



Bridges Trade BioRes

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

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WTO Dispute Settlement

EU APPEALS WTO RULING IN RETREADED TYRE DISPUTE WITH BRAZIL; NGOS PROTEST

The EU has formally appealed a WTO ruling against Brazil's import restrictions on retreaded tyres, taking the unusual step of challenging a decision in which it was nominally victorious. Several environment and development NGOs have expressed their concern over this move, asking the EU to withdraw the appeal.

Brussels is complaining that the dispute panel "disregarded the actual facts in Brazil and went against established WTO law," and that as a result, the ruling is unacceptably easy for Brasilia to implement (see BRIDGES Weekly, 20 June 2007, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/07-06-20/story3.htm>).

In the dispute, the EU had argued that the import measures were motivated by a desire to protect local tyre manufacturers from import competition, rather than by the pursuit of genuine public health objectives as claimed by Brasilia. The panel ultimately concluded that although the limitations were in theory justifiable to safeguard health and environmental considerations, Brazil applied them in a way that amounted to an unjustified and discriminatory restriction of trade.

While announcing the appeal on 3 September, the EU welcomed the panel's recognition that the restrictions were inconsistent with WTO rules. However, it disagreed with the "extremely narrow condemnation of Brazil, which makes it possible for Brazil to implement the ruling merely by stopping the importation of used tyres and without removing the import ban on retreaded tyres."

Retreaded tyres are used tyres reprocessed for a second and final use. Brazil had argued that these

tyres had a shorter life span than new ones and therefore contributed to a faster accumulation of waste tyres, which in turn provide fertile breeding grounds for disease-carrying mosquitoes.

The panel effectively accepted Brazil's claim that the sheer volume of waste tyres was already beyond the country's capacity for environmentally responsible disposal, and said that the import restrictions and associated fines were necessary to meet the public health goals. WTO rules, specifically GATT Article XX(b), allow governments to limit trade when necessary in order to protect human, animal, or plant life and health.

Where Brazil erred, ruled the panel, was in how it applied the measures. The so-called 'chapeau', or introductory paragraph, of GATT Article XX specifies that permissible trade restrictions must not be applied "in a manner which would constitute a means of arbitrary or unjustifiable discrimination... or a disguised restriction on international trade."

The principal reason for this conclusion was that Brazil's retreaded tyre industry had actually imported large quantities of otherwise-banned used tyres between 2000 and 2005, after receiving numerous court injunctions allowing them to do so (government objections notwithstanding). Thus, that period saw used tyre imports soar, including from the EU, while imports of EU retreads ground to a halt. The panel found that the court-sanctioned imports of used tyres defeated the very purpose of the retread ban, and had benefited Brazilian tyre makers at the expense of their competitors elsewhere.

In June, Brazilian officials welcomed the ruling, pointing to the panel's acceptance of their health- and environment-related justifications for the import restrictions. At the time, some trade lawyers expressed surprise at the extent to which the panel agreed with Brasilia's arguments and left the door open for many of the limitations to be maintained with only minor modifications.

Sources in Brazil now suggest that the government is planning to give the tyre import ban the strength of federal law. This would put an end to the court injunctions that the panel deemed

unacceptable, while leaving in place the import ban to which the EU objects.

Brussels: retread import ban did not reduce waste

Brussels argues that the panel should not have let Brazil off so lightly. Claiming to have "clearly shown that banning the import of retreads does not reduce waste," particularly "in a country such as Brazil where domestic used car tyres cannot be retreaded," it said that the panel was simply wrong to conclude that Brazil's import ban reduces public health risks.

Furthermore, the EU criticised the panel for "discount[ing] alternative measures that would serve public health in Brazil much more effectively," such as improving waste tyre disposal.

As for the panel's decision to refrain from addressing Brazil's exclusion from the import ban of tyres from Mercosur partners Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Venezuela, a statement from the European Commission called it "clearly discriminatory," saying that it "makes no sense from the perspective of protection of public health." Brazil had argued that the exception was necessary due to binding regional obligations; the panel had noted that the volume of tyres imported from those countries was currently not significant.

