



# Bridges Trade BioRes

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

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## **Climate & Sustainable Energy**

### **ENERGY CONFERENCE CONSIDERS TRADE ISSUES**

A recent conference among major players in the realm of energy has called on the global trading system to support the stability and fairness of energy trade. Gerald Doucet, Secretary General of the World Energy Congress, suggested that the WTO should "open a new chapter" of energy negotiations, looking in particular at new issues arising due to the need to significantly increase the use of clean and renewable energy.

A new report on 'embodied carbon' in trade shows that consumer products imported from the emerging economies come with a significant carbon footprint, raising issues about the responsibilities of producer and consumer countries with regard to emissions reductions - and the need for a comprehensive global regime to tackle climate change and avoid leakage of carbon emissions from countries with stringent climate policies to those without.

Meanwhile, the 2007 edition of the International Energy Agency's Global Energy Outlook is forecasting rapid growth in global energy consumption and carbon emissions, especially as the emerging economies grow even more quickly than previously projected. According to the IEA, carbon-intensive fossil fuels will continue to dominate the scene unless unprecedented action is taken to steer the world towards a low-carbon economy.

### **Lamy addresses World Energy Congress**

Italy hosted the tri-annual World Energy Congress in Rome from 11-15 November. The congress was convened by the World Energy Council, which was established in the 1920s and has private-sector members across energy sectors and

94 countries, representing both energy producers and consumers.

The event covered a plethora of themes, focusing on issues ranging from different energy options to energy security and climate change. Among the hot items on the agenda was the global trade context, with WTO Director-General Pascal Lamy delivering one of the keynote addresses to the congress.

Lamy pointed out that while the rules of the WTO do not deal with energy as a distinct sector, trade rules apply to all forms of trade, including in energy goods and services. However, as energy is a very particular sector, the rules may not always be well-adapted to it. According to Lamy, more attention is now being focused on the issues at the interface between energy and trade rules, and as "WTO rules are living creatures, well capable of adjusting to changing realities" they could evolve to respond to new commercial and political needs and realities. He noted that "short of having a specific agreement on energy trade," energy already featured in various areas of the Doha round, such as negotiations on energy services and on environmental goods and services.

As the conference wrapped up, World Energy Congress Secretary General Doucet addressed climate change and trade, warning against a "trade war between those who are concerned over carbon emissions and those who are not." Such a trade war could come about if countries with stringent climate policies decided to make use of border adjustments with regard to imports from countries taking a lax approach to climate change mitigation. Under a climate change agreement with global buy-in, such problems would be unlikely to surface.

Doucet also urged WTO Members to craft an international accord on renewable energy. Currently, standards, subsidies and other measures to encourage the development and use of renewable energy have not been considered within the WTO context in a comprehensive manner, and there is a lack of clarity with regard to the legality of some measures.

### **Embodied carbon in trade - who is responsible, and how should it be tackled?**

A recent report from the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research at the University of East Anglia in the UK has raised questions regarding current carbon accounting systems, which are based on the nation state. Entitled "Who Owns China's Carbon Emissions?," the report concluded that net exports accounted for 23 percent of China's total CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. This was due to China's trade surplus and the relatively high level of carbon intensity of its economy.

The report called on developed countries to take strong first steps to tackle climate change in order to address their responsibilities both with regard to their historic and current real emissions, and to intensify technology transfer to developing countries, including economies they are sourcing large amounts of their consumer goods from.

Other commentators, such as New Economics Foundation Director Andrew Simms, has accused developed countries of 'carbon laundering' their economies by outsourcing polluting industries to developing countries. Trade unions and representatives of heavy industry have, on the other hand, raised concerns over jobs lost in developed countries due to industry relocating to developing countries with less strict climate standards - leading to carbon leakage and the same, or even larger, amounts of carbon dioxide ending up in the atmosphere.

At the World Energy Congress in Rome, Fatih Birol, Chief Economist of the IEA, noted the need to involve all actors, saying that "A third of Chinese emissions come from industrial activities aimed at producing goods to be exported throughout the world and this is why the problem should be tackled jointly by all countries. We have no alternative solution other than providing incentives and involving China in working towards a sustainable world."

