



# Bridges Trade BioRes

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

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## Climate & Sustainable Energy

### ORGANIC GROUP OKS PRODUCE FLOWN IN FROM DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

A leading organic organisation in the UK recently said it would continue to certify air freighted fresh produce from developing countries, despite concerns over their "carbon footprint." The decision followed extensive stakeholder consultations, and came with strings attached - the agricultural products would also have to adhere to strict ethical standards.

While the bulk of internationally traded goods are transported by water, roads and rail, aviation also plays an important and growing role. According to the UK organic certifier, emissions of greenhouse gases related to air freighted goods are 177 times greater than those associated with marine transport, and the group had been considering whether to stop labelling products based on their carbon footprint (see Bridges Trade BioRes, 22 June 2007, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/07-06-22/story3.htm>). However, the export of fresh organic produce provides significant development benefits and opportunities for export-led growth for some of the poorest and most vulnerable countries in the world.

In related news, preliminary results of a study on the emissions from marine transport show that greenhouse gas emissions may be as high as double previously thought.

### Organic air freighted goods with strings attached

The UK-based Soil Association, a leading certifier of organic products, said on 25 October that it would apply the organic label to air freighted food from developing countries if they adhered to its Ethical Trade standard or a standard developed by the Fair Trade association.

The Soil Association had been conducting a four-month consultative process, with participants stressing the need to consider the wider emissions context, including the full supply chain for both imported and local organic products in any comparison.

The Soil Association is seeking to push exporters to seek alternatives to air freighting whenever possible, Anna Bradley, chairwoman of the Soil Association said. She noted that "It is neither sustainable nor responsible to encourage poorer farmers to be reliant on air freight, but we recognise that building alternative markets that offer the same social and economic benefits as organic exports take time."

"Our aim is to minimise airfreight by encouraging alternatives, such other forms of shipping, and creating local organic markets," she added.

The Soil Association will be working on the standards over 2008, so they can come into effect in 2009. The exporters would be obliged to comply with the additional ethical standards by 2011.

### **Exporters weary of additional hurdles**

Reactions to the Soil Association announcement have been mixed. Development charity Oxfam welcomed the decision, noting the benefits of applying fair trade standards. Duncan Green, head of research at Oxfam, stressed that "curbing greenhouse gas emissions is an urgent and vital task, but rich countries should start by putting their own houses in order, not by effectively boycotting poor ones." He also said that any new requirements should be phased in gradually, and vulnerable producers should be provided support to comply with them.

Alexander Kasterine, an expert on trade and development International Trade Centre (ITC) said, however, that the Soil Association was missing the point. Its decision "does not address the environmental issue that was at the origin of the debate," according to Kasterine. He said "Food transport has nothing to do with working conditions of farm workers, and only a small proportion of these exporters are currently using fair trade or ethical trade standards." Meeting

additional standards would imply additional costs in the future. Patricia Francis, ITC's executive director said, "Organic production in Africa has been an export success story. ITC is disappointed that the Soil Association will make it harder for African companies to enter lucrative markets. African companies and cooperatives want to trade internationally. To get value-added organic foods onto retail shelves, they have an overwhelming amount of standards to meet. Meeting these standards costs money - laboratories, audits and more. Too many standards will hurt African farmers."

The Kenya High Commission in London drew attention to the development benefits its emergent perishable goods industry provides, which supports one million Kenyans. The country has been highly critical of the food miles concept, and launched a campaign dubbed 'Grown under the Sun' to inform British consumers about the development benefits associated with sourcing fresh produce from Kenya. The Kenya High Commission called for a sense of proportion, quoting UK Trade and Development minister Gareth Thomas who said that "driving around six miles to a supermarket to buy some Kenyan green beans emits the same amount of carbon as air-freighting that pack of green beans."

### **Emissions from marine transport on the rise**

Meanwhile, Intertanko, a global group representing tanker operators, has released informal preliminary data showing that greenhouse gas emissions from marine transport have grown rapidly, and are almost twice as high as previously thought. The rapid growth over the last six years is due both to the growing volume of trade, and increasing shipping speed that leads to more fuel being burned. Environmental groups in the US have been pushing for limits on greenhouse gas emissions from marine vessels in US territorial waters (see Bridges Trade BioRes, 5 October 2007, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/07-10-05/story2.htm>).

The Intertanko report, when completed, will feed into the International Maritime Organisation, which deals, among other things, with emissions from shipping.

## Additional resources

To access the documents from the Soil Association consultation on air freighted goods, visit <http://www.soilassociation.org/airfreight>

"Ships' CO2 'twice that of planes'," BBC ONLINE, 19 October 2007; "UK Organic Group Says Air-Freight Food OK if Aids Poor," REUTERS, 26 October 2007; "Organic not organic if it's air-freighted, says Soil Association," FOODQUALITYNEWS, 25 October 2007; "ITC and Soil Association debate merits of air freight standards," NEWCONSUMER, 1 November 2007.

## Standards

### WTO: WORK ON VOLUNTARY STANDARDS TO CONTINUE

A group at the WTO has been discussing transparency issues with regard to the large number of both government-set and private standards, hoping to improve export opportunities and simplify trade in food products.

At a meeting of the WTO Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Products (SPS), held from 18-19 October, Members continued to discuss what role - if any - the WTO could play in regulating the vast array of standards set by the private sector. The Committee also focused on standard agenda items related to specific country rules regarding food, animal and plant safety that affect other countries' exports.

### What role for the WTO with regard to private standards?

Two years ago, St. Vincent and the Grenadines drew attention to the challenges it faced when trying to access the EU market due to strict standards set by commercial supermarket chains (see BRIDGES Weekly, 6 July 2005, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/05-07-06/story3.htm>), and a discussion on voluntary standards has continued at SPS meetings since then (see Bridges Trade BioRes, 6 July 2007, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/07-07-06/story4.htm>). According to delegates, the issue

has come to somewhat of an impasse, with countries disagreeing on whether the SPS Committee and WTO have the competency to deal with private sector standards.

At the latest meeting, Committee Chair Marinus PC Huige (The Netherlands) asked countries whether they thought the SPS Committee was the correct venue for a discussion on private sector standards - and if so, what the scope of its work should be.

Developing countries including Egypt and many other African countries intervened in support of continued engagement at the WTO. Private sector standard-setting was of key importance to developing countries, they said, given that they led to additional costs and strongly affected potential export opportunities. They further noted that while the standards were in theory voluntary, they became quasi-mandatory in practice, and posed non-tariff barriers to exports. These countries argued that governments should take responsibility for the WTO-compatibility of voluntary standards set by companies within their borders, and that the SPS Committee could support the process.

Developed countries, on the other hand, said the WTO did not have the mandate to deal with standards set by entities other than governments. They added that many of the standards discussed did not cover food safety - the traditional province of the SPS Committee - but rather environment, packaging and other issues that might be raised in other WTO bodies, such as the Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade.

The EU said that the discussion at the WTO had already encouraged private sector standard-setting bodies to look more carefully at the development impacts of their activities.

Many Members agreed that future discussions should be based on proposals for how to address the challenges posed by private sector standards, and ought to focus on case studies and countries' concrete experiences.

### New database to ease info access

At a workshop on transparency preceding the SPS meeting, the WTO Secretariat presented a new online database set up to help countries and companies access information about the standards their trading partners have implemented. The SPS Information Management System database covers regular and emergency notifications, and recognition of equivalence among different standards.

At the meeting itself, discussion also focused on the specific concerns countries have raised with regard to certain regulations and measures other countries have put in place to deal with food, animal and plant health and safety. For example, Thailand had raised concerns over Australia's import restrictions on prawns and prawn products, and the US over India's avian influenza restrictions. Members also discussed food safety and standards set by China, as a part of a review mechanism required as a follow-up to the country's WTO accession in 2001.

Under the SPS Agreement, WTO Members are allowed to set a standard of human and plant protection that they consider 'appropriate,' but any trade restrictions must be backed by a scientific risk assessment and applied only to the extent necessary to attain the stated goal.

The next meeting of the SPS Committee is scheduled for 2-3 April 2008.