Green groups oppose the appeal

The case, which represents the first-ever challenge against trade restrictions imposed by a developing country for health and environmental reasons, was closely watched by green groups. Thus, while faulting the panel's interpretation of the exceptions in GATT Article XX, the EU took pains to emphasise that it was "strongly in favour of environmental and public health protection," but the Brazilian measures "were not intended to protect the environment at all, and... had no such effect."

Brussels insisted that it was appealing "these points of the panel's ruling to defend not only its trade interests, but also the general interest that WTO rules be applied so as to ensure real and effective protection of public health and the environment, rather than allowing protectionism."

The Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL) and WWF, as well as the German NGO Forum on Environment and Development were not convinced by Brussels, however, and called on European Trade Commissioner Mandelson to withdraw the appeal. In an open letter dated 5 September, the German NGO Forum for Environment and Development said "An appeal of the panel report would be an assault on the health needs of the poor and the environment," noting that "the EC has defended several European environmental and health policies at the WTO (asbestos, GMOs, Hormones) and will likely have to defend others in the future. It does not make sense to challenge a decision that will be useful for arguing pending and future environment and health cases at the WTO." CIEL and WWF agreed, in a separate letter addressed to Mandelson, that the panel report had "made an important contribution to the progressive development of WTO's jurisprudence on environment and trade... it is in the EC's interest that the Panel's environmentally sensitive interpretation of WTO law stands."

CIEL and WWF also stressed that the appeals process — should it go ahead — should be conducted in a transparent manner, due to the public importance and precedent-setting effect of the case.

According to the timetable for WTO dispute settlement, the appeal, which started on 3 September, should last for 90 days.

Additional resources

The EU's appeal (WT/DS332/9) is available online at <http://docsonline.wto.org/>.

Open letter to Commissioner Mandelson from the German NGO Forum on Environment and Development
http://www.ciel.org/Publications/Mandelson_Letter_5Sep07.pdf.

Letter from CIEL and WWF to Commissioner Mandelson
http://www.ciel.org/Publications/Brazil_Tires_Appeal_4Sep07.pdf.

ICTSD reporting.

Desertification And Sustainable Land Management

UN DESERTS MEETING LOOKS TO THE FUTURE

Participants at a major international meeting on desertification are staking out a plan for efforts to combat the problem over the course of the next ten year. Taking place in Madrid from 3-14 September, the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP-8) to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) is focusing on the strategic plan, which aims to address some of the Convention's key challenges and create a new, revitalised common ground for all UNCCD stakeholders based on concrete actions to combat desertification.

According to Gregoire de Kalbermatten, officer-in-charge of the UNCCD, "The ten-year strategic plan comes at a significant time, on the eve of the 16th and 17th sessions of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development, which will focus on Africa, agriculture, rural development, land degradation, desertification and drought." In addition, recognition of the interlinked problems of desertification and climate change is growing.

In addition to the COP, UNCCD parties are also meeting to review of the implementation of the Convention by the parties, as well as in a committee that focuses on science and technology. Additional events include a dialogue among high-level officials on "Desertification and adaptation to climate change" on 12-13 September.

Deliberations on the strategic plan

Close to 2000 conference participants from 191 countries and a number of intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations are hoping to create a new 10-year strategic plan on how to stem desertification that sets measurable objectives as well as a timeline for achieving them.

In the negotiations so far, many countries expressed their support for the draft ten-year strategic plan and called for the need to address

several issues, including financial resources and the establishment of measurable objectives and indicators. For example, Morocco, Chile, Iran and other delegations said that a mid-term programme with measurable targets and quantitative indicators with programme costs and financial contributions was necessary. Uganda, on behalf of the African Group, highlighted that the draft plan does not have budget, timeline and priority actions and recommended that the COP prepare and adopt a costed implementation plan through identifying priority actions for the first four years. However, on the following day, Brazil objected to global targets for the plan, saying they would burden developing countries without the provision of financial support from developed countries. Some developing countries, such as India, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Tunisia, stressed the need for resource mobilisation for the implementation of the strategic plan to enhance the convention.

The draft text of the ten-year strategic plan considers trade as a tool to achieve different operational objectives that will guide the action of all UNCCD stakeholders and partners. The document acknowledges the need for desertification and land degradation to be addressed in relevant international forums such as those pertaining to agricultural trade at the WTO. It also considers the identification of innovative sources of finance and financing mechanisms to combat land degradation in market-based mechanisms and trade.

A number of non-governmental organisations present at the meeting expressed concern at the slow pace of progress in implementing the UNCCD and said they hoped the Madrid conference would be a "turning point." The groups issued a joint statement saying that "If this does not happen, the silent death of the convention is imminent."

The COP-8 of the UNCCD will last until 14 September. The next issue of the BioRes will cover the final outcome, including issues related to trade.

Additional resources

Daily reports by IISD's Earth Negotiations Bulletin are available at <http://www.iisd.ca/desert/cop8/>

Documents of the COP8 of the UNCCD are available at <http://www.unccd.int>

ICTSD reporting; "UN holds desertification summit in Spain," EDIE NEWSROOM, 7 September 2007; "UN conference sounds warning on spread of deserts," AFP, 4 September 2007.

Biotechnology

GMO UPDATE: BRAZIL, INDIA PAVE WAY FOR NEW CROPS; PERU BANS BIOTECH POTATOES

Brazil and India have recently taken measures that signal a growing acceptance of new genetically modified (GM) crops — although these measures also face fierce criticism. In Brazil, two GM corn varieties are progressing through the regulatory approval process, and a Brazilian company, EMBRAPA, has developed the country's first commercial biotech soybean in collaboration with BASF, a multinational company. Meanwhile, the Indian government is allowing large-scale field trials of GM eggplant.

In contrast, the regional government of Cusco in Peru — the area potatoes originate from — decided in late July to ban modified varieties of potatoes. A new public order forbids the sale, cultivation, use and transport of biotech potatoes as well as other food crops native to the region.

Brazil approves guidelines for monitoring and coexistence of GM corn

16 August Brazil's biosafety committee, CTNBio, approved two sets of guidelines governing the use of GM corn. These guidelines, covering monitoring and coexistence, are conditional for the commercial release of GM corn Liberty Link produced by Bayer CropScience.

CTNBio initially approved Liberty Link for commercial release in May. However, Brazil's

legislation requires transgenic crops to be planted under specific schemes that also must be approved by the commission.

The new coexistence plan allows GM and non-GM corn to coexist in the same field. It establishes a minimum distance of 100 meters between GM and non-GM corn grown for commercial use. A distance of 20 meters is allowed if the crops are separated by a ten-row vegetable 'fence', made up of plants of a size and growth cycle similar to that of corn. The monitoring plan is not yet available.

The approval of the coexistence plan drew criticism from seven of the twenty-seven members of CTNBio. These members said that the discussions had focused on the commercial release of GM corn rather than on dealing with biosafety issues. In a statement to the press, they said that "Biosecurity must not be confused with the explicit flag of 'adopting transgenics' in the country. We cannot vote without considering the precaution principle and the interests of the Brazilian society." Environmentalists have also complained that Liberty Link corn has not been adequately tested in Brazilian conditions. The 11-member National Council on Biosecurity will now assess the plans and take a final decision before Liberty Link can be planted commercially.

Also on 16 August, CTNBio approved the commercial release of another variety of GM corn, Guardian produced by Monsanto Co., resistant to Lepidoptera insects.

Brazil develops GM soybean

In early August, Brazilian Enterprise Agropecuary Research (EMBRAPA) announced that it had developed the country's first genetically modified soybean for commercial purposes in cooperation with the world's largest chemical company BASF. The transgenic soybean is resistant to imidazolinone herbicide, which competes with glyphosate, the main ingredient of herbicide Roundup developed by Monsanto Co.

According to EMBRAPA, several bio-security tests are being carried out to check the plant's impact on the environment and humans. The

results will be sent to the CTNBio, which is in charge of authorising the project.

BASF's Biotechnology Manager in Brazil, Luiz Carlos Louzano, said he expects the new soybean to take over up to 20 percent of the Brazilian market, and compete with Monsanto. Brazilian Media reported that the new GM soybean will reach the market by 2012.

Brazil is one of the world's major soy producers and exporters. India approves large-scale field trials of GM brinjal

In mid-August the Indian government approved large-scale field trials of four varieties of Bt brinjal (eggplant), promising better yield with less use of pesticides. "The large-scale field trials of a GM crop have been allowed for the first time," an environment and forest ministry official said. The crops will be tested at 13 locations in the country until April next year. The trials will not be conducted in fields owned by farmers, but in Indian Council for Agricultural Research farms under the direct supervision of the Indian Institute of Vegetable Research (IIVR). This decision follows from protests by farmers in Haryana and Uttar Pradesh over field trials of Bt rice.