As climate change negotiators from around the world meet in Bali from 4-13 December to create a roadmap for negotiations on a treaty to tackle climate change after 2012, when the current phase of the Kyoto Protocol expires, some of these

discussions related to climate change and trade are likely to surface.

### **China, India key players with regard to future emissions**

The International Energy Agency's World Energy Outlook was released on 7 November, and focused on non-IEA members China and India in particular. The report noted that global energy consumption is going up, not down, and government inaction in several key policy sectors is to blame. The report confirmed that China is about to surpass the US as the world's top energy consumer and carbon emitter, and said that India is set to overtake Japan and Russia in the next couple decades.

The IEA warned that governments must implement all policies in consideration now to have any hope of establishing a sustainable world. The World Energy Outlook showed that oil and gas imports, along with coal use and greenhouse gas emissions would rise to unimaginable heights by 2030, at rates even faster than predicted in last year's report, unless effective policies were enacted. The world's energy needs stood to increase by over 50 percent above present needs in 2030, said the report.

The report urged the international community to look seriously at India and China in the context of climate change mitigation, noting that their energy use was set to double between 2005 and 2030. The IEA set up an alternative policy scenario incorporating India and China, leading to a more secure, competitive and lower-carbon energy system. Under this scenario, global energy-related CO2 emissions would level off in the 2020s and global oil demand would be 14 million barrels per day lower than under a business as usual scenario.

The report encouraged governments to focus in particular on improving energy efficiency, as this would be the fastest way to curb demand and emissions growth short-term, especially for China and India.

### **Additional resources**

To access Lamy's speech at the World Energy Congress, see

[http://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/sppl\\_e/spp180\\_e.htm](http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/sppl_e/spp180_e.htm)

To access the study on embodied carbon in trade, entitled "Who Owns China's Carbon Emissions?" visit

[http://tyndall.webapp1.uea.ac.uk/publications/briefing\\_notes/bn23.pdf](http://tyndall.webapp1.uea.ac.uk/publications/briefing_notes/bn23.pdf)

ICTSD reporting; "Why China Could Blame Its CO2 on West," WALL STREET JOURNAL, 12 November 2007; ""The Next 10 Years are Critical - the World Energy Outlook Makes the Case for Stepping up Co-operation with China and India to Address Global Energy Challenges," IEA PRESS RELEASE, 7 November 2007; "INTERVIEW-IEA says energy outlook gloomiest ever," REUTERS, 7 November 2007; "China to Topple US as Top Energy User After 2010 - IEA," PLANET ARK, 8 November 2007; "China, India Growth Force Climate Change Action - IEA," PLANET ARK, 8 November 2007; "World to Stay Hooked on Fossil Fuels - IEA," PLANET ARK, 8 November 2007," AFP, 15 November 2007; "The Next 10 Years are Critical - the World Energy Outlook Makes the Case for Stepping up Co-operation with China and India to Address Global Energy Challenges," IEA PRESS RELEASE, 7 November 2007; "INTERVIEW-IEA says energy outlook gloomiest ever," REUTERS, 7 November 2007; "China to Topple US as Top Energy User After 2010 - IEA," PLANET ARK, 8 November 2007; "China, India Growth Force Climate Change Action - IEA," PLANET ARK, 8 November 2007; "World to Stay Hooked on Fossil Fuels - IEA," PLANET ARK, 8 November 2007."

## **Plant Genetic Resources**

### **FARMERS' RIGHTS, FUNDING DISCUSSED AT SEED TREATY MEETING**

A recent meeting on the preservation and exchange of agricultural seeds saw divisive discussions on farmers' rights and funding issues that underpin the implementation of a relatively new treaty on the topic.

The second meeting of the Governing Body of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture was held in Rome from 29 October to 2 November.

As the event opened, Shakeel Bhatti, Secretary of the Governing Body of the Treaty, noted that "World agriculture is under enormous pressure to produce more food in a sustainable way. Agricultural production needs to be improved by developing food crops that can adapt to threats such as climate change, desertification, pests and diseases and at the same time meet the demand of a population that will grow from six billion people today to nine billion in 2050."

The agricultural resources governed by the Treaty will be important in helping to resolve the problems Bhatti highlighted. Participants at the meeting of its governing body discussed, among other, funding schemes, the development of a compliance mechanism and farmers' rights.

### **Civil society calls for Treaty suspension**

Civil society groups participated actively in the meeting, advocating for a comprehensive recognition of farmers' rights. Due to problems in raising funds for the core activities under the Treaty, a coalition of development and farmers' organisations called for its suspension. They felt that the Treaty thus far had improved plant breeders' access to plant genetic resources, while doing little to help small farmers in developing countries and to ensure that benefits flow back to these stewards of much of the world's plant genetic diversity.

"The Treaty, hosted in Rome by the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), must halt the exchange of crop germplasm - the critical material for plant breeding. The suspension should remain in effect until governments meet the minimal obligations of the Treaty including its core financial arrangements," said Ibrahima Coulibaly of ROPPA (regional farmers' organisation of West Africa). These core obligations would involve, for example, support to farmers' in situ conservation of seeds - not only support of ex situ seed collections.

Pat Mooney of ETC Group said that the real beneficiaries of the Treaty so far were big agribusiness companies. According to Mooney, "The global seed industry has annual commercial sales of \$23 billion. Beginning in the 1970s multinational pesticide enterprises began buying seed companies. Today, the top 10 seed companies have 57% of the commercial seed trade. Last year, a single company's biotech seeds and traits — Monsanto's — accounted for 86% of the total worldwide area devoted to genetically modified seeds."

### **Farmers' rights in the spotlight**

The civil society groups stressed that need to recognise the 'collective rights' of farmers, noting that "No plant variety and animal breed that is conserved, renewed or selected by farmers can be separated from the social, economic and cultural systems in which farmers develop their production. The rights of farmers include all of these systems of exchange — land, water, animals, knowledge, etc. — and not only plant genetic resources... The rights of farmers should not be reduced to individual private property rights on life which are in fact the opposite of their rights. The rights of peasants are collective rights concerning access to resources and their use, as envisaged by the essence of the Treaty."

The groups called for a process to be put in place, involving all farmers' groups, to consider issues regarding plant genetic resources and farmers' rights, such as their rights to the rights to reuse, conserve, protect, exchange and sell their seeds; the revision of any legislation providing obstacles to farmers' rights; and financial support for the in situ work farmers do to preserve plant genetic diversity.

### **The work will go on**

At the end of the meeting, some critical funding was secured, and a funding strategy forwarded for intersessional work and fundraising activities. Discussions on the compliance mechanism were left pending on the funding strategy.

The meeting adopted a resolution acknowledging the important role farmers play as stewards of plant genetic resources, and on their rights. It

called for Treaty members to submit views on the topic, to facilitate further discussion at future meetings.

The meeting also took note of the recent meeting looking at similar issues with regard to animal genetic resources (see Bridges Trade BioRes, 21 September 2007)

At the close of the meeting, Jacques Diouf, Director-General of FAO, noted that the Treaty was entering a critical implementation stage, and called on governments to make the necessary financial contributions to make it effective. "With the global challenges we are facing in today's world, the International Treaty is more relevant than ever in relation to global climate change, food security and poverty reduction", he said.

#### **Additional information**

For a detailed report of the meeting, see IISD's Earth Negotiations Bulletin at <http://www.iisd.ca/biodiv/itpgrgb2/>

For the civil society declaration at the meeting, see <http://www.grain.org/bio-ipr/?id=531>

ICTSD reporting.

## **Environment Negotiations at the WTO**

### **BRAZIL PERU DISCUSS NEW IDEAS ON ENVIRONMENTAL GOODS LIBERALISATION**

Negotiations on expedited liberalisation for environmental goods and services were front and centre at last week's meeting of the WTO Committee on Trade and Environment-special session (CTE-SS).

The US, the EU, and others rebuffed Brazil's recent calls to classify biofuels as an environmental good qualifying for deep tariff cuts (see BRIDGES Weekly, 10 October 2007).

Discussions on 1 November focused on a recent Brazilian proposal (JOB (07/146)), as well as a related informal paper from Peru (JOB (07/161))

that called for organic farm products to be classified as environmental goods. Both countries are trying to ensure that the scope of the environmental goods talks is not restricted to industrial products.

The talks demonstrated "progress sideways" but "not forward," said one developed country delegate.

#### **Brazil explains 'request-offer' proposal**

Brazil opened the environmental goods discussions by responding to questions about its proposed approach for environmental goods to be identified through a multi-round process of requests and offers.

It had proposed the approach as a compromise to persistent divisions on how to go about meeting the Doha mandate to reduce or eliminate barriers to trade in environmental goods and services.

Brazil said that the 'request-offer' process would reflect the procedure followed in previous GATT/WTO negotiations, under which countries would request specific liberalisation commitments from each other, and then extend tariff cuts they deemed appropriate equally to all WTO Members. At the meeting, it also outlined a 'basket' approach as a 'second-best' option, under which each Member could offer to make tariff cuts on a handful of environmental goods. Members' compiled 'baskets' could then be subject to negotiations to arrive at a common one. Brazil characterised its proposal as a 'work in progress' and stressed that it was open to comments and suggestions from other Members.

Many developing country delegates were more favourable to the 'request-offer' methodology than the 'basket' one. Some told Bridges that they would prefer a combination of the approaches being considered in the negotiations - a negotiated 'list' of environmental goods, an 'integrated' approach that foresees tariff cuts for goods used towards certain environmental activities, and a 'request-offer' process.

Some countries from the 'friends of environmental goods and services' group, especially New Zealand, expressed concern that a

request-offer process would be time consuming and cumbersome. The group, made up mainly of developed countries, favours a list approach.

### **Proposal to include biofuels comes under fire**

The US and the EU, along with Korea, argued against Brazil's proposal to include ethanol and other biofuels as environmental goods. They claimed that expedited liberalisation was reserved solely for industrial goods, and not farm products. The US places a tariff of over 14 cents per litre on ethanol, in order to protect its politically influential corn-based ethanol industry. EU tariffs are roughly twice as high; it too richly subsidises ethanol production.

Brazil countered that the negotiating mandate (in Paragraph 31(iii) of the Doha Declaration) did not exclude the consideration of agricultural products. Moreover, it noted, the EU had included agricultural products in its original list of environmental goods (TN/TE/W/47, available at <http://docsonline.wto.org>). Both the EU and the US have described ethanol as an environmental good in reports to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, it added.

According to the Associated Press, the US claim that biofuels are agricultural goods is inconsistent with its stance in an ongoing WTO farm subsidy dispute with Brazil, where Washington officials have described payments for ethanol production as industrial subsidies (and not farm payments, as Brasilia claims).

Cuba, too, was critical of counting biofuels as environmental goods, albeit for food security and environmental considerations. Growing demand for biofuels has seen corn prices spike. So have wheat prices, as farmers shift production towards corn.

The Brazilian delegation responded that sugarcane production for ethanol in Brazil had not affected domestic food availability or nutrition.

### **Peru calls for preferential treatment for organics**

In addition to expressing support for the Brazilian paper's request-offer approach, the Peruvian

submission openly called for granting organically and biologically grown agricultural products swift liberalisation. It said that this could give strong encouragement to agricultural producers in developing countries. In many poor nations, it added, "organic agriculture is identified with ancestral forms of production typical of indigenous or native communities." Peru also suggested that in the Andean region, increased market access for organic crops could help combat poverty and reduce the attraction of growing narcotics.

Although Brazil's paper had stopped short of specifically calling for organic farm products to be designated as environmental goods, it alluded to the possibility by urging the CTE to ask the Codex Alimentarius Commission, which sets global food standards on behalf of the UN, to develop standards for organic foods. This, it said, could ease the path for environmentally beneficial exports. In response to comments that Codex already had such guidelines, Brazil stated that many WTO Members were not abiding by them, and that the standard-setting body should decide whether the guidelines needed to be revised.

### **Peru: sustainable development should be criterion**

Peru's wide-ranging submission stressed the need for 'sustainable development and environmental protection' to be substantive criteria not only when Members agree on terms for liberalising trade in environmental goods and services, but also in the talks on disciplining fisheries subsidies and cutting tariffs on tropical farm products.

According to Peru, indigenous communities living in the tropical forest ecosystems that combat global warming require special support for developing forms of agriculture compatible with these environments. Peru suggested that they could be among the first to receive support under the WTO's incipient 'aid-for-trade' initiative.

Repeating a demand it has made in WTO discussions on intellectual property, Peru called for amending the Agreement on Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) to require patent applicants to disclose the origin of genetic resources or traditional knowledge used in

their inventions, along with proof of benefit sharing. Peru said that this was necessary to support patent-related obligations arising from the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The Doha mandate on trade and environment called on Members to examine the "relevant provisions" of the TRIPS Agreement.

