



Bridges Trade BioRes

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

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This edition of Bridges Trade BioRes was edited by Malena Sell, msell@ictsd.ch.

Contributors to this issue were Marie Chamay, Fleur Claessens and Malena Sell.

The Director is Ricardo Meléndez-Ortiz.

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Animal Genetic Resources

CONFERENCE AGREES STEPS TO SAFEGUARD FARM ANIMAL DIVERSITY

A recent international conference has agreed an action plan to protect the diversity of farm animals. Civil society groups — meeting in their own alternative forum — also adopted a declaration on protecting livestock diversity, focusing on the perils of global industrial farming.

With global human populations, as well as their appetites for meat, egg and dairy products, growing at rapid rates, a narrow range of farm animal species are becoming more popular — at the expense of traditional farm animals. However, the hardy traditional farm animals are often well-adapted to harsh conditions in developing countries. Also, in a world increasingly seeing the effects of climate change, having access to a wide range of animal genetic material would serve as an insurance regime. The world is, however, currently losing one traditional livestock breed per month.

Around 300 negotiators and representatives of international and non-governmental organisations were present at the first International Technical Conference on Animal Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture to discuss these issues. The conference took place in Interlaken, Switzerland, from 3-7 September, and culminated in the adoption of Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources — the first internationally agreed framework to halt the erosion of livestock diversity and support the sustainable use, development and conservation of animal genetic resources.

Governments adopt global action plan

The conference kicked off with the presentation of a new UN Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) report on the state of the world's animal genetic resources, entitled "The State of the

World's Animal Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture." The report had evolved from a process initiated in 2001, when countries were asked to submit reports on their animal genetic resources (AnGR). It compiles information gathered from 169 countries and provides the first comprehensive assessment of global livestock biodiversity.

The rest of the conference focused on negotiations on the draft Global Plan of Action and Interlaken Declaration on Animal Genetic Resources. The draft Global Plan of Action had been the subject of earlier discussions, including during the eleventh regular session of the FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA) in December 2006, from which the text was forwarded to the Interlaken conference. At the end of the meeting, participants adopted the Global Plan and the Interlaken Declaration, which stresses the importance of AnGR and confirms the adoption of the Global Plan. Together, they provide a framework for future action on AnGR and represent the start of a longer process for countries and the FAO to sustainably manage the world's AnGR for food and agriculture.

The Global Plan of Action draws on the findings of the FAO report, and "will provide the framework for action and international cooperation for many years to come. It is a visible sign of the urgency that all countries and regions give to ensuring the survival of these crucial resources, and to improving their use to achieve global food security and sustainable development," according to José María Sumpsi, FAO Assistant Director-General for Agriculture and Consumer Protection. He described the outcome as a "historic result" that would "define action on AnGR for many years to come."

There are four strategic priority areas under the Global Plan: characterisation, inventory and monitoring of trends and risks; sustainable use and development; conservation; and policies, institutions and capacity building. The plan calls for the provision of technical and financial assistance, especially to developing countries and countries with economies in transition, to help them implement its provisions.

Ahmed Djoghlaif, executive secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) noted that parties to the convention regard AnGR as essential for food security. He said that the adoption of the Global Plan and Interlaken Declaration would help further the objectives of the CBD. He mentioned ongoing work under the CBD on access and benefit sharing, the importance of indigenous peoples and traditional knowledge as areas of mutual interest.

NGOs call for action to promote food sovereignty and collective rights

Meeting in parallel with the FAO conference in Wilderswil, a number of organisations of pastoralists, indigenous peoples, smallholder farmers and NGOs discussed problems related to industrial livestock production, which they identified as the fundamental cause of the current crises leading to the erosion of farm animal genetic diversity. With a few breeding companies from the North dominating the markets, the lifestyles and livelihoods of vulnerable small farmers have been put at risk. In a declaration of their own, the civil society organisations said they "want livestock keeping that is on a human scale. We defend a way of life that is linked deeply with our cultures and spirituality and not just aimed at production."

The civil society groups supported the concept of collective rights as a solution. In the Wilderswil Declaration, they stressed that "Ownership, knowledge and innovation at the community level are often of a collective nature. Therefore local knowledge and biodiversity can only be protected and promoted through collective rights. Collective knowledge is intimately linked to cultural diversity, particular ecosystems, and biodiversity and cannot be dissociated from any of these three aspects. Any definition and implementation of the rights of livestock keepers should take this fully into account."

