



Bridges Trade BioRes

Biweekly news, events and resources at the intersection of trade and biodiversity

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NOTE TO SUBSCRIBERS

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CLIMATE CHANGE

House Version of US Climate Bill Strengthens Likelihood of Border Measures

The US climate bill, which will go the House of Representatives for a vote today, will include strengthened language on border measures. Efforts this week by the House Ways and Means Committee – the body with jurisdiction over legislation relating to tariffs, import trade, and trade negotiations – have adjusted the bill's goals for international climate negotiations and ensure that the US is not placed at a competitive disadvantage.

The border measures contained in the legislation would authorise the US to impose import tariffs on countries that fail to take measures to curb greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, which has been a key issue for domestic and international industries (see Bridges Trade BioRes, 20 March 2009, <http://ictsd.net/i/news/biores/43679/> and, 17 April 2009, <http://ictsd.net/i/news/biores/45217/>).

Today's vote comes much sooner than anticipated after House Democrats were able to resolve difficult agricultural issues earlier this week. While the bill is likely to pass in the house, some opponents in the Senate, where the bill is expected to face greater opposition, have criticised the

climate legislation citing possible WTO rule violations as a reason to delay domestic action on climate change.

Senator Charles Grassley, a critic of the bill's possible WTO violations, suggested last week that the Senate wait for an international climate agreement before taking domestic action. Grassley said this would allow the Senate to avoid negative trade effects and ensure comparable emission reduction among US trading partners. Parties will meet in Copenhagen, Denmark at the end of the year to attempt to hammer out a successor to the Kyoto Protocol, which is set to expire in 2012.

Mixed messages on the role of import tariffs in US climate policy

The adjustments made by the House Ways and Means Committee will make downplaying the role of border measures in US climate legislation much more difficult for the Obama administration. Commenting on the changes, Subcommittee Chairman, Sander Levin, indicated a strong desire to reach a "meaningful international agreement...that will reduce global carbon emissions and maintain trade neutrality in the process."

In the absence of an international agreement, Levin continued, "this legislation ensures that the United States will avoid carbon leakage in its energy intensive and trade sensitive industries." Leakage, a term referring to the movement of carbon producing industry to countries with more lax environmental standards, has been a prime concern for the Obama administration as it mulls its proposed emissions trading scheme.

The new provisions require that import tariffs be applied to carbon-intensive products in 2020 unless Congress is informed by the president that border measures are not in the "national economic interest." This would make import tariffs the rule rather than the exception, a significant shift from the previous version of the bill, where the president was allowed several options if certain loss of competitiveness factors were met.

The Ways and Means revisions also moved to adjust international negotiation objectives to "address the competitive imbalances that may be

created in domestic and export markets" between countries that have and have not taken sufficient climate change measures. Additionally, provisions governing border measures would also be sought.

Experts caution against unilateral import tariffs

In the absence of broad multilateral action, Gary Hufbauer, a Senior Fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics in Washington, indicated before a hearing of the Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality in March that efforts to address competitiveness concerns and emissions leakage through the use of trade measures will have limited success. In addition to concerns surrounding WTO compliance, there are also concerns with how import restrictions could affect US exports.

If the US imposes restrictions on imports in the name of climate change, these actions, Hufbauer warned, would likely elicit similar measures by other countries on US exports. In addition, the issuance of performance standards on foreign firms by the US, would stand a high chance of reciprocal actions on the US as well, he said. These examples were cited by Hufbauer as reasons for the US to "make an exceptional effort to negotiate agreed international rules before blocking imports or penalising foreign GHG control measures."

According to Hufbauer, an inability to avoid the creation of unique brands of import bans, border taxes, and comparability mechanisms could result in "drawn-out trade skirmishes and even trade wars" with global cooperation in limiting emissions possibly the first casualty of a unilateral approach that ignores the basic GATT articles.

Domestic import tariffs and the WTO

Under pressure from industry and unions to address competitiveness concerns in the bill, media sources report that Congress is carefully considering the structure of border measures to encourage a global climate change treaty and avoid violation of WTO trade rules. However, some experts have said that, in its current form, US climate legislation could violate WTO rules that do not allow tariffs to be imposed if they are in

addition to those reflected in the US schedule or if they discriminate against foreign products based on production and processing methods.

Supporters of the import tariff provision contend that, even if border measures violate WTO rules, the US could qualify for an exemption under Article XX of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). While the legislation may satisfy competitiveness provisions laid out in sections XX(g) and XX(b), legal experts suggest that satisfying the demanding conditions of the Article may pose a significant challenge.

Arjun Ponnambalam at the Georgetown University Law Center said this is especially true after the Brazil-Tyres decision, which expanded the discretion of the WTO Appellate Body to ensure that Article XX is not invoked in a manner that undermines the fundamental notions of international trade equity.

Given the current state of US climate legislation and continued domestic calls for strong border measures, observers say the country's ability to remain engaged on these issues at the international level will be critical to how possible trade disputes are received in the future. In recent weeks, experts from the WTO have encouraged countries to "seek good-faith international negotiations on matters related to the border measures." Experts have indicated that current efforts could determine whether future exceptions for environmental measures under the WTO are granted.

More Information

The amended legislative trade provision text can be found here:
<http://ictsd.net/downloads/2009/06/wamc-draft.pdf>

ICTSD Reporting; "Climate Change: Competitiveness Concerns and Prospects. Testimony before the Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, US House of Representatives, Committee on Energy and Commerce," PETERSON INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL ECONOMICS, 5 March 2008; "U.S. Climate Change Legislation and the Use of GATT Article XX to Justify a

"Competitiveness Provision" in the Wake of Brazil-Tyre," INTERNATIONAL TRADE REVIEW, 2008.

SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT

Peru Overturns Land Laws in Wake of Violence

Two controversial laws that loosened development restrictions in Peru's Amazon regions have been repealed after dozens were killed in clashes between indigenous protesters and police. Observers say the move could trigger a re-evaluation of the US-Peru Trade Promotion Agreement (TPA), which entered into force on 1 February.

Protests over the laws – which demonstrators say would have opened areas of the rainforest to mining and energy development – had been simmering since April. Some 15,000-20,000 indigenous people took part in the relatively-peaceful demonstrations, which included blockading highways, shutting down an oil pipeline pumping station, and obstructing rural airports.

But tensions boiled over on 5 June when security forces attempted to remove a roadblock on a stretch of highway near the town of Bagua Chica. Reports estimate that at least 34 people – 11 officers and 23 civilians – were killed in the botched operation.

President admits errors

While President Alan García initially blamed protesters and 'foreign agitators' for the violence, he eventually issued an apology for the violence and for failing to consult with indigenous groups before passing the laws. "There comes a time to recognise that there were a series of errors," he said in a speech before Congress.

García requested that Congress throw out legislative decrees 1090 and 1064, which were initially passed to bring Peru's regulatory

framework in line with the country's bilateral trade deal with the US – seven less controversial laws remain. Indigenous leaders said they were satisfied with the government's decision and requested that demonstrators cease protesting.

"This is a historic day for all indigenous people in Peru," said Daysi Zapata, director of the Indian rights group Aidesep. However, Zapata also cautioned that because seven laws remain, more protests could be in the pipeline.

García's minority government is still struggling with the backlash over the way the government handled the protests. The government's chief of staff has announced his resignation and political analysts say a cabinet reshuffle will likely come in July.

Yehude Simon, the country's prime minister, has also offered to resign and said a national commission should be formed to foster reconciliation.

"Sadly, it seems to take violence for Peru to know itself, and we've learned we've made some big mistakes from not listening," Simon said. "We know we are very behind from where we should be, but the president is committed to making up for lost time."

Many observers have said that the violence has forced the country to acknowledge the 'second-class citizen' status of indigenous people in Peruvian society.

Economic policies will not change: Finance minister

Since being sworn in as president in July 2006, García has pursued a strong free-trade agenda. In addition to approving the US trade pact, he is actively seeking similar deals with Canada, China, the EU, and Japan.

Ratifying the US TPA, which George W. Bush announced as one of his final official actions as US president, did not come easily. The then-Bush administration faced significant opposition from Democrats and labour unions over workers' rights and environmental protection in the South American country (see Bridges Weekly, 21 January

2009, <http://ictsd.net/i/news/bridgesweekly/38202/>).

At the time, then US Trade Representative Susan Schwab insisted that new Peruvian legislation had addressed these concerns and satisfied labour and environmental requirements. "With the president's issuance of a proclamation to implement the US-Peru Trade Promotion Agreement as of February 1, 2009, I am very pleased to be able to celebrate the entry into force of this important trade agreement," Schwab said in a statement.

In seeking free trade pacts, García has not shied away from promoting private investment as a means to boost the economy. In the past, the president framed his foreign investment promoting agenda as a means to help preserve the environment, saying it would bring order and formality to the Amazon, where illegal logging and gold mining are rampant.

Political analysts now speculate that the mis-handling of the protests will force García to alter his agenda. Still, Luis Carranza, Peru's finance minister, said despite the government's reconsideration of the two decrees, there will not be a shift in economic policies.

A recent Ipsos Apoyo poll revealed that that García's approval rating has dropped precipitously since the clashes. The pollster also found that 90 percent of Peruvians believe the president should have consulted with indigenous groups before passing the controversial laws.

Political analysts have said that while García will likely be able to complete the remaining two years of his term, it will not be easy.

While indigenous leaders have called off protests in the Amazonian regions of the country, demonstrations over other issues – such as highway improvement, mining concessions, and hydroelectric projects – continue in other areas of the country.

ICTSD Reporting; "Peru's Congress Repeals Laws Behind Amazon Clashes," REUTERS, 21 June 2009; "Peruvian troops patrol Amazon towns after 60 die over forest protests," REUTERS, 9 June 2009; "ANALYSIS-Peru's Garcia to struggle for

rest of term," REUTERS 23 June 2009; "Amazonian Indians End Protest After Peru's Congress Repeals Decrees," ENVIRONMENT NEWS SERVICE, 19 June 2009.

NATURAL RESOURCES

EU, US Target Chinese Export Restrictions

After months of speculation, the EU and the US on Tuesday launched a WTO case against Chinese export restrictions on a range of raw materials, saying that they intend to level the playing field for their domestic manufacturers. Beijing countered that the export curbs are justified on environmental grounds and that it intends to contest the accusations.

Washington and Brussels have targeted Chinese export quotas, export duties, and other export restraints on nine materials they say are critical to their domestic steel, aluminium, and chemicals sectors: bauxite, coke, fluorspar, magnesium, manganese, silicon metal, silicon carbide, yellow phosphorus and zinc. China produces 60 percent of the world's supply of coke and is a major supplier of the other materials. Beijing's export restrictions keep prices for those materials unfairly low in China, US and EU officials said Tuesday, while decreasing supply for the rest of the world and causing an increase in their prices on the global market.

"After two years of discussion and dialogue with no resolution, it was well past the time to take this step," US Trade Representative Ron Kirk said yesterday. "China's policies on these raw materials put a giant thumb on the scale in favour of Chinese producers. It's our job to make sure we remove that thumb."

The WTO does not generally regulate its Members' use of export taxes, which can act as indirect subsidies to domestic industries. Roughly a third of the WTO's 153 Member countries currently impose such measures, according to a 2004 report by the WTO's Roberta Piermartini, although some developed countries have

proposed an agreement that would eliminate them.

Beijing promised to drop restrictions upon accession

But when China joined the global trade body in December 2001, it promised to do away with "all taxes and charges applied to exports" on all but 84 of its goods. The products that the US and the EU are targeting in their WTO challenge are not included in that list of exceptions, which is outlined in Annex 6 of the country's accession package, the office of the US Trade Representative said Tuesday. The numerous and wide-ranging commitments that countries make when they join the WTO are enforceable under the organisation's dispute settlement system.

But while, in most cases, the WTO does not ban its Members from imposing export taxes, it does regulate – quite strictly – their use of quotas on exported goods. With a few exceptions, such measures are prohibited under Article XI of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), which bans the implementation of "prohibitions or restrictions other than duties, taxes or other charges" on exports.

The US and EU have reportedly been mulling a case against the Chinese export curbs for many months, but have only now moved forward with the request for consultations, the first step in the WTO's lengthy dispute settlement process. USTR Kirk indicated at a press conference on Tuesday that the launch of the case is in keeping with the Obama administration's tough line on trade enforcement.

"We will always, and that's always, expect our trading partners to play by the rules," Kirk said.

China defends policies

But China's Ministry of Commerce has insisted that the export curbs are justified and has said that it will work to defend them.

"The goal of the Chinese side's policy on the relevant exports is to protect the environment and natural resources, and the Chinese side considers the relevant policy to be compliant with WTO

regulations,” the ministry said in a written statement.

The goal of the restrictions is to place some limits on the domestic production of the materials since the extraction and processing of the products can cause tremendous amounts of pollution in certain areas of the country, a Chinese official said on Wednesday. Beijing has also argued that the export measures help the country ensure the sustainability of critical domestic resources.

But China took a conciliatory step on Tuesday, with the announcement that it was lifting export duties on wheat, rice, soybeans, vitriol and steel wire, and reducing them on chemical fertilisers and non-ferrous metals. None of those products, however, is targeted in the new case.

Taking an offensive move, the Chinese ministry issued a statement on Wednesday indicating that it is moving forward with a WTO challenge to a five-year-old US ban on imports of Chinese poultry, on the grounds that the restrictions are unfair and have hurt Chinese poultry producers. The US embargo has been in place since an outbreak of bird flu in 2004.

The poultry issue aside, the US and the EU maintain that they have an air-tight case against Beijing’s export restrictions. At least one analyst agrees.

“China has made a specific commitment not to apply export restrictions on certain products and it is applying those restrictions, so it’ll lose,” Daniel Crosby, a Geneva-based trade lawyer, told Bloomberg on Tuesday.

There is a measure of irony in the recent challenge, as the US has recently focused its enforcement efforts on stopping Beijing from selling Chinese exports at artificially low prices in the US market, a practice known as ‘dumping’ in trade parlance. But the current case ultimately aims to bring down the US market prices of the raw materials in question. Some observers say moves such as these will likely become more common as countries looking to shore up domestic industries amid the ongoing economic slowdown pursue their trade disputes at the WTO.

The parties to the dispute will begin consultations within 30 days of yesterday’s request, as per the WTO’s rules on dispute settlement. If a resolution has not been reached after 60 days of talks, the EU and the US will have the right to ask a WTO dispute panel to hear their complaint. Both sides have said they hope to resolve the matter before it reaches that stage.

Additional information

To read Roberta Piermartini’s report on export taxes, please see http://www.wto.org/english/res_e/booksp_e/discussion_papers4_e.pdf

To read the announcement from the Chinese Ministry of Commerce regarding the lifting of certain export restrictions, please click here <http://english.mofcom.gov.cn/aarticle/newsrelease/commonnews/200906/20090606352494.html>

ICTSD reporting; “EU, US complain at WTO over Chinese export curbs,” BLOOMBERG, 23 June 2009.

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

New Issues Arise in EU-US Beef Trade Dispute

In May, the US and the EU struck a deal promising to end a long-standing feud over trade in beef. But that agreement came under fire last week, when several other beef-producing countries said that the deal would unfairly discriminate against their exports.

Under the memorandum of understanding that Washington and Brussels agreed ‘in principle’ last month, the EU would get to maintain its ban on imports of beef from cows treated with growth hormones. But the 27-nation bloc would also create a new tariff-free import quota for high-quality hormone-free beef, providing increased commercial opportunities for American ranchers. Meanwhile, the US would limit and possibly reduce retaliatory duties levied on EU exports

after WTO dispute panels ruled against Brussels' import ban.

Officials in the administration of US President Barack Obama have described the deal as an example of a "practical, problem-solving approach to trade barriers."

Uruguay, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, and some other WTO Members disagree.

These countries, most of them beef exporters, fear that the US-EU memorandum of understanding deliberately defines 'high-quality' