



Bridges Trade BioRes

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

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

Contributors to this issue were Alicia Handy, Julia Oliva and Malena Sell.

The Director is Ricardo Meléndez-Ortiz.

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Environmental Governance

UNEP GOVERNING COUNCIL DISCUSSES CLIMATE CHANGE, SETS DIRECTION FOR FUTURE WORK

The Governing Bodies of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), in the largest gathering of environment ministers since the UN conference on climate change at Bali, deliberated on ways to mobilise financing for mitigation and adaptation. In the context of broader discussions on international environmental governance, the need to strengthen UNEP was also discussed, with countries approving a renewed work strategy for the organisation.

The tenth Special Session of the UNEP Governing Council and the Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GC/GMEF) took place from 20-22 February in Monaco. The GC/GMEF is an annual global forum allowing ministerial-level review of important and emerging environmental policy issues. The theme of this year's UNEP GC/GMEF was "Globalisation and the Environment - Mobilising Finance for the Climate Challenge."

Discussions on financing for climate change, as well as on international environmental governance, the other central topic of the GC/GMEF, were held both in plenary and in smaller ministerial consultations. Other issues on the agenda were the findings of the fourth Global Environment Outlook report (GEO-4) and the UNEP Yearbook for 2008, as well as the follow-up and implementation of previous decisions, including the proposed UNEP Medium-term Strategy 2010-2013. The official meetings were preceded by a Global Civil Society Forum, a platform for exchange and consultation among major groups and stakeholders on key environmental issues to be addressed by the Member States.

Mobilising finance to meet the climate challenge

Effective catalysis of financing to meet the climate change challenge requires not only international mechanisms, but also private sector engagement at the national level. Efforts to promote such engagement were the focus of the GC/GMEF ministerial consultations on financing for climate change. The President of the GC/GMEF, Robert Calcagno of Monaco, said ministers agreed that investment capital was available in the world to address climate change but that a “sufficiently high and long-term predictable price for carbon will be central for mobilising that capital for the new economy.” Developing countries noted the need for financial and technical assistance in order to make the transition to lower carbon economies. The meeting participants recognised UNEP’s role in assisting developing countries to establish adequate policies and institutional frameworks and in building their capacity to access finance.

Unlike in 2007, trade did not feature prominently at the UNEP GC/GMEF (see Bridges Trade BioRes, 16 February 2007, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/07-02-16/story1.htm>). Nevertheless, several trade-related topics arose in discussions on financing for climate change. The background paper for the consultations - prepared by Achim Steiner, Executive Director of UNEP - suggested various policies to promote investment in mitigation of climate change, including the liberalisation of environmental goods and services at the World Trade Organisation (WTO). The paper also noted that subsidies continue to have a major impact on climate change, with studies showing that the removal of some consumer energy subsidies could significantly reduce global carbon dioxide emissions. The issue of innovation and technology transfer was addressed as well, with the background paper highlighting the need to raise the level of innovation. Ministers were asked to consider, in particular, appropriate policies for promoting innovation and enabling large-scale deployment of mitigation and adaptation technologies.

International Environmental Governance and the UNEP Medium-term Strategy

The UNEP GC/GMEF in Monaco served as a forum to discuss progress on the informal consultative process on the institutional framework for UN environmental activities, initiated by the UN General Assembly as a result of the 2005 World Summit. In addition, the GC/GMEF considered the issue of international environmental governance more generally. Countries recognised the challenges faced by institutions responsible for environmental governance, as well as the need to address them through improved coordination, policy advice and guidance, scientific knowledge and the integration of environmental activities in the broader sustainable development framework. Divergences on the issue of international environmental governance were evident in discussions. However, there was general consensus on the need to strengthen UNEP, even if countries emphasised that such strengthening should be incremental and take care not to encroach on other mandates.

Indeed, the GC/GMEF decision authorising the proposed Medium-Term Strategy in formulating the programme of work was considered a milestone towards “new and transformational directions” for the organisation, Steiner said. The strategy will focus the organisation’s activities across six cross-cutting thematic priorities, aimed at strengthening and focusing the response of UNEP to climate change; disasters and conflicts; ecosystem management; environmental governance; harmful substances and hazardous waste; and resource efficiency, sustainable consumption and production. Steiner noted that countries, by empowering UNEP, had signalled their determination to address these existing and emerging environmental challenges.

