed out by Australia, biotech exporting countries, even if they are not Parties to the Protocol, will nevertheless need to comply with the Protocol's requirements if they want to maintain or gain market access to Parties that have implemented the Protocol at the national level.

Similar dynamics are also reflected in countries' submissions on the transboundary movement of LMOs for contained use under Article 18.2(b) and for intentional introduction into the environment under Article 18.2(c). The MOP-2 Decision requested Parties to submit information on experiences gained with the existing requirements "with a view to the future consideration of a stand-alone document". The EU in its submission outlined its national system which includes unique identification codes. The US, echoed by the Global Industry Coalition, said that current best practices were adequate and warned that additional requirements would be needlessly burdensome. It also pointed to difficulties for importers and exporters arising from the "paucity of information" available in the Biosafety Clearing-House.

Shaping a liability and redress regime

Also on the agenda of MOP-2 are issues related to liability and redress which are of particular concern to many developing countries, notably in Africa. Prior to MOP-2, Parties are convening from 25-27 May for the First meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Liability and Redress under the Biosafety Protocol, which is mandated to complete its work by 2007. Among the issues to be discussed are the nature, valuation and threshold of damage, the causal link between the damage and activities, State liability, the choice of instrument and the settlement of claims.

The EU would like to see a broad liability regime that covers not only LMO shipments -- as advocated by the US -- but also transit, handling and use. Damage would primarily be vested in the person(s) "responsible for the carrying out of an action related to the transboundary movement" of an LMO. The US believes that responsibility should be decided on a case-by-case basis and could rest with the exporter, importer or third entity, and has proposed to focus on national liability regimes. The EU, on the other hand, would prefer the regime to initially take the form of a MOP decision, leaving the option of a legally binding regime open for a later stage.

In related news, the Chinese Parliament on 27 April ratified the Cartagena Protocol according to a 19 May statement from a Chinese state official. The ratification made the world's largest GM cotton grower the 120th Party to the Protocol.

Additional Resources

Documents of MOP-2:
<http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meeting.aspx?mtg=MOP-02>
(including the draft Decision on LMO-FFPs,
UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/2/2)

Daily coverage by IISD Linkages:
<http://www.iisd.ca/biodiv/bs-copmop2/>

ICTSD reporting.

Climate Change

CLIMATE CHANGE NEGOTIATORS BEGIN TALKS ON POST-KYOTO PERIOD

Climate change negotiators from around the world met in Bonn from 16-17 May at a Seminar of Governmental Experts on Climate Change to start untangling issues related to a future climate regime to follow the Kyoto Protocol, which expires in 2012. Mandated by the last Conference of the Parties (COP-10) in December 2004, the Bonn meeting sought to launch discussions on the post-2012 phase. While the meeting did not produce concrete results, delegates hoped the next COP, to be held later this year, would be able to adopt a more detailed roadmap for negotiations. In related news, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on 12 May on the Bonn meeting, which called on the EU to play a leading role in ensuring that the future climate change agreement is inclusive and effective. Meanwhile, participants at the fifth Global Forum on Sustainable Energy (GFSE-5) on 11-13 May discussed ways to enhance international cooperation on biomass, including through the expansion of international markets and trade.

Although negotiations on the post-2012 climate change regime have been mandated to begin in 2005, negotiations on the post-Kyoto period stalled at COP-10 in Buenos Aires (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 20 December 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/04-12-20/story1.htm>). While there was no formal, negotiated outcome at the Bonn meeting, discussions made some headway that delegates hoped would lead to agreement on a more detailed roadmap for negotiations at COP-11 in Montreal in December this year. However, the meeting also highlighted some of the well-known divergences between countries. Those that have not signed on to the Kyoto Protocol (most notably the US and Australia) preferred a more lenient, technology-focused approach to climate change mitigation and a focus on reduced emission intensity rather than quantitative reductions. The current developed

country Parties to the Protocol hoped to secure a credible follow-up instrument to the Kyoto Protocol, with binding commitments and the widest possible participation -- not least to provide their private sectors with certainty regarding the future policy environment and a continuation of emissions trading schemes. A number of developing countries, for their part, were looking for signs of real progress in implementation by developed countries as a prerequisite for beginning to engage in a discussion on the possibility of taking on some type of binding commitments of their own. South Africa, China, Argentina and Mexico also outlined their own policies for combating climate change under their non-binding commitment to do so as Parties to the UNFCCC, which were welcomed by environmental groups as a positive signal within the climate process.

European Parliament urges trade measures

In advance of the Seminar of Governmental Experts on Climate Change in Bonn, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on 12 May, urging the EU to play a leading role in shaping a future climate change agreement. The resolution stressed the EU objective of maintaining the average global temperature increase below 2°C above pre-industrialisation levels, and called on the Commission to put forth proposals for the post-2012 period based on eco-innovation and development of environmental technologies. The resolution stressed the need to include the US and advanced developing countries in a future climate agreement, and called for an international sector-specific approach for emissions reductions in particularly emission-intensive industries, in order to ensure an international level playing field. In addition, it called on the European Commission to "take into account in any cost-benefit analyses of climate policies the possibility to adopt border adjustment measures on trade in order to offset any competitive advantage producers in industrialised countries without carbon constraints might have".

An international biofuels market developing as countries seek to reduce emissions?

In related news, participants at the fifth Global Forum on Sustainable Energy (GFSE-5) discussed ways to enhance international cooperation on biomass, including through the expansion of international markets and trade. They suggested that expanded use of biomass could provide one part of a policy-mix aimed at addressing climate change.

Meeting in Vienna from 11-13 May, GFSE-5 discussed the potential and challenges for increasing biomass use, the relationship between biomass needs for energy use and as food crops, and considered regional experiences. Among other things, participants discussed the potential for increased trade in biofuels -- clean-burning, carbon-neutral fuels derived from agricultural crops and waste that can be used to partially replace liquid petroleum products. They noted, however, that current trade barriers such as tariffs were impeding the adoption of the environmentally-friendly fuels by hindering the development of a vibrant international market. While the most competitive producers of biofuels, principally ethanol and biodiesel, are located in the South, there is a large and growing demand in OECD countries seeking to implement climate targets and improve their energy mix. A new export market could channel money back to rural areas in developing countries by creating jobs and spurring diversification of the agriculture sector. At the meeting, participants considered potential conflicts between local development of biofuels programmes (through agricultural and rural development schemes) and imports, and ways to overcome such conflicts to allow the co-existence of both and expansion of the overall use of biofuels.

Additional Resources

To access the European Parliament resolution, visit <http://www2.europarl.eu.int/omk/sipade2?PUBREF=-//EP//TEXT%2BTA%2BP6-TA-2005-0177%2B0%2BDOC%2BXML%2BV0//EN&LEVEL=3&NAV=X>

For more information on GFSE-5, visit <http://www.gfse.at/gfse5.htm>

For a summary report of the Seminar of Governmental Experts on Climate Change, see IISD Linkages, <http://www.iisd.ca/vol12/enb12261e.html>

For a summary report of GFSE, see IISD Linkages, <http://www.iisd.ca/sd/gfse5/>

ICTSD reporting: "UN Seeks Climate Roadmap Beyond Kyoto," REUTERS, 18 May 2005.

Trade in Endangered Species

CITES CONSIDERS TIMBER CONSERVATION

The Plants and Animals Committees of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES) met on 17-21 and 20-25 May respectively and focused on decisions made at the 13th Conference of the

Parties (COP-13) to CITES in October 2004 (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 21 October 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/04-10-21/story1.htm>). In particular, participants grappled with the COP decision to add certain heavily-traded timber species to the CITES Appendices, seeking to understand the political, trade and conservation dynamics in the sector and how to best ensure the survival of the listed species.

In its first meeting since COP-13, the Plants Committee began the process of conducting a Review of Significant Trade (RST) in Appendix II species as mandated by Decision 12.8 of COP-13. Under CITES, Appendix II species are subject to strictly regulated trade on the basis of quotas and permits to ensure that trade does not compromise their survival. While the Animals Committee has been carrying out RSTs for several years, at COP-13 parties decided to call on the Plants Committee to carry out such reviews for the first time. Species subject to the review are assessed on their conservation, management and trade regulation and volume status. Should the committee find that existing measures to preserve the species are inadequate, it can make recommendations on how to enhance protection of the species in all CITES countries. Such recommendations can include urging CITES Members to implement export quotas, conduct population reviews, or other trade or environmental policies. Such a review and recommendation process was carried out in one of the best known cases by the Animals Committee in 2002 regarding sturgeon caviar (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 10 September 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/04-09-10/inbrief.htm>).

After examining a document from the Secretariat that presented species that could be considered under the review, a newly established RST working group proceeded to eliminate the majority of proposed species from the review. Species were removed from the scrutiny because the working group felt that effective controls were in place to preserve them, because there was not significant trade in the species or their derivatives, or because it was felt that postponing such scrutiny for the time being was an effective "carrot" to induce CITES Parties to initiate their own conservation strategies.

In particular, the meeting considered a number of new timber species that were added to Appendix II at COP-13 including agarwood trees in East Asia, a number of African species and big-leaf mahogany.

Although CITES has traditionally avoided including heavily traded timber species in its annexes, recent COPs have witnessed more countries embracing the CITES approach as a viable way to achieve sustainable trade in threatened timber species (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 21 November 2002, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/02-11-21/story1.htm>). However, discussion at the plants meeting recognised that science, enforcement, legislation, chain-of-custody controls, international trade regulation and business incentives were all integral components of sustainable trade in such species. Incorporating CITES system of certification of permitted trade was cited as spurring a "revolution" in how forests are managed nationally insofar as it makes CITES scientific expertise and familiarity with customs and certification measures available to national actors.

Participants also recognised that the dynamics of the timber trade may be different and particularly challenging. The difficulties with enforcement of trade restrictions in endangered timber species are sensitive for many countries as illegal trade is common and the timber sector often accounts for a significant portion of GDP. Nonetheless, participants recognised that the international community was becoming increasingly concerned with trade in such species. In particular, they considered the proposal to include bigleaf mahogany in the RST given concerns that enforcement of Appendix II listing of the species is being threatened by increasing logging and trade in Peru, Brazil and Bolivia. Instead of subjecting it to a direct review, however, participants decided to re-establish the Bigleaf Mahogany Working Group to prepare and adopt regional action plans, undertake inventories, initiate capacity-building programmes and report back to the next plants committee meeting. The Committee did note that it was "seriously concerned" by bigleaf mahogany trade in a letter sent to States involved in trade and that if insufficient progress was made in curtailing trade by the next Plants Committee meeting, bigleaf mahogany would be included in the RST.

A number of medicinal plants were also added to Appendix II at COP-13 and the Plants Committee began discussion on how to best enforce these listings. In addition, the meeting began a periodic review of plant species listed in the CITES appendices, with Chair Margarita Clemente stressing the need to "clean up" the current list of some 28,000 species through de-listing and up-listing. The meeting created a preliminary list of potential

species for review for de-listing or up-listing, which will be examined by an intersessional working group.

In recognition of the increasing overlap between CITES and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), synergies between the two Conventions was the subject of focused attention. Based upon COP-13 decision 13.8, which establishes that the Plants Committee shall link its activities with the CBD Global Strategy for Plant Conservation especially regarding target XI (regarding conserving species of wild flora that are endangered by international trade), a new working group was established to examine the connection. The working group reported that improving communication, compiling "best practice" projects showcasing synergies and offering CITES expertise to the CBD were the best ways to achieve greater links between the two. COP-13 decision 13.10 on invasive alien species (IAS; see related article, this issue) also requests greater cooperation between CITES, CBD and the IUCN/SSC Invasive Species Specialist Group. The Plants Committee asked the Secretariat to prepare a document on the possibility of CITES contributing to the CBD's IAS principles and to ask the CBD Secretariat for comments on the invasive potential of plant species included in the CITES appendices.

For a summary report of the meetings, see IISD Linkages at <http://www.iisd.ca/cites/ac21pc15/>.

ICTSD Reporting; ENB, Vol. 21 No. 46, 23 May 2005.

