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For the immediate future, at least, a schedule has been set: senior-level talks (that is, below the ministerial level) on agriculture will resume at WTO headquarters in Geneva the week starting of 14 September. Key to those discussions will no doubt be the Special Safeguard Mechanism (SSM), which was at least the proximate trigger of the failure of the talks (see BRIDGES Weekly, 7 August 2008, <http://ictsd.net/i/news/bridgesweekly/18040/>).

In the weeks following the collapse, WTO Director-General Pascal Lamy paid visits to both the Indian and US trade ministers - the primary players, along with the head Chinese trade official, in the SSM deadlock. In a speech to industry representatives in India, Lamy reportedly said that he was urging the two sides to "try to understand each other a bit more, at the political level, because this is a political discussion that has to translate into a technical discussion, not the other way around."

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

Many involved in the talks expressed surprise that the SSM, a seemingly minor and technical matter, ended up playing such a critical role in the collapse. "It became a huge issue because of the politics on both sides," Lamy said in an interview with Reuters. "I wouldn't say if we solve the SSM, the rest will fall in place. But what I'm certain is if we don't solve this, the rest will not fall into place," he said.

Some trade observers now speculate that the US refused to yield on the SSM in order to avoid a discussion of its cotton subsidies, which the WTO has repeatedly ruled to be in violation of the US' word trade commitments. After the SSM, cotton was the next item on the negotiators' agenda.

LEAD STORIES

WTO AG TALKS TO RESUME; DEAL STILL POSSIBLE THIS YEAR, SOME SAY

In the month following the failure of world trade talks, trade ministers and world leaders have sought to ensure that the significant progress that was made before negotiations fell apart will not be lost in the aftermath of the collapse. Whether - or to what extent - that aim can be realised is far from certain.

"I know there are a lot of conspiracy theories running on this...To be frank, I don't suspect the US broke on the SSM not to have cotton on the table. They know cotton has to be there," Lamy said in an interview with Reuters.

Looking ahead

Whether progress can be made on the SSM and other outstanding issues remains to be seen. On his recent trip to India, Lamy met with trade minister Kamal Nath, who reportedly expressed his support for the resumption of high-level talks in Geneva. But speaking to reporters on the sidelines of a meeting in Singapore a week later, Nath made it clear that he thought that other players should take on more responsibility: the "key to the lock of the [WTO] deadlock is not in our hands. The key is with the developed countries," he said. Nath is expected to meet with EU Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson on 12 September.

Less than two weeks after his visit to New Delhi, Lamy paid a call on US Trade Representative Susan Schwab, who also expressed her support for continued talks, telling reporters that a world trade deal was "still conceivable" this year. She cautioned, however, that whether an agreement can be reached "depends largely on the seriousness of purpose, commitment, flexibility of the key players, and grandstanding isn't going to do it."

Schwab called for senior officials to re-engage and work to establish a framework for further action at the ministerial level. "Our sense is we need to have a representative group of countries that are ready, willing and able to engage in good faith to try to find an ambitious outcome to this round," she said.

The US position has been somewhat complicated by opposition from its domestic manufacturing lobby, which disagrees with some language in a report on the status of the industrial goods talks put out by committee chair Don Stephenson in mid-August. The National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), the largest industrial trade group in the US, has argued that the report does not go into enough detail on the offers Members put forward on sectoral liberalisation initiatives, provisions that would rapidly cut tariffs to a low level, even zero, on specific sectors, such as bicycle parts or forest products.

In a statement released while Lamy was in Washington, NAM president John Engler made his organisation's demands clear: "balance for American manufacturers is only possible if the big emerging manufacturers of Brazil, China, and India are part of sector-specific agreements that would be aimed at eliminating tariffs in

significant industrial sectors. These countries must open their markets."

While the US and Indian ministers did not go so far as to call for ministers to re-engage in negotiations immediately, Brazil and Australia were explicit in their calls for ministers to return to Geneva as soon as possible to try to hammer out the final terms of a deal. "I'm still hopeful that we can still make an effort, but it has to be very fast," Brazilian foreign minister Celso Amorim told reporters on a visit to Australia at the end of August. "Based on past experience, there are two possibilities. We either do it now, in September, or we will have to wait for a long time," he said.

Many people involved in the talks consider the US presidential election in early November to be a final deadline for the agreement of a world trade deal in the near future.

