



Bridges Trade BioRes

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

Issue: 16 May 2008

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Committee on Trade and Environment

TESCO PILOTS CARBON FOOTPRINTING SCHEME

An informal meeting of the WTO Committee on Trade and Environment (CTE) special (negotiating) session gathered from 5-6 May.

Participants held discussions on the relationship between existing WTO rules and specific trade obligations (STOs) set out in multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) as per Paragraph 31 (i) of the Doha Declaration, as well as the environmental goods liberalisation mandate under Paragraph 31 (iii).

Para 31 (i): Norway presents draft decision

During the informal CTE discussions, Members provided their initial reactions to a Norwegian proposal (JOB (08)/33) for a ministerial decision on Para 31 (i), to be adopted once the round winds up. Among other, the proposal noted that up until now, specific trade measures among parties to MEAs have not been contested in the WTO. It recognised, nevertheless, that a WTO Member might bring such cases before the WTO, and that WTO rules would be applicable should such a situation arise -- although multilaterally negotiated STOs that are specific in nature were unlikely to be challenged in the WTO. The proposal also recognised MEAs and the WTO Agreement as instruments of international law of equal standing, and stressed that all obligations under international law should be implemented harmoniously and in good faith.

According to source, Members' initial reactions to the Norwegian proposal varied. While Canada and Korea expressed their support, the US, Australia and the EU were more critical. The US and Australia said the proposal was not ambitious enough and excluded elements from an earlier submission (see TN/TE/W/72/Rev.1, available at <http://docsonline.wto.org>) that they considered important, such as references to the key features in the design of STOs that contribute to mutual supportiveness. They also stressed the need to highlight the importance of learning from national experiences and the role of national coordination between different domestic agencies and stakeholders involved with international agreements (see Bridges Weekly, 7 November 2007, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/07-11-07/wtoinbrief.htm#1>).

The EU was critical about the lack of reference in the Norwegian proposal to the role of the WTO Dispute Settlement Understanding (DSU) in disputes. According to delegates, Norway emphasised the need to avoid hierarchy or any bias in favour of WTO agreements in this regard.

African countries call for new expert group

The Africa Group presented an informal ‘room document’ at the meeting (now JOB 08/38). In the view of this group, an outcome of the Para 31 (i) negotiations that strengthens the relationship between the multilateral trading system and MEAs - rather than to try to develop mechanisms to deal with hypothetical problems that might arise in the future -- would be a good outcome. In this regard, the group felt that the negotiations under Paragraph 31(ii) on information exchange between MEAs and the WTO could contribute to the outcome on the Paragraph 31(i) negotiations.

While the proposal suggested experience-sharing among Members as one form of support, it further called for the establishment of a specific and permanent technical assistance and capacity building instrument. This new instrument would complement existing technical assistance, providing support to developing country Members to strengthen the relationship between the trade and environment regimes. Specifically, the proposal called for the establishment of a roster of experts on trade and environment in the form of a “Group of Experts on Trade and Environment.” The emphasis of mechanism would be on the implementation of STOs under MEAs, ensuring the effective implementation in a WTO-compliant manner. The expert group would comprise experts, particularly from developing countries, from customs and other implementing bodies in the trade realm, as well as from international organisations providing technical assistance to Members.

EGS: Brazil responds to questions on ‘request-offer’ approach

During discussions on Para 31 (iii) (Liberalisation of Environmental Goods and Services), Brazil clarified a number of questions raised by other Members regarding its ‘request-offer’ approach to liberalisation (see Bridges Weekly, 7 November 2007, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/07-11-07/wtoinbrief.htm#1> and Bridges Weekly, 10 October 2007, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/07-10-10/story5.htm>).

Under this approach, each country would ask its trading partners to slash tariffs on those agricultural and non-agricultural goods it felt would bring environmental benefits. Countries would then determine whether such liberalisation requests might compromise their own development of environmental or other industries, and indicate the environmental goods on which they were prepared to remove trade barriers. Several iterations of such ‘request-offer’ rounds would be held.

One of the concerns discussed related to the perception that the ‘request-offer’ approach was introduced late in the game, and was new and untested in a WTO context. Brazil pointed to previous similar experiences, however, during both the Uruguay and Dillon Rounds. According to Brazil, the ‘request-offer’ approach would allow Members’ to preserve their ‘policy space,’ with built-in special and differentiated treatment allowing developing countries to identify their own trade, environmental and developmental priorities.

On timing issues, Brazil clarified that the ‘request-offer’ process would allow for a parallel process synchronised with development under the agriculture and industrial goods mandates. Brazil presented the ‘request-offer’ approach as a middle-ground in the negotiations and as a compromise between existing approaches centred on liberalising goods included in a list or within time-bound projects.

On transparency, Brazil emphasised that the process was ‘not a secret’ and that nothing would stop a Member from making public any details of the requests and offers. According to a trade delegate, Brazil said the ‘request-offer’ provided an opportunity to avoid the complexity of determining environmental criteria for goods inherent in the list approach. Brazil added that Members would be flexible to choose criteria for their goods, and that it would be possible to determine if the concessions granted were accurately reflected in the relevant market access schedules based on verification.

The Chair, Ambassador Manuel Teehankee of the Philippines, reportedly called on Members to engage on two tracks, namely modalities and product coverage, in parallel. Speaking to BioRes, one trade delegate agreed that preparatory work on product coverage should be undertaken irrespective of the final approach at this point. According to

another delegate, developed countries supporting the list approach still were most active in the discussions, while most developing countries underlined the need for a resolution on which approach to take: the list approach, the project approach or the 'request-offer.'

Some delegates told BioRes that they saw greater possibilities for a breakthrough when a deal on tariff cuts formulae was reached within industrial and agricultural negotiations and this would also give delegates a sense of what products to include, as well as the ambition of any tariff cuts.

The date for the next formal session of the CTE has not yet been set, although it is likely to take place in June. The Chair will continue to schedule informal consultations as appropriate.

ICTSD reporting.

Biofuels

BRAZIL CONCERNED OVER TRADE-DISTORTING BIOFUELS CRITERIA

The development of sustainability standards for biofuels is turning into a bone of contention between trade partners. The EU process for defining sustainability criteria is progressing at a slow pace. Brazil, meanwhile, is becoming increasingly vocal in its objections against any criteria that might pose trade barriers.

An EU working group has been set up to develop sustainability criteria for biofuels (see Bridges Trade BioRes, 18 April 2008, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/08-04-18/story2.htm>) as part of a wider process towards the adoption of a final legislative package on climate change and trade in late 2008. Ambassadors from EU member states met to discuss draft sustainability criteria on 7 May, but failed to make much progress, as divisions emerged among countries.

How large are the greenhouse gas savings that biofuels provide?

One of the key issues discussed among EU ambassadors was a draft requirement for biofuels to provide a minimum of a 35 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions as compared to conventional fossil fuels. The threshold would later be raised. Reportedly, the UK, Netherlands and

Germany pushed for tighter thresholds than the 35 percent proposed, while France and Spain favoured the lower threshold, as this would allow for the inclusion of their domestic biofuels industries.

A recent report prepared for the European Parliament -- which has to approve the European climate and energy legislation that includes the biofuels target -- supported a higher threshold. "A dynamic greenhouse gas threshold should be introduced, which should target at least 55 or 60 percent greenhouse gas savings, combined with a system ... that creates a financial incentive for the best performing (fuels)," according to the report.

Environmental group Greenpeace also called for a threshold of 60 percent at a minimum. "What is curious is how many of the biofuel crops that can be grown in Europe hover at around or not much above a 35 percent savings. This is where this figure comes from. Biodiesel made from rapeseed for example has a savings on oil of 36 percent according to commission figures," said Frauke Thies, a renewables campaigner with Greenpeace. Greenpeace spokesperson Mark Breddy added that "The question is: Do we adjust biofuels targets to ensure sustainability or do we adjust sustainability criteria to match our biofuels targets?"

Many member states are developing their own biofuels industries. There are exceptions, however. Sweden's biofuel programme, for example, relies heavily on imports from Brazil. Overall, all the ambassadors were hopeful that second generation biofuels derived from agricultural residues and algae would provide greater greenhouse gas emissions reductions -- at which time the sustainability criteria could be tightened.

Social and environmental standards?

At the 7 May meeting, ambassadors also discussed how environmental, social and labour conditions associated with imported biofuels could be monitored. In this area, the working group had proposed three options: one, requiring exporting countries to be signatories to key international environmental and labour treaties; second, requiring exporters to pass 'sufficient' domestic legislation in these areas; and third, requiring exporter to report on environmental and social standards.

Reportedly, some ambassadors at the meeting expressed concerns over whether such requirements

would be WTO compatible. Others wanted to take the issue further. The Greenpeace campaigners were particularly worried about how to account for indirect land-use changes triggered by biofuels production. The report produced for the European parliament on the topic called for a ban on using arable farmland for biofuels, in order to address problems related to rising food prices.

Brazil warns against trade distortions

Brazil -- the world's top exporter of ethanol -- has been following the development of biofuels criteria in Europe and elsewhere with great interest. Brazilian ethanol, produced from sugarcane in factories fuelled by bagasse, an agricultural residue, is efficient and provides substantial greenhouse gas reductions compared to many other biofuels. Andre do Lago, director of the energy department in Brazil's foreign ministry, recently stressed that this needs to be taken into account. "If Brazil is looking to export ethanol to Europe, it is important that Europe considers our ethanol to be sustainable," he said.

Do Lago added that if Europe introduced a discriminatory sustainability scheme, Brazil would not hesitate to challenge it at the WTO. According to do Lago, "the issue is, as we all know, that all the countries in the world have a natural tendency to try to find ways to create barriers to protect their own interests and products." Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva has said that he is open to a debate about the sustainability of biofuels, but that it needs to go beyond "half-truths" but forth by constituencies that are fearful of Brazilian competition and only looking for their own trade interests.

Meanwhile, Brazil is also targeting US tariffs on Brazilian ethanol. Brazil has long held that current US tariffs of 54 cents per gallon on imports are unfair and in breach of WTO rules. The tariffs mainly serve to protect inefficient corn-based ethanol production in the US, according to Brazil's chief trade negotiator, Roberto Azevedo. As the new US farm bill -- already overdue for adoption -- would extend these tariffs by two years, Brazil has warned that they might proceed with a WTO challenge. Azevedo said Brazil may also target subsidies that the US pays to support ethanol blending. "In the light of WTO rules, the (import) tariff is questionable. We've been studying its compatibility with WTO rules," stressed Azevedo.

"We may have no other option but to solve our differences at the WTO. We've been offering common-ground, consumer-oriented solutions but the response from the U.S. Congress is more trade-distorting protectionism," agreed a Brazilian industry representative.

"EU still far from agreeing biofuel standards: diplomats," AFP, 7 May 2008; "EU May Tighten Rules on Biofuels," EURACTIV, 9 May 2008; "Brazil warns Europe against biofuel import barriers," AFP, 9 May 2008; "Brazil could challenge new US ethanol rules at WTO," REUTERS, 8 May 2008; "Merkel Says Brazilian Biofuels Must Respect Amazon," REUTERS, 15 May 2008; "Key lawmaker urges EU to scrap 10 pct biofuel target," REUTERS, 16 May 2008.

In Brief

UN LIABILITY REGIME ON BIOSAFETY CHALLENGED

International rules on biosafety have been threatened by global biotech companies, Friends of the Earth International warned as an international meeting on the topic opened on 12 May. According to the environmental group, six companies are seeking to reduce the effectiveness of key decisions on global rules to deal with damage caused by the release of biotech or genetically modified (GM) crops.

The Fourth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), serving as Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, is being held in Bonn, Germany from 12-16 May. A key topic on the agenda is the finalisation and adoption of an international regime on liability and redress in the area of biotechnology.

Rather than creating an international liability regime within the framework of the UN, BASF, Bayer CropScience, Dow AgroSciences, DuPont/Pioneer, Monsanto and Syngenta were hoping to create a 'compact' and recommended that the settlement of all damages related to GM contamination go through private compensation mechanisms with individual countries.

Environmental group Greenpeace called the proposal "worse than useless," owing among other reasons, to its exclusions on damage. Greenpeace's objection underscored the compact as an impracticable alternative to a strong, legally binding regime with a backup fund. The Washington

Biotechnology Action Council, speaking on behalf of a coalition of NGOs, called on delegates to prohibit the biotechnology industry from privatising public international law.

The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety seeks to protect biological diversity from the potential risks posed by living modified organisms (LMOs) resulting from modern biotechnology. Not all major countries are parties to it; The US has never signed the CBD, nor the Cartagena Protocol.

The meeting was also tasked with considering the need for, and modalities of, developing standards with regards to identification, handling, packaging and transporting living modified organisms (LMOs), as well as reviewing the effectiveness of the Protocol

The next issue of Bridges BioRes will provide full coverage of the meeting, as well as of the CBD Conference of the Parties taking place immediately after the meeting under the Cartagena Protocol.

Additional resources

For full coverage on the meeting and a report on its outcomes see IISD's Earth Negotiations Bulletin at: <http://www.iisd.ca/biodiv/bs-copmop4/12may.html>

ICTSD reporting; 'Attempt to derail U.N. talks on Biotech contamination condemned', FRIENDS OF THE EARTH INTERNATIONAL PRESS RELEASE, 12 May 2008; 'COP-MOP 4 – Agenda', CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY, 8 May 2008; 'Fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety', IISD REPORTING SERVICES, 15 May 2008.

CIVIL SOCIETY CALLS FOR ACTION ON E-WASTE PROBLEM

Consumers International is calling for urgent improvements in the monitoring and enforcement of the Basel Convention on the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Waste and their Disposal. The request comes in response to environmental concerns raised in Africa following copious importation of ineffective second-hand electronic goods, such as computers, from industrialised nations.

The Basel Convention Ban Amendment prohibits all forms of hazardous waste exports from the twenty-nine wealthiest industrialised countries of the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and

Development (OECD) to all non-OECD countries. However, the convention does permit the export of used electronic equipment for second-hand use. In practice, however, 75 percent of the half million used- computers arriving every month in Lagos, Nigeria for instance, are obsolete. Without any use, these computers are dumped and burnt, polluting the water supply and damaging local people's health (see Bridges Trade BioRes 8 February 2008, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/08-02-08/inbrief.htm#3>).

In Africa, "a whole community is virtually living and working in this highly toxic environment, which is growing everyday as a consequence of western countries mismanaging their e-waste," said Benjamin Holst, co-founder and editor of DanWatch, a corporate watchdog body.

In response, Consumers International recently called on exporting countries to implement tougher monitoring procedures to ensure that computers exported to Africa are in working condition, with obsolete computers disposed or recycled in their country of origin. The advocacy group suggested that manufacturers rather than consumers bear the cost of recycling old electrical goods. Manufacturers must take responsibility for their products' full life cycle, including recycling or disposal after they are no longer operable, said the organisation.

The concern about wastes being exported from industrialised nations for cheap disposal in inadequately prepared sites in developing countries culminated in the negotiation and adoption of the Basel Convention in 1992. The eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP-8) in December 2006 considered the issue of e-waste and issued a 'Nairobi Declaration' on the environmentally sound management of electrical and electronic wastes (see Bridges Trade BioRes, 15 December 2006, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/06-12-15/story1.htm>).

The ninth Conference of the Parties (COP-9) of the Basel Convention is scheduled to take place from 23 to 27 June 2008 in Bali, Indonesia. Follow-up to the Nairobi Declaration is high on the agenda of the meeting.

Additional information

The full report by Consumers International can be accessed at: http://consint.live.poptech.coop/shared_asp_files/GFSR.asp?NodeID=97576

The Nairobi Declaration can be accessed at:
<http://www.basel.int/meetings/cop/cop9/docs/advance%20-%2009e.pdf>

"E-waste: West Africa continues to drown in the rich world's obsolete electronics," CONSUMERS INTERNATIONAL PRESS RELEASE, 6 May 2008.

COMMISSION HESITATES TO PERMIT NEW GM CROPS INTO EU

Three genetically modified (GM) crops have been delayed in their entrance into the EU until the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) conducts a scientific review of their potential effects on environmental and human health.

In spite of favourable opinions of the crops - two maize varieties and one potato - previously given by EFSA, on 7 May EU Environment Commissioner Stavros Dimas pushed back a decision on the potato crop for nearly a year and expressed his intent reject the maize applications outright. This put Dimas squarely in opposition against fellow members of the 27-person Commission -- including Trade Commissioner Mandelson -- who are more amenable to accepting GMOs.

Commissioners were due to set an official policy with regards to GMOs in early February 2008, but internal divisions have delayed this decision. Commission spokesperson Johannes Laitenberger recently assured members of the press that "The Commission will adopt the pending decision if and when EFSA confirms the safety of these products."