A Peruvian delegate told Bridges that the proposal was primarily intended to be 'conceptual', but that it was 'well-received' by many developing countries such as China, Ecuador, Egypt and India, despite the lack of detailed discussion.

Sources say that it met with scepticism from delegations including the US, the EU, Korea and Australia. Australia, Norway and Taiwan also raised questions as to how Peru proposed to address concerns about differentiating organic agricultural products from others based on process and production methods (PPMs).

As for how to negotiate specific liberalisation commitments for individual environmental goods, Brazil said that if Members could agree on the broad 'approach' by December, along with acceptable results in the Doha Round negotiations as a whole, discussions about product coverage could begin immediately thereafter. One developing country delegate said it was premature to begin discussions on the treatment of specific products before the approach was resolved. Another told Bridges that terms for the selection and treatment of environmental products could be finalised within the CTE-SS, and commitments reflected within Members' industrial goods and agriculture commitment schedules as appropriate.

The chair, Ambassador Mario Matus (Chile), is expected to convene further informal discussions to narrow differences before the next formal session in December.

ICTSD reporting; "US, EU block Brazilian Attempt to Slash Bio-fuel Tariffs at WTO," INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, 5 November 2007.

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## In Brief

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### STUDY: MARINE SHIPPING HIGHLY POLLUTING

For the first time, a study has linked pollution-related illness and mortality to emissions of seafaring vessels.

Approximately 60,000 lung- and heart-related deaths in 2002 were linked to the pollution and chemicals emitted by large shipping freighters in a study by the University of Delaware. According to the researchers, these deaths were due to the poor regulation of the shipping industry on fuel standards.

In the last couple of decades, the international community has taken steps to reduce other environmental hazards and greenhouse gases, but the shipping industry has been left largely unregulated. Emissions released by the diesel fuel in ships have risen, while for buses and trucks the levels have been reduced by almost 90 percent.

Efficiency and environmental standards on shipping fuel have not been maintained over the years due to the distance between the ships and the externalities they create, explained the study. The freighters travel the open seas, leagues away from the coastal inhabitants who fall ill. These chemicals can spread through the water via spills or through the atmosphere after the fuel is burned for use.

International shipping accounts for eight percent of global sulphur emissions. This is unsurprising considering that the industry largely uses bunker fuel, which is the waste byproduct of distillate oil. Thus it contains the excess sulphur driven out by the distillation process, upwards of 2000 times that which is found in highway diesel fuel.

The article calls on the international community to update shipping standards in order to better protect the environment and lives of coastal inhabitants. Those who live near major trade routes will be most affected, mainly those in South and East Asia and Europe. By 2012, the study predicts that the death rate is likely to grow by 40 percent.

The UN International Maritime Organisation is conducting its own investigation and is planning a series of meetings on the issue over the upcoming months.

Ninety percent of globally traded goods are transported by the sea, and recent studies show that emissions are on the rise (see Bridges Trade BioRes, 2 November 2007).

“Ship Emissions Causing 60,000 Deaths a Year-Study,” PLANET ARK, 8 November 2007; “Environmentalists call for ban on bunker fuel, described as toxic,” SAN JOSE MERCURY NEWS, 12 November 2007; “Report studies shipping emission deaths,” GARDEN ISLAND, 10 November 2007.

### **GREENPEACE: PALM OIL EXPANSION A PENDING CLIMATE CATASTROPHE**

A Greenpeace report claims that global demand for palm oil is lighting the fuse of a “climate bomb” in the peat lands of Indonesia. The slash-and-burn tactics of palm oil farmers is releasing 1.8 billion tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per annum from the carbon rich soils of Indonesia’s swamps.

The 22 million hectares of peat soils of Sumatra have the highest concentration of carbon in the world. Half have already been consumed by the palm oil industry. Due to the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions resulting from the destruction of the peat swamps, Indonesia accounts for four percent of global greenhouse gas emissions. This ranks Indonesia as the third-highest global emitter of greenhouse gases, just behind the US and China.