Regarding modern intellectual property rights systems, the Declaration stressed that "[I]t is clear that the rights of livestock keepers are not compatible with intellectual property rights systems because these systems enable exclusive and private monopoly control. There must be no patents or other forms of intellectual property

rights on biodiversity and the knowledge related to it". The Declaration further called for the "self-determination and autonomy" of local communities and indigenous peoples and criticised the FAO report for not paying attention to the industrial livestock system as one of the main forces behind the destruction of the biodiversity of domestic animals and for undermining the livelihoods of local communities that nurture this diversity.

Challenges ahead

Countries are now responsible for the implementation of the Global Plan, which faces many policy hurdles at the national level, including funding issues. Sumpsi warned that "Adopting a Global Plan of Action is not an end in itself. It now needs to be implemented. Governments must now demonstrate the sustained political will to do so, and resources will have to be found, nationally and internationally. Issues related to capacity building in developing countries and financing will be key to the effective implementation of the strategy to safeguard animal genetic resources, and remain to be made effective on the ground."

The Wilderswil Declaration criticised governments for showing a lack of commitment, as no substantial financial engagements to implement the plan were made in Interlaken. This now needs to take place as follow-up to the conference.

Background

The effective management of AnGR for food and agriculture is considered important for global food security, sustainable development, and the livelihoods of over one billion people worldwide. During the past two decades, concerns have grown about the future of livestock biodiversity. At least one livestock breed a month has become extinct over the past seven years, and around 20 percent of the world's livestock breeds are at risk of extinction, according to the FAO. Animal genetic resources are also at risk from major disease epidemics and from disasters brought on by emerging threats such as climate change. In addition, the rapid growth in global demand for livestock products represents a major challenge

for the effective and sustainable management of livestock.

During the 1990s the FAO launched a Global Strategy for the Management of Farm Animal Genetic Resources (CGRFA) to respond to these concerns.

The CGRFA initiated a process to help further develop and implement the Global Strategy. Consequently, an Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Animal Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture was established in 1998. This working group reiterated the concerns over the state of the world's AnGR and suggested the development of country-driven efforts and progress on an internationally agreed framework. Hence, countries were invited to submit their national reports on the state of their AnGR. These submissions included information on the contribution of farm animals to food, agriculture and rural development, the state of national capacity to manage these resources, and a list of 'priority actions'. This request resulted in 169 country communications. The main conclusion of all these reports was that farm animals are highly important to food security and sustainable development and their genetic diversity is being eroded in both developed and developing countries.

Climate and Sustainable Energy

CLIMATE TALKS ON TRACK FOR BALI?

A key conference in Bali in December this year — set to launch a process for agreeing on future action to mitigate and adapt to climate change — is drawing closer, sparking political activity that is regularly making headlines around the world.

Among developments over the last couple of months, negotiations under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Vienna, Austria from 27-31 August resulted in Kyoto countries agreeing on the need for cuts ranging between 25-40 percent under 1990 greenhouse gas emissions by 2020. This discussion will continue in Bali at the thirteenth Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC from 3-14 December.

Meanwhile, Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) leaders adopted a high-profile declaration on climate change on 8 September, heads of state will debate climate change at UN Headquarters on 24 September and US President Bush will host representatives of 15 major economies in Washington from 27-28 September to talk about future climate action.

APEC meeting agrees aspirational climate goals

The leaders of the Pacific Rim nations, meeting in Sydney from 8-9 September, agreed on the need to address climate change, and also signalled their support for the faltering Doha round trade talks.

Climate change was in the spotlight at the meeting, and in the final Sydney Declaration, the 21 APEC members agreed to long-term aspirational goals of a reduction in energy intensity of at least 25 per cent by 2030 and for an increase in all types of forest cover of 20 million hectares by 2020 — rather than binding targets. The declaration also clearly spelled out the UN as the venue for climate talks.

Environmental groups and other commentators were quick to question the value of the Sydney meeting. The Economist suggested that the very existence of the APEC summit and the declarations flowing from it "creates the illusion that something is being done and so weakens other efforts to reach meaningful agreements on, for example, climate change and trade."

Greenpeace Southeast Asia energy campaigner Abigail Jabines called the Sydney Declaration "a political stunt. Developing nations of the Asia Pacific region cannot afford to accept lip service instead of action." Julie-Anne Richards, of Climate Action Network Australia, added that "The world doesn't have time for voluntary action, what we need is real action, real targets and real timetables."

Others said that the fact that the meeting strongly endorsed the UN as the venue for climate action — meaning there would be no separate track outside the UN for countries currently not party to the Kyoto Protocol, like the US and Australia

— was significant, and pointed to strong lobbying by developing country APEC members to ensure this. The promoters of the Sydney Declaration also said that it added value by highlighting the need for both developing and developed countries to do their shares to address climate change. Australian Prime Minister John Howard called the declaration "a very important milestone toward a future global agreement" because it drew in both rich and poor countries.

Next stop US

Meanwhile, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon is playing an active role in seeking to ensure that the climate talks stay on track and remain firmly anchored in the UN system. He organised a discussion at UN headquarters in late July, and climate change will be the topic at headquarters again at a summit coming up on 24 September ahead of the General Assembly.

Ban said he hopes the summit will send "a strong political message at the leaders' level for the climate change negotiations in Bali." Regarding the subsequent meeting that US President Bush will host in Washington, Ban said "I think the main objectives and principles and goals we are working are all the same. While we welcome individual measures and initiatives by any countries, all these measures and initiatives should fit into UN efforts."

Additional information

The Sydney APEC Leaders' Declaration on Climate Change, Energy Security and Clean Development is available at http://www.apec2007.org/apec.aspx?inc=lw/lw_syd_dec

ICTSD reporting; "APEC climate call is just hot air, say activists," AFP, 10 September 2007; "APEC Leaders Agree Long-Term Goal to Cut Emissions," 10 September 2007; "APEC leaders pledge political will, flexibility to advance faltering global trade talks," ASSOCIATED PRESS, 9 September 2007; "Industrial Nations Agree Step to New Climate Pact," REUTERS, 3 September 2007; "Targets Agreed for Greenhouse Emissions in Post-Kyoto Era," ENS, 31 August 2007; "UN

Debates Urgent Action to Avert Global Warming," ENS, 31 July 2007.

Desertification and Sustainable Land Management

DESERTIFICATION CONFERENCE ADOPTS ACTION PLAN, FAILS TO AGREE ON FUNDING

Participants at a recent international meeting on desertification agreed on a ten-year action plan, without, however, managing to strike a deal on how to fund its implementation. The issue of trade was discussed in the margins of the meeting, with a focus on the potential of trade as a tool for aiding implementation of the action plan.

Delegates from 191 countries, met at the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP-8) to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), held from 3-14 September in Madrid, Spain. Many observers considered COP-8 a crucial meeting in the convention's ten-year history. The adoption of the ten-year strategic plan and decisions on the structure, role and responsibilities of its institutions, including the Committee on Science and Technology (CST), the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC) and the Global Mechanism (GM) provide new guidance and opportunities for the convention to achieve its objectives. While delegates expressed satisfaction with the delivery of all these elements, the fact that they failed to adopt the budget in the closing plenary left parties uncertain with regard to how the reforms will be implemented.

A high-level dialogue at the UNCCD COP focused on the linkages between desertification and climate change. The latter issue has been getting substantial attention globally, and pressure is building for further action in this area (see related story, this issue). "Desertification, the loss of biodiversity and climate change are three inextricably linked aspects" of the same problem, commented Yvo de Boer, executive secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

Budget woes

At the end of the meeting, Japan refused to back a five percent increase in the secretariat's core budget, partially because of domestic uncertainty due to the resignation of the prime minister. As a result, parties decided to hold an extraordinary COP meeting in New York during the UN General Assembly to finalise the budget element.

"Even if the ten-year plan was passed, there exists, in the absence of a budget, a major risk that it will not be applied," Ecologists in Action commented.

"We are going to work hard to get over this sole obstacle," said Spanish Environment Minister Cristina Narbona, insisting the conference had otherwise seen "significant moves forward," including greater NGO and civil society involvement in combating desertification and awareness-raising.

The meeting the UNCCD objectives

The objective of the UNCCD is to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought in countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification, particularly in Africa, through effective action at all levels and supported by international cooperation and partnership arrangements. The UNCCD recognises the physical, biological and socioeconomic aspects of desertification, the importance of redirecting technology transfer so that it is demand-driven, and the participation of local communities in combating desertification and land degradation. After a decade of implementation, several limiting factors preventing optimal deployment of the convention have been recognised, including insufficient financial resources, a weak scientific basis, institutional weaknesses and parties' difficulties in reaching consensus. As noted by an expert team that helped draft the strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the convention, much remains to be done to promote sustainable land management in drylands, and there is growing evidence that land degradation and drought will worsen with increased climate change impacts.

