



Bridges Trade BioRes

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

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Doha Round

DOHA TALKS COLLAPSE, SOME MEMBERS CALL FOR QUICK REVIVAL

Ministers are preparing for the resumption of WTO activities after a month of pondering what the collapse of negotiations in Geneva means for the future of the Doha Round. While the inability to reach a consensus during the 21-29 July “mini-ministerial” is not a good sign for the future of the Round, some countries are now calling for a quick return to discussions in order to seize upon the significant progress that was made before talks collapsed on 29 July.

This is the third summer in a row that a hard push to make a breakthrough in negotiations has ended in failure. And while incremental progress by trade negotiators in lower-profile technical work at the WTO this year should have made discussions easier than in the past two, hopes for an agreement were low going in.

But despite the ultimate demise of the talks, some now say that Doha should not be abandoned in light of the movement that was made during the nine days of gruelling discussions - the longest such meeting in the WTO’s history.

Progress made on agriculture

Agriculture - the key sticking point in the Round - was at the centre of discussions and some long-standing issues were tackled. Latin American countries looking for the expedited liberalisation of tropical agricultural products saw significant progress. And concerns of former European colonies fearing the erosion of longstanding trade preferences with former colonial powers were addressed as well.

The mini-ministerial also saw movement towards an agreement on tariff rate quotas for farm products, measures under which a specific tariff

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This edition of Bridges Trade BioRes was edited by Andrew Aziz, aaziz@ictsd.ch.

Contributors to this issue were Andrew Aziz, Trineesh Biswas, Marie Chamay, Shuaihua Cheng, Paige McClanahan, Shanisa Smith and Ginger Walker.

The Director is Ricardo Meléndez-Ortiz.

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rate would be applied to a certain quantity of agricultural imports, and a second (higher) rate would be levied on imports above that quota amount. Demands from Bolivia, Venezuela, and Mongolia for special tariff treatment on industrial market access also made some headway, as did the talks on the erosion of preferential market access for certain textiles and clothing products.

Obstacles to consensus

Delegates made it “80-85 percent of the way” to consensus, according to WTO Director-General Pascal Lamy. “Negotiators were prepared to reach out beyond their entrenched positions to seek compromise,” Lamy told WTO Members after the meeting. But he conceded that the differences on negotiating the details of a ‘special safeguard mechanism’ (SSM) proved to be “irreconcilable.”

The SSM is a tool that would allow developing countries to raise tariffs temporarily beyond current legal limits when import volumes increase or prices fall suddenly. One of the main sticking points was whether, and by how much, developing countries would be allowed to raise tariffs beyond current ‘bound’ levels in order to protect domestic producers. India and China fought for more flexible terms for the use of the SSM, while the US was firm in its demands for predictable market access for its farm products.

Substantial differences on cuts to industrial tariff ceilings and allowable spending on trade-distorting farm subsidies proved to be another roadblock in the negotiations. Additionally, the political conditions among some of the principal players were not conducive to hard negotiating. The Bush administration was deeply unpopular and lacked a negotiating mandate from Congress and France and other EU member states were loudly proclaiming that Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson did not have the support he claimed. Moreover, the Indian government was facing a parliamentary confidence vote as discussions were underway in Geneva.

Norwegian Foreign Minister suggests path for TRIPS issue

The only item on the Geneva agenda directly related to the environment was a trade-related

intellectual property rights (TRIPS) issue addressing whether patent applicants should be obliged to disclose any biological resources or traditional knowledge used in inventions.

The disclosure issue was linked with two matters relating to geographical indications (GI) - the process that recognises the right of certain products to claim its origins in a certain geographic area, such as Champagne or Roquefort cheese. The first proposal under consideration would extend the intellectual property protections currently afforded to wines and spirits to all GI products - the second proposal would establish a register for GI wines and spirits.

Going into the negotiations, a large coalition of a more than a hundred developing and developed countries were pushing for the three TRIPS issues to be moved forward as a single undertaking in the Round. The coalition, led by Brazil, the EU, India, and Switzerland, had momentum coming into the mini-ministerial, but the proposal was strongly rebuffed by countries such as Australia, Canada, Chile, South Korea and the US, who contended that the intellectual property issues should not be discussed in tandem with the Doha negotiations on liberalising trade in agricultural and industrial goods.

Opponents to the coalition argued that moving the three issues forward as a single package was not realistic. “Each of the TRIPS issues...has its own terms of reference, and particular subject matter,” they countered. “The extent and interest of Members in the content and potential outcomes for each issue varies considerably.”

Although delegates ultimately failed to resolve any of their major differences, delegates at the mini-ministerial made progress on the three issues under the guidance of Norwegian Foreign Minister Jonas Gahr Støre. Støre reportedly suggested to delegates that the wine and spirits register negotiations should continue under the auspices of the TRIPS Council while the other two issues should be resolved through dedicated meetings helmed by Pascal Lamy. However, like all issues discussed at the July Conference, the future of the TRIPS issues depend upon the future of the negotiations.

Some calling for quick revival

With the US presidential election scheduled for November, many observers are doubtful that Washington has the political will to conclude the Doha Round any time soon. Nevertheless, calls to return to negotiations as soon as possible - most notably from Brazil and Australia - are growing louder. "Based on past experience, there are two possibilities," says Brazilian foreign minister Celso Amorim. "We either do it now, in September, or we will have to wait for a long time."

Senior-level talks on agriculture are scheduled to resume at WTO headquarters in Geneva in mid-September. Many observers presume that those discussions will target the Special Safeguard Mechanism that ultimately brought the mini-ministerial to a close. But while the SSM must be tackled in order for progress to be made, some are calling it a red herring.

There is growing speculation that the US refused to yield on the SSM in order to avoid a discussion of its cotton subsidies, which the WTO has repeatedly ruled to be in violation of the US' word trade commitments (see related article, this issue). After the SSM, cotton was set to be the next item on the negotiators' agenda.

"I know there are a lot of conspiracy theories running on this...To be frank, I don't suspect the US broke on the SSM not to have cotton on the table. They know cotton has to be there," Lamy said in an interview with Reuters. "I wouldn't say if we solve the SSM, the rest will fall in place. But what I'm certain is if we don't solve this, the rest will not fall into place."

For in-depth reports from the July mini-ministerial see Bridges Daily Updates <http://ictsd.net/news/wto/englishupdates/>

ICTSD reporting.

Climate Change

CLIMATE CHANGE TALKS SPEED UP IN ACCRA, SAYS UN

The latest round of global climate change talks in Accra, Ghana concluded on 27 August with officials praising the progress made during the seven day meeting on a number of key issues. There are "clear signals that the pace of negotiations to get to a deal on long-term strengthened international action on climate change is picking up," the Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) said in a press release following the talks.

The objective of the Accra climate negotiations was to continue discussions on the Bali Action Plan - a roadmap intended to achieve a global climate deal on a post-2012 framework by December 2009.

Over 1600 participants, representing governments, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations, academia, and the private sector attended the third session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action (AWG-LCA 3) and the first part of the sixth session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol to the UNFCCC (AGW-KP 6) from 21-27 August.

The AWG-LCA is mandated to launch a comprehensive process to enable the full, effective, and sustained implementation of the Convention through long-term cooperative action up to and beyond 2012. This includes a shared vision for long-term cooperative action and enhanced action on the mitigation of climate change, adaptation, technology development and transfer, and the provision of financial resources and investment.

In Accra, the AWG-KP continued work on analyzing the means that may be available to Annex I Parties - industrialized countries that have commitments under the Kyoto Protocol - to reach their Kyoto emission reduction targets after 2012 and on identifying ways to enhance their effectiveness and contribution to sustainable development. Possible means to achieving these goals that were discussed included emissions trading and the project-based mechanisms, land use, land-use change and forestry, greenhouse

gases sectors and source categories, and possible approaches targeting sector emissions.

The climate talks resulted in the adoption of conclusions on long-term cooperative action and on the 2009 work programme under the AWG-LCA. Delegates also agreed that the AWG-LCA would shift into full negotiating mode in 2009 in order to advance negotiations on all the elements of the Bali Action Plan in light of the approaching deadline for the completion of its work at the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to be held in Copenhagen in December 2009.

“This has been a very important and encouraging meeting,” said Yvo de Boer, the Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC. “We are still on track, the process has speeded up, and governments are very serious about negotiating a result in Copenhagen.” He added that “The highlight of this session is that governments have agreed to compile different proposals for solutions in a structured way for discussion at the next landmark meeting in Poznan.”

The Accra Climate Change Talks were the last round of talks and negotiations before this year’s Conference of the Parties (COP-14) in Poznan, Poland, in December.

Progress on sectoral agreements

Discussions at a workshop under the third session of the AWG-LCA clarified so-called “sectoral approaches” through which countries can address emissions from a whole sector of their economy. Countries meeting in Ghana emphasized that such approaches should not lead to binding commitments for developing countries and that it is up to a country to decide if it wants to put sectoral policies in place or not. Also, countries seemed to agree that sectoral cooperation is an important tool that would foster exchange of best practices, deployment of technology, and technology transfer.

During the discussions, significant differences emerged between some developed countries and a majority of developing countries on whether to impose limited carbon emissions levels on specific industries such as steel, cement, or power generation. Many developing countries, including

the Philippines (representing the G77), India, China, Brazil, Bangladesh (representing LDCs), Grenada (representing small island states), and Saudi Arabia, fear that developed countries could use sectoral benchmarks, such as the amount of energy required to produce a tonne of cement, as a means of effectively blocking goods from their less efficient industries.

The Philippines, on behalf of the G77 and China, said that discussions on sectors should not be used to justify trade measures, standards, or other measures against developing countries. It noted that the founding principles of the UNFCCC should not be undermined, including the principle of “common but differentiated responsibility.” In addition, the delegation said that within the AWG-KP, sectoral efforts can contribute to, but not replace, legally binding targets for Annex I countries. For developing countries, sectoral approaches should only be one option among others to achieve national goals. Within the AWG-LCA, sectoral approaches call for enhanced efforts to implement the Convention’s technology obligations.

Japan, a proponent of the sectoral approaches, responded that its method would not replace national overall targets (for Annex I countries) nor would it lead to trade restrictions. It clearly stated that it did not favour imposing common international standards.

Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries

In a working group on long-term cooperative action under the UNFCCC, participants discussed possibilities for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries (REDD). Executive Secretary Yvo de Boer says that countries have made it very clear that the issue of forests needs to be part of a Copenhagen deal. This is because emissions from deforestation account for 20 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions. Delegates agreed that countries should be compensated for slowing or halting deforestation and that countries where forests have largely been depleted should be rewarded for conserving and expanding their remaining forest cover.

As part of a workshop on policy approaches and positive incentives on issues relating to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries (REDD), several countries gave presentations on different substantive issues including the provision of financing for forest related initiatives (whether through market or non-market mechanisms). Some countries stressed that reforestation and afforestation activities, and international support for these activities, should not serve as an offset for emissions by Annex I countries, and a means for them to avoid reducing their domestic emissions.

Friends of the Earth (FoE) International warned that including forests in carbon markets would enable Annex I countries to buy up large areas of forest to gain carbon credits that can count towards their own emission reduction targets. FoE further warned that increasing the value of forests in this way could “trigger a rapid increase in land rights abuses due to a rapid expansion of state and/or corporate control over forests without regard for the customary or territorial rights of Indigenous Peoples and other forest-dependent communities.”

Contentious discussions on differentiation for mitigation

Developing countries opposed attempts by developed countries to amend the UNFCCC to impose new greenhouse gas reduction obligations on them, calling the move counter-productive to achieving a positive outcome at the climate talks in Copenhagen in 2009. Developed countries, led by the EU, said that developing countries should be divided into two groups: “advanced developing countries” (or “major economies”) and other developing countries. They suggested that developing countries that have a higher per capita income (such as Singapore, Argentina and some OPEC states) could take on new commitments on limiting greenhouse gas emissions. For the first time, developed countries explicitly stated their intentions to amend the Convention and to propose the creation of a new Protocol.

A number of developing countries, including the G-77 plus China and the African Group, strongly opposed any differentiation of parties beyond that

of the Convention. India, Qatar, and Singapore pointed out that developed countries have so far largely failed to implement their mitigation, technology, and finance obligations under the Convention and its Kyoto Protocol. They said that it is unfair to now attempt to pass this onto those countries who have contributed little to causing climate change and who are most vulnerable to its impacts. Differentiation between developed and developing countries was included as a part of the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol to their respective historical responsibility for causing climate change.

A new treaty will require deeper cuts from developed nations by 2020 and only “actions” by developing nations to slow the rise of their emissions.

Financing and technology

For the first time at a UNFCCC meeting, governments discussed what is needed both in terms of financing and technology to improve action on both reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to the impacts of climate change.

Delegates debated the various financing proposals that had been presented by countries. They will be assembled and submitted at the 1-12 December meeting in Poznan, Poland. Many developing countries supported the G77 plus China’s proposal on an enhanced financial mechanism to promote action on mitigation and adaptation as well as the development and transfer of technology, as required by the Bali Action Plan.

Way forward

The short-term future of global climate change negotiations will depend upon the makeup of the next US administration. The closely watched US election will take place shortly before the meeting in Poznan and the new administration will take office six weeks after. Jake Schmidt, International Climate Policy Director at the National Resources Defense Council, says the pace of negotiations will largely depend on “how quickly a U.S. team can be put in place, how fast they can get their positions sorted out, and when they can start to negotiate.”

“UN Climate Change Negotiations Speed up in Accra,” UNFCCC PRESS RELEASE, 27 August 2008; “TWN Accra News Updates,” THIRD WORLD NETWORK; ENB Vol.12 No.383, Earth Negotiations Bulletin; “UN Climate Talks To Seek Speed Amid Discord,” INSNET.ORG, 25 August 2008; “UN Climate Talks Advance on Forests, Industry,” REUTERS, 26 August 2008; “Ghana Climate Talks Advance on Saving Forests,” REUTERS, 27 August 2008; “Rich or Poor? New Faultline in UN Climate Talks,” REUTERS, 28 August 2008; “Climate Talks Accelerating, Says UN After Accra Meet,” THE WORLD BANK GROUP, 28 August 2008; “UN Climate Talks Make Headway on Emission Limits,” AP, 27 August 2008.

Agriculture & Biofuels

BRAZILIAN COTTON DISPUTE MOVES FORWARD, BIOFUELS MAY SOON FOLLOW

Brazilian Foreign Minister Celso Amorim says his government will be moving ahead with its request for sanctions against US cotton subsidies and is considering a similar case regarding biofuels.

The US lost its final appeal in the cotton dispute - which has been ongoing since 2002 - in June of this year (see BRIDGES Weekly, 11 June 2008, <http://ictsd.net/i/news/bridgesweekly/12287/>). Brazil says the US has not significantly altered its system of payments to cotton producers, and this is why they are moving ahead with arbitration at the WTO to decide appropriate retaliatory measures.

Brazil, joined by a handful of West African cotton-producing countries, has long argued that Washington's support for US cotton farmers depresses world prices and floods the global market for the commodity, making it hard for Brazilian producers to compete.

