



Bridges Trade BioRes

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

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Standards And Labelling

TESCO PILOTS CARBON FOOTPRINTING SCHEME

Tesco, the UK-based global retailer, has introduced new carbon labels on 20 of its products under a new pilot scheme.

The scheme seeks to go beyond the simple ‘food miles’ concept by considering the carbon emissions during the full life cycle of selected goods.

The first 20 goods include Tesco’s own-brand products in four different categories: orange juice, potatoes, washing detergent and light bulbs. The new labels express the greenhouse gases released over the lifecycle of the products in terms of grams of carbon much like the nutrition label provides the amount of sodium or fat in foods. They have been developed with the Carbon Trust — a private company established by the UK government to help Britain move towards a low carbon economy — the UK Environment Department and the British Standards Institute.

Introducing the new labels, Terry Leahy, chief executive of Tesco, said “We want to give our customers the power to make informed green choices for their weekly shop, and enlist their help in working towards a revolution in green consumption.”

Tom Delay, chief executive of the Carbon Trust, added that “There has been a significant groundswell of interest from consumers in the carbon impact of the products they buy. And the collective challenge for businesses is to get meaningful information to them at the right time and place so they can begin to make informed low carbon choices.”

Complex process

Tesco announced in March 2007 that they intended to provide the carbon footprint of all their 70,000 products. Calculating the carbon footprint is complex and costly, however, and the current 20 labelled products are part of a pilot project. Tesco has said that more labels will appear in its supermarkets over the course of the year. The groundwork has been done for labelling tomatoes, for example, but tomatoes are currently not in season. The first 20 products that Tesco has labelled are not air freighted ones. The methodology in this area is particularly challenging.

Peter Melchett, Policy Director at the Soil Association — the leading organic certifier in the UK — welcomed the move by Tesco. He said, however, that since soil carbon had not been considered in the carbon footprinting exercise, the label did not rate organic products as positively as they deserved. “Overall, organic farming has a reduced carbon footprint as it stores carbon in the soil, as well as using less fossil fuel energy,” he noted.

Some other commentators expressed scepticism with regard to the new labelling scheme. Lucy Yates of the National Consumers Council said ‘carbon grams’ did not ring a bell with most consumers — at least not yet. Overall, the carbon-related information was complicated and added to an ever-expanding jungle of consumer information, she said. Paul Monaghan, head of ethics at the Co-operative group, a competitor of Tesco’s, felt the burden of emissions reduction should not be placed on the customer. He said companies were better placed to take action to minimise the carbon footprint over the supply chain of the products they sell.

Beyond food miles

Retailers initially responded to consumer demands for information helping them to reduce their personal carbon footprints by labelling certain products as being air freighted, since airplane emissions are particularly high. Most bulk products are shipped by sea; fresh produce, however, needs to reach the consumer quickly and airfreight is the only option. This first experiment

ended up hurting some of the poorest and most vulnerable countries in the world. These developing countries had managed to capture high-value niche markets in developed countries by air-freighting fresh produce during the northern winter. The stickers singled out just one part of the carbon footprint, namely transport, ignoring other parts of the process. Overall, the exporters operating in warmer climates often produced products with lower carbon emissions as compared to their counterparts in developed countries, which produce out-of-season vegetables in a highly mechanised fashion in greenhouses using large amounts of carbon-intensive fertilizer input.

The new carbon footprinting attempts to account for the full life cycle carbon, measuring the carbon emissions from the field to the plate by accounting for agricultural methods, processing, energy, soil, distribution and everything in between. As this calculation is based not only on miles travelled but rather on carbon emitted during the entire production process, it is less likely to discriminate against developing country exports they way food miles schemes have done.

ICTSD reporting; “Tesco and Carbon Trust join forces to drive forward carbon labelling,” CARBON TRUST, 29 April 2008; “Tesco trials climate-change labels on groceries,” REUTERS, 29 April 2008.

‘RESPONSIBLE’ SOY STIRS CONTROVERSY

Stakeholders in the soy business seeking to develop sustainability criteria for their industry have met with tough resistance from civil society groups. Environmentalists choosing to sidestep the multi-stakeholder initiative have called it a ‘greenwash,’ saying that any expansion of soy production would have dire environmental and social consequences and that the only solution is to cut consumption in the North.