### Additional resources

The WTO's SPS Information Management System is available at <http://spsims.wto.org/>

"'Untransparent' private standards criticized in a week of more transparency," WTO RELEASE, 19 October 2007; ICTSD reporting.

## Fishery Negotiations at the WTO

### FISHERIES NEGOTIATING TEXT DUE SOON, SAYS CHAIR

The chair of the Doha Round negotiations on rules governing fisheries subsidy spending has said

that he is ready to issue a draft agreement text to serve as the basis for future discussions, though this would depend to some extent on the agriculture and industrial goods talks.

Chair Ambassador Guillermo Valles Games (Uruguay) closed four days of meetings on 18 October by saying that Members' discussions on each others' proposals were starting to yield "diminishing returns," and that a text would be necessary in order to move the negotiations forward.

He acknowledged that the negotiations on rules - which cover fisheries subsidies as well as anti-dumping and industrial subsidies — were not "operating in a vacuum," and would be linked to the evolution of other key issues, notably agriculture and non-agricultural market access (NAMA). Revised versions of the agriculture and NAMA draft texts issued in July by the negotiating committee chairs are now expected sometime in mid-November, officials suggest.

Valles Games had said in late September that he would not issue a rules text before the agriculture and industrial goods draft deals were available. Sources say that he now suggested that the rules group should not wait too long to move its work forward.

Government payments to fishing fleets have been blamed for encouraging overfishing, thus contributing to the dramatic depletion of global marine fish stocks. Some claim that creating strong rules to restrict fisheries subsidy spending could be the Doha Round's single greatest contribution to the environment.

Several delegates have complained that the level of ambition in the fisheries discussions has been waning. They also say that the mood is increasingly pessimistic, particularly following meetings last week, which focused primarily on an Indonesian proposal for fisheries subsidy rules that many called confused, unhelpful, and overly complex.

The principal cleavage in the negotiations is between advocates of a 'top-down' general prohibition on fisheries subsidy payments with negotiated exceptions, and countries that want a

'bottom-up' ban only on specific kinds of subsidies.

### Indonesian revision generates opposition

Indonesia claimed that its paper (TN/RL/GEN/150/Rev.2, available at <http://docsonline.wto.org>) represented a "solid middle ground" between the two approaches. The new proposal was a revised version of a paper that delegates had strongly criticised in September (see Bridges Trade BioRes, 5 October 2007, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/07-10-05/story5.htm>).

The current version reinserts a more extensive subsidy prohibition - absent from the paper's previous incarnation - banning payments to support the construction of fishing vessels or to offset their operating costs. Indonesia told Bridges that the latest paper received a warmer reception because of this wider prohibition.

Even so, support was limited and came mostly from the Japanese delegation. During last week's talks, Japan said that the Indonesian paper represented a compromise between members' positions and thus could be the basis for further discussion. Japan, Korea, and Taiwan have been the most vocal opponents of a top-down blanket ban on fisheries subsidy payments, in opposition to a far larger group of countries including the US, New Zealand, Chile, Argentina, Brazil, and Australia.

In addition to the prohibitions, the Indonesian proposal spelled out detailed procedures for determining whether subsidies were causing injury to fisheries resources for the purposes of introducing countervailing duties. It also included a provision allowing subsidies for small fishermen from developing countries and permitting their exemption from fisheries resource management programmes.

For many delegates, the special and differential treatment component in the Indonesian proposal remained too loose. Switzerland, Canada, and the EU in particular expressed concern about too many exemptions for developing countries. India thought the notification requirements the paper called for were too burdensome. New Zealand

and Malaysia said that they would rather see a broad-based prohibition than Indonesia's lists of actionable and non-actionable subsidies.

Korea and Taiwan, on the other hand, complained that the proposed rules were too restrictive. They said that assistance to support operating costs - such as fuel, bait, and ice - should not be prohibited unless they directly harm marine resources. They added that subsidies for small fishermen should not be limited to developing countries.

Generally, while delegates expressed polite appreciation for Indonesia's work, they said that its proposals - which some told Bridges had floundered "from one end of the spectrum to the other" - underlined the need for a text that will establish a platform for more focused, constructive negotiations.