Analysts have been predicting the rise of protectionism and a new wave of litigation before the WTO's Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) since the collapse of Doha Round negotiations on 29 July. While disputes such as these had generally

been on hold in the lead up to the July mini-ministerial conference in Geneva, it appears this is no longer the case. “If we don't make progress [in the WTO negotiations], disputes will be the only way to resolve the problems,” Amorim said at a recent appearance in Rio de Janeiro.

WTO meetings are scheduled to resume this month and Brazil expects to receive a decision on whether it will have the right to retaliate - by as much as US\$ 4 billion - by the end of the year. To get the process moving, on 25 August Brasilia formally asked the chair of the DSB panel to resume consultations with the US on the amount of compensation to which Brazil is entitled.

But even after a retaliatory amount is fixed, Brazil will still have to face the potential political repercussions of imposing sanctions against its primary trading partner. Brazilian industry, which depends heavily on US supplies, is particularly vulnerable to worsening trade relations between the two countries. Thus, some speculate that, instead of imposing measures that would cut off the flow of goods between the two countries, Brazil will ‘cross retaliate’ through the suspension of intellectual property protection obligations (in copyrights, trademarks, patents, industrial property rights and the protection of undisclosed information), as well as through suspension of concessions in several services sectors.

‘Cross-retaliation’ - the imposition of sanctions in a sector other than that at issue in the dispute - has never been put to practice under the WTO, although Ecuador (in the banana dispute) and Antigua and Barbuda (in the gambling dispute) obtained authorisations to use the method.

Ethanol challenge may be in the works

Along with its current litigation against the US, Brazil could also be launching a dispute over a US\$ 0.14 per litre (US\$ 0.54 per gallon) duty imposed on ethanol imports to the US. Critics of the tariff consider it a pure protectionist measure intended to give a leg up to US corn growers. The US is currently the world's largest producer of ethanol.

As in the cotton case, Brasilia hoped to resolve the issue during Doha Round negotiations and was

awaiting the outcome of the mini-ministerial before deciding how to proceed. During the Geneva negotiations, Brazil pushed for the inclusion of ethanol as an environmental good, which would help to free up access to markets based on the product's potential environmental advantages. But while the US and the EU currently support increasing the use of biofuels, they are against the idea of its inclusion as an environmental good, claiming that there have not yet been enough studies on the environmental impacts of ethanol.

Despite Brasilia's announcement that it was considering going ahead with the issue at the WTO, Brazilian officials say a negotiated solution is preferable. Marcos Jank, president of the Brazilian Sugar Cane Industry Association (UNICA), supports the government's move to retaliate, but also hopes a negotiated settlement can be reached. Officials say they hope the disputes serve as a tool to help revive stalled Doha negotiations.

Meanwhile, recent squabbling on Capitol Hill has revealed that the biofuels issue is a controversial one even among US lawmakers.

US Senator Dianne Feinstein of California has requested the US Trade Representative Susan Schwab to reconsider whether Brazil has a 'substantive case' against the US ethanol tariff and, if so, what countermeasures Brasilia might be able to take were it to win a WTO dispute on the issue. Feinstein also suggested that Brazil's argument could be weakened if the US voluntarily lowered the duty.

But Feinstein's remarks were blasted by the ranking Republican member of the Senate Finance Committee, Charles Grassley of Iowa. The US was "clearly within its WTO rights" since it had bound the tariff in its schedule of agricultural goods as an 'other duty or charge', he wrote.

This story has been adapted from the 1 September 2008 edition of Pontes Quinzenal.

ICTSD reporting; "Brazil seeks billions in trade sanctions from US," ASSOCIATED PRESS, 27 August 2008; "Brazil presses US, EU to include

ethanol in any WTO trade pact," ASSOCIATED PRESS, 28 July 2008.

In Brief

BRAZIL GIVEN UNTIL MID-DECEMBER TO COMPLY WITH WTO TYRE RULING

A WTO-appointed arbitrator has given Brazil until mid-December to bring its import restrictions on retreaded tyres into compliance with a recent dispute ruling, well ahead of the September 2009 date that Brasilia was seeking.

The EU, which initiated the case against Brazil's import ban on retreaded tyres, sought binding arbitration after it and Brazil were unable to agree on a "reasonable period of time for implementation" of the ruling. Brussels had petitioned for the deadline to be set for 17 October, but Brasilia argued that it needed more time to bring its domestic policies into compliance with the ruling.

'Retreaded' tyres are used automobile tyres that have been reprocessed for a second and final use. Brazil placed an import ban on retreaded tyres in 2000, arguing that they had a shorter life span than new ones and therefore contributed to a faster accumulation of waste tyres. This quicker accumulation, they argued, links retreaded tyres more directly than new tyres to pollution and jeopardizes the health of its citizens by providing fertile breeding grounds for disease-carrying mosquitoes.

Because the case represents the first-ever challenge against trade restrictions imposed by a developing country for environmental and health reasons at the WTO, it been closely watched by green groups.

In the dispute, the EU, whose exports of retreaded tyres to Brazil had been halted almost entirely by the ban, had argued that the import measures were motivated by a desire to protect local tyre manufacturers from import competition, rather than by the pursuit of genuine public health objectives as claimed by Brasilia. It pointed to the fact that despite the ban, Brazil was continuing to

import large quantities of used tyres under injunctions from lower courts secured by the local tyre industry. Brazil was also allowing retreaded tyres from its fellow members of the Mercosur trade bloc - Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay - to be imported.

The WTO's Appellate Body ruled last year that although the import limitations could be justified as health and environmental safeguard measures, Brazil was applying them in a way that amounted to unjustifiable and arbitrary trade discrimination, in contravention of the WTO rules.

Brazil believes that the import restrictions on retreaded tyres could be made WTO-compliant through two steps: domestic legal action to prevent lower courts from granting the injunctions sanctioning the importation of used tyres and the negotiation of an agreement on tyre trade with other Mercosur countries. It argued that a reasonable date by which to accomplish the former, longer step would be by 17 September 2009, some 21 months after the WTO Dispute Settlement Body adopted the panel and Appellate Body reports.

In contrast, the EU says that the most "obvious" and prompt way for Brazil to comply with the ruling would simply be to repeal the import ban.

The arbitrator, Yasuhei Taniguchi, refrained from commenting on which means of implementation might be better. However, he found that past cases suggested that the Brazilian government would need less than the 21 months it claimed it needed to finish an ongoing federal supreme court case aimed at ending the injunctions.

Taniguchi also found that Brazil did not necessarily have to formally negotiate new rules with other Mercosur members before changing its tyre import regime, since it had altered its Mercosur policies through "mere domestic measures" in the past. He thus determined that a "reasonable period of time" would be 12 months from the reinforcement of its initial ruling (see Bridges Trade BioRes, 18 December 2007, <http://ictsd.net/i/news/biores/9513/>), ending on 17 December 2008.

ICTSD reporting; "WTO Panel decision in Brazil - Tyres supports safeguarding environmental

values," AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL LAW INSIGHT, 5 September 2005.

ANTI-DUMPING MEASURES ON ENERGY EFFICIENT CHINESE LIGHT BULBS DROPPED

German light bulb producer Osram has withdrawn its application for extending EU anti-dumping duties on Chinese energy-saving integrated electronic compact fluorescent lamps (CFL). The 11 August decision brings the long-standing, high profile trade dispute to an end for the foreseeable future.

Osram, the dominant CFL producer in Europe, requested permission to impose anti-dumping duties against Chinese exports in 2001. Measures were imposed the same year and were extended for another year last October. Because the deadline for submitting and extension application has already lapsed, the duties are now set to expire on 18 October.

It appears that Osram's decision is in part based on a lack of political support in the EU. "We have had to concede...that we have not been able to secure a majority in Europe for the Osram position," the company's CEO Martin Goetzeler said in a statement.

Political pressure from a wide range of stakeholders - including environmentalist groups, retailers, consumers and business competitors - over the duties had been growing since they were imposed in 2001.

This pressure intensified last October when the anti-dumping duties were given a one year extension. "This is narrowly protectionist and sends a regressive message to developing country producers that they will be excluded from markets for cleaner products created by the higher environmental standards expected by European consumers," said a WWF press release at the time.

In a July 2008 retailers roundtable, many business leaders - including Sir Terry Leahy of Tesco and Sören Hansen of Ikea - said the tariffs of up to 66 percent ensured that prices were "artificially

inflated” when consumers reached the shops and this depressed demand for energy-saving bulbs.

The case has also attracted widespread attention because of the divide of Europe’s light bulb makers between those who have production plants in China and those focusing on local production in Europe. While Osram does have factories in China, production remains focussed in Europe. Philips Lighting and other EU producers with their main production facilities in Asia complain that the duties have been squeezing their profit margins. These companies have been fighting their own case at the EU Court of First Instance to have the anti-dumping duties scrapped completely.

Although the CFL anti-dumping case is coming to a close, analysts think it might serve as a proxy for revisiting some rules in EU anti-dumping measures. “This anti-dumping case has put forward the ongoing discussions on the decision making criteria and process to practice the definition of ‘EC community interests’,” says Xiaoyi Tang, a Brussels-based trade lawyer. Tang says the EU needs to not only strike a balance between producers, retailers and consumers, but also between trade policy instruments and broader community policy objectives such as climate security, social and environmental standards.

Some point out that obstacles to revise trade defence mechanisms are difficult to overcome. Min Shu, an economist at Fudan University, says the energy saving light bulb issue is just a small window for the complex political economy behind the EU anti-dumping measures. Shu says there are clashes between producers from EU member states (i.e., Netherlands-based Philips and Germany-based Osram in the light bulb case. He also says that the divide between the trade Commissioner and industry Commissioner can complicate matters, and points to the shelving of EU trade commissioner Peter Mandelson’s proposal to reform trade defence rules as an example.

ICTSD Reporting; “Osram drops EU call to extend Chinese bulb duties,” REUTERS, 11 Aug. 2008; “Europe can’t agree on anti-dumping rules,” INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, 13 Jan. 2008; “Retailers urge EU to scrap anti-

dumping duties on energy-saving lightbulbs,” THE GUARDIAN, 21 July 2008; “Osram drops EU call to extend Chinese bulb duties,” REUTERS, 11 Aug. 2008; “EU allows China to export special globes sans duty,” HAITI NEWS, 12 Aug. 2008.