Analysts say that global demand for palm oil will double in 25 years and triple by 2050. Big name companies like Procter & Gamble, Unilever, Nestlé, and Kraft are using more and more palm oil in their products like Pringles, Flora margarine, Kit Kats, and Philadelphia Cream Cheese. Increasingly, it is also being used in cooking oil and as a biofuel.

Greenpeace blames the large firms for the destructive practices used to create palm oil plantations, but company officials say there is virtually no traceability for the product.

The projected increase in demand for biofuels is of highest concern to the group. Europe plans for biofuel to account for ten percent of all its transport fuel by 2010, the US by 2020, and China and India expect to use 20 percent biofuels by 2012. Not counting the forest set aside for cooking oil and other food products, 3 million hectares of land in Indonesia have also been set aside for biofuel production.

Nearly 15.5 million hectares of plantations will be required to meet Europe’s demand for palm oil alone. In its report, Greenpeace states that “substituting even ten percent of the world demand for diesel fuel” will require “more than 75 percent of the world’s total current demand for soya, palm oil, and rapeseed oil.”

The report can be downloaded at <http://www.greenpeace.org/international/press/reports>

“Palm oil warning for Indonesia,” BBC NEWS, 8 November 2007; “Big companies accused of risking climate catastrophe,” GUARDIAN, 8 November 2007.

### **EU, SWITZERLAND DISTANT FROM OTHER MEMBERS IN WTO-MEA TALKS**

Differences persist among WTO Members on the content of a potential text that could serve as the basis for future negotiations on the relationship between WTO rules and specific trade obligations (STOs) set out in multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs).

Discussions on 2 November in the Committee for Trade and Environment - Special Session (CTE-SS) on an informal compilation prepared by the WTO Secretariat, of ideas in submissions from Members including Australia, Argentina, the EU, Taiwan, and the US (see BRIDGES Weekly, 9 May 2007).

The compilation, intended to facilitate an outcome from the discussions, was divided into four parts: Reflecting the Doha mandate; observations drawn from discussions in the CTE-SS; the importance of domestic co-ordination in the implementation of MEAs; and dispute settlement.



One delegate said that dispute settlement was the major bone of contention. The text on dispute settlement, which drew from an EU submission (TN/TE/W/68, available at <http://docsonline.wto.org>), would have WTO panels seek and defer to MEA expertise while examining environment-related issues. This met with opposition from developing countries as well as Australia, Argentina and the US. The EU and Switzerland supported the idea.

According to a trade delegate, the ‘centre of gravity’ appeared to rest with the Australia-Argentina submission (TN/TE/W/72/Rev.1), which simply asked the CTE-SS to recommend ways in which Members could structure specific trade obligations in MEAs to ensure that they and WTO rules support each other. In contrast, the EU proposal was more ambitious, as it sought to develop principles for clarifying the relationship between WTO dispute settlement and MEA trade obligations.

One source said that the divide seemed to hinge on different interpretations of the mandate, and hopes for the scope of the outcome.

Chair Ambassador Mario Matus (Chile) is set to continue consultations to try to bridge the split between the EU and Switzerland and the rest of the Membership on the issue.

ICTSD reporting.

### **TROPICAL TIMBER ORGANISATION WAITING FOR NEW AGREEMENT TO ENTER INTO FORCE**

Delegates at the forty-third session of the International Tropical Timber Council (ITTC-43), held from 5-10 November 2007 in Yokohama, Japan, discussed issues concerning operational, project and policy work for 2008-2009. Most notably, they discussed the Biennial Work Programme 2008-2009, which was adopted, and the preparations for entry into force of the new governing treaty, the International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA), 2006. The Council has committed US\$10.1 million for new projects and activities for the conservation and sustainable management, use and trade of tropical forest resources.

The Council also reviewed the status of the ITTA, 2006, which has only been ratified by four countries - the US, Malaysia, Switzerland and Poland - but which must be ratified by 10 consumer and 12 producer countries before it enters into force. The ratification process is complex and lengthy, and not a top priority for many members. Because of uncertainty over when the ITTA, 2006 will enter into force, some important decisions were put on hold. For example, a new action plan for ITTO work under the ITTA, 2006 were ultimately left hanging. Some expressed that it was too soon to conclude work on issues pertaining to the new Agreement because it has not entered into force. The members therefore gave priority to smaller and more immediate matters. They decided to host a high-level meeting in Accra, Ghana from 2-5 June 2008, to review and clarify the operational issues needed to be considered on the entry into force of the new agreement.