In Brief

EU STUDY HIGHLIGHTS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF DOHA ROUND

A study released by the European Commission on 22 April warns that negotiations currently underway as part of the WTO's Doha round of trade liberalisation talks may exacerbate climate change and biodiversity loss due to increased emissions of greenhouse gases and the conversion of forest land to agricultural uses. The Sustainability Impact Assessment (SIA), carried out by an independent research team at the University of Manchester in the UK for the EU, looks at liberalisation in the agriculture, forests and distribution sectors and makes predictions about impacts on economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainability. It found that while liberalisation is likely to have an overall adverse impact on countries' ability to achieve Millennium Development Goal 7, on

environmental sustainability, the implications for developed and developing countries differed widely. While developed countries can expect overall effects from liberalisation to be beneficial across sectors and in all three sustainability aspects, developing countries will face mixed economic and social effects, and negative environmental effects overall. The study highlights the potential for significant negative impacts on the environment from trade liberalisation that are likely to result from increased transport, packaging, unsustainable forestry harvesting, increased agricultural production in biologically sensitive areas, and increased use of agro-chemicals. However, the assessment also notes that some of the economic gains expected from liberalisation could in principle be directed towards offsetting these impacts. The WTO Doha Declaration in paragraph 6 "takes note" of voluntary environmental assessments done by WTO Members and recognises that WTO rules should not prevent countries from taking measures to protect human, animal or plant life or health as long as the measures are not disguised restrictions on or unjustified protection from international trade.

The latest SIA reports are available at <http://www.sia-trade.org/wto/index.htm>

ICTSD Reporting; "EU/WTO: Negotiations To Impact Badly On The Environment", FoE EUROPE BULLETIN, May 2005.

WTO BIOTECH CASE DELAYED UNTIL AUGUST

The chairman of the panel considering the complaint brought by the US, Canada and Argentina against the EU's alleged de facto moratorium on approvals of new genetically modified organisms (GMOs) has said that the panel will not issue its preliminary ruling until 5 August 2005. Chairman Christian Haberli told the parties to the dispute in mid-May that the delay was necessary owing to the large volume of information that the panel had to go through, including information from specialists and experts. The panel report was originally expected in September 2004 but has been repeatedly delayed by difficulties in choosing panel members and a decision to seek expert advice on technical and scientific issues raised in the dispute (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 10 September 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/04-09-10/story1.htm>). Haberli had told WTO Members in November 2004 that the panel was expected to deliver its final ruling to the parties by the end of June 2005.

ICTSD Reporting; "WTO Panel Notifies Further Delay For Ruling On Bioengineered Foods," WTO REPORTER, 19 May 2005.

EXPERTS IDENTIFY REGULATORY GAPS FOR INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES

At the meeting of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Gaps and Inconsistencies in the International Regulatory Frameworks on Invasive Alien Species on 16-20 May in New Zealand, the world's leading experts on invasive alien species (IAS) identified missing components and lack of coherence in international regulatory framework in relation to IAS and discussed practical options to enhance policy coherence. The meeting was convened in response to a mandate adopted at the Seventh Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) in February 2004 (see Bridges Trade BioRes, 20 February 2005, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/04-02-20/story1.htm>). The major regulatory gap identified in the lead-up to the meeting was the lack of international standards related to invasive animal species that do not qualify as plant pests under the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC). The Office International des Epizooties (OIE, the World Organization for Animal Health) manages risks associated with animal diseases but does not include species that may be IASs. To address this, experts explored the option of including guidelines under existing international conventions such as the CBD. Alternatively, they raised the possibility of expanding the scope of the OIE or broadening the definition of animal diseases to include IAS. In addition to ensuring regulatory coordination, the Expert Group also stressed that capacity limitations in developing countries -- including financing, the infrastructure and skilled labour -- remained one of the major obstacles to effective implementation of regulations.