UNDERWATER TIMBER HARVEST IN GHANA COULD REDUCE DEFORESTATION, HELP CLIMATE

A plan to salvage timber at the bottom of the world’s largest man-made lake has caught the attention of climate change experts. The project, and potentially others like it, aims to cut the amount of greenhouse gases released into the atmosphere by offsetting traditional above-ground harvesting.

On the sidelines of a recent UN climate change conference in Accra, forestry officials in Ghana announced on 25 August that up to 14 million cubic metres of timber lying on the bottom of Lake Volta will be recovered and sold on the market. The wood has been submerged since the building of the Akosombo hydroelectric dam in the 1960s.

Ghanaian officials say that the project will reduce the country’s levels of above-ground timber harvesting, thus reducing the amount of carbon emissions that come with traditional logging.

Despite these potential carbon offsets, the Volta plan does not qualify for carbon credits under the Kyoto Protocol, which grants credits only for afforestation and reforestation projects. But some hope that the new treaty that takes effect when the Kyoto Protocol expires in 2012 will reward countries for ‘avoided deforestation’, not just for planting new trees. Such a treaty could make submerged timber harvesting more lucrative than regular logging.

If the Lake Volta project goes smoothly, experts say other developing countries could engage in similar operations. Robert Bamfo of Ghana’s Forestry Commission says there are “five million hectares of salvageable submerged timber in the hydroelectric reservoirs in the tropics with the

potential to supplement global demand for timber,” Reuters reports.

“There are very similar circumstances in numerous countries around the world including Ivory Coast, Cameroon, Brazil, Surinam, Malaysia and others,” Bamfo said. “The potential is there — they are awaiting to see the outcome of the Ghana project.”

Despite the additional costs associated with harvesting underwater, officials say that the project could still be a money-maker given current timber prices. Indeed, Bamfo told Reuters that the wood harvested from the bottom of Lake Volta will have a market value of about \$4 billion.

The Canadian firm CSR Developments will conduct the longing, which is set to begin in October.

“Ghana Timber Plan Shows Vision for New Environmental Regime,” VOA NEWS, 26 August 2008; “Submerged Forests to be Harvested in Ghana, Touted as Way to Slow Tropical Deforestation,” TREEHUGGER, 25 August 2008; “Submerged Ghana Forest May Point to Timber Bonanza,” REUTERS, 25 August 2008.

Events and 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>.

Events coming up in the next two weeks

7-10 September, Dallas, US. 23RD ANNUAL WATEREUSE SYMPOSIUM. This symposium is organized by the WateReuse Association, the American Water Works Association, and the Water Environment Federation and focuses on water reuse and desalination. For more information contact the WateReuse Association, tel: +1 703.548.0880; fax: +1 703.548.5085; internet:

<http://www.watereuse.org/conferences/symposium/23>

8 September, Manila, Philippines. ADB URBAN DAY 2008. This forum aims at tackling issues on solid waste management, climate change, city cluster development, and their impacts on promoting liveable cities. For more information contact Virginita A. Capulong, tel: +632 632-6679; email: mvcapulong@adb.org; internet: <http://www.shimbun.denki.or.jp/english/g8summit/aomori.shtml>

8-9 September, Geneva, Switzerland. THE INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON POST-2012 CLIMATE AND TRADE POLICIES. This event brings together a range of leading experts to actively discuss trade and economic strategies in a post-2012 world and the future interplay between the UN climate regime and the World Trade Organisation. For more information contact Benjamin Simmons, email: benjamin.simmons@unep.ch; internet: <http://ictsd.net/i/events/22824/>

8-10 September, Geneva, Switzerland. ACCESS TO KNOWLEDGE CONFERENCE (A2K3). This international, high-level conference will bring together scholars, policymakers, industry, and civil society to discuss key issues in global knowledge policy. For more information contact the Information Society Project at Yale Law School, email: a2k3@pantheon.yale.edu; internet: <http://www.law.yale.edu/intellectuallife/7106.htm>

8-9 September, Paris, France. WORKSHOP ON ADAPTING TO THE IMPACTS OF GLOBAL CHANGES ON RIVER BASINS AND AQUIFER SYSTEMS. This workshop, organized by UNESCO, aims to identify key research topics related to global change issues, identify common topics for synergy and coordinate research agendas of interested parties. internet: http://www.unesco.org/water/news/newsletter/202.shtml#news_1

8-12 September, Paramaribo, Suriname. INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE ON FINANCING SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT. This Country-Led Initiative in support of the UN Forum on Forests is organized

by the governments of Suriname, the Netherlands and the United States. For more information contact Henry Mac, tel: +1-212-980-7029; email: suriname@un.int; internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/forests/2008.html>

9-10 September, Geneva, Switzerland. HARVESTED WOOD PRODUCTS IN THE CONTEXT OF CLIMATE CHANGE POLICIES WORKSHOP. This workshop will focus on providing high-level information for policy makers and other stakeholders on the role of wood products in fighting climate change. For more information contact Sebastian Hetsch, email: sebastian.hetsch@unece.org; internet: www.unece.org/trade/timber/workshops/2008/hwp/