In a speech to the Australian parliament on 26 August, Trade Minister Simon Crean expressed similar optimism on the prospects of deal. "The amount of distance that we covered in July and the relatively short distance left to travel does offer hope that WTO members can get back to the negotiating table soon," Crean said. "With further and sufficient political will brought to the task, we have a real chance to move forward."

Meanwhile, trade officials from the G-33 group of developing countries, which lobbied hard on the SSM during the July talks, sought to construct a potential compromise on the sidelines of a recent meeting of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in Singapore.

"We're working hard to come up with a compromise which we think is doable," Indonesian Trade Minister Mari Pangestu told reporters at the meeting. She said she hoped that ministers would return to Geneva to continue discussions in September, stressing the importance of acting quickly. "When you have an economic slowdown as is being predicted in the US as well as Europe and Japan, then this is often the time when you have unilateral protectionism. We certainly would be very concerned about that," she said.

ICTSD reporting; "Falconer looks to cement progress, issue Ag text after Doha talks resume," INSIDE US TRADE, 28 August 2008; "Quick work needed to secure world trade deal: Lamy," REUTERS, 22 August 2008; "Scwhab urges new push for WTO deal," REUTERS, 22 August 2008; "Developing nations try to break WTO impasse: minister," AFP, 27 August 2008; "Key to WTO talks deadlock with developed nations: Nath," THE ECONOMIC TIMES, 27 August 2008;

"WTO, India Push for Resumption of Global Trade Talks," VOA News, 12 August 2008; "Australia, Brazil back urgent return to WTO talks, 27 August 2008, REUTERS.

BRAZILIAN COTTON DISPUTE MOVES FORWARD, BIOFUELS MAY SOON FOLLOW

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

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

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

The WTO largely agrees. According to a compliance ruling made public in December, US subsidies - even after reform - continue to cause "significant price suppression" in the world market for cotton. The elimination of the Step 2 programme, which compensated processors and exporters for using US cotton, did not "affect the price suppressing effects of [continued US] marketing loan payments and counter-cyclical payments in the world market for upland cotton," the panel found. It further argued that without such payments the level of US cotton acreage and production would be considerably lower, and world prices therefore higher.

Analysts have been predicting the rise of protectionism and a new wave of litigation before the WTO's Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) since the collapse of Doha Round negotiations on 29 July. While disputes such as these were generally on hold in the lead-up to the July mini-ministerial conference in Geneva, it appears this is no longer the case. "If we don't make progress [in the WTO negotiations], disputes will be the only way to resolve the problems," Amorim said at a recent appearance in Rio de Janeiro.

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

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

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

Sean Spicer, a spokesman for US Trade Representative Susan Schwab, said that Schwab would work with the US Congress to "vigorously" defend American interests on cotton, the Associated Press reported.

Ethanol challenge may be in the works

Along with its current litigation against the US, Brazil may also be launch a dispute over a US\$ 0.14 per litre (US\$ 0.54 per gallon) duty imposed on ethanol imports to the US. The US considers its ethanol tariff an "other duty or charge" that falls outside WTO regulation. Critics of the tariff consider it a pure protectionist measure intended to give a leg up to US corn growers.

Foreign Minister Amorim told reporters on 2 September that Brazil "has a very strong case and there is a good chance" that Brasilia will launch a dispute against the US at the WTO, according to the Associated Press. Amorim further indicated that the case could be launched in the next one to two months.

US corn-based ethanol is much more expensive than Brazilian ethanol, which is produced from sugar cane.

The US is currently the world's largest producer of the biofuel, while Brazil is the largest exporter.

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

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

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

US Senator Dianne Feinstein of California sent a letter to US Trade Representative Susan Schwab on 8 August, calling on her to consider whether Brazil has a 'substantive case' against the US ethanol tariff and, if so, what countermeasures Brasilia might be able to take were it to win a WTO dispute on the subject. Feinstein also suggested that Brazil's argument could be weakened if the US voluntarily lowered the duty.

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

ICTSD reporting; "Brazil seeks billions in trade sanctions from US," ASSOCIATED PRESS, 27 August 2008; "Brazil presses US, EU to include ethanol in any WTO trade pact," ASSOCIATED PRESS, 28 July 2008; "Brazil may press WTO on US ethanol tariffs," ASSOCIATED PRESS, 3 September 2008; "Brazil sees WTO ethanol case against U.S. soon," REUTERS, 2 September 2008.