Myanmar, speaking on behalf of Asia and the Pacific, said the strategic plan "opens a way for

renewed commitment among stakeholders." The EU commented that approving the ten-year strategic plan and an adequate budget — including solid collaborative work between the UNCCD secretariat and GM — provides the requisite conditions for UNCCD implementation. Fundación IPADE, from Spain, speaking on behalf of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), noted that the plan represents a "last chance" for the convention.

Looking ahead

The ten-year strategic plan and framework to enhance implementation of the convention (2008-2018) provides "a global framework to support the development and implementation of national and regional policies, programmes and measures to prevent, control and reverse desertification/land degradation and mitigate the effects of drought through scientific and technological excellence, raising public awareness, standard setting, advocacy and resource mobilization, thereby contributing to poverty reduction." It aims to provide a common and focused vision for the convention and to address operational inefficiencies within its institutions. The plan links the work programmes of the convention's institutions to this common vision, clarifies their mandates and methods of work, and institutionalises a results-based management approach.

At the meeting, a number of ministers and senior officials stressed that the ten-year strategic plan needs concrete and preferably quantitative goals, to be accompanied by an implementation framework and a substantial budget to be effective (see Trade BioRes, 7 September 2007, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/07-09-07/story2.htm>). Others said the plan should enhance capacity at the local level to adapt to climate change and increase support to developing countries to combat desertification, and enable the adoption of better regional and global integrated strategies.

Discussions on the strategic plan focused on issues related to the implementation framework, i.e. the roles and responsibilities of the various UNCCD institutions, partners and stakeholders in meeting the strategic and operational objectives of

the strategic plan. Parties did not at this time discuss the content of the strategic and operational objectives of the plan, including issues related to trade and market-based mechanisms to finance sustainable land management in drylands. According to sources, an action plan containing measurable targets, quantitative indicators and a timeline will be defined by COP-9.

Recognition of trade in the operational objectives

The strategic objectives of the ten-year plan involve improving the living conditions of affected populations and ecosystems, generating global benefits through effective implementation of the UNCCD, and mobilising resources to support the implementation of the convention. As such, effective partnerships between national and international actors will need to be built. The text considers trade as a tool to achieve different operational objectives, which will guide the action of all UNCCD stakeholders and partners in achieving the overarching strategic objectives. More specifically, the document acknowledges the need for desertification/land degradation to be addressed in relevant international forums such as those pertaining to agricultural trade. It also notes that innovative sources of finance and financing mechanisms to combat land degradation should be identified, including private sector financing, market-based mechanisms, trade, and other financing mechanisms related to biodiversity conservation and sustainable use.

UNCCD COP-9 is expected to be held in Bonn, Germany, in the fall of 2009, in the event that no party makes an offer to host that session and meet the additional financial costs.

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 Congress Against Desertification", PRENSA LATINA, 15 September 2007; "UN Desertification Plan Fails

After Funding Dispute", AFP, 17 September 2007.

In Brief

OECD QUESTIONS BIOFUELS FIX, CALLS FOR WTO CERTIFICATION

A recent report has struck a note of caution with regard to the current biofuels craze.

Prepared for an OECD Roundtable on Sustainable Development held from 11-12 September in Paris, the report says biofuels may "offer a cure that is worse than the disease they seek to heal," citing problems such as the potential a potential conflict between food and fuel crops, threats to biodiversity stemming from land conversion. The report also asserts that biofuels subsidies in the North are expensive and inefficient, and provide limited benefits in terms of carbon mitigation.

The report notes that the only real potential for efficient first generation biofuels production exists in the South; however, countries in the North not only heavily subsidise home-grown biofuels, but also impose tariff barriers against imports. The authors say that the WTO should be used "to step up efforts to lower trade barriers to biofuels imports, allowing developing countries that have ecological and climate systems more suited to biomass production to use their comparative advantage."

Touching on the issue of sustainability certification, the report supports developments at the global level, noting that "misuse of certification schemes and sustainability standards regulations provide a continuing challenge to fair and indiscriminate trade." The authors call for "certification of biofuels - and the design criteria to use them in combination with GHG emissions reduction regulations and preferential tax treatments" - to be placed on the WTO agenda.

The report, written by Richard Doornbosch and Ronald Steenblik and entitled "Biofuels: is the Cure Worse than the Disease?" is available at <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/33/41/39276978.pdf>

ICTSD reporting.