### Argentina revises proposal

Argentina introduced a revised version of a paper on special and differential treatment (S&DT) for developing countries it initially released with Brazil in early September, adding a second article focused on 'adverse effects' to fisheries.

The earlier joint proposal called for permitting subsidies for developing countries that could demonstrate that their fisheries production was too small to significantly deplete fish stocks. The new version now includes a provision that would oblige developing countries that apply S&DT exceptions to take into account any adverse effects on fish stocks. Under this stipulation, developing countries are allowed to provide subsidies in order to increase their fishing capacity, but not above the maximum sustainable yield - the highest catch that can be taken from a fish stock over an indefinite period. The text would thus require all developing countries to apply some sort of national fisheries management system.

The Argentinean delegation presented the new paper as an informal room document rather than a formal submission, due to time limitations. The proposal was not debated at the recent meeting; discussions on it were limited to private consultations among delegations.

## The crystal ball epoch

Sources report that the next step in the negotiations will be Valles Games' view on the talks, though exactly what his negotiating draft will look like remains somewhat of a mystery. As in other areas of the Doha Round talks, with Members far from consensus on crucial issues, the chair will have to exercise his own judgement about what might prove broadly acceptable - what one delegate described as "crystal ball stuff." Though negotiators all expect provisions on certain issues, such as S&DT, how these will be constructed is anyone's guess, they say.

They may not have to wait for too long to find out: Valles Games said that he would likely issue the text in time for delegates to discuss it at the next meeting of the Negotiating Group on Rules, tentatively scheduled for the week of 3 December. Sources say that the Uruguayan ambassador emphasised that his text was not intended to be a near-finalised deal, but a tool to encourage more focused, result-oriented work - not the end of the road, but the beginning.

ICTSD reporting.

## In Brief

### LDC GROUP SUPPORTS BIODIVERSITY AMENDMENT IN WTO COUNCIL ON INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

At a recent meeting on intellectual property at the WTO, the group of least-developed countries come out in support of a proposal to amend TRIPS rules to require patent applicants to disclose the origin of genetic resources or traditional knowledge used in their inventions.

At the WTO Council for Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) from 23-24 October, the 32 LDC Members of the WTO officially announced support for the biodiversity-related TRIPS amendment proposed by a group of several developing countries including Brazil, China, Ecuador, India, and South Africa (see Bridges Weekly, 13 June 2007, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/07-06->

[13/story4.htm](http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/07-10-31/story4.htm)). The proposal also has the support of the African Group.

This potential addition to multilateral trade rules has been championed by Peru, one of the most vocal critics of the misappropriation of biological resources and traditional knowledge through patents ("bio-piracy") without adequate recompense. The Peruvian delegation presented to the TRIPS Council a document on the country's experience with 'bad' patents - those that failed to involve proof of consent or benefit sharing. The delegation reiterated that a formal TRIPS amendment was necessary to combat bio-piracy. It stated that "the patent system works only if the rights of those who made the invention possible are acknowledged... there is an urgent need to rethink the patent system and to consider how to make it more balanced."

Brazil, India, Pakistan, Thailand, Tanzania and other developing country backers of the proposed new TRIPS article ('29bis') expressed support for Peru's statements. They insist that such requirements — with penalties including patent revocation — are necessary to support patent-related obligations arising from the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

The US and Japan are sceptical of - or outright opposed to — claims that a mandatory disclosure requirement in the TRIPS Agreement is necessary. They argue that bio-piracy could be addressed by other means.

Due to this lack of agreement, Members are set to continue discussions of the issue at the next TRIPS Council, which is tentatively scheduled for February 2008.

For a full report on the WTO TRIPS Council, see Bridges Weekly at <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/07-10-31/story2.htm>

ICTSD reporting.

## US DRAFT CLIMATE BILLS TRIGGER TRADE CONCERNS

Two climate change bills currently under review in the US Senate include elements that have raised concern among some trading partners because they would require exporters of energy intensive goods to the US to buy greenhouse gas “emissions allowances” on the US market.

The most recent bill, introduced on 18 October by Joe Lieberman (Independent) and John Warner (Republican), would cap greenhouse gases stemming from 75 percent of the US economy and would introduce emissions trading and other market-based tools.

Defensive action to mitigate potential trade and competitiveness impacts envisioned in the draft bills would target countries without stringent climate regulations in place, such as China, which is currently not required to make emissions reductions under the Kyoto Protocol. The US itself has also rejected the Kyoto Protocol, and the actual enactment of any legislation to cap greenhouse gas emissions is not expected in the near future.

Meanwhile, on 25 October French President Nicolas Sarkozy called for a European levy on imports from countries outside the Kyoto Protocol, namely the US and Canada. European legislators have called for such border tax adjustments from time to time, but the European Commission has not moved on the issue, preferring a less confrontational approach (see Bridges Trade BioRes, 18 March 2005, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/05-03-18/inbrief.htm#3>).

Michael Moore, former Director-General of the WTO, commented on the draft US legislation, saying it “could be the focus of some disputes” at the WTO. He questioned whether de facto price adjustments at the border were legal, especially in cases where some trading partners were non-parties to the environmental agreements underpinning such adjustments. The WTO-compatibility of climate-related border tax adjustments discussed in Europe is also contested.

Countries are set to discuss the future of the global climate change regime at a summit in Bali, Indonesia, from 3-14 December this year. Trade ministers will also convene at the event.

“U.S. Senators Propose Compulsory Greenhouse Gas Cuts,” ENS, 18 October 2007; “INTERVIEW:US Climate Change Bills Risk Trade Rows-Ex WTO Head,” DOW JONES, 24 October 2007; “Climate change: Sarkozy backs carbon tax, EU levy on non-Kyoto imports,” AFP, 25 October 2007.

## TOYS MADE IN CHINA UNDER FIRE

A batch of toys made in China has recently been recalled in the US due to lead-related concerns.

Approximately 20 million Chinese-manufactured toys have been recalled in the US over the past four months. Concerns have surfaced in other markets as well, and over products such as dog food and toothpaste.

These issues have gotten considerable media attention and triggered consumer weariness in many countries. A US Consumer Report poll showed that 89 percent of consumers are aware of the recalls, with 30 percent saying they would buy few toys for the holidays and 30 percent saying they would not buy toys made in China.

US Congress has started discussing new legislation to decrease the levels of lead permitted in toys, and some congressmen have even suggested a ban on lead-containing products altogether. It is also looking to increase the mandate, workforce, and budget of its Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) in order to better regulate possibly harmful products. Currently the CPSC has one staffer in charge of product inspection.

The EU is also looking to tighten legislation.

China has raised concerns that new product regulations in the EU and the US are branding a “new form of protectionism” at a time when China’s exports have been growing at unprecedented levels.

“US Recalls More China-Made Products for Lead in Paint,” PLANET ARK, 26 October 2007;

“Kuneva welcomes Mattel recall on lead paint toys,” NEW EUROPE: THE EUROPEAN WEEKLY, 27 October 2007; “New Safeguards Against Lead in Thomas and Friends Toys, but Parents Wary,” ABC NEWS, 29 October 2007; “Union: Trade deals partly to blame for lead problems,” PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE, 30 October 2007.

### **FRANCE REMAINS SUSPICIOUS OF BIOTECHNOLOGY**

French President Nicolas Sarkozy recently said he would allow no planting of genetically modified (GM) crops in France until they were evaluated by a new authority on genetically modified organisms (GMOs) set to be launched later this year.

Speaking at a national conference on the environment on 25 October, Sarkozy said “I don’t want to be in contradiction with EU laws, but I have to make a choice. In line of the precautionary principle, I wish that the commercial cultivation of genetically modified pesticide GMOs be suspended.” He added that this did not mean that no GMOs would be allowed in the future.

Sarkozy’s statement came as Europe is seeking to implement a WTO ruling against EU-wide and national moratoria on the approval of new biotech products (see Bridges Trade BioRes, 6 October 2006, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/06-10-06/story1.htm>).