OTHER NEWS

GEORGIA CONFLICT STALLS RUSSIA'S WTO BID

Russia's bid to join the WTO, which was until recently considered on track to be concluded by the end of the year, has stalled following sharp disagreements with the US and the EU over its role in recent conflict in Georgia. Moreover, Moscow is considering pulling back from some of the commitments it has already made in its WTO accession process.

Violence flared earlier this month when Georgian government forces tried to retake the separatist provinces of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. Within twenty-four hours of the Georgian foray into South Ossetia, and with the deaths of Russian peacekeepers, Russia had launched a counter attack. South Ossetia and Abkhazia are two regions seeking to break off from Georgia, a former Soviet republic.

The West has threatened various sanctions to the intervention and continued Russia presence in the area, including vetoing Moscow's bid to join the WTO, freezing relations with NATO and blocking its membership in the G-8 and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.

US presidential candidate Senator Barack Obama was among those who called for diplomatic action to be taken against the Kremlin. "We should...convene other international forums to condemn this aggression, to call for an immediate halt to the violence and to review multilateral and bilateral arrangements with Russia -- including Russia's interest in joining the World Trade Organisation," Obama said.

Similar noises came from the Bush administration: US Commerce Secretary Carlos Gutierrez said in an interview with Germany's Der Spiegel magazine that Russian military actions in Georgia had put the country's WTO membership in jeopardy.

Russia, by far the largest economy still outside the WTO, has been working to join the global trade forum for nearly 15 years. As recently as earlier this summer, EU Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson said that he thought that Moscow could potentially finalise the details of its accession package by the end of the year (see BRIDGES Weekly, 27 August 2008, <http://ictsd.net/i/news/bridgesweekly/12267/>).

Indeed, Russia has made significant progress in its accession talks, having already concluded bilateral

negotiations on goods and services with nearly all of the WTO Members who requested such negotiations, including all of Russia's major trading partners. All applicants for Membership in the global trade body must negotiate bilateral accords with any WTO Member that requests one. The only bilateral talks that remain unresolved are the negotiations with two former Soviet republics, Ukraine and Georgia. Under the WTO's rules for consensus decision-making, the process by which all accession bids are considered, each of the organisation's 153 Members has the power to veto Russian accession.

But some of that progress may soon be lost. Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin indicated in August that Moscow might pull out of some of the trade commitments it had made as part of its accession bid.

"We propose continuing negotiations within the framework of the Working Party on WTO accession, but informing our partners of the need to exit some agreements which currently oppose the interests of the Russian Federation," Putin said, according to Russian news agencies.

"We don't feel or see any advantages from membership, if they exist at all. But we are carrying the burden," he said. "We need to make this clear to our partners."

That threat was followed by an official announcement on 27 August that the Kremlin planned to both increase agricultural subsidies and cut import quotas for US poultry and meat. Indeed, Russian Agriculture Minister Alexei Gordeyev said that Moscow would reduce quotas for those products by "not tens but hundreds of thousands of tons."

Such a move would violate an agreement brokered between Moscow and Washington in 2005, under which US poultry and meat producers are allowed reduced tariffs on a specified quantity of exports to Russia. When that deal was struck, many considered it a critical step towards Russian accession to the WTO.

But Maxim Medvedkov, the head of Russian accession talks, offered some reassuring words in an official statement released on 2 September. "We don't plan to break any agreement," he said. "The case in point is to revise individual agreements and only in case if they couldn't be changed Russia could break them off. In this case, as in the situation with any other agreement, we'll start consultations and only after them we can decide on further action. These agreements would be changed only if the implementation of these commitments is uncomfortable for Russia."

Any backward movement from Moscow would not sit well with its trading partners.

"If Russia decides to step back from those...commitments, that will obviously further delay its aspirations to join the WTO," US Trade Representative spokesman Sean Spicer said, as reported by The Wall Street Journal.

Relations between Russia and the EU are also strained: the two major trading partners continue to dispute several issues, including timber tariffs, a Russian ban on imports of some European meat, and the regulation of state-owned enterprises such as Gazprom. But despite the ongoing differences, Brussels has publicly urged the Kremlin to continue to pursue its WTO Membership.