Other topics

A number of other issues were also addressed in discussions at the UNEP GC/GMEF in Monaco. Countries expressed concern at the evidence of unprecedented environmental changes presented by the GEO-4, and called for timely action to prevent, mitigate and adapt to such changes. There was also much interest in the UNEP Year Book 2008, which describes the “green economy”

that is emerging as the private sector increasingly embraces environmental policies and investors turn to cleaner technologies.

Background

The UNEP GC, formed by 58 member states elected by the UN General Assembly on the basis of equitable regional representation, is charged with promoting international cooperation in the field of the environment and providing general policy guidance for the direction and coordination of environmental programmes within the UN system. Regular sessions of the UNEP Governing Council take place biannually at the UNEP headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya. Since 2000, special sessions of the UNEP Governing Council have been held on alternate years, aiming to advance discussions on increasingly pressing environmental concerns. In addition, the GMEF is convened annually to review important and emerging policy issues in the field of the environment at a high political level, with the Governing Council constituting the forum either in its regular or special sessions.

Additional information

For daily coverage and a summary of the meeting, see IISD's Earth Negotiations Bulletin at <http://www.iisd.ca/unepegc/unepps10/>

ICTSD reporting; "New and Forward Looking Strategy for UNEP Authorized," UNEP PRESS RELEASE, 22 February 2008.

Intellectual Property

WIPO CTTE ON GENETIC RESOURCES AND TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE LOOKS FOR WAY FORWARD

Members of the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) have identified a number of steps in order to move forward long-running discussions on the policy, legal and practical aspects of the protection of genetic resources, traditional knowledge and folklore.

The WIPO Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources,

Traditional Knowledge and Folklore (IGC) met from 25-29 February in Geneva.

Although the committee was created in 2000, its work has been inconclusive. This was the IGC's first session since its mandate was renewed for two years last September following WIPO members' continuing disagreement on whether to conclude a new international treaty to protect genetic resources, traditional knowledge, and folklore against misappropriation. In general, biodiversity-rich developing countries want an international legally binding instrument, whereas industrialised countries such as the US, Japan, and Canada are opposed to seeing the committee's work move towards this objective.

The renewed mandate calls for the IGC to concentrate on "the international dimension" of the relationship between intellectual property and genetic resources, traditional knowledge, and folklore, including possible international instruments. Governments are discussing the same issues elsewhere - not least in the WTO and the Convention on Biological Diversity - and the mandate specifies that discussions at the IGC are without prejudice to work pursued in other fora.

The committee elected Jaya Ratnam, Singapore's deputy permanent representative to the United Nations in Geneva, as its new chair.

As in previous meetings, developed and developing countries agreed that progress was necessary, but disagreed on what it would entail. Developed countries continued to call for further discussion and analysis of the relationship between intellectual property and genetic resources, traditional knowledge, and folklore. The US, for example, said a fuller understanding of the issues was necessary. Japan argued that no clarity had yet been achieved regarding basic definitions, or even the objectives of the discussions. The EU thought it premature to discuss the international aspects of preventing misappropriation

Developing countries, on the other hand, pushed for a move towards an international legally binding instrument to prevent the misappropriation of traditional knowledge and folklore, particularly given the fact that IGC first met in 2001. India remarked that domestic

experiences and national views are now well known, and “it is time that we reflect on all that we have said, and explore opportunities to come to some sort of conclusion.” Brazil also said that “discussions needed to move beyond statements.”

The African Group submitted a proposal aimed at guiding the future work of the committee. The proposal called for accelerating work on what it sees as the ultimate objective of the IGC process: the development and adoption of a legally binding international instrument for the protection of traditional knowledge, traditional cultural expressions and genetic resources. Other recommendations included the establishment of a “focused expert group” to “further study the outstanding issues thereby building consensus to advise the committee.” As it was submitted on the last day of the deliberations, there was limited discussion of the African proposal. Nevertheless, it was widely welcomed as a good starting point for the next IGC meeting.

The IGC continued its consideration of the protection of traditional knowledge (TK) and traditional cultural expressions (TCEs) through two processes: an agreed list of issues on each topic; and two draft sets of “Revised Objectives and Principles” for the protection of each. However, little substantial discussion took place. Most countries raised a number of the same basic conceptual issues that the IGC has been grappling with for many years without significant advances.