Speaking out against the decision, the director of the Hyderabad-based Centre for Sustainable Agriculture, Dr G.V. Ramanjaneyulu, said trials should not be allowed until complete bio-safety data is generated on Bt brinjal. "It is unfortunate that the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) [of the environment ministry] has allowed large-scale trials of Bt brinjal without biosafety having been cleared and without making the data public. In the process, it is breaking its own rules which were reiterated in its June 2007 meeting," said Dr Ramanjaneyulu. "Some of the prescribed tests like foliar feeding studies (which have been mandated after reports of animal mortality and morbidity after open grazing on Bt cotton fields) have not been completed on Bt brinjal," he noted.

GM potatoes banned in Cusco region, Peru

On 19 July, the regional government of Cusco in Peru made a decision to ban modified varieties of potatoes public. The order forbids the sale,

cultivation, use and transport of biotech potatoes, as well as other native food crops. The Cusco region is the world centre of potato diversity, and local farmers' organisations fear that genes from biotech potatoes could transfer into local varieties and alter their unique properties.

The head of the region's government environmental office, Abel Caballero, proposed the ban "in recognition of the historical, cultural, social and economic importance of the potato and other native crops to the Cusco Region."

Dr. Michael Pimbert, director of the sustainable agriculture, biodiversity and livelihoods program at the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) commented that "With this decision to keep GM crops out of one of the world's most diverse centres of potato and other Andean crops, the regional government of Cusco has acted wisely and with courage". He added that the government "has put issues of food security, human well-being and the environment first and foremost at a time when most national governments persist in their failure to implement international agreements to protect the environment and human rights."

"Controversy over GM corn approval in Brazil", CHECKBIOTECH, 23 August 2007; "Brazil Biosafety Commission Approves Monsanto GMO Corn", DOWN JONES, 20 August 2007; "Brazil Develops its First Genetically Modified Plant", CHINAVIEW, 7 August 2007; "Activists Cry Foul Over Trials of Bt Brinjal", THE ECONOMIC TIMES, 21 August 2007; "Green Signal to Genetic Food", HINDUSTAN TIMES, 18 August 2007; "New GM Crops Approved in Colombia", ISAAA, 10 August 2007; "Peru's Ancient Inca Capital Bans Transgenic Potatoes", ENS, 19 July 2007.

In Brief

EU SET TO KEEP EXTRA DUTIES ON ENERGY-SAVING LIGHT BULBS FROM CHINA

A divided European Commission decided last week to retain heavy anti-dumping duties on energy-saving light bulbs from China for an

additional year, angering environmental groups who argue that the move will impede efforts to curb climate change. Certain industry groups had proposed retaining the duties for an additional five years.

The EU's executive body on 29 August announced that it would urge member states to remove the extra tariffs in 2008, effectively backing down from plans to eliminate them this year. Governments are set to vote on the proposal during the next week.

Brussels has imposed the duties of up to 66 percent since 2001, claiming that "state intervention or other market distortions" meant that the Chinese bulbs were being sold in the EU "at less than their real value."

EU consumers might have been grateful for cut-rate light bulbs, and the Commission argued that it was in member states' interest to end the duties - not least to cut energy use and greenhouse gas emissions. Nevertheless, European manufacturers seeking more time to adjust to Chinese competition won a reprieve.

Eivind Hoff, a trade and investment advisor for environmental group WWF, described the EU's move as "narrowly protectionist." Pointing to a "severe contradiction" between Brussels' energy efficiency objectives and the prolongation of the extra taxes, he said that it sent "a regressive message to developing country producers that they will be excluded from markets for cleaner products created by the higher environmental standards expected by European consumers."

WWF estimates that a rapid switch from traditional incandescent bulbs to more efficient lamps could reduce EU greenhouse gas emissions by 0.5 percent. The Commission acknowledges that domestic production can account for only a quarter of the EU's demand for energy-efficient light bulbs.