9-10 September, Buenos Aires, Argentina. BIOFUELS MARKETS AMERICAS - EXPANDING SUSTAINABLE MARKETS. This event will provide a platform for the global industry to learn about the region's opportunities in biofuels, address the key issues, and conduct business. For more information contact Dana Vogel, tel: +44 207 0990 600; fax: +44 207 9001 853; email: dana.vogel@greenpowerconferences.com; internet: www.greenpowerconferences.com/biofuelsmarkets/bm_americas.html

10-11 September, Kigali, Rwanda. AFRICA CLIMATE CHANGE FORUM. This conference will bring together academic experts, business leaders, non-governmental organisations and policy makers with an interest in applied innovation and sustainable development in Africa. There will be a strong emphasis on constructive participation from all delegates, with the aim of developing national and regional solutions to the global challenge. For more information contact Niamh McClean, tel: +44 7984 199113; fax: +44 20 7955 6934; email: africa.forum@lse.ac.uk; internet: <http://www.lse.ac.uk>

11 September, Brussels, Belgium. AD HOC MEETING - TRADE SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (SIA) OF THE EU-ASEAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT (FTA) - DRAFT GLOBAL ANALYSIS REPORT. The draft global analysis report of the Trade

Sustainability Impact Assessment (SIA) of the EU-ASEAN FTA will be subject of this meeting. For more information please contact the Civil Society Dialogue Team, email: trade-civilsociety@ec.europa.eu; internet: <http://trade.ec.europa.eu/civilsoc/meetdetails.cfm?meet=11269>

15-19 September, Dakar, Senegal. SIXTH SESSION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL FORUM ON CHEMICAL SAFETY. This session will consider the future of the IFCS, nanotechnology and nanomaterials, substitution and alternatives, the need for international action on lead and cadmium, and ecologically sound and integrated pest and vector management. Preparatory meetings will take place prior to the session, on 13-14 September. For more information contact the WHO, tel: +41 22 791 3873; fax: +41 22 791 4875; email: ifcs@who.int; internet: <http://www.who.int/ifcs/forums/six/en/index.html>

15- 20 September, Orvieto, Italy. EUROPEAN FOREST INSTITUTE ANNUAL CONFERENCE: ADAPTATION OF FOREST LANDSCAPE TO ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES. This seminar will focus on sharing knowledge on trees and forests for conservation, ecological restoration, energy and raw material sustainability. It will also seek answers to how to use forestry in managing environmental changes. For more information contact Anu Ruusila, e-mail: anu.ruusila@efi.int; internet: http://www.efi.int/portal/news_events/events/extra/2008/efi_2008_annual_conference_and_scientific_seminar/

17-20 September, Geneva, Switzerland. FIRST CONFERENCE OF THE GENEVA TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT FORUM. This is an open event where participants can engage in ongoing and substantive debates on trade and development challenges faced by developing countries. For more information and to register contact Giovanna Connor, tel: +41 22 839 84 94; email: giovanna.connor@symporg.ch; internet: www.gtdforum.org

18-20 September, Cracow, Poland. 12TH BIENNIAL CONFERENCE OF

EUROMEDITERRANEAN NETWORK OF EXPERIMENTAL AND REPRESENTATIVE BASINS. This conference will be organized around the theme “hydrological extremes in small basins.” For more information contact Jagiellonian University, tel: +48-12-664-5276; fax: +48-12-664-5385; email: erb2008@geo.uj.edu.pl; internet: <http://www.geo.uj.edu.pl/konferencja/erb2008/>

Other Upcoming Events

5-9 October, Bali, Indonesia. INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE ON TROPICAL RAINFORESTS AND AGROFORESTS UNDER GLOBAL CHANGE. This meeting aims to advance our understanding of human-induced global change processes, such as agricultural intensification and climate change, which threaten rainforests, by using an integrated scientific approach linking ecological, economic and social approaches at different scales. For more information contact the Organising Committee for the event, email: info@globalchange-2008.org; internet: www.globalchange-2008.org

6-8 October, Amsterdam, The Netherlands. NEXT GENERATION BIOFUELS MARKETS - DRIVING THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEXT GENERATION BIOFUELS. This event will bring together key players who are pioneering the development of next generation biofuels to address the latest developments in creating cost competitive, industrial scale production of next generation biofuels technologies. For more information contact Greenpower Conferences, tel: +44 (0) 20 7801 6333; email: info@greenpowerconferences.com; internet: www.greenpowerconferences.com

13-16 October, Accra, Ghana. INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON TRADITIONAL FOREST-RELATED KNOWLEDGE AND SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT IN AFRICA. This conference will highlight the importance of traditional forest-related knowledge (TFRK) towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals and sustainable forest management. The conference will cover context and history of the relationship between formal forest knowledge, and

“scientific” forestry and TFRK with respect to forest management, including community participatory approaches in Africa. For more information contact Alfred Oteng-Yeboah, email: otengyeboah@yahoo.co.uk; internet: http://www.iufro.org/download/file/2595/95/g_hana08-tftfk-1st-announcemt-call-upd.doc