In light of this situation, a “gap analysis” was proposed as a way to identify points of divergence, while re-focusing the IGC on the issues on which consensus exists. WIPO Members agreed to such a gap analysis for traditional knowledge and for traditional cultural expressions. These analyses will describe existing international obligations, provisions and possibilities for the protection of both, as well as the existing gaps in such protection, considerations relevant to determining whether those gaps need to be addressed, and the possible options - legal and otherwise - to address them. These documents will be made available by the WIPO Secretariat in draft form by 31 May. Participants in the IGC will have the opportunity to comment on the drafts by the end of June after which final drafts will be

published by mid-August for consideration by the IGC in October.

Given time constraints, genetic resources were not discussed. On behalf of the EU, Slovenia suggested placing genetic resources as the first item on the agenda for the next IGC meeting. Latin American, Caribbean, and African countries argued it would be more appropriate to focus discussions on traditional cultural expressions, as deliberations on that topic are more advanced. Members ultimately agreed that the next IGC meeting would allot sufficient time to genetic resources as well as traditional knowledge and folklore.

At the outset of the meeting, the IGC approved sixteen requests for accreditation from various indigenous peoples groups and non-governmental organisations. Participation by indigenous communities has become an important feature in IGC discussions. This session of the IGC was the first after the UN’s adoption of a Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which recognised the right of indigenous peoples “to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions.”

Despite the agreement on how to proceed, various Members expressed their frustration with the lack of substantive discussions at the meeting. It is still unclear whether the agreed work plan will achieve a more in-depth debate. The next IGC session, with a view to accelerating work, will consider establishing inter-sessional mechanisms to push the talks forward in a structured and focused manner.

The next IGC meeting is scheduled for 13-17 October.

ICTSD reporting.

Trade And Climate Change

CLIMATE CHANGE: SCHWAB OPPOSES POTENTIAL TRADE MEASURES

US Trade Representative Susan Schwab has warned US legislators against introducing border measures in draft climate legislation.

According to Schwab, “trade restrictions run the risk of tit-for-tat retaliation and even an all-out trade war where no one wins and everyone loses.” Instead, Schwab has advocated a focus on ‘win-win’ solutions, such as the liberalisation of trade in climate-friendly goods and services.

US climate legislation moving along

There are two main climate- and energy-related bills are under preparation in the US Senate. Both are based on the ‘cap and trade’ principle, under which energy-intensive enterprises would be allocated CO2 emission rights. A certain portion of the allowance would be cost-free and another would be auctioned.

The Low-carbon Economy Act sponsored by Senators Bingaman and Specter calls for limiting CO2 emissions to 2006 levels by 2020, while the bill being developed by Senators Lieberman and Warner would require a 10-percent reduction from that level by the same deadline. Both proposals would also allow regulated industries to buy credits through climate-friendly projects in foreign countries, as well as foresee the possibility of requiring US importers of energy-intensive goods to submit allowances in an amount that would compensate for the economic advantage resulting from the products not being subject to emissions-related regulation in their countries of origin.

Representatives Dingell and Boucher are working on a House bill along similar lines. Final legislation is not expected to be passed until well after the current presidential elections are over.

Schwab cautions against border measures

In a letter sent in early March to Joe Barton, Ranking Member of the US House Committee on

Energy and Commerce, Schwab responded to a 31 January ‘white paper’ on potential climate change legislation produced by this committee.

The white paper, was part of a series aimed at providing guidance to lawmakers in crafting a mandatory, economy-wide climate change programme for the US, had a particular focus on competitiveness concerns and ways to engage developing countries.

As a starting point, the paper noted that Congress was unlikely to adopt legislation committing the US to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions without action by developing countries as well. The paper looked at measures such as border adjustments, performance standards and instruments under a carbon market.

Regarding border measures, Schwab stressed that using import restrictions would amount to putting into place “a blunt and imprecise instrument of fear - rather than one of persuasion - that will take us down a dangerous path and adversely affect U.S. manufacturers, farmers and consumers.”

The white paper considered the consistency of potential border measures with the US’ obligations under the WTO, highlighting possible concerns - without ruling out the use of the measures despite this fact. Schwab took note of these concerns, adding that any trade-related measures could prompt retaliation by the US’ trade partners and that “this scenario could unfold long before any potential disputes were concluded in the WTO.” Thus, according to Schwab, “the consequences for global trade could be enormous,” and play out rather rapidly.

In addition, at a political level any threats of trade measures could bring acrimony into the climate change negotiations, where a more successful strategy would be to focus on carrots, not sticks, said Schwab.