"As the only major economy outside the WTO, it should hasten its efforts to join," said Peter Power, spokesman for the European commission on trade affairs in a press release.

Like the US, the 27-member EU is reportedly considering threatening to veto Russia's bid to join the WTO in order to pressure the country to pull its troops out of Georgia. But even if Western nations do not follow through on that threat, Georgia itself, which has been a Member of the WTO since 2000, would almost certainly veto Moscow's bid.

Georgia had previously maintained that it would not finalise WTO negotiations until Russia establishes functioning customs controls on its border with Abkhazia and South Ossetia. This demand seems increasingly unlikely to be met, especially in light of the formal recognition of independence that Russia granted to Abkhazia and South Ossetia last week.

At this point, the future of the Russia's bid remains uncertain. While accession talks are set to resume in mid September, analysts consider it unlikely that all of the outstanding issues will be resolved in the near future. Indeed, some experts say that, with hundreds of billions of dollars in reserves thanks to high oil prices, Moscow has decided the time is right for Russia to reassert its power in the region.

ICTSD reporting; "Putin says no advantages for Russia from WTO," REUTERS, 25 August 2008; "Russia risks delay in joining WTO: US trade official," AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE, 25 August 2008; "Russia Backs Away From Some WTO Commitments," ASSOCIATED PRESS, 25 August 2008; "Doubts grow on Russia's WTO Plans," BBC NEWS, 26 August 2008; "Putin Eyes Retreat On WTO Accords," THE MOSCOW TIMES, 26 August 2008; "Russia plans to cut imports of US meat,"

WALL STREET JOURNAL, 28 August 2008; "Kremlin raises the ante," CHICAGO TRIBUNE, 27 August 2008; "Russian Ambassador defends recognition of South Ossetia, Abkhazia," XINHUA, 29 August, 2008.

WTO IN BRIEF

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

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

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

'Retreaded' tyres are used automobile tyres that have been reprocessed for a second, final use. Brazil in 2000 placed an import ban on retreaded tyres, arguing that these tyres had a shorter life span than new ones and therefore contributed to a faster accumulation of waste tyres, which in turn provide fertile breeding grounds for disease-carrying mosquitoes.

In the dispute, the EU, whose exports of retreaded tyres to Brazil had been halted almost entirely by the ban, had argued that the import measures were motivated by a desire to protect local tyre manufacturers from import competition, rather than by the pursuit of genuine public health objectives as claimed by Brasilia. It pointed to the fact that despite the ban, Brazil was continuing to import large quantities of used tyres under injunctions from lower courts secured by the local tyre industry. Brazil was also allowing in retreaded tyres from its fellow members of the Mercosur trade bloc - Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay.

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

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

In contrast, the EU says that the most "obvious" and prompt way for Brazil to comply with the ruling would simply be to repeal the import ban. It thought Brazil should implement the ruling by 17 October of this year.

The arbitrator, Yasuhei Taniguchi, refrained from commenting on which means of implementation might be better. However, he found that past practice suggested that the Brazilian government would need less than the 21 months it claimed to finish its ongoing federal supreme court case aimed at ending the offending injunctions. He also found that Brazil did not necessarily have to formally negotiate new rules with other Mercosur members before changing its tyre import regime, since it had altered its Mercosur policies through "mere domestic measures" in the past. He thus determined that a "reasonable period of time" would be 12 months, ending on 17 December 2008.

The case, which represents the first-ever challenge against trade restrictions imposed by a developing country for health and environmental reasons, has been closely watched by green groups.

ICTSD reporting.

WTO RULES AGAINST CHINA IN AUTO PARTS DISPUTE

China lost its first ever WTO dispute on 18 July, when a panel on the WTO compliance of its auto part tariffs found in favour of the complainants - Canada, the EU and the US.

Central to the dispute was a 25-percent tariff on certain imported auto parts that China introduced in 2005. China had previously bound its tariffs on car parts at 10 percent, but claimed that the extra duty was necessary in cases where the imported parts are incorporated into a final assembled vehicle that fails to meet local requirements.

Vehicle manufacturers in China that use imported parts must register with China's Customs Administration and

provide a list of all imported and domestic parts to be used in each vehicle produced. If the number or the value of imported parts in the assembled vehicles surpasses specific thresholds, Chinese authorities impose a 25-percent tax on each of the imported parts - a figure that equals the duty China applies on imported automobiles but exceeds its 10-percent tariff ceiling on auto parts.