International trade in goods is one of the main gateways for the introduction of alien invasive species into ecosystems. However, IAS cause significant economic costs for agriculture, irrigation and hydropower, freshwater fisheries, forestry and health, and after habitat destruction represent the most important cause of biodiversity loss. According to IUCN, a sample of global economic costs of damage from IAS is \$137 billion per year. Under WTO rules, measures to control the spread of IAS are covered by the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures of the World Trade Organisation (the SPS

Agreement). The SPS Agreement encourages Members to use standards and guidelines identified by international standard-setting bodies, naming in particular the IPPC, the OIE, and the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

Documents from the meeting can be found at <http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meeting.aspx?mtg=AISTEGGI-01>

ICTSD reporting; "The Basics On Alien Invasive Species," IUCN.ORG, 26 May 2005.

BIODIVERSITY DAY MARKED BY NEW ECOSYSTEMS REPORT

The theme of the 22 May International Day for Biological Diversity, "Biodiversity: life insurance for our changing world", was reflected in speeches from world leaders and in a new study released for the occasion from the Millenium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) and the Convention on Biological Diversity. The study, entitled "Ecosystems and Human Well-being: A Biodiversity Synthesis", is the second of a set of seven studies from the MA that examine changes to the earth's ecosystems and their impacts on humans (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 1 April 2005, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/05-04-01/story3.htm>). It suggests that human activities such as habitat conversion, climate change, pollution and over-exploitation of resources are largely to blame for alarming rates of biodiversity loss and are likely to continue or worsen in the future. It also notes that there may be both trade-offs and synergies between poverty and conservation targets. Trade-offs could include, for example, the adverse impact on biodiversity of rural road networks that are essential for economic development. Jeffrey Sachs, director of the Millenium Development Project (MDP), criticised the report's discussion of trade-offs, describing the idea as "naïve" and a "non-debate" because it could rekindle historical debates between environmentalists and those working in development. "All of us now agree that poor people depend on the health of ecosystems to survive," he noted, adding that environmental sustainability is on a par with the other Millenium Development Goals. Environmentalists and some of the writers of the MA-CBD report, however, have challenged the conclusions of the MDP report that said that significant increase in development aid and infrastructure spending was needed in developing countries to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 21 January 2005, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/05-01->

21/inbrief.htm). They have suggested that some of the infrastructure investments or increased agricultural productivity recommended in the MDP report could have adverse impacts on biodiversity.

To access the MA-CBD report visit <http://www.biodiv.org/doc/press/2005/pr-2005-05-18-ibd-en.pdf>

"Protecting Biodiversity 'May Clash With Pursuit Of MDGs'," SCIDEV.NET, 19 May 2005; "World's Biodiversity Declining At An Alarming Rate," ENN, 23 May 2005.

In Memoriam

On May 20, 2005, Konrad von Moltke, PhD, passed away in Vermont after a courageous battle with cancer. Dr. von Moltke, a Senior Fellow at the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), was one of the world's leading thinkers on the relationship between sustainable development and international trade and investment.

Events & Resources

EVENTS

For a more comprehensive list of events in trade and sustainable development, please refer to ICTSD's web calendar, <http://www.trade-environment.org/page/calendar.htm>.

Coming up in the next two weeks

30 May - 3 June, Montreal, Canada: SECOND MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES SERVING AS THE MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE CARTAGENA PROTOCOL ON BIOSAFETY (COP/MOP-2). Organised by the Convention on Biological Diversity. For further information contact the CBD Secretariat, tel: (+1-514) 288-2220; fax: 288-6588; email: secretariat@biodiv.org; Internet: <http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meeting.aspx?mtg=MOP-02>

30 May - 26 June, Internet: FAO E-MAIL CONFERENCE - BIOTECHNOLOGY AND CHARACTERISATION/CONSERVATION OF GENETIC RESOURCES. The FAO Biotechnology Forum is devoting its next e-mail conference to the role that biotechnology can play in the characterisation and conservation of crop, animal, forestry and fishery genetic resources in developing countries. The conference is free and open to everyone, and will be used to discuss and exchange experiences on this theme. For further information contact John Ruane; email: john.ruane@fao.org; Internet: <http://www.fao.org/biotech/index.asp>