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

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>

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>

Other upcoming meetings

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). Recognising 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

22-23 October, Minneapolis, Minnesota: LESSONS FROM NAFTA: BUILDING A NEW FREE TRADE AGENDA. The purpose of this meeting is to gather North American researchers, policymakers and activists to review NAFTA's past, learn about efforts to expand free trade, and exchange ideas on building a new fair trade agenda. internet: <http://events.iatp.org/index.php?q=node/4>

15-16 November, Nusa Dua Bali, Indonesia: INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON OIL PALM AND ENVIRONMENT 2007. This is an international conference on oil palm and the environment and will be a featured event in the lead up to UNFCCC COP-13 in Bali in December this year. It will highlight environmental issues in the oil palm industry and provide a forum for participants to share experiences and possible solutions that benefit both the environment and the industry. internet: <http://www.insinyur->

kimia.com/v2/index.php?modul=detail&catID=39&key=2222

20-22 November, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: FIFTH ROUNDTABLE MEETING ON SUSTAINABLE PALM: PROMOTING THE GROWTH, TRADE IN AND USE OF SUSTAINABLE PALM OIL. Participants will discuss the latest developments on bringing sustainable palm oil to the marketplace and developing, verifying, and implementing global standards on sustainable palm oil production. Of special interest will be the unveiling of the Roundtable's Certification System, which should be a significant step in opening the door to creating a sustainable palm oil market. internet: [http://www.rspo.org/5th_Roundtable_Meeting_\(RT5\)_on_Sustainable_Palm_Oil.aspx](http://www.rspo.org/5th_Roundtable_Meeting_(RT5)_on_Sustainable_Palm_Oil.aspx)

27-27 June 2008, Villa Erba, Como, Italy. FIRST GLOBAL CONFERENCE ON GMO ANALYSIS. This conference aims to address the science and technology underpinning genetically modified organism (GMO) control and analysis by bringing together international experts willing to share knowledge and participate in promoting international scientific dialogue across diverse yet interdependent areas such as sampling for GMO analysis, consistency of test results, result interpretation and reporting, and harmonizing standards for detection of genetically modified traits. internet: <http://gmoglobalconference.jrc.it/menu.htm>

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.

KEEPING THE LIGHTS ON. By Walt Peterson (Royal Institute of International Affairs, July 2007). This book analyses human energy consumption and the dangers it poses to the planet. It proposes a new approach to thinking about energy, in order to progress and improve in energy security and consumption, maintaining low costs and distributing it to all corners of the globe. For more information, visit <http://shop.earthscan.co.uk/ProductDetails/mcs/productID/790/>

SECURING LIVELIHOODS IN DRYLAND AREAS. By Alessandra Giuliani (Bioversity International, August 2007). This book describes a study, conducted in Syria, of how communities are developing markets for local products derived from neglected and underutilised plants. The data and processes documented in the book aim to show the potential of biodiversity to make a significant contribution to livelihood security in communities that inhabit difficult environments with unique resources. The study also highlights the importance of local cultural knowledge and institutions in sustainable development of biodiversity markets. The book argues that farmers need a broad base of agrobiodiversity to be able to respond and adapt to environmental changes and to improve their production, which may prove especially important in the face of climate change and changing economic and political pressures. For further information visit <http://shop.earthscan.co.uk/ProductDetails/mcs/productID/794/>

A DISASTER IN SEARCH OF SUCCESS: BT COTTON IN GLOBAL SOUTH. By the Community Media Trust (February 2007). Genetically engineered cotton (Bt cotton) is one of the hotly debated subjects around the globe. The biotech industry has worked relentlessly to create interest and market for the product. The book argues that the experiences around the global south in Bt cotton farming suggest that Bt cotton may not be the as miraculous as it sounds, by drawing from the documented experiences of farmers from Mali, South Africa and Indonesia, all of whom have work with Bt cotton. For further information, visit <http://www.iied.org/pubs/display.php?o=145391> IED

BETWEEN SAFETY AND COMMERCE: HOW SANITARY REGULATIONS AFFECT GLOBAL DAIRY TRADE. By Thom Achterbosch. International Food & Agricultural Trade Policy Council, August 2007. The issue brief argues that to maintain safety in dairy commerce, sanitary regulations that govern global dairy trade are necessary, but concedes that it is possible that these regulations may be used for protectionist purposes, and may hinder beneficial trade flows. The issue brief is reporting on an IPC

study that surveyed top 20 companies in the industry and documented how increased sanitary regulations impacted trade. It concludes by arguing that costs can be lowered by reducing regulatory divergence and requesting the aid of global institutions. The issue brief is available at http://www.agritrade.org/Publications/IssueBriefs/between_safety_commerce_dairy.html