China had contended that the higher tariff was necessary to prevent tax evasion by companies that import whole cars as spare parts to avoid the higher tariffs applicable to entire automobiles.

However, the three complainants in the case maintained that these higher charges unfairly discriminate against the use of foreign auto parts and effectively subsidise domestic production. The parties argued that the tariff not only discouraged auto manufactures in China from using the imported parts, but also that the higher tariff put pressure on foreign auto parts producers to relocate manufacturing facilities to China.

The panel agreed that the tariff was in violation of WTO rules and China's scheduled tariff commitments. China had promised as part of its 2001 WTO accession agreement to increase access to the automobile market and not to treat parts as whole cars. The panel further ruled that the tariff breached the GATT's national treatment principle and the Agreement on Trade-Related Investment Measures. China has until mid-October to appeal the ruling.

More recently, the US filed a complaint on 13 August, asking China to defend the legality of its tax, subsidy and export regulations for farm products such as pork and wheat. China will have a chance to respond at a WTO meeting on 17 to 18 September when the country's informal 'transitional review' will take place.

ICTSD reporting; "US questions China at WTO over pork, farm taxes," THE ASSOCIATED PRESS, 26 August, 2008; "China finds a way to cut car imports without offending the WTO," THE ECONOMIST, 21 August, 2008; "China auto parts tariffs ruled illegal," THE CALTRADE REPORT, 11 August, 2008.

EU APPEALS WTO RULING ON BANANA IMPORT REGIME

The EU filed an appeal on 28 August in an attempt to overturn a WTO ruling that its import tariffs on bananas discriminate against Latin American countries. In its appeal, Brussels argues that the panel "completely disregarded" evidence showing that Latin American

banana suppliers' access to the European market has risen by more than 10 percent. The EU also had "significant systemic concerns" about judges' interpretation and application of relevant WTO provisions, according to an official statement.

The WTO has consistently ruled against Brussels' banana tariff regime, forcing it to overhaul a system that has long granted preferential conditions to producers from ACP states -- 79 former colonies, mainly British and French, located in Africa, the Caribbean, and the Pacific. This arrangement is particularly disliked by Latin American banana exporters, who claim that the EU's treatment of ACP bananas is unfairly discriminatory.

On the sidelines of the negotiations at the Doha mini-ministerial held in Geneva in July, the EU tried to stave off such protests by striking a deal with 11 Latin American nations. Under the terms of that agreement, Brussels would cut its banana imports from €176 per tonne to €114 per tonne by 2016, with an interim cut to €148 by January of next year.

In exchange for easier access to the EU banana market, the Latin American nations would agree not to challenge the EU's duty-free access to banana imports from ACP countries. In addition, the Latin American governments would drop existing lawsuits against the EU, and agree not to launch more challenges.

But given the collapse of the mini-ministerial talks, the fate of that deal is now in question. The EU maintains the agreement was dependent on the WTO Members reaching a breakthrough on agriculture and industrial tariffs, while Ecuador insists that the banana deal struck in July is a stand alone agreement.

Latin American banana producers have expressed "extreme disappointment" with the EU's decision to reject the accord. Indeed, Ecuador, the world's largest banana exporter, and the US have vowed to move forward with WTO litigation against the EU's banana tariff regime.

The WTO's Appellate Body - its highest court - will issue a verdict within 90 days as to whether Brussels will have to comply with the WTO panel reports.

ICTSD reporting; "EU to appeal WTO banana ruling," THE LATIN AMERICANIST, 28 August, 2008; "EU appeals against WTO banana rulings," EU BUSINESS, 29 August, 2008; "WTO rules for U.S. against EU banana tariffs," ASSOCIATED PRESS, 2 August, 2008; "EU Files Appeal Against WTO Ruling On Compliance With Banana Import Tariffs," WTO REPORTER, 1 September, 2008; "Ecuador hits back at EU for

discarding banana deal," NORTH AMERICAN NEWS, 29 August 2008..

EVENTS & RESOURCES

EVENTS

For a more comprehensive list of events in trade and sustainable development, please refer to ICTSD's web calendar at: <http://www.ictsd.org/cal/index.htm>. If you would like to submit an event, please email events@ictsd.ch.

Upcoming Events: 3 - 9 September

3 - 5 September. Koli, Finland. **FORESTS IN THE CHANGING ENVIRONMENT**. Organized by the Finnish Government and the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe, this workshop will provide an opportunity for experts in forestry, natural resources management, biodiversity, climate change, land-use and economic development to exchange their views on the theme "Forests in the changing environment," which will also be the overall theme at the eighth session of the UN Forum on Forests. For more information contact: Heikki Granholm, Counsellor of Forestry; tel: +358916052431; e-mail: heikki.granholm@mmm.fi; Internet: <http://www.mmm.fi/en/index/frontpage/forests/koli2008.html>

3 - 5 September. Kampala, Uganda. **WORLD AGRICULTURAL FORUM: 2008 AFRICAN CONGRESS** This meeting will discuss "Creating Prosperity by Investing in Agriculture." For more information contact: World Agricultural Forum; tel: +1-314-206-3208; fax: +1-314-206-3222; e-mail: wafstl@stlrcga.org; Internet: <http://www.worldagforum.org/index.php?section=1>

4 September. Geneva, Switzerland. **LAUNCH OF THE TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT REPORT 2008**. The 2008 Report is subtitled "Commodity prices, capital flows and the financing of investment" It will present the outlook for the world economy and the economic prospects for developing countries in view of the situation in international financial, currency and commodity markets and doubts about the direction of macroeconomic policy in major economies. The Report will question the traditional theoretical framework of development financing and make suggestions to improve the financing of investment with a focus on profit reinvestment and credit creation through the domestic banking system. It will also look at the need to increase official development assistance for the achievement of the MDGs as well as to increase productive capacities. For further information refer to website: <http://www.unctad.org/tdr>

4 - 5 September. Schleswig-Holstein, Germany. **GLOBAL ECONOMIC SYNOPSIS**. This annual event constitutes an international forum for leading policy makers, business executives, academics and other representatives of civil communities to formulate innovative, global practical solutions for the world's most important economic problems. It aims to formulate research-based action plans to address global

problems. These action plans can take the form of business strategies, government policies, or civil society initiatives. Its sessions are all supported by state-of-the-art research and are divided into themes: Environment- Dealing with Climate Change, Social Insurance - Promoting Health and Welfare, Security- Creating a Safer World, Inequality -Tackling Poverty and Social Fragmentation and Growth -Benefiting from Globalization. For further information please refer to website: <http://www.ifw-kiel.de/konfer/global-economic-symposium>

4 - 5 September. Budapest, Hungary. **THE INTERNATIONAL WATER ASSOCIATION 11TH INTERNATIONAL SPECIALIZED CONFERENCE ON WATERSHED AND RIVER BASIN CONFERENCE** The objective of this conference is to provide a multidisciplinary forum for scientists, practicing engineers, regulators and stakeholders in the area of watershed and river basin management. The competition is growing among water users for water resources while the available resources are increasingly constrained both quantitatively and/or qualitatively in most river basins. The conference intends to focus on the following themes: the latest results and experiences achieved in the field of river basin management techniques; assessment methods; modeling conflicting water demands and climate change; stakeholders and public involvement; and the economics of river basin management. For more information contact: Organizing Secretary; e-mail: trivent@trivent.hu; Internet: <http://www.iwa2008budapest.org/>

7 - 10 September. Dallas, Texas, US. **23RD ANNUAL WATEREUSE SYMPOSIUM**. The symposium is organized by the WaterReuse Association, the American Water Works Association, and the Water Environment Federation and focuses on water reuse and desalination. For more information contact: WaterReuse Association; tel: +1 703.548.0880; fax: +1 703.548.5085; Internet: <http://www.watereuse.org/conferences/symposium/23>

8 September. Manila, Philippines. **ADB URBAN DAY 2008**. The ADB Urban Community for the first time presents their annual urban forum highlighting the "Environment and Livable Cities". The forum will aim at tackling issues on solid waste management, climate change, and city cluster development; and their impacts on promoting livable cities. Participants will range from national and local governments, international community of practice to the private sector, civil society and academia to discuss pressing urban issues on urban environment and sanitation, urban transport, city region development, and municipal finance and governance, in relation to operational themes of sustainable urban development and sound environmental management promoting livable cities. For more information please contact Ma. Virginita A. Capulon the Senior Programs Officer: tel: +632 632-6679; email: mvcapul@adb.org; Internet: <http://www.shimbun.denki.or.jp/english/g8summit/aomori.shtml>