The four European companies that manufacture such bulbs were split on the issue, based largely on how much they have invested in China. Osram, a German company that produces many bulbs in the EU itself, was the only one to lobby heavily for the extension of the duties, reports Associated

Press. Dutch multinational Philips, which manufactures many bulbs in China, pushed for scrapping them. EU Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson said that the case illustrated “the complexities of managing anti-dumping rules in a global economy and against the broad range of EU interests.”

Duties notwithstanding, the EU has been a vocal proponent of liberalising trade in environmental goods as part of the Doha Round WTO talks.

ICTSD reporting; “Europe to keep tariffs on light bulbs,” INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, 29 August 2007; “EU won’t lift charges on Chinese energy-saving light bulbs for another year,” ASSOCIATED PRESS, 29 August 2007; “Towards a Low Carbon Future: The Case for China and EU Collaboration,” THE WORLD TODAY, October 2007 (forthcoming).

SEAL HUNT LANDS AT WTO

Canada is taking a strong stance against countries that have enacted or are planning to enact import bans with regard to Canadian seal products. The Canadian government issued a statement at the end of July on its intention to challenge Belgium at the WTO over a ban on the importation and marketing of seal products, in force since April this year.

Animal right groups worldwide strongly oppose the annual North-Eastern Canadian seal hunt, which they claim is cruel and unsustainable. Belgium is the first country to impose a full ban, soon to be followed by the Netherlands. Belgium itself does not import any seal products, while several other European countries do. The European Parliament has also called for a Europe-wide ban.

“Sealing is an important way of life for many Canadians, including Inuit and other Aboriginal peoples,” commented Loyola Hearn, Canadian Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. “It is important that we pursue these consultations to maintain access to markets for all those involved in the sealing industry.” The Belgian ban exempts seal products produced by Inuit and aboriginal people. These groups say, however, that the ban

undermines the market as a whole, thus making the exception meaningless.

Livelihoods in the areas of Newfoundland and Labrador are suffering the consequences of the collapse of the cod fishery in the mid-nineties, which has never recovered. While seal products such as pelts bring in C\$33 million in annual revenues, the Humane Society of Canada claims that the government subsidises the seal hunt to the tune of C\$20 million each year. This year, 270,000 seals will be killed. According to Ottawa, the healthy seal population amounts to 5.5 million animals.

If the consultations initiated at the WTO between Canada and Belgium do not lead to a mutually-accepted solution, Canada has the right to request the establishment of a dispute settlement panel 60 days after the initial request for consultations.

“Seal appeal pits animal rights v. trade,” GLOBE AND MAIL, 1 August 2007; “Canada seeks WTO consultations on Belgium seal products ban,” AFP, 31 July 2007; “Canada Files Complaint at WTO Against Belgium Over Seal Ban,” BLOOMBERG, 31 July 2007; “Canada Fights Belgian Ban on Seal Trade at WTO,” REUTERS, 31 July 2007; “Canada To Request WTO Consultations On Belgium’s Ban On The Importation Of Seal Products,” FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE CANADA RELEASE, 31 July 2007.

EU FOOD SAFETY AGENCY: GM FEEDS DOES NOT AFFECT MEAT, EGGS, DAIRY

A statement from the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), dated 20 July, says there is no evidence that genetically modified (GM) animal feed can negatively effect meat, eggs and dairy products.

In March this year international environmental group Greenpeace and one million EU citizens petitioned the European Commission to labels food products (such as meat, milk and eggs) from animals that have been fed with genetically modified feed. The European Commission proceeded by requesting the EFSA to assess the potential for transgenes or their products to be

incorporated into animal tissues or products such as eggs and milk.

The EFSA study was based on a literature survey and showed that “recombinant DNA did not survive passage through the intact gastrointestinal tract of healthy human subjects fed GM soya.” The study said that the rapid breakdown of DNA and proteins during digestion reduces the chance of them being absorbed intact into the muscle, milk, or eggs of animals. “After ingestion, a rapid degradation into short DNA or peptide fragments is observed in the gastrointestinal tract of animals and humans,” the report stated. “To date, a large number of experimental studies with livestock have shown that recombinant DNA fragments or proteins derived from GM plants have not been detected in tissues, fluids or edible products of farm animals like broilers, cattle, pigs or quails.”