European Agriculture Commissioner Mariann Fischer Boel said a full ban on GM crops would clearly go against the rules and that France would lose in court if it implemented such a ban

The MON810 corn variety, produced by US-based biotech firm Monsanto, is the only biotech maize approved for cultivation in the EU. The corn is designed to resist the European corn borer, a pest that attacks maize stalks and thrives in warmer climates in southern Europe. In France, which has been notoriously sceptical of GMOs, only 1.5 percent of cultivated maize land was sown with GMO maize this year, but some farmers have supported the use GM crops to boost yields.

Several EU countries have banned the use of GM maize. Hungary, one of the EU biggest grain producers, banned the planting of MON 810 seed in January 2005. This year, Germany decided that maize produced from MON 810 seeds could only be sold with an accompanying monitoring plan for assessing environmental impacts. Austria is under pressure to lift regional bans on GMOs.

In a statement, US biotech company Monsanto said Sarkozy’s statement was “incomprehensible” and that its GMO technology helped fulfil environmental goals such as reducing pesticide use and economising on water.

In related news, the European Commission authorised three GM corn varieties and a GM sugar beet on 24 October after member states had failed to reach agreement on their approval (see Bridges Trade BioRes, 5 October 2007, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/07-10-05/inbrief.htm#4>).

“France bans GM crops before evaluation”, ALLABOUTFEED.NET, 30 October 2007; “French Skepticism of GMO Crops Signals Policy Shift”, DEUTSCHE WELLE, 27 October 2007; “Monsanto Regrets Sarkozy Stance on GMOs”, REUTERS, 26 October 2007; “France Suspends Planting of GMO Crops”, PLANETARK, 26 October 2007; “EU Environment Chief Opposes Two GMO Maizes”, CHECKBIOTECH.ORG, 26 October 2007.

### **GEO-4: GLOBAL GROWTH IS OUTPACING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Twenty years after the Bruntland Commission coined the concept of sustainable development, a major UNEP stocktaking exercise of the state of the global environment has found that humanity has failed to come even close to achieving it.

The fourth edition of UNEP’s Global Environmental Outlook (GEO-4), focusing on Environment for Development and launched on 25 October, warns that humans are destroying the planet faster than it can regenerate. Despite best intentions and leaps of progress - especially in cutting emissions and ensuring clean water - there has not been enough progress to hem in the



destructive externalities of global growth. According to the report, twenty years of political support for sustainability has not produced enough results.

The world may now be facing its sixth major wave of extinctions, warns the GEO-4 report. Many of our ecosystems are not being used sustainably; 64 percent are degraded. Fisheries exploitation, for example, is 250 percent above a sustainable level.

Looking at human populations specifically, the report notes that global population has grown 34 percent since 1987, and its growing needs are quickly eroding the planet's resources through overfishing, deforestation, desertification, reduction in water quality and quantity and increased air pollution. According to a UNEP official, climate change is intricately linked with all of these issues, and should remain on the forefront of the battle to save the planet.

To access the GEO-4 report, visit <http://www.unep.org/geo/>

ICTSD reporting; "UN Planetary Report Paints Bleak Regional Picture," PLANET ARK, 26 October 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

5-10 November, Yokohama, Japan: 43RD SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER COUNCIL AND ASSOCIATED COMMITTEES. internet: [http://www.itto.or.jp/live/PageDisplayHandler?p\\_ageId=189](http://www.itto.or.jp/live/PageDisplayHandler?p_ageId=189)

11-15 November, Rome, Italy: TWENTIETH WORLD ENERGY CONGRESS. The main topic of the congress is "The Energy Future in an Interdependent World," and it will also focus on

social issues that developing and emerging countries face in relation to the international energy market, and sustainable progress for industrialised countries. internet: <http://www.worldenergy.org>

12-16 November, Bangkok, Thailand: FIRST MEETING OF THE OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP ON MERCURY. UNEP Chemicals, in response to the 24th Session of the UNEP Governing Council (GC) that called for the development of an overarching policy framework for the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership, will convene the first Open-ended Working Group on Mercury (OEWG). The OEWG will consist of representatives from governments, regional economic integration organisations and stakeholder representatives and will review and assess options for enhanced voluntary measures and new or existing international legal instruments on mercury. The Decision calls for an overarching framework for collaborative actions and the existing partnerships in artisan and small scale mining, coal combustion, the chlor-alkali sector, mercury containing products and air transport and fate research. internet: <http://www.chem.unep.ch/mercury/default.htm>