8 - 9 September. Geneva, Switzerland. **THE INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON POST-2012 CLIMATE AND TRADE POLICIES**. In December 2007 at the Bali UNFCCC conference, parties to the UN climate regime launched a two-year negotiation process aimed at forging a post-2012 agreement. Prior to the Bali conference, WTO

parties began discussing trade liberalisation for a number of climate-friendly goods and services. Moreover, during the conference in Bali, an Informal Trade Ministers' Dialogue on Climate Change was held, where 32 Trade Ministers emphasised the need for increased high-level engagement for improving the mutual supportiveness of the climate and trade regimes. This workshop aims at building on previous UNEP trade and climate change dialogues by bringing together a range of leading experts to actively discuss trade and economic strategies in a post-2012 world and on the future interplay between the UN climate regime and the World Trade Organization. For further information, please refer to website: http://www.unep.ch/etb/events/2008_Post-2012ClimateTradePoliciesSept08_09.php or contact benjamin.simmons@unep.ch

8 - 9 September. Paris, France. WORKSHOP ON ADAPTING TO THE IMPACTS OF GLOBAL CHANGES ON RIVER BASINS AND AQUIFER SYSTEMS This workshop, organized by UNESCO, will bring together scientists from different networks such as HELP, GWSP, G-WADI, GRAPHIC, ISARM, FRIEND, IFI, ISI, IRI, IWMI, and WMO, Universities, research organizations and centres in order to: identify key research topics related to global change issues; identify common topics for synergy and coordination of research agendas for different IHP projects and networking partners focusing on the major drivers related to global change and their impacts on hydrology and water resources; develop a background paper on global change issues; and develop a global change network. For more information please refer to website: http://www.unesco.org/water/news/newsletter/202.shtml#news_1

8 - 12 September. Paramaribo, Suriname. INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE ON FINANCING SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT This Country-Led Initiative in support of the UN Forum on Forests is organized by the governments of Suriname, the Netherlands and the United States. For more information contact: Henry Mac; tel: +1-212-980-7029; e-mail: suriname@un.int; Internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/forests/2008.html>

9 - 10 September. Buenos Aires, Argentina. BIOFUELS MARKETS AMERICAS - EXPANDING BIOFUELS BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES ACROSS THE AMERICAS. The fifth edition of Biofuels Markets Americas, and the second annual biofuel event in Argentina, organised by Green Power Conferences in cooperation with the Argentine Association for Biofuels and Hydrogen, will provide an excellent platform for the global industry to learn the region's opportunities in biofuels, address the key issues and do business. For further information please refer to website: www.greenpowerconferences.com

WTO Events

An updated list of forthcoming WTO meetings is posted at: http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/meets.pdf. Please bear in mind that dates and times of WTO meetings are often changed, and that the WTO does not always announce the important informal meetings of the different bodies. Unless otherwise indicated, all WTO meetings are held at the WTO,

Centre William Rappard, rue de Lausanne 154, 1211 Geneva, Switzerland, and are open to WTO Members and accredited observers only.

The next WTO Event is the WTO Public Forum, scheduled for 24-25 September. For more information, see http://www.wto.org/english/forums_e/ngo_e/forum08_backgrund_e.htm

Other Upcoming Events

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

15 - 19 September 2008. Dakar, Senegal. SIXTH SESSION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL FORUM ON CHEMICAL SAFETY. The Sixth Session of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS) will be hosted by the government of Senegal. The session will consider: the future of the IFCS; nanotechnology and nanomaterials; substitution and alternatives; the need for international action on lead and cadmium; and ecologically sound and integrated pest and vector management. Preparatory meetings will take place prior to the session, on 13-14 September. For more information contact: tel: +41 22 791 3873; fax: +41 22 791 4875; e-mail: ifcs@who.int; Internet: <http://www.who.int/ifcs/forums/six/en/index.html>