Clinton, Obama want environment, labour considerations in trade

In related news, the US presidential campaigns of Hillary Clinton and Barak Obama have emphasised the need for enforceable

environmental and labour standards in current and any future international trade agreements.

The emphasis in their campaigns has been on the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which has hurt some state's economy as businesses have sent manufacturing jobs to countries like Mexico where labour is cheaper. Both candidates have indicated their support for amending NAFTA to include environmental and labour standards.

Trade with China has also been highlighted in the Clinton and Obama campaigns. Clinton and Obama have both stated their commitment to tackling the unfair trade practices of China and the need to make enforcement of trade agreements a top priority in order to protect US interests.

Republican presidential candidate John McCain has criticised Clinton's and Obama's stance saying, "they are sending 'the wrong message to the world' by pledging to renegotiate [NAFTA] to protect American workers," and labelled any major restructuring of NAFTA a "betrayal."

Depending on the outcome of the presidential election outcome in November, Clinton's and Obama's positions may hinder a successful conclusion to the already troubled Doha Round of negotiations (see Bridges Weekly, 5 March 2008, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/08-03-05/story2.htm>).

ICTSD reporting; "WTO Needs New Labour, Environment Rules - Clinton, Obama," Reuters, 3 March 2008; "For Candidates, A Lot of Distance Between Texas and Ohio on NAFTA," Dallas News, 4 March 2008; "Forget NAFTA, Look at What Clinton and Obama Say on China on China Trade," The Nation, 4 March 2008; "Behind Obama's Union Comeback," TIME, 3 March 2008; "McCain Blasts Obama's and Clinton's Attacks on NAFTA," LA Times, 29 February 2008.

In Brief

AQUATIC SPECIES INVADE FOREIGN COASTAL WATERS

Vessels shipping goods around the world carry aquatic animals and plants with them as well, spreading potentially invasive and dangerous non-native species across the globe.

"The scale of this problem is vast," said Jennifer Molnar, co-author of a recent report entitled "Assessing the Global Threat of Invasive Species to Marine Biodiversity," published by The Nature Conservancy, an environmental group. The report highlights just how damaging non-native species are to the marine biodiversity of coastal waters and was published with a comprehensive database that identifies the threats posed by non-native species and potential introduction pathways.

According to Molnar, 84 percent of coastal waters now contain non-native species. These have "hitchhiked" on the hulls of ocean-going vessels, or have been transported in ballast water. "As many as 10,000 species [] estimated to be in transit at any one time," said Molnar. Ninety percent of globally traded goods are carried by marine vessels.

Aquaculture is another major contributor of non-native species to coastal waters.

The introduction of non-native species has cost economies billions of dollars in ecosystem repairs and has damaged local economies. For example, the US spends approximately US\$120 billion annually to control non-native species and to repair the resulting damage. In the 1990s, the comb jellyfish devastated Black and Caspian Sea fish populations, damaging commercial fishing and causing massive job losses in coastal communities. Non-native species have also contributed to nearly one-third of species extinctions in the last 400 years.

Absent effective control, and as international trade continues to increase, the spread of non-native species will continue. By quantifying the damage caused by non-native species and identifying the pathways by which they are introduced, the report

by The Nature Conservancy seeks to provide relevant information for policymakers to establish preventive measures at the international, regional and national levels.

Additional resources

The report “Assessing the Global Threat of Invasive Species to Marine Biodiversity” can be accessed at <http://conserveonline.org/workspaces/global.invasive.assessment>

ICTSD reporting; “World’s Coastal Waters Riddled with Invasive Species,” ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS SERVICE, 24 February 2008; “New Study Examines System for Reducing Import of Invasive Plants into the US,” PRESS RELEASE NEWSWIRE, 29 February 2008.

GM CONTAMINATION ON THE RISE, COMPLICATES TRADE

Incidents of GM contamination incidents are becoming more frequent on the global agriculture market.

Environmental group Greenpeace recently released its “GM Contamination Register Report 2007.” Two-hundred and sixteen incidents of GM contamination are now recorded in the register, of which 39 took place 2007, and 35 were added for 2003-2005. Of the 39 incidents, 28 were involved the contamination of food, feed and seeds, and 11 were illegal releases. The report also found that non-commercially cultivated GM varieties were responsible for approximately 30 percent of the recorded incidents.