Around 200 representatives from the soy industry — including growers, fodder mills, meat producers, retailers, and financiers — together with environmental and social non-governmental organisations from around the world gathered for the third Global Round Table on Responsible Soy

(RTRS) from 23-24 April in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Under the heading of “Responsive Soy: Food, Feed, and Fuel for a Future World”, the meeting discussed criteria for economically viable, socially equitable and environmentally sustainable production, processing and trading of soy. At the close of the meeting the Executive Board agreed on draft principles and criteria for responsible soy production and trade, and on a verification mechanism to be able to ensure compliance. The final versions of these documents are expected to be ratified in May 2009.

Before the meeting some civil society groups called on those involved in the RTRS to withdraw. Participating organisations such as WWF are encouraging all parties to cooperate in the round table discussions. A week before the meeting, the Global Forest Coalition — a coalition of non-governmental and indigenous peoples organisations — called upon other civil society groups involved in the process to withdraw. According to Miguel Lovera, chairperson of the Global Forest Coalition, “The support of civil society organisations to this Round Table is legitimising a corporate-dominated process that attempts to give a green veneer to further soy expansion in South America and other regions instead of promoting more sustainable consumption patterns that would take away the need for further expansion.”

What’s in the criteria?

As a result of increasing demand for feedstock to meet the world’s growing demand for meat and poultry and bioenergy to replace fossil fuels, soy production is expanding. The RTRS is seeking to ensure that the expansion happens in a sustainable fashion, and that its members adhere to principles and criteria currently under development to ensure this.

The principles and criteria are being developed by a smaller group of soy stakeholders, and are open to comments during public consultation periods. They relate to responsible business practices, responsible labour conditions, respect for land rights, small scale and traditional land use, responsible community relations, environmental

sustainability, responsible water management, responsible soil management, protection of biodiversity, crop protection and responsible use of chemicals, and responsible establishment of infrastructure and new areas of cultivation.

The latest document on criteria and principles, dated 27 March 2008 and circulated during the round table, contains different wording options where members of the drafting group could not agree and are looking for further input. According to the document, soy business companies have to comply with applicable legal requirements and openness and transparency. It also says that there is a need to ensure that RTRS does not become a technical barrier to trade.

The principles on responsible labour conditions include the recognition and respect for labour rights and individual human rights (and propose different laws that companies would have to comply with), adequate handling of health and safety issues, recognition of and respect for workers’ freedom of association, and provision of fair salaries.

With regard to responsible community relations, criteria relate to the contribution to sustainable development of local communities, constructive dialogue and addressing of grievances, and compensation for loss or damage. On environmental responsibility, the soy industry has to identify and document, through participatory and transparent processes, any significant negative and positive environmental impacts caused by ongoing operations, and take demonstrable measures to monitor, prevent or minimise and mitigate negative impacts. The industry also has to minimise pollution and waste and greenhouse gas emissions, maintain or improve the quality and availability of surface and ground water, and maximise water use efficiency.

The document is open to the public for comment until 30 May this year. The next Round Table on Responsible Soy will be held in May 2009, and the principles and criteria are expected to be adopted at this meeting.

Civil society says soy expansion is 'irresponsible'

Many civil society groups are not convinced by the RTRS process, however. Friends of the Earth released a report on the eve of the round table entitled "Sustainability as a Smokescreen: The Inadequacy of Certifying Fuels and Feeds." The report states that attempts to use certification schemes to reduce the widespread environmental and social problems caused by growing crops for fuels and animal feeds are bound to fail. "The expansion of massive monocultures leads to the destruction of our forests, savannahs and wildlife, raises land and food prices and directly impacts on rural communities who are forced off their land to make way for the plantations. Unfortunately certifying large monocultures as sustainable would mislead international consumers and not improve production methods. Increasing production for exports, and increasing consumption in the North, are destructive trends that must be reversed," said Lucia Ortiz of Friends of the Earth Brazil.

Another report, entitled "The Round Table on Irresponsible Soy: Certifying Soy Expansion, GM Soy and Agrofuels" was released earlier in April several civil society groups, including Corporate Europe Observatory and Rain Forest Action Network. They claimed that the only role of the RTRS is to "greenwash," providing the soy industry with a framework within which they can talk about corporate social responsibility (CSR) without actually providing any solutions for the real victims of soy production and expansion.

Background: The challenges of rapid soy growth

The soy sector is one of the fastest growing industries in South America. The cultivated area for soybean has more than doubled over the past ten years in the main soy producing countries, namely, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, and Paraguay, which represent some 60 percent of total world production). This trend is expected to continue in the future, with demand for soy increasing to 300 million tons by 2020. The current food crises and the increased demand for biofuels has further focused attention on all commodities and their market linkages (see Bridges Weekly, 23 April

2008, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/08-04-23/story1.htm>).

While soy production is one of the largest sources of income, generating development and providing employment in several countries in the region, extensive cultivation and the expansion of agricultural frontiers also entail high social and environmental costs, including deforestation, water pollution and soil erosion. Rapid growth of soy production also signifies a threat to the rich biological diversity in the region. Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Bolivia have all suffered conversion of forests and other ecosystems to land under cultivation.

Increasing soy production could lead to the loss of an additional 16 million hectares of savannahs and six million hectares of tropical forests in these countries. Since 2003, 70,000 km² of tropical forest have been destroyed in this region. When soy cultivation results in the conversion of natural forest, it also contributes to climate change. In several instances, soy expansion has been the cause of social conflicts between local communities and soy producers. The creation of new soy fields often leads to land rights violations against families, small farmers and indigenous population groups, thereby increasing the number of landless people.

Additional resources

The meeting report will be available shortly on the Round Table on Responsible Soy Association website at <http://www.responsiblesoy.org>

"Sustainability as a Smokescreen: The Inadequacy of Certifying Fuels and Feeds," by Friends of the Earth Europe, is available at <http://www.foeeurope.org/agrofuels/sustainabilitysmokescreen.html>

"The Round Table on Ir-Responsible Soy: Certifying Soy Expansion, GM Soy and Agrofuels" by ASEED Europe, Base Investigaciones Sociales, Corporate Europe Observatory, Grupo de Reflexión Rural, and Rain Forest Action Network, is available at <http://www.corporateeurope.org/docs/soygreenwash.pdf>

ICTSD reporting; “The Withdraw NGO Support to Responsible Soy Roundtable”, SCOOP, 18 April 2008; “Green Schemes for Biofuel Crops set to Fail”, FRIENDS OF THE EARTH INTERNATIONAL, 22 April 2008; “Global Conference on Responsible Soy Convenes Industry Players and NGOs”, WWF, 14 April 2008.

Fisheries Negotiations

CALLS FOR EXEMPTING SMALL-SCALE FISHING FROM SUBSIDY RULES DIVIDE WTO MEMBERS

WTO Members last week disagreed on the extent to which future multilateral rules on fisheries subsidies should include exceptions for payments to the small-scale fishing sector, as Canada and some other developed countries sought controversial exemptions for their own industry.

Marine conservation groups said that the exceptions these countries were seeking would undermine the main objective of fisheries subsidies disciplines: preventing government payments from promoting the wide-scale depletion of marine fish stocks.

Canadian paper sparks controversy

At the centre of the disagreement during the 24-25 April session of the Doha Round negotiating group on rules was a new informal proposal from Canada to allow all WTO members, developed and developing alike, to support small-scale fishing.

The paper called for adding a provision to the general exceptions set out in the draft agreement on fisheries subsidies released by the chair of the rules negotiations, Uruguayan Ambassador Guillermo Valles Games, in November 2007 (see BRIDGES Weekly, 5 December 2007, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/07-12-05/story3.htm>). That text would ban a wide-range of fisheries subsidy payments, especially those that boost fishing capacity or create other incentives to fish. It also contained a relatively narrow range of exceptions under which payments would be allowed if linked to effective fisheries

management, with some special provisions for developing countries.