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

17- 20 September 2008. Crans-Montana, Switzerland. GENEVA TRADE & DEVELOPMENT FORUM (GTDF): TRADE AS A DEVELOPMENT TOOL - PARTNERSHIPS AND POLICIES. The 1st conference of the GTDF will connect about 250 top thinkers, practitioners and decision makers from the trade and development fields from more than 40 developing, transition and OECD countries with the goal to foster a more inclusive globalisation by addressing some of the specific challenges and opportunities of developing countries in their quest to liberalise trade and integrate into the world economy to the benefit of all. The conference is expected to develop country-specific action plans/policy recommendations as well as policy principles on trade

governance and new ideas and approaches to promote trade as a development tool. Participants will probe how entrepreneurship, food security, service development, labour mobility, intellectual property rights, commodities, climate change, livelihoods, export development, trade built on decent work, trade rules and governance can contribute to reducing poverty and enhancing integration into the world trading system. The focus will be on what each stakeholder can do to contribute to solutions. A group of key stakeholders will form a "constituency for change" to work to advance the Forum's agenda. IDEAS Centre is organising the GTDF, backed by Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland. For more information, visit www.gtdforum.org.

18 - 20 September 2008. Cracow, Poland. 12TH BIENNIAL CONFERENCE OF EUROMEDITERRANEAN NETWORK OF EXPERIMENTAL AND REPRESENTATIVE BASINS. The conference will be organized around the theme "hydrological extremes in small basins." For more information contact: Jagiellonian University; tel: +48-12-664-5276; fax: +48-12-664-5385; e-mail: erb2008@geo.uj.edu.pl; Internet: <http://www.geo.uj.edu.pl/konferencja/erb2008/>.

20-24 October 2008. EUROPEAN FOREST WEEK. The European Forest Week will be marked by events in Brussels, Rome and throughout Europe. The week highlights the contribution of European forests in mitigating the effects of climate change, providing wood and renewable energy, promoting fresh water supply and protecting the environment. The European Forest Week, declared by ministers responsible for forests in 46 European countries, is jointly organized by the European Commission, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, in close collaboration with the Presidency of the Council of the European Union at the time of the event, France. For more information, visit <http://www.europeanforestweek.org>.

RESOURCES

REGULATING WATER AND SANITATION FOR THE POOR ECONOMIC REGULATION FOR PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS by Richard Franceys and Esther Gerlach. August, 2008. The aim of this book is to present the potential benefits as well as the challenges of introducing a more formal economic regulatory process into the urban water sector arena in lower-income countries. There is a particular focus upon the impact this may have on the poorest, the informal, slum and shanty dwellers of the rapidly growing cities. Economic regulation, usually introduced in the context of private operation of monopoly water supply, can deliver objectivity and transparency in the price-setting process for public as well as private providers. The book describes and analyses these issues through a consideration of ten country case studies. As a starting point, the current situation for the provision of water and sanitation services for the poorest through non-regulated public providers in India and Uganda is reviewed. Comparative chapters are then presented on Ghana, Philippines, Bolivia, Jordan, Zambia and Indonesia, all with varying degrees of private sector involvement and

regulation. Finally the experiences of two richer countries are considered - Chile and England, countries with the longest experience of economic regulation and the 'most privatized' suppliers. In all cases there is a focus on the very necessary role of customer involvement in price-setting and service monitoring and on the role of alternative (private) service providers. For further information please refer to <http://www.earthscan.co.uk/?TabId=21081&v=390108>.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF AGRI-FOOD SYSTEMS GLOBALIZATION, SUPPLY CHAINS AND SMALLHOLDER FARMERS by Ellen B. McCullough, Prabhu L. Pingali and Kostas G. Stamoulis. August 2008. The driving forces of income growth, demographic shifts, globalization and technical change have led to a reorganization of food systems from farm to plate. The characteristics of supply chains - particularly the role of supermarkets - linking farmers have changed, from consumption and retail to wholesale, processing, procurement and production. This has had a dramatic effect on smallholder farmers, particularly in developing countries. This book presents a comprehensive framework for assessing the impacts of changing agri-food systems on smallholder farmers, recognizing the importance of heterogeneity between developing countries as well as within them. The book includes a number of case studies from Asia, Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe, which are used to illustrate differences in food systems' characteristics and trends. The country case studies explore impacts on the small farm sector across different countries, local contexts, and farm types. For further information please refer to <http://www.earthscan.co.uk/?TabId=3931&v=390171>.

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