The trade implications of GM contamination can be significant. For example, contaminated US rice exports led many importers to close their markets to US rice, with product recalls costing over US\$250 million. Russia also recently asked India to guarantee that there were “no GM crops in the rice, groundnuts and sesame seeds” Russia was importing, leading to additional measures and costs for India where field trials are currently underway for GM rice and groundnuts.

To prevent the contamination of non-GM varieties, the Greenpeace report highlights various methods, including spatial and temporal separation of crops and physical and biological barriers. However, the report also notes the fact that such efforts have been made to hinder contamination, more needs to be done. In addition to developing international and national regulations to address the problem, Greenpeace proposed that biotech companies be made “wholly financially responsible” for any GM contamination, giving the biotech industry the incentive to prevent contamination.

Additional information

The GM Contamination Register Report 2007 can be found at <http://www.greenpeace.org/raw/content/international/press/reports/gm-contamination-register-2007.pdf>

“Biotech Companies Fuel GM Contamination Spread,” GREENPEACE RELEASE, 29 February 2008; “GM Trials in India Threaten Trade Ties,” THE TIMES OF INDIA, 13 February 2008.

NEW CALLS FOR SUSTAINABILITY TRANSITION

The world economy urgently needs to transform into a truly sustainable global economy, according to two new reports. Released by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and by the Washington-based World Watch Institute, the reports outline the growing environmental damage caused by the global economy and propose various alternatives to achieve a more sustainable path.

The OECD’s “Environmental Outlook to 2030” discusses policy scenarios and costs of combating environmental challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and water scarcity. The report found that some key environmental challenges could be addressed at as little as approximately one percent of GDP in 2030. The report also discussed the consequences of doing nothing, and concluded that under ‘business as usual,’ greenhouse gas emissions could result in a 1.7 - 2.4 degree Celsius increase in temperatures by

2050, continued loss of biodiversity, increased water scarcity and increased negative health impacts. To transition to a sustainable economy, the OECD report proposed that implementing policies that would ensure efficient resource use and encourage innovation. Nations should increase environmental cooperation and policy actions should target key sectors such as energy, transport, agriculture and fisheries. Some of the policy actions considered included issues dealt with under the WTO Doha Round of trade negotiations, such as removing agricultural and fishing overcapacity subsidies.

The World Watch Institute recently released its annual State of the World report, with the 2008 edition focusing on “Innovations for a Sustainable Economy.” In its report, the World Watch Institute discussed the importance of merging environmental and economic policies to promote continued economic growth, and to “[take] advantage of the ability of markets to allocate scarce resources while explicitly recognising that our economy is dependent on the broader ecosystem that contains it.” On the trade front, one chapter focused specifically on possible reforms to the international trading system that could help advance sustainable economic activity.

Additional information

Information on obtaining the OECD “Environmental Outlook to 2030,” and the Executive Summary of the report can be found at http://www.oecd.org/document/20/0,3343,en_2649_37465_39676628_1_1_1_37465,00.html

Information on obtaining the World Watch Institute report “State of the World 2008: Innovations for a Sustainable Economy,” can be found at <http://www.worldwatch.org/stateoftheworld>

“Environmental Safeguards Affordable, Urgent - OECD,” REUTERS, 6 March 2008, “This Time, World Should Heed OECD Call to Action on Environment,” WWF RELEASE, 5 March 2008.

GLOBAL SEED VAULT OPENS IN NORWAY

In an effort to protect crop biodiversity and the ability to restart agricultural production after a potential disaster, a “Global Seed Vault” was opened on 26 February. The vault contains three cold rooms surrounded by permafrost in a mountain in the Svalbard archipelago in Norway. It has the potential to house 4.5 million batches of seeds, or approximately 2 billion seeds. At its opening, the Global Seed Vault had 268,000 samples.

Dr. Rony Swennen, head of the crop biotechnology division at Catholic University (Belgium) said, “the erosion of plants’ genetic resources is really going fast.” According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation, “three-quarters of biodiversity in crops has been lost in the last century.” The goal of the Global Seed Vault is to “protect samples of every type of seed from every seed collection in the world” from climate change, politics and human error.

Jens Stoltenberg, Norway’s prime minister, said “with climate change and other forces threatening the diversity of life that sustains our planet, Norway is proud to be playing a central role in creating a facility capable of protecting what are not just seeds, but the fundamental building blocks of human civilization.” Stoltenberg also described the vault as “the Noah’s Ark for securing biological diversity.” Cary Fowler of the Global Crop Diversity Trust added that “crop diversity will soon prove to be our most potent and indispensable resource for addressing climate change, water and energy supply constraints, and for meeting the food needs of a growing population.”

Various agricultural NGOs criticised the Global Seed Vault, however, as “fundamentally unjust in its objectives.” For example, agriculture lobby GRAIN said “the ultimate beneficiaries will [] be the very same corporations that are at the roots of crop-diversity destruction.” The GREEN Foundation added that “it is already a decade since the UNCED in Rio de Janeiro and the Convention on Biological Diversity realised that gene banks had their own limitations, starting from major power breakdowns, to excluding

farmers' access to these banks, to realising that seeds conserved under freeze conditions did not evolve when grown under changed environmental conditions."

"Doomsday' Seed Vault Opens in Arctic," ASSOCIATED PRESS, 27 February 2008; "Near Arctic, Seed Vault is a Fort Knox of Food," NEW YORK TIMES, 29 February 2008; "Arctic 'Doomsday' Seed Vault Opens Doors for 100 Million Seeds," SCIENCEDAILY, 27 February 2008; "Development: NGOs Wary of Doomsday Seed Vault," INTER PRESS SERVICE, 4 March 2008.

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

10-14 March, New York, US: SEVENTH INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS OF STATES PARTIES TO THE FISH STOCKS AGREEMENT. This meeting will be an informal consultation of the parties to the UN Agreement for Implementation of the Provisions of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks. Participants will discuss the implementation of the Agreement, taking into consideration the outcome of the Review Conference as regards proposed means of strengthening implementation, promoting wider participation, and making recommendations to be considered by the General Assembly. Internet: http://www.un.org/Depts/los/convention_agreements/convention_overview_fish_stocks.htm

12-14 March, Brussels, Belgium. WORLD BIOFUELS MARKETS CONGRESS. The World Biofuels Markets Congress is Europe's largest gathering of biofuels professionals. It is intended for industry experts looking to share best practices and attract new clients. Mariann Fischer

Boel, EU Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, is confirmed to address this year's Congress. Internet: <http://www.worldbiofuelsmarkets.com/>

14-16 March, Chiba, Japan: GLENEAGLES DIALOGUE ON CLIMATE CHANGE, CLEAN ENERGY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. The Gleneagles Dialogue is a multi-year, multi-government, public-private policy dialogue on climate change and clean energy issues, the findings of which will be submitted to the G8 summit process at this meeting in Japan. Internet: <http://www.do-summit.jp/en/about/summary02.php>
Other upcoming meetings

27-28 March, New York City, US: BIODIVERSITY & ECOSYSTEM FINANCE. This will be the first meeting where financiers, corporations and the environmental communities come together to discuss how the business community can lead in biodiversity & ecosystem conservation. Internet: <http://www.greenpowerconferences.com/general/documents/BiodiversityBrochure.pdf>

31 March-4 April, London, UK: IMO MARINE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION COMMITTEE. The MEPC is the IMO's senior technical body on marine pollution. This meeting will be the 57th session of the MEPC covering topics such as ship recycling, air pollution prevention and ballast water management. Internet: http://www.imo.org/Newsroom/mainframe.asp?topic_id=109

8 April, New Delhi, India: GLOBAL AGRO-INDUSTRIES FORUM: IMPROVING COMPETITIVENESS AND DEVELOPMENT IMPACT. Internet: <http://www.fao.org/events/index.asp>

23-25 April, Paris, France: OECD-UNEP CONFERENCE ON RESOURCE EFFICIENCY. This meeting will discuss how improved resource efficiency can reduce negative environmental impacts while sustaining economic activity. Internet: http://www.oecd.org/departement/0,3355,en_2649_33713_1_1_1_1_1,00.html

16-17 June, London, UK: A NEW GLOBAL CLIMATE DEAL? ACHIEVING REAL COLLABORATION FOR A LOW CARBON FUTURE. This will be the 11th Chatham House conference on climate change. Topics will include how to balance economic growth with the need for emissions reductions in developing countries, developing low carbon technologies, carbon markets and equity, and climate strategies that can be agreed to in Copenhagen 2009. Internet: <https://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/events/conferences/view/-/id/118/>

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 mse...@ictsd.ch.

EU CONSUMPTION, GLOBAL POLLUTION. By John Kornerup Bang, Eivind Hoff and Glen Peters (WWF, February 2008). This report shows that the global CO₂ emissions from EU consumption are 500 megatonnes (12%) higher than EU production. The countries most impacted by the EU's carbon imbalance are China, South Africa and Russia. The situation reflects the fact that the Europe mainly exports services and high-value added products while importing more energy-intensive and low-value added products. Imported goods also tend to cause more emissions because production in some countries is more pollution intensive than in Europe. Goals to reduce EU emissions by 50-80% by 2050 are weakened if this is done by increasingly importing CO₂-intensive products from the rest of the world. For the EU to reduce its global CO₂ emissions, systemic changes to the European economy are needed. As the world's largest economic and trading block, trade and investment flows from the EU are an important, but often overlooked, method to achieve change. The report says that the EU must mobilise the funds to help developing countries introduce technology that 'leapfrogs' beyond the inefficient industrial and urban infrastructure in the developed world. To access the report go to http://www.panda.org/about_wwf/what_we_do/policy/index.cfm?uNewsID=125140

BIOFUELS: MAKING TOUGH CHOICES. By Sonja Vermeulen, Annie Dufey and Bill Vorley (IIED, February 2008). The jury is still out on biofuels. But one thing at least is certain: serious trade-offs are involved in the production and use of these biomass-derived alternatives to fossil fuels. This has not been lost on the European Union. The year kicked off with an announcement from the EU environment commissioner that it may be better for the EU to miss its target of reaching 10 per cent biofuel content in road fuels by 2020 than to compromise the environment and human wellbeing. The 'decision tree' outlined in this briefing can guide the interdependent processes of deliberation and analysis needed for making tough choices in national biofuels development. To access the briefing visit <http://www.iied.org/pubs/display.php?o=17032IIED&n=1&l=177&c=econ>

INTERNATIONAL TRADE-RELATED REGULATIONS OF GM FOOD: WHAT POLICIES FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES? By Guillaume Gruère (International Food Policy Institute, 2007). This brief summarizes a comprehensive review of national and international trade-related regulations on the food and feed products derived from transgenic or genetically modified (GM) crops, identifies the main effects of these regulations on developing countries' decision-making, and suggests four necessary policy arrangements to achieve multiple domestic objectives under these regulatory constraints. To access the policy brief, visit <http://www.ifpri.org/pbs/pdf/pbsbriefgruere.pdf>

LABELING POLICIES OF GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOOD: LESSONS FROM AN INTERNATIONAL REVIEW OF EXISTING APPROACHES. By Guillaume Gruère (International Food Policy Institute, 2007). This brief summarizes a comprehensive review of international labeling policies for genetically modified (GM) food and uses it to draw lessons for policymakers in developing countries that are considering the possibility of adopting a labeling policy for GM food. To access the policy brief, visit <http://www.ifpri.org/pbs/pdf/pbsbrieflabeling.pdf>

WHAT INFORMATION SHOULD BE REQUIRED ON SHIPMENTS OF LMO-FFPS? ANALYZING OPTIONS UNDER ARTICLE 18.2.A OF THE BIOSAFETY PROTOCOL. By Guillaume Gruère and Mark W. Rosegrant (International Food Policy Institute, 2007). This brief summarizes the potential economic effects of making mandatory the voluntary stringent information requirements adopted in 2006 under Article 18.2.a of the Biosafety Protocol. This would require all traded shipments containing living modified organisms intended for direct use as food, feed, or for processing (LMO-FFPs) to be accompanied by a list of all present genetically modified (GM) events. To access the policy brief, visit <http://www.ifpri.org/pbs/pdf/pbsbrieflmoFFPs.pdf>

COPING WITH WATER SCARCITY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: WHAT ROLE FOR AGRICULTURAL BIOTECHNOLOGIES? This document provides a summary of the main issues discussed during a moderated e-mail conference, hosted by the FAO Biotechnology Forum from 5 March to 1 April 2007, based on the messages posted by the participants, 75% of which came from people in developing countries. The major topics discussed were the application of biotechnologies (mainly genetic modification and marker-assisted selection) to develop crops with improved drought resistance or water use efficiency; the use of bacteria and mycorrhizal fungi in water-limited conditions; and the use of biotechnology in wastewater treatment. To view the document, visit <http://www.fao.org/biotech/logs/C14/summary.htm>, or contact biot...@fao.org to request a copy.