EU regulations that came into force in April 2004 require any food containing a GM ingredient or derivative (like processed oils and lecithin) in amounts of more than 0.9 percent to be labelled as containing GM material. This rule, however, does not apply to products like milk, meat and eggs from animals raised on GM feed.

EU feed imports — mainly soybeans and maize — come from countries like the US, where GM crops are common through the crop supply chain. Approximately 90 percent of the EU’s imports of GM grain and oilseeds are used as animal feed, and EU feed manufacturers say the constant need to import high-protein feed materials makes it impossible to supply non-GMO feed on a large scale.

Additional resources

EFSA statement on the fate of recombinant DNA or proteins in meat, milk and eggs from animals fed with GM feed, 20 July 2007 is available at http://www.efsa.europa.eu/etc/medialib/efsa/science/gmo/statements.Par.0002.File.dat/EFSA_statement_DNA_proteins_gastroint.pdf

“No GMO From Feed Found in Meat, Eggs, EU Agency Says”, PLANETARK, 6 August 2007; “EFSA: GM Feed Does Not Affect Meat”, CHECKBIOTECH, 2 August 2007.

ICELAND FINDS NO MARKET FOR WHALE MEAT

Fisheries Minister Einar Guofinnsson recently announced that he would refrain from issuing a new quota for commercial whaling until the market for whale products improved. The old quota — issued in October last year for 30 minke whales and 9 fin whales in defiance of an international whaling moratorium that has been in place for two decades (see Bridges Trade BioRes, 20 October 2006, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/06-10-20/inbrief.htm>) — expired on 31 August.

Over the past year, Icelandic whalers killed 7 minke and 7 fin whales, both of which are listed as endangered species. Iceland, along with Japan and Norway, also maintains a programme of whaling on “scientific” grounds. However, demand for whale meat has decreased, and Iceland had trouble exporting the whale meat to Japan due to its high concentration of toxic chemicals.

Meanwhile, anti-whaling nations and animal rights groups have noted that while commercial whaling yields very little profit, Iceland’s whale-watching industry accumulates over US\$20 million in revenues per annum.

The last meeting of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) in June this year rejected requests from pro-whaling nations to challenge the IWC’s international ban on commercial whaling (see Bridges Trade BioRes, 22 June 2007, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/07-06-22/inbrief.htm#2>).

“Iceland Puts Down Its Whaling Harpoons for a Year,” ENS, 27 August 2007; “New Zealand welcomes Iceland’s decision to not issue new whaling quotas this year,” INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, 27 August 2007.

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

3-14 September, Madrid, Spain: EIGHTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE UN CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION (COP-8). COP-8 of the CCD will consider the following agenda items: programme and budget for the biennium 2008-2009; review of the implementation of the Convention; review of the report of the Committee on Science and Technology; review of activities for promotion of relationships with other relevant organizations; follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development; Regional Coordination Units; and review of the 2006 International Year of Deserts and Desertification activities. internet: <http://www.unccd.int/>

10-13 September, Wengen, Switzerland: CLIMATE CHANGE AND DESERTIFICATION: MONITORING, MODELLING AND FORECASTING. This meeting will review (1) where we were and what we have learned about desertification processes over the last three decades, (2) the current state of the art in this and related fields (monitoring, modelling, integration of natural and social sciences, historical background, etc), and (3) where we are heading, given the high likelihood of significant climate changes in the coming decades. internet: <http://www.unige.ch/climate/Workshops/wengen07.html>

17-21 September, Montreal, Canada: NINETEENTH MEETING OF THE PARTIES (MOP) TO THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL. MOP-19 is tentatively scheduled to take place in September 2007 in Montreal, Canada. It is likely to be preceded by the 39th meeting of the Implementation Committee. internet:

<http://ozone.unep.org//meetings2006and2007.asp>

17-23 September, Oxford, England: CLIMATE CHANGE: SCIENCE, POLITICS AND THE MANAGEMENT OF UNCERTAINTY. Even with the latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report making ever clearer the scientific consensus about humanity's contribution to global warming, the severity of its impact remains highly uncertain. This conference, hosted by Deutsche Wissenschaft, the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, and the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, will consider the difficulties of making policies to address the problems of global warming within a context of such uncertainty. internet: <http://www.21stcenturytrust.org/2007.html#1>