Under the Canadian proposal, the exception would be limited to fishing within a Member's own territorial waters (as opposed to distant-water fleets), and payments would not exceed a to-be-negotiated “de minimis” percentage of the average value of fish harvested in those waters “for the three preceding years for which data is available.” Governments would be able to use this exception to make ordinarily banned payments, such as those to fuel or other operating costs.

While introducing the proposal at the meeting, Canada noted that while discussions on support for small-scale fishing had focused on developing countries, it was a matter of concern for many developed countries as well. The chair's text provided special and differential treatment for small-scale fishing in developing countries, but was silent on this issue with respect to rich nations, it said.

Canada argued that it needed the freedom to provide payments under the exemption it was proposing in order to rationalise its domestic fisheries in the wake of the collapse of its Atlantic cod stocks, as well as to support programmes for aboriginal communities.

Japan, Korea, the EU and Taiwan expressed strong support for the Canadian proposal, calling it easily workable. Hong Kong agreed that support for small-scale fisheries should be allowed for all Members. Norway said that small-scale coastal fishing needed support, but was concerned with the scope of the Canadian paper. The US said that the proposal was premature.

New Zealand cautioned that rising fish prices would continuously push up the amount of spending allowed under the Canadian proposal, and that payment amounts could thus be substantial even at a hypothetical cap of 10 percent of catch value.

Australia emphatically criticised the proposal for opening the door to a large carve-out for small-scale fishing subsidies, likening the potential exception to “using a sledgehammer to kill a mouse.”

Developing countries were opposed to the Canadian proposal. Many argued that the small-scale fishing sector in developed countries did not perform the crucial subsistence function that it does in poor countries. China noted that small-scale Chinese fishermen earned \$3 a day - quite different from what is earned by their counterparts in rich countries. India wondered aloud if developed countries were seeking a blank cheque. Thailand, South Africa, Cuba and Turkey said special and differential treatment for small-scale fisheries should be for developing countries alone.

Some developing country delegates speculated that the Canadian paper, though purportedly a new, informal 'room document', had already been circulated and discussed among certain Members, with a coalition of defenders already in place. Many mentioned that the scope of exemptions Canada proposed would be a departure from the narrowly defined exemptions in Valles Games' text.

Environmental group Oceana suggested that Canada's proposal was "puzzling," given its experience with the collapse of its own cod stocks. "The Canadian proposal creates a hole that the entire European fishing fleet could drive through," Oceana said. "Given its experience on fisheries, it is puzzling why Canada is standing out front for the countries that provide major subsidies to send their boats around the world."

According to sources cited in the fourth UN Environment Programme Global Environment Outlook for 2007, the collapse of the Canadian east coast cod fishery in the late 1980s left 25000 fishermen and 10000 other workers unemployed.

India announced a new joint paper with Indonesia that would modify Valles Games' text to remove what they deem to be overly stringent conditions associated with the text's provisions for special and differential treatment (S&DT) for developing countries.

Several developing countries had complained that the various sustainability and other requirements developing countries would have had to meet in order to provide otherwise-prohibited subsidies were so complicated that they rendered the S&DT unusable. The draft text's conditions relate to

territorial limits, size of fishing boats and the existence of management regimes. The joint paper by India and Indonesia is due to be discussed at the next meeting of the group.

Differences on subsidies vs. management resurge

Discussions on fisheries management systems and the text's requirement for a peer review of Members' management systems gave rise to a resurgence of old differences.

Developing country delegations including Argentina, Brazil, China, the Solomon Islands, Venezuela, and Turkey, though not disputing the importance of fisheries management, cautioned against overly stringent rules with which poor countries would be unable to comply.

In previous discussions of the chair's text, several Members had expressed concern about involving external institutions such as the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation in a peer review mechanism. Many countries had stressed that reporting to any external body should not be required.

Valles Games stressed that the review process he envisioned would be in the form of written questions and answers in a manner similar to the WTO Committee on Subsidies. The review would not be done by scientific experts but by trade representatives, who could draw from expertise of organisations outside the WTO.