1 June, Geneva, Switzerland: SEEKING SOLUTIONS: DEVELOPING NEW TREATMENTS AND IMPROVING ACCESS FOR POOR PEOPLE. This conference is organised by the Commission on Intellectual Property Rights, Innovation and Public Health (CIPRH) of the World Health Organization (WHO). For further information contact the WHO, tel: (+41 22) 791 2764; fax: 791 4852; email: cipihopenforum@who.int; Internet: <http://www.who.int/intellectualproperty/events/openforum/en/>

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

6-10 June, Washington D.C., United States of America: CONSULTATIONS AND GEF COUNCIL MEETING. This event is organised by the Global Environment Facility. For further information contact the secretariat, tel: (+1 202) 473-0508; fax: 522-3240/3245; e-mail: secretariat@TheGEF.org; Internet: <http://gefweb.org/>

6-10 June, New York, United States of America: 6TH MEETING OF THE UNITED NATIONS OPEN-ENDED INFORMAL CONSULTATIVE PROCESS ON OCEANS AND THE LAW OF THE SEA. For more information contact Mr. Vladimir Golitsyn; tel: (1) 212 963 3951; fax: (1) 212 963 5847; email: doalos@un.org; Internet: http://www.un.org/Depts/los/consultative_process/consultative_process.htm

Other Upcoming Events

16-18 June 2005, New York City, US: THE COMMUNITY COMMONS: A DIALOGUE ON LOCAL APPROACHES TO THE MDGS. This event is co-organised by UNDP, the Equator Initiative and Fordham University and is designed as a special civil society contribution towards the Millennium Review Summit in September 2005. For further information contact the Equator Initiative, tel: (+1 212) 457-1709; Fax: 457 1370 email: EquatorInitiative@undp.org; Internet: <http://www.undp.org/equatorinitiative/secondary/events/CommunityCommons/CommunityCommons.htm>

18-22 June, Brazzaville, Republic of Congo: 28TH SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER COUNCIL (ITTTC-38). Organised by the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO). For further information contact Manoel Sobral Filho, Executive Director, ITTO, tel: + 81 45 223 1110; fax: +81 45 223 1111; email: itto@itto.or.jp; Internet: <http://www.itto.or.jp/live/PageDisplayHandler?pageId=189>

11-13 July 2005, São Paulo, Brazil. THE GLOBAL FEED AND FOOD CONGRESS. Organised by FAO and the International Feed Industry Federation, this congress also includes six panel sessions, one of which is dedicated to biotechnology. For further information contact Global Feed & Food, tel: (+55 11) 3073-0102; email: global_feed_food@sight-momentum.com.br; Internet: www.globalfeed-food.com

21-27 August, Stockholm, Sweden: WORLD WATER WEEK. This event is organised by the Stockholm International Water Institute and will unite experts from more than 100 countries representing private sector, civil society, governmental, inter-governmental, science and water management sectors. For further information contact the Stockholm International Water Institute, tel: (+46 (0)8)522 139 60; email: sympos@siwi.org; Internet: <http://www.worldwaterweek.org/>

RESOURCES

If you have a relevant resource (books, papers, bulletins, etc.) you would like to see announced in this section, please forward a copy or review to the BRIDGES staff at smohan@ictsd.ch.

THE BIOSAFETY PROTOCOL: MULTILATERAL AGREEMENT OR PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT OR PROTECTIONIST CLUB? By Anna L. Hobbs, Jill E. Hobbs and William A. Kerr in the *Journal of World Trade* 39(2), 2005. This paper examines whether the Biosafety protocol can act as an effective multilateral protector of biodiversity that balances the risk that environmental sustainability may be threatened by the introduction of living modified organisms (LMOs) with the risk that considerable opportunities for substantial human benefits will be forgone if the use of LMOs is overly restricted. It suggests that the Protocol is a trade agreement that is solely concerned with establishing the rules under which countries can limit imports of agricultural commodities produced using modern biotechnology and is as such open to a broad range of protectionist interests and unfettered restrictions on imports.

DUMPING FOOD AID: TRADE OR AID? (SUBSIDIZED) FOOD AID IN KIND: WHAT IS IN IT FOR THE WTO. By the Wemos Foundation (April 2005). This report looks at the relationship between humanitarian food aid, subsidized surpluses in donor countries and trade and concludes that local food production must be analyzed in order to end long-term dependency on food aid. It suggests that the process of "dumping" of subsidised food aid through the World Food Program has the same effects as the dumping of below-cost products on world markets. To access this report visit http://www.wto.org/english/forums_e/ngo_e/posp47_dumping_food_aid_e.pdf

NO, AIR, DON'T SELL YOURSELF. By GRAIN (May, 2005). This paper suggests that the concept of

"environmental services" has become popular over the last decade and has crept into our collective consciousness without setting off the alarm bells it should have done. Environmental services provide the means of taking privatisation to a new level - a means of privatising many things that have as-yet been unavailable for privatisation: air, water and all sorts of other ecological processes. To access this paper visit <http://www.grain.org/seedling/?id=332>

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS OF NOTIFICATIONS OF NON-TARIFF MEASURES (NTMS) IN NON-AGRICULTURAL MARKET ACCESS (NAMA) NEGOTIATIONS OF THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION, REVISED. By Friends of the Earth International (May, 2005). This report presents revised analysis of non-tariff barrier to trade notifications under non-agricultural market access negotiations at the World Trade Organization. This report shows that these 212 notifications challenge national laws protecting the environment, social well-being and health. They include laws on labelling and certification requirements; national standards and regulations; export restrictions; restrictions on foreign investment and measures to promote local economic development. To access the report visit <http://www.foei.org/trade/NTBSanalysis.doc>

A SOUTHERN AGENDA ON INVESTMENT? PROMOTING DEVELOPMENT WITH BALANCED RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS FOR INVESTORS, HOST STATES AND HOME STATES. By Howard Mann and Konrad von Moltke (International Institute for Sustainable Development, 2005). This report is one of, if not the first, deliberate effort to look at how to approach international investment negotiations based on an agenda that takes the priorities of developing countries as its starting point. Even though more than 2,000 international investment agreements that have been signed, they address but a small proportion of the issues that require attention if international investment is to promote sustainable development. To access this report visit http://www.iisd.org/pdf/2005/investment_southern_agenda.pdf.

TRADE IN AGRICULTURE AND THE DOHA ROUND OF MULTILATERAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS. By Dilip K. Das in Journal Of World Investment & Trade 6(2), 2005. Multilateral trade in agriculture and agricultural products is known to have had a difficult political chemistry. An innovation of the

World Trade Organization's Doha Ministerial Conference was that it made special and differential treatment for developing countries integral throughout the negotiations. After prolonged negotiations, there was little agreement on issues of significance and a complete lack of progress before the Cancún Ministerial Conference. This article focuses on the recent progress made in negotiations on agriculture under the sponsorship of the Doha Round.

INTERNATIONAL BIODIVERSITY-RELATED TREATIES AND IMPACT ASSESSMENT -- HOW CAN THEY HELP EACH OTHER? By Dave Pritchard in IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND PROJECT APPRAISAL 23(1), 2005. This paper briefly introduces the 'biodiversity-related' treaties or conventions, and their rather basic provisions (but deeper implications) regarding impact assessment. Some initiatives in the past decade to develop this area are reviewed, in particular, the building of linkages between the conventions world and the environmental impact assessment/strategic environmental assessment (EIA/SEA) world.

VACANCY

RESEARCH ASSOCIATE, GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT INSTITUTE. The Global Development and Environment Institute at Tufts University seeks a research associate who specialises in analyses of the effects of trade and investment liberalisation on development in Latin America. The associate will conduct such work as part of a larger project that draws lessons from the Latin American experience for ongoing trade negotiations in the Western Hemisphere and at the WTO. Successful candidates will have a PhD in economics or related field (or be close to completion), be able to write and speak well in English, and have a demonstrable record in conducting policy oriented research. This is a one year position that could be renewed indefinitely. Interested applicants should write a short e-coverletter and send a c.v. and short writing sample to kevin.gallagher@tufts.edu.

ON THE MOVE

WTO Members meeting in the General Council on 26 May formally selected Pascal Lamy of France to be the organisation's fifth Director-General. Mr. Lamy will assume his four year term on 1 September 2005.

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