18-27 September, Geneva, Switzerland: JOINT MEETING OF THE FAO PANEL OF EXPERTS ON PESTICIDE RESIDUES IN FOOD AND THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE WHO CORE ASSESSMENT GROUP ON PESTICIDE RESIDUES (JMPR). This meeting will consider a list of substances scheduled for evaluation. The list has been prepared by the Joint FAO/WHO Secretariat of the Meeting and is based on recommendations of the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR), previous Expert Meetings, and direct requests from governments, other interested organisations, and producers of substances that have been evaluated previously. internet: <http://www.fao.org/ag/AGP/AGPP/Pesticid/JMPR/DOWNLOAD/2007JMPRcallfinal.pdf>

19-21 September, Bern, Switzerland: NEW APPROACHES TO PLANT BREEDING OF ORPHAN CROPS IN AFRICA. This conference is being organised by the University of Bern. It will bring together scientists from both developed and developing countries to discuss techniques that could be implemented in a scheme of orphan crop improvement. Orphan (neglected or lost) crops are crops of high economic value in developing countries, particularly in Africa. These include cereal crops (such as millet and tef), legumes (cow pea, grass pea, and bambara groundnut), and root crops (cassava and sweet potato). In addition, the future prospects and feasibility of modern biotechnology in African

agriculture will be discussed. internet:
<http://www.botany.unibe.ch/deve/orphancrops/index.htm> Other upcoming meetings

24 September, New York, USA: UN HIGH LEVEL MINISTERIAL MEETING ON CLIMATE CHANGE. A high-level ministerial meeting is being planned to take place during the UN General Assembly sessions in September. The event is tentatively scheduled for 24 September 2007, at UN headquarters in New York. internet: <http://www.un.org/ga/61/>

27-28 September, Washington, DC, USA: US-HOSTED MEETING OF MAJOR ECONOMIES ON ENERGY SECURITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE. US President Bush has issued invitations to major economies to attend this meeting, including the EU, France, Germany, Italy, UK, Japan, China, Canada, India, Brazil, South Korea, Mexico, Russia, Australia, Indonesia, South Africa and the UN. internet: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/08/20070803-7.html>

1-3 October, Davos, Switzerland: SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON TOURISM AND CLIMATE CHANGE. This conference will seek to set in place the research and policy measures that will enable tourism to respond to the challenges of climate change and at the same time reduce the industry's own contributions to global warming. It is organised by the UN World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) together with the UN Environment Programme, and with support from the World Economic Forum (WEF) and the Swiss Federal Government. internet: <http://www.unwto.org/climate/index.php>

4-5 October, Oslo, Norway: TECHNICAL WORKSHOP MEETING ON EMISSIONS FROM AVIATION AND MARITIME TRANSPORT. This workshop is organised by Norway with the assistance of the European Environment Agency (EEA). internet: <http://www.eionet.europa.eu/training/bunkerfuel/emissions>

15-16 October, Stratford-upon-Avon, UK: SUSTAINABILITY IN FOOD AND AGRICULTURE: THE ROLE OF THE

PRIVATE SECTOR AND GOVERNMENT. Organised by the International Food & Agricultural Trade Policy Council (IPC). Recognizing that agriculture and food security face a range of pressing challenges from increasing population growth to global warming, IPC will bring together international food and agricultural trade experts, environmental experts, farm leaders, government officials, and agribusiness and food retail executives to discuss how the private sector and governments can best address these sustainability challenges. The seminar will also discuss the role of trade in the sustainability debate. internet: http://www.agritrade.org/events/sustainability_agriculture.html

RESOURCES

If you have a relevant resource (books, papers, bulletins, etc.) you would like to see announced in this section, please forward a copy for review by the Bridges staff to Malena Sell at msell@ictsd.ch.