Despite such promises, the current policy vacuum creates a precarious situation, as it has the potential to undermine trade relations with major biotech growers, chief among them being the US. At the WTO, the US and other trade partners have successfully challenged the implementation of the EU approval system for biotech crops (see Bridges Trade BioRes, 6 October 2006, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/06-10-06/story1.htm>). The EU insists that the community, by ending a temporary moratorium on approvals, again has a functional approval system for GM crops.

In spite of expressed ambition on the part of the Commission, it remains unknown how long the current EFSA review process will take. This uncertainty coupled with Dimas' view of GMOs as

parlous, makes any suitable solution unlikely in the foreseeable future.

"EU delays decision on approving more GM crops," 7 May 2008, REUTERS;
"Commission hesitant to approve more GM crops," 8 May 2008, EURACTIV;
"EU-US economic ties should be strengthened says MEPs," 8 May, EURPARL.

SORGHUM: A SWEET ALTERNATIVE TO CORN

Sweet sorghum may be the answer to biofuel proponents' prayers, according to the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT).

Corn-based ethanol production has come under increasing attack following rising world food prices and recognition of secondary environmental effects (see Bridges Trade BioRes, 18 April 2008, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/08-04-18/story2.htm>).

In a contribution to the international biofuels debate, ICRISAT recently highlighted the many promising traits of sweet sorghum -- a carbon-dioxide neutral crop praised for its ecological properties. It can grow in dry climates and can tolerate heat, flooding and salinity. Unlike sugarcane, it does not require irrigation; unlike oil palm, it does not encroach into ecologically sensitive areas (i.e. rainforests).

Perhaps more important, however, is the process used to yield ethanol. Its eight to twelve foot stalk is crushed into a syrupy juice that is then fermented and distilled into ethanol, leaving the grain that grows atop the stalk intact. Since the grain is not destroyed in production, ethanol derived from sweet sorghum need not come at the expense of the food supply. As sorghum is mostly grown and consumed locally, production will have little impact on international food prices.

Poor farmers can benefit, too. By selling the stalks to distilleries, they can accrue profits without compromising their own food security. Using the crop makes sense in terms of its output-to-input ratio as well. Sweet sorghum ethanol production generates eight units of energy for every unit of energy invested. Comparatively, corn has a two-to-one output-input energy ratio.

With the many benefits in mind, the US Department of Agriculture will host an International Conference on Sorghum for Biofuel from 19-22 August 2008 in Houston, Texas.

"Sweet sorghum: "Smart crop" which can produce food and fuel," AFP, 13 May 2008;

"Sweet sorghum: A new smart biofuel crop that ensures food security," ICRISAT, 12 May 2008;

"Sweet sorghum promoted as "smart" biofuel," REUTERS, 13 May 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

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>

19-30 May, Bonn, Germany: 9TH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION (COP-9). This meeting 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/>

20 May, New York, U.S.: ECOSOC SPECIAL MEETING ON GLOBAL FOOD CRISIS. The President of the UN Economic and Social Council, Léo Mérorès, will convene this Special Meeting of ECOSOC on the Global Food Crisis. The meeting will seek to: identify short-term emergency measures that can be taken at national and international levels to feed the hungry and to bring prices down while strengthening household food security via targeted safety nets; enhance regional and international cooperation to address both the causes and the consequences of high food prices and to work towards greater price stability; and

identify a strong coordinated and coherent approach both by the UN system and between the UN system and the broader international community. Internet: <http://www.un.org/ecosoc/GlobalFoodCrisis/index.shtml>

30 May, Guildford, U.K.: FROM PRODUCTION TO CONSUMPTION: LEGAL AND POLICY CHALLENGES FOR A NEW APPROACH TO CLIMATE CHANGE. In this workshop, three main issues will be debated; 1) Sustainable Consumption, Policy and Regulation; 2) Sustainable Consumption and Trade Law; 3) Sustainable Consumption and Emissions Trading. Organised by the Environmental Regulatory Research Group (ERRG) in conjunction with the Surrey European Law Unit and the Centre for Environmental Strategy (RESOLVE) Internet: <http://www.surrey.ac.uk/errg>

30-31 May, Bonn, Germany: 2ND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE - "CLIMATE CHANGE AS A CHALLENGE TO POVERTY REDUCTION". Hosted by Germanwatch, the conference is meant as a run-up to the UN Climate Conference in Bonn 2-13 June 2008. It will serve as a forum for opinions and information, with workshops addressing specific topics, such as climate change and food security, adaptation, and deforestation. Contact: Mirjam Kid; tel.: 49 (0)228 / 60492-22 e-mail: klima@germanwatch.org; Internet: <http://www.germanwatch.org/>

Other upcoming meetings

2-6 June, Bremen, Germany: 11TH SESSION OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON FISH TRADE OF THE COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES. There are five main items on the agenda: discussing current trends in the international fish market, especially in relation to rising food prices; moving towards international standardisation with the formulation of minimum "ecolabel" requirements on fish and fish-related products; assessing market access trends in import regions, and their effect on exporters in the developing world; drafting catch documentation schemes designed to track fish products across the production chain; and creating basic guidelines for responsible fish trade. Hosted by the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation. Internet: <http://www.fao.org/fishery/meetings-news>

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

3-5 June, Nairobi, Kenya: 5TH AFRICAN ROUNDTABLE ON SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION (ARSCP-5). The Development of the African 10-Year Framework Programme (10-YFP) on Sustainable Consumption and Production as part of the Marrakech Process on the 10-Year Framework Programmes was facilitated by UNEP and UN-DESA in close consultation with the Secretariats of the African Ministerial Conference on Environment (AMCEN) and the Secretariat of the African Roundtable on Sustainable Consumption and Production (ARSCP). The African 10-YFP was approved in March 2005 by AMCEN. Internet: http://www.unep.org/roa/Projects_Programmes/10YFP/index.asp

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/>

23-24 June, Jaipur, India: NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON ECOLABELLING. The workshop seeks to engage relevant stakeholders by introducing the "Enabling developing countries to seize eco-label opportunities" project and discussing the procedure, criteria and related market opportunities of the European Union's ecolabel. Organised by Consumer Unity and Trust Society

(CUTS) and the Confederation of Indian Textiles Industries (CITI), in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Internet: <http://www.cuts-citee.org/events.htm#event01>

24-26 June, Cochin, India: INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON CLEANER PRODUCTION & ENERGY CONSERVATION FOR SUSTAINABILITY. The workshop aims to bring together different stakeholders in developing countries, working in the fields of Energy Efficiency, Renewable Energy, Industrial Productivity and Waste Minimization along with experts from the National Cleaner Production Centers (NCPC, established by UNIDO) to deliberate on various aspects of Cleaner Production. Case studies are presented to help understand the concept of cleaner production as a growing worldwide movement. Hosted by the Centre for Science and Technology of the Non-Aligned and Other Developing Countries (NAM S&T Centre). Contact: Arun P. Kulshreshtha; tel.: +91-11-24645134; e-mail: apknam@gmail.com; Internet: <http://www.energyprofessional.in/articlepages.php?id=135&pg=&Month=&Year=&Category=3>

24-28 June, Geneva, Switzerland: TWELFTH EADI GENERAL CONFERENCE: GLOBAL GOVERNANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: THE NEED FOR POLICY COHERENCE AND NEW PARTNERSHIPS. Individuals and organisations are cordially invited to submit a paper for the 12th General Conference of the European Association of Development Research and Training Institutes (EADI). The conference deals with the overarching theme: "Global Governance for Sustainable Development" and will be hosted by the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies (IHEID) in Geneva. Internet: <http://www.eadi.org/gc2008>

29 June to 4 July, Kushiro, Japan. WORKSHOP ON BIODIVERSITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE. Co-organized by the UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and the Kushiro International Wetland Centre, in partnership with Japan-UNDP Partnership Fund and the Secretariats of the Ramsar Convention and the Convention on Biological Diversity, this workshop aims to support the sharing of scientific facts and policies on biodiversity, wetlands and climate change, provide analytical knowledge to understand and practically use the scientific data and documentation, facilitate

exchange of ideas and strengthen the Kushiro/UNITAR network of experts in wetlands, biodiversity and climate change. For more information contact: e-mail: hiroko.nakayama@unitar.org; Internet: <http://www.unitar.org/hiroshima/programmes/kuhiro08/>

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.

"China's booming economy is sparking and accelerating biological invasions" in BIOSCIENCE 58 (4, 2008). By Jianqing Ding, et al. China has undergone enormous economic growth in the last 25 years, largely as a result of greatly increased international trade. This burgeoning trade has triggered environmental threats from an expanding list of biological invaders: nonnative species previously unknown in China (e.g., the American vegetable leaf miner, the fall webworm) have arrived and are already causing damage to China's environment and economy. Huge construction projects, such as the Three Gorges Dam and the recently completed rail link to Tibet, could further spread invasive species to once-isolated portions of the country.

"Border tax adjustments and emissions trading : the implications of international trade law for policy design" in CARBON AND CLIMATE LAW REVIEW 1 (2008). By Matthew Genasci. Border tax adjustments offer a means of addressing the competitiveness impacts of rigorous emissions policies, though their status under international trade law is unclear at best. The legality of border adjustments for energy taxes has long been an unsettled question, and the legal uncertainties only multiply when the concept is extended to an emissions trading scheme. Designing a mechanism to adjust the cost of emissions allowances upon export in a manner that adequately protects international competitiveness without resulting in illegal subsidies would be quite difficult, especially where the actual cost of allowances varies from firm to firm due to, e.g., grandfathering or different experiences in emissions allowance markets.

"Maximum carbon intensity limitations and the agreement on technical barriers to trade" in

CARBON AND CLIMATE LAW REVIEW 1 (2008). By Charles Owen Verrill. Emission of greenhouse gases is a global problem. Any nation seeking to restrict such emissions by its manufacturers should avoid putting them at a disadvantage in world and domestic markets where they are likely to compete with producers that do not bear the cost of emission controls. One approach being considered in the United States would be adoption of technical regulations limiting the carbon intensity of basic products, such as cement, aluminum, steel, etc., offered for sale in the US market (carbon intensity would be defined as the CO₂ equivalent emissions per ton of product).

"Climate change and the international trade of biofuels" in CARBON AND CLIMATE LAW REVIEW 1 (2008). By Haroldo Machado-Filho. This paper explores the significant role that biofuels have in mitigating greenhouse gases, especially in the transportation sector. The paper focuses specifically on the benefits of the use of ethanol and biodiesel and the emergence of their international trade, as well as some issues that have been recently raised regarding these alternative fuels. That includes environmental and socio-economic considerations which could potentially lead to tariff and non-tariff barriers to the international trade in biofuels.

"Will the 'friends of climate' emerge in the WTO? The prospects of applying the 'fisheries subsidies' model to energy subsidies" in CARBON AND CLIMATE LAW REVIEW 1 (2008) By Sadeq Bigdeli. Notwithstanding the potential virtues of subsidies in certain circumstances, this form of government intervention in markets mainly through financial or fiscal means may have huge negative impacts in addition to the effects on efficiency and trade. Fish stock depletion and man-made global warming are two examples of cases in which a subsidy could have detrimental effects on the environment. The fisheries subsidies case has found its way to the WTO in a constructive and promising manner. Following similar approaches to address the issue of energy subsidies, however, may pose challenges of the highest magnitude, as will be discussed in this paper.

"Can carbon trading save vanishing forests?" in BIOSCIENCE 58 (4, 2008). By William F. Laurance. Among the many nasty things that humans are doing to the environment, few rank worse than destroying tropical forests. Rainforests

sustain an astonishing diversity of species, and they are vital for keeping our planet livable—they limit soil erosion, reduce floods, maintain natural hydrological cycles, and help to stabilise the climate. Yet around 13 million hectares of tropical forest are destroyed every year - the equivalent of 50 football fields a minute. If we hope to rein in global

warming, the last thing we should do is raze tropical forests. Destroying these forests dumps vast quantities of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere—roughly one-fifth of all human carbon emissions, more than the entire global transportation sector.

BRIDGES Trade BioRes© is published by the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD), <http://www.ictsd.org>, in collaboration with IUCN - World Conservation Union, <http://www.iucn.org>. This edition of *BRIDGES Trade BioRes* was edited by Malena Sell, msell@ictsd.ch. Contributors to this issue were Hugh Hobbs, Malena Sell, Jonars Spielberg and Mahesh Sugathan. The Director is Ricardo Meléndez-Ortiz. ICTSD is an independent, not-for-profit organisation based at: 7, ch. De Balexert, 1219 Geneva, Switzerland, tel: (+41-22) 917-8492; fax: 917-8093. Excerpts from *BRIDGES Trade BioRes* may be used in other publications with appropriate citation. Comments and suggestions are welcomed and should be directed to the Editors or the Director. To subscribe to *BRIDGES Trade BioRes*, please send an email tobiores@ictsd.ch.

ISSN 1682-0843