12-16 November, Valencia, Spain: 27TH SESSION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON CLIMATE CHANGE. IPCC-27 will focus on the adoption of the IPCC's Fourth Assessment Report (AR4). For more information contact: Rudie Bourgeois, IPCC Secretariat; tel: +41-22-730-8208; fax: +41-22-7 30-8025/13; email: [ipcc...@wmo.int](mailto:ipcc...@wmo.int); internet: <http://www.ipcc.ch/>

13-14 November, Geneva, Switzerland: NEXT GENERATION BIO-ETHANOL. internet: <http://www.cmtevents.com/eventschedule.aspx?v=071148&>

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>

#### **Other upcoming meetings**

20-22 November, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: FIFTH ROUNDTABLE MEETING ON SUSTAINABLE PALM OIL: PROMOTING THE GROWTH, TRADE IN AND USE OF SUSTAINABLE PALM OIL. Participants at this meeting will discuss the latest developments in 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 is expected to be a 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)

#### **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](mailto:msell@ictsd.ch).

BIOFUELLING POVERTY: WHY THE EU RENEWABLE-FUEL TARGET MAY BE DISASTROUS FOR POOR PEOPLE. By Oxfam (November 2007). This paper looks at the European Commission's targets for biofuel development in Member States. It claims that the target may cause a scramble in the developing countries to supply and argues that this may pose a serious threat to vulnerable people who may be forced to bear the costs of emissions reductions in the EU. Instead, the paper asserts, there must be social standards incorporated into the sustainability framework and mechanisms developed to evaluate the impact of the policy on developing country populations and adjust accordingly. To access the paper visit [http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/policy/trade/bn\\_biofuels.html](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/policy/trade/bn_biofuels.html)

PAVING THE WAY FOR AGROFUELS - EU POLICY, SUSTAINABILITY CRITERIA, AND

CLIMATE CALCULATIONS. By Tamra Gilbertson, Nina Holland, Stella Semino and Kevin Smith (Transnational Institute, Corporate Europe Observatory, and Grupo de Reflexion Rural, September 2007). This paper summarises EU policy making on agrofuels to date. It provides a full survey of current international efforts to develop 'sustainability' standards, drawing attention to problems with existing certification schemes, in particular the failure to consult affected groups in the global South. The paper also looks at the possibility that agrofuel production could in future be funded through the Clean Development Mechanism of the Kyoto Protocol, which would provide a huge financial boost to the expansion of agrofuel plantations. To download the paper visit [http://www.tni.org/detail\\_pub.phtml?know\\_id=202](http://www.tni.org/detail_pub.phtml?know_id=202)

THE ECONOMICS OF US ETHANOL IMPORT TARIFFS WITH A CONSUMPTION MANDATE AND TAX CREDIT. By Harry de Gorter and David R. Just (Cornell University, October 2007). This paper analyses the impact of an ethanol import tariff in conjunction with a consumption mandate and tax credit. It takes into account many different ways this form of protectionism may be utilised, and the impact the action may have on Brazil, the largest producer and exporter of ethanol. To access the paper visit [http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=1024532](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1024532)

THE ECONOMICS OF A BIOFUEL CONSUMPTION MANDATE AND EXCISE-TAX EXEMPTION: AN EMPIRICAL EXAMPLE OF US ETHANOL POLICY. By Harry de Gorter and David R. Just (Cornell University, 24 October 2007). This paper develops a general framework to evaluate the effects on agricultural and gasoline markets of a consumption mandate and excise-tax exemption, the two most prominent public biofuel policies. To illustrate the complexity and importance of the interaction between biofuel mandates and tax exemptions, the paper calibrates a stylised empirical model of the US ethanol market. The study asserts that its model is well suited to form a basis for evaluating the social benefits of the mandate versus the tax exemption in reducing local pollution, global warming and reliance on oil,

and in enhancing farm incomes, reducing tax costs of farm subsidies and promoting rural development. To access the paper visit [http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=1024525](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1024525)

**THE WELFARE ECONOMICS OF AN EXCISE-TAX EXEMPTION FOR BIOFUELS.** By Harry de Gorter and David R. Just (Cornell University, 17 September 2007). This paper has developed a generalised theory in order to analyse the efficiency and income distribution effects of a biofuel consumer tax credit and the interaction effects with a price contingent farm subsidy. Using the US ethanol market as a stylised example, it shows how ethanol prices rise above the gasoline price by the amount of the tax credit. It argues that corn farmers therefore gain directly while gasoline consumers only gain from any reduction in world oil prices due to the extra ethanol production and domestic oil producers lose. The paper calibrates a stylised empirical model of the US corn market to illustrate the welfare effects of a tax credit. To access the study, visit [http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=1015542](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1015542)

**THE PUBLIC, THE MEDIA AND AGRICULTURAL BIOTECHNOLOGY.** Edited by Brossard, Shanahan and Clint Nesbitt (CABI, May 2007). This book is a compendium of different scholarly writings on the issue of public perceptions of genetically modified organisms (GMOs), modern agricultural biotechnology, and the role of the press. It explores public perceptions of agricultural biotechnology using case studies and analyses of the "mosaic" of public opinion and news media behavior in the U.S and other countries, including the U.K., Germany, India, Switzerland, the Philippines, and South Africa. The book argues that public debate over genetically modified (GM) food can vary dramatically depending on cultural and national context. For further information see [http://www.cabi.org/bk\\_bookdisplay.asp?action=display&openMenu=search&PID=2004](http://www.cabi.org/bk_bookdisplay.asp?action=display&openMenu=search&PID=2004)

**ENVIRONMENT ENCYCLOPEDIA & DIRECTORY 2007.** December 2007. This book examines environment issues throughout the world, providing an easy-to-use reference source covering a wide variety of environmental affairs

that are brought together conveniently into one volume. It contains a systematic A-Z section of key terms including deforestation, greenhouse effect, accelerated erosion, energy, balance, landfill, a comprehensive directory section organised alphabetically by country listing 3000 government and non-governmental organisations both national and international, an extensive index lists environmental organisations according to their fields of activity, a series of maps which show areas of pollution, rainforest, and other environmental features both regionally and worldwide, an extensive bibliography of relevant periodicals and a comprehensive Who's Who section of leading personalities actively involved with environmental organisations. For further information see

[http://www.routledge.com/shopping\\_cart/products/product\\_detail.asp?sku=&isbn=9781857433777&pc=](http://www.routledge.com/shopping_cart/products/product_detail.asp?sku=&isbn=9781857433777&pc=)

**NEGOTIATING AND IMPLEMENTING: A MANUAL FOR NGOS.** By the United Nations Environmental Programme, Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future, el Centro de Estudios Ambientales and Earth Media, May 2007. This manual attempts to link the two areas of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEA) formulation and civil society participation. Its goal is to both strengthen multi-stakeholder participation and increase political momentum for effective MEA development, implementation and enforcement. It provides step-by-step background information and approaches, 'inside the process' guidance, and expert advice on how stakeholders can effectively engage in developing and implementing MEAs. It is a companion to UNEP's Guidelines on Compliance with and Enforcement of MEAs (2002), and its Manual on Compliance with and Enforcement of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (2006). The manual is available at <http://www.unep.org/dec/docs/MEAs%20Final.pdf>

**AGRICULTURAL POLICIES IN OECD COUNTRIES: MONITORING AND EVALUATION 2007.** By the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development, OECD (October 2007). Support to farmers in OECD countries accounted for 27 percent of farm receipts in 2006, a drop of 2 percentage

points from 2005. However, for the OECD as a whole, there has been little change in the level of producer support since the late 1990s. For further information see [http://www.oecd.org/document/0/0,3343,en\\_2649\\_37401\\_39508672\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_37401,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/0/0,3343,en_2649_37401_39508672_1_1_1_37401,00.html)