The ITTA, 2006 builds on the foundations of the previous agreements and focuses on the world tropical timber economy and the sustainable management of the resource base, simultaneously encouraging the timber trade and improving forest management. It also allows for the consideration of non-tropical timber issues as they relate to tropical timber.

The Council is the governing body of the International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO). It meets regularly to discuss a wide-ranging agenda aimed at promoting sustainable tropical forest management and the trade of sustainably produced tropical timber.

For more information on the 43rd Council session or ITTO in general, visit <http://www.itto.or.jp>

For daily reporting and a summary of the meeting, see IISD's Earth Negotiations Bulletin at <http://www.iisd.ca/forestry/itto/ittc43/>

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

9 November, Geneva, Switzerland: STOCKHOLM CONVENTION POPRC-3. The third meeting of the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee of the Stockholm Convention. Internet: <http://www.pops.int>

19-20 November, Brussels, Belgium: BEYOND GDP. This high-level conference hopes to measure progress, true wealth and the well-being of nations. The European Commission, European Parliament, Club of Rome, OECD and WWF will host a high-level conference with the objectives of clarifying which indices are most appropriate to measure progress, and how these can best be integrated into the decision-making process and taken up by public debate. The conference will bring together high-level experts and policy makers to address these critical issues. Over 300 people from economic, social and environmental spheres from across the globe will attend. Preceding the main political conference, an expert workshop will be held, where leading practitioners will consider progress in the development and policy application of indicators of progress, true wealth, and well-being. Internet: <http://www.beyond-gdp.eu/index.html>

19-21 November 2007. Bonn, Germany: SECOND WORLD RENEWABLE ENERGY ASSEMBLY (WREA) 2007: This Assembly is the follow-up event of the First World Renewable Energy Assembly, of the 2nd World Renewable Energy Forum and of the International Parliamentary Forum on Renewable Energies, held in Bonn in 2004 and 2005. It is organized by EUROSOLAR and supported by InWEnt, by the City of Bonn, EUFORES, by the International Solar Energy Society (ISES), IUCN Environmental Law Center, Legambiente Italy,

Global Green Cross, and World Future Council, among others. Internet: <http://www.wrea2007.org>

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).

THE IMPLICATIONS OF PRIVATE-SECTOR STANDARDS FOR GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES EXPLORING OPTIONS TO FACILITATE MARKET ACCESS FOR DEVELOPING-COUNTRY EXPORTERS OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES: EXPERIENCES OF ARGENTINA, BRAZIL AND COSTA RICA. By UNCTAD, November 2007. This publication analyses the developmental and market access impact of new, ever more stringent and complex private standards on food safety, health and environmental requirements (mostly set by large and globally acting supermarkets) on fresh fruit and vegetable exports from Central and South American countries. These private standards, although voluntary in legal nature, are often de facto mandatory for producers and exporters through the buying power of those setting and applying them. The wider use of these standards can help to increase efficiency of fruit and vegetable production, offer safer and healthier produce for consumers, improve occupational safety of producers, and facilitate access to lucrative export and domestic markets. Internet:

[http://www.unctad.org/trade\\_env/test1/publications/UNCTAD\\_DITC\\_TED\\_2007\\_2.pdf](http://www.unctad.org/trade_env/test1/publications/UNCTAD_DITC_TED_2007_2.pdf)

MARKET AND WELFARE EFFECTS OF GMO INTRODUCTION IN SMALL OPEN ECONOMIES. By Alejandro Plastina and Konstantinos Giannakas, University of Nebraska. This article tries to sort out how farmers and consumers in small "open" developing economies would be affected by the introduction of genetically modified (GM) products. Economic modeling indicates that while the agronomic benefits associated with the introduction of the first-generation, farmer-oriented GM products are "certainly important," their presence does not guarantee welfare gains to small developing countries. The introduction of GM products is shown to create winners and losers among the consumers and producers of these small open economies. The model finds that the hypothetical introduction of GM products without domestic labeling requirements creates more economic benefits for consumers than when labels are required. Internet:

<http://www.agbioforum.org/v10n2/v10n2a05-giannakas.htm>