ICTSD resources

TRADE AND SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT IN DRYLANDS, Selected Issue Brief, published by ICTSD (August 2007). This publication aims to provide a wide range of perspectives from various stakeholders on how trade policies and processes could contribute to advancing the objectives of sustainable land management and sustainable development in dryland regions of the world. It is also meant to provide an intellectual input into the ongoing process towards the ten-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (2008-2018). The publication is available at http://www.trade-environment.org/page/ictsd/projects/trade_slm_drylands_0807.pdf

THE WTO AND ENERGY: WTO RULES AND AGREEMENTS OF RELEVANCE TO THE ENERGY SECTOR. By Yulia Selivanova (ICTSD Trade and Sustainable Energy Series, August 2007). This paper puts energy in the context of international trade and provides some clarity as to how international trade rules apply to this sector. First, the paper gives an overview of

the energy supply and demand market and the international framework of energy regulation. It goes on to examine the WTO rules and agreements that relate to energy trade; the characteristics of energy resources and products that differentiate them from other goods; the existing energy trade processes that could constitute barriers according to GATT-WTO rules; and issues related to energy security, energy investment, and trade in energy services. To conclude, the paper discusses how the interests of both energy-importing and energy-exporting states can be addressed by the WTO. The report is available at <http://www.trade-environment.org/output/icts/resource/The%20WTO%20and%20Energy.pdf>

Other resources

CONSIDERING TRADE POLICIES FOR LIQUID BIOFUELS. By Masami Kojima, Donald Mitchell, and William Ward (World Bank, August 2007). This report asks how liberalising trade in liquid biofuels might affect biofuel production and consumption. Focusing primarily on ethanol and biodiesel, the report takes a time horizon of the next five to ten years. It outlines the important link between agriculture and biofuels, reviews past and present government policies for agriculture and for biofuels, and considers how these policies might affect the world biofuel market. The report is available at http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTOGMC/Resources/Considering_trade_policies_for_liquid_biofuels.pdf

BIOFUELS FOR TRANSPORT: GLOBAL POTENTIAL AND IMPLICATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE ENERGY AND AGRICULTURE. Worldwatch Institute (August 2007). This book assesses the range of "sustainability" issues the biofuels industry will present in the years ahead, ranging from implications for the global climate and water resources to biological diversity and the world's poor. It concludes that the long-term potential of biofuels is in the use of non-food feedstock, including agricultural and forestry wastes, as well as fast-growing, cellulose-rich energy crops such as perennial grasses and trees. The book recommends policies that protect natural resources and support a speedy transition to improved biofuels technologies. Freer trade in biofuels should be coupled with social and

environmental certification and a credible system to certify compliance. For more information see <http://www.worldwatch.org/node/5303>

BIOFUELS, AGRICULTURE AND POVERTY REDUCTION. ODI Natural Resource Perspective 107 (June 2007) By Leo Peskett, Rachel Slater, Chris Stevens and Annie Dufey. The development of biofuels has generated vigorous debate on economic and environmental grounds. The attention here is on its potential impacts on poverty reduction. The potential is large, whether through employment, wider growth multipliers and energy price effects. But it is also fragile: it will be reduced where feedstock production tends to be large scale, or causes pressure on land access, and its success can be undermined by many of the same policy, regulatory or investment shortcomings as impede agriculture. Whilst some of the factors facilitating, and impacts of, biofuels can be tracked at global level, its distributional impacts are complex, and point to the need for country-by-country analysis of potential poverty impacts. The report is available at <http://www.odi.org.uk/nrp/NRP107.pdf>

WTO ANNUAL REPORT 2007. WTO, August 2007. In his forward, Director-General Pascal Lamy, says that the "most demanding" of the tasks facing the WTO this year is the conclusion of the Doha Development Round. In parallel with the efforts of Members and the Secretariat to advance the negotiations, the past year has also involved hard work on many other issues, including on trade and environment, and on the Aid for Trade initiative for developing countries. To access the report, visit http://www.wto.org/english/res_e/reser_e/annual_report_e.htm

ANNUAL REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT OF THE WORLD TIMBER SITUATION 2006. ITTO, 2007. The International Tropical Timber Organisation has released its annual report, providing data and forecasts on production and trade of tropical forest products and the state of tropical forests in ITTO member countries. The report notes that forest cover has declined in all producer regions over the past decade, while growing in consumer countries. Forest degradation and the establishment of plantation

forests were not considered. The conversion of logs into at least primary products before export has been increasing, with only Africa lagging behind in this regard. Latin America was most advanced in shifting to secondary products. The report notes that mahogany prices were on the rise due to the requirements of the species' Appendix II CITES listing. The report is available at <http://www.itto.or.jp/live/PageDisplayHandler?pageId=199>