20-24 October, Rome, Brussels, and throughout Europe. EUROPEAN FOREST WEEK 2008. This series of meetings in Rome will provide a unique opportunity for diverse stakeholders and forest managers to share perspectives and seek solutions to some of the most challenging issues facing forests and forestry today: climate change, energy and water. In conjunction with the Rome meetings, a high-profile European Union Presidency event will be held in Brussels (20 October) and a number of national and local events will take place in participating countries throughout Europe. For more information contact European Forest Week, email: efw@unece.org; internet: www.europeanforestweek.org

7-10 November, Alexandria, Egypt. NINTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON DRYLAND DEVELOPMENT: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE DRYLANDS - MEETING THE CHALLENGE OF GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE. This conference will provide an opportunity to examine the probable impact of global climate change on the natural resources and agricultural productivity of dry area ecosystems and exchange information on possible ways to enhance the resilience of these systems through adaptation and mitigation strategies. For more information contact Mohan C. Saxena, tel: +202-35681581; email: M.Saxena@cgiar.org; internet: http://www.icarda.org/Announcement/2008/9th-IDDC/9th-IDDC_FirstAnn.htm

10-12 March 2009, Copenhagen, Denmark. ADAPTING COASTAL ZONE AND MARINE RESOURCES TO CLIMATE CHANGE. This session of the Scientific Congress on Climate Change: Global Risks, Challenges, and Decisions aims to provide a synthesis of existing and emerging scientific knowledge in order to make intelligent societal decisions concerning the application of mitigation

and adaptation strategies in response to climate change. For more information, see <http://climatecongress.ku.dk>

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 Andrew Aziz at aaziz@ictsd.ch.

THE CLIMATE REGIME BEYOND 2012: RECONCILING ASIAN DEVELOPMENTAL PRIORITIES AND GLOBAL CLIMATE INTERESTS. By A. Srinivasan. Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, 2008. With a view to fostering constructive thinking and consensus-building on ways to strengthen the current climate regime, the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES) has been organising a series of national, sub-regional and region-wide consultations since 2005. This report summarises the findings from the third round of consultations, held in New Delhi (29-30 August 2007) and Beijing (13-14 September 2007), where four specific themes of importance to the Asia region and the future climate regime were discussed - sectoral approaches, technology development and transfer, adaptation financing and mainstreaming, and developmental co-benefits of climate actions. http://enviroscope.iges.or.jp/modules/envirolib/upload/1030/attach/full-report_climate_beyond2012_round3.pdf

PRACTICAL APPROACHES TO TRANSBOUNDARY WATER BENEFIT SHARING. By H. Qaddumi. Overseas Development Institute [ES], 2008. The emergence and maintenance of trans-boundary water management regimes rests on a complex web of inter-related factors that define incentives for cooperation. This paper considers practical mechanisms towards an operationalisation of benefit sharing in trans-boundary water by focusing on steps for putting the concept into practice and the lessons learned from existing cooperative efforts. Written from the perspective of an economist, it attempts to inject some degree of objectivity into what is otherwise a highly

political exercise. <http://www.odi.org.uk/publications/working-papers/292-transboundary-water-benefit-sharing.pdf>

LEVELING THE CARBON PLAYING FIELD: INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION AND US CLIMATE POLICY DESIGN. By Trevor Houser, Rob Bradley, Britt Childs, Jacob Werksman and Robert Heilmayr. Peterson Institute, May 2008. Since harmonisation of international climate policy is still a long way off, a key question in the design of domestic US climate policy today is how to best level the playing field for carbon-intensive industries during a period of transition. With trading partners moving at different speeds and adopting a variety of policies to reduce emissions, it can be difficult to address this challenge in a way that does not threaten the prospects of a broader international agreement down the road. This book aims at tackling these issues through an assessment of the economics and trade flows of key carbon-intensive industries. <http://bookstore.petersoninstitute.org/bookstore/4204.html>

SAVING WATER: FROM FIELD TO FORK-CURBING LOSSES AND WASTAGE IN THE FOOD CHAIN. By J. Lundqvist, C. de Fraiture, D. Molden, Stockholm International Water Institute, 2008. This paper discusses the current problems of food demand and water scarcity in the context of agriculture, the role that food consumers and businesses play, and outlines some possible solutions to these issues. <http://www.eldis.org/go/what-s-new&id=39358&type=Document>

IEA ENERGY POLICIES REVIEW — THE EUROPEAN UNION 2008. By the International Energy Association. September 2008. For the first time, the International Energy Association has reviewed the energy policies of the European Union. Strong policy drives are underway in the EU to achieve the completion of the internal energy market, increase renewable energy supply, reduce CO2 emissions and make the EU more energy-efficient. Concerns about security of supply have also led to a greater focus on improved energy relations with supplier countries, and new institutional structures are being put in place. This review addresses the progress the EU

has made in the field of security, internal market and external energy policies, the areas in which the EU has fully integrated its policy, and the impact of the most recent major EU policy measures, in particular the Energy & Climate Package of January 2008 and the 3rd Liberalisation Package of September 2007.
<http://www.iea.org/W/bookshop/add.aspx?id=3>
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