The chair's clarification eased some of the concerns of many delegations, including Barbados (on behalf of the small, vulnerable economies), Jamaica (on behalf of the ACP countries), Thailand, China, and Egypt.

Also on the management of fisheries stocks, Japan and Korea reiterated their long-held view that monitoring and management systems would control overfishing more effectively than prohibitions on subsidies.

The EU suggested establishing a fisheries division in the WTO Secretariat, and publishing independent reports on Members' fisheries management systems.

Some delegates said that an overemphasis on management instead of effective disciplines on fishing subsidies would be a step back from the chair's text, as well as a departure from the core of Members' pledges to discipline fisheries subsidies, including through the prohibition of certain payments that contribute to overcapacity and over-fishing.

In closing, Valles Games said that the discussions had been constructive, and noted that Members' concerns were not limited to the fish, but also extended to livelihoods and employment in the fisheries sector.

The rules group's next meeting on fisheries subsidies is set for the week of 13 May.

ICTSD reporting.

Trade In Endangered Species

CITES: TECHNICAL COMMITTEES PROGRESS WORK

The Plants and Animal Committees under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) recently met in Geneva, where they successfully completed technical groundwork on politically sensitive issues such as trade in economically valuable timber species.

The seventeenth meeting of the Plants Committee (PC17) and the twenty-third meeting of the Animals Committee (AC23) met from 15-19 and 19-23 April. The two bodies held a joint session on 19 April.

CITES is the international convention tasked with regulating trade in endangered species. The Plants and Animal Committees meet every one to two years to discuss progress in the management of the wildlife trade.

Plants Committee tackles timber

The Plants Committee managed to undertake important scientific work on timber without getting caught up in politics — a key dimension of the discussions at the last meeting of the CITES

Conference of the Parties (COP; see Bridges Trade BioRes, 22 June 2007, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/07-06-22/story2.htm>).

On bigleaf mahogany, which is a valuable traded species, the Committee heard updates and considered recommendations made by an International Workshop of Experts on non-detriment findings (NDFs). The Plants Committee adopted essential elements for NDF formulation including an estimation of range areas, population parameters, and management principles which can contribute to a useful methodology in the improvement of NDFs on bigleaf mahogany.

Participants also discussed volumetric conversion of standing trees to exportable mahogany sawn wood. In order to improve compliance with CITES it was felt necessary to revise and standardise the conversion factors for standing timber and export grade mahogany wood volumes. Different countries were using different systems of measurement exporting more wood than allowed, which meant that good governance of the forest sector in producer countries and the development of the export trade and forest industry in general were affected negatively. The Plants Committee recommended the adoption of the document on volumetric conversion regarding it as a useful methodology for improving the management of export quotas, whilst noting the present existence of a wide variation in potential results and methodologies for determining volumetric conversion factors in the different countries.

The PC agreed to include bigleaf mahogany in the Review of Significant Trade. A Review of Significant Trade compels countries to review their trade in specified species, in order to assess implementation problems and propose solutions to these problems. The group recommended that the review be limited to those parties that are not correctly implementing Article IV (Regulation of Trade in Specimens of Species included in Appendix II) of the Convention. A working group was formed to identify such countries, and selected Belize, Bolivia, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Venezuela, and Santa

Lucia for a Review of Significant Trade in bigleaf mahogany.

The next Plants Committee will be held in Argentina in February 2009.

Sharks and fish at animals meeting

The Animals Committee discussed, among other, conservation measures for dolphins, sharks and sturgeon — the fish that produces the luxury product caviar. All species are commercially valuable.

The Committee selected the Solomon Islands population of bottlenose dolphins for inclusion in the Review of Significant Trade. However, the actual review was postponed until the next Animals Committee, and in the meantime further research will be undertaken.

With regard to sharks, the Committee recommended that a customs data model to assess the trade in the species should be created. Parties were also asked to adopt national conservation and management measures of shark species.

On sturgeon and paddlefish, participants decided that the methodology for stock assessment should be reviewed, and that the range states should develop a unified methodology in this regard. Caspian caviar quotas have periodically been suspended due to their threatened status and data challenges (see Bridges Trade BioRes, 19 January 2007, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/07-01-19/inbrief.htm#1>).

There was no offer by a party to host the next Animals Committee meeting, which is likely to be held in Geneva, Switzerland.

Joint Session

The joint session of the Plants Committee and Animals Committee (PC/AC) opened on 19 April. Among issues on the agenda, participants discussed transport of live animals and plants. The Committee agreed that CITES members should participate in meetings of other organisations dealing with the topic, such as the International Air Transport Association, but that they could not take decisions on behalf of CITES.

The next Conference of the Parties will take place in Doha, Qatar, in 2010.

Additional resources

For daily reporting and a summary of the meetings, see IISD's Earth Negotiations Bulletin at <http://www.iisd.ca/cites/ac23pc17/>

ICTSD Reporting; "Wildlife experts meet in Geneva to discuss the future of the South American cedar, mahogany, sharks, sturgeons and other species," CITES PRESS RELEASE, 14 April 2008; 'Summary of the 17th Meeting of the CITES Plants Committee, the Joint Session with the Animals Committee and the 23rd Meeting of the CITES Animals Committee: 15-23 April 2008', EARTH NEGOTIATIONS BULLETIN, 28 April 2008.

In Brief

EU BIODIESEL PRODUCERS LAUNCH TRADE COMPLAINT

The European Biodiesel Board (EBB) has launched a trade complaint with the European Commission, asking for action against US biodiesel exports. On 25 April, the EBB lodged its complaint against unfair subsidised biodiesel exports. Under US support policies, biofuels blended in the US with as little as one percent mineral oil — so called B99 — enjoy a subsidy benefit of one US\$ per gallon. The EBB considers this practice to constitute unfair competition, and has therefore brought a joint anti-subsidy and anti-dumping complaint to the Commission. According to the EBB, "subsidised "B99" exports are a trade practice that is not only breaching WTO rules, but also threatening the very concept of international trade in biodiesel." The EBB is hoping for an investigation followed by countervailing measures against the US B99 exports. The EBB has brought up the issue at previous occasions (see Bridges Trade BioRes, 30 March 2007, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/07-03-30/story3.htm>), targeting a particular problem related to triangular trade. The US provides subsidies not only to home grown, but also to imported biofuels that are blended, and the

biofuel blend can then be re-exported. Under such 'splash and dash' trade, operators import biofuels from abroad, add minute amounts of mineral oil, and then re-export. When the B99 arrives in Europe, it again benefits from a tax brake on environmental grounds. In response to the current complaint by the EBB, the US National Biodiesel Board (NBB) has questioned the motivation behind the EBB actions. According to the NBB, the EU biodiesel industry's problems lie elsewhere, namely in more expensive feedstock than their US competitors have access to, and also in changes in EU government policies on biofuels. The NBB called the move behind the litigation a 'protectionist tool to shield them [EU producers] from US competition'. A spokesperson for the EU Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson said the EU would look at the issue 'very carefully'. ICTSD Reporting: 'Transatlantic trade dispute looms over biodiesel', 25th April 2008, REUTERS; 'EBB lodges joint anti-dumping & anti-subsidy complaint against unfair US "B99" exports', 25th April 2008, EUROPEAN BIODIESEL BOARD PRESS RELEASE; 'National Biodiesel Board (NBB) Statement Regarding European Biodiesel Board (EBB) Trade Complaint', 25th April 2008, NATIONAL BIODIESEL BOARD.

Events & Resources

EVENTS

For a more comprehensive list of events in trade and sustainable development, please refer to ICTSD's web calendar, <http://www.trade-environment.org/page/calendar.htm>.

Coming up in the next two weeks

5-16 May, New York, U.S.: 16th SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. This review session at United Nations headquarters will focus on agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa. Internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd>

12-16 May, Bonn, Germany: FOURTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES SERVING AS THE MEETING OF

THE PARTIES TO THE CARTAGENA PROTOCOL ON BIOSAFETY (COP-MOP 4). Organised by the Convention on Biological Diversity. Internet: <http://www.cbd.int/mop4/>

12-16 May Bonn, Germany: PLANT DIVERSITY - WORLD CONGRESS ON THE FUTURE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE. In May, the world of diversity is meeting during the official negotiations of the United Nations Rio-Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and its Cartagena Protocol on Bio-safety. "Planet Diversity" will bring together representatives from local and regional grassroots movements and institutions working on food and agricultural innovation and reconciliation based upon cultural and biological diversity. The organisers believe that diversity in its full sense is the common denominator of a world wide movement in the making. Internet: <http://www.planet-diversity.org/registration.html>

12-17 May, Mexico City, Mexico: CODEX COMMITTEE ON FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES (14TH SESSION). Organised by the Food and Agricultural Organisation. Internet: <http://www.fao.org/events/index.asp>

Other upcoming meetings

19-30 May, Bonn, Germany: NINTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION (COP-9). The ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP-9) will be held at the Maritim Hotel in Bonn, Germany, from 19 to 30 May 2008. COP 9 will include a high-level ministerial segment organised by the host country in consultation with the Secretariat and the Bureau. The high level segment will take place from 28 to 30 May 2008 at the World Conference Center Bonn. COP 9 will also coincide with the International Biodiversity Day, on 22 May 2008. The Conference of the Parties will be invited to hold a special plenary session to celebrate this event. Internet: <http://www.cbd.int/cop9/>

3-5 June, Rome, Italy: HIGH-LEVEL CONFERENCE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY AND THE CHALLENGES OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIOENERGY. The UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) is

organising this conference, which will address food security and poverty reduction in the face of climate change and energy security. The conference will seek to contribute to the UN system efforts in the field of climate change. A series of expert meetings and stakeholder consultations will take place during the January-April 2008 period as part of the preparatory process.

Internet:
http://www.fao.org/foodclimate/home.html?no_cache=1&L=7

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.

THE MULTILATERAL TRADE AND INVESTMENT CONTEXT FOR BIOFUELS. By Sophia Murphy (IIED, 2008). This paper looks at the multilateral trade and investment context for biofuels. Biofuels are a relatively new arrival in the world of global trade, though not quite so new to investors. A few countries, notably Brazil, have a biofuel industry that dates back to the 1970s, but it is only in the last few years that biofuels have captured the headlines and really taken off. The production, investment and the time given to biofuels on the policy agenda have all increased exponentially since 2003. This paper is focused on the agricultural crops that are being converted into liquid fuel on a commercial scale, especially, but not only, in response to the recent surge in demand from both the EU and the United States, two of the world's largest energy users. The biofuels reviewed are ethanol and biodiesel, which are the principal traded biofuels. The analysis looks at trade issues for biofuels, investment issues for biofuels, and some of the issues on developing standards. The paper concludes with some proposals for how governments, particularly small and medium-sized economies, might develop appropriate trade and investment rules to support a fair and sustainable biofuels sector. The paper is available at <http://www.iied.org/pubs/display.php?o=15513> IIED

"Environmental Policy In The European Union: Fostering The Development Of Pollution

Havens?" By Lisa A. Cave and Glenn C. Blomquist in *ECOLOGICAL ECONOMICS* 65 (2, 2008). A pollution haven occurs when dirty industries from developed nations relocate to developing nations in order to avoid strict environmental standards or developed nations imports of dirty industries expand replacing domestic production. The purpose of this study is to determine whether the European Union (EU) has increased its imports of "dirty" goods from poorer, less democratic countries during a period of more stringent environmental standards.

"Climate Change And Biofuels As "Environmental Goods And Services." By Soledad Aguilar in *ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY AND LAW* 38 (1-2, 2008). The WTO Committee on Trade and Environment (CTE) convened a Special Session to address the liberalisation of EGS, focusing in 2007 on defining which goods shall be classified as "environmental" in order to be subject to preferential treatment. In these discussions, some previous positions were altered. In WTO discussions of the listing of agricultural goods such as biofuels and organic products, developing countries are favouring broader inclusion, while developed countries are suggesting a short list of climate-friendly goods and services (for prompt liberalisation), and a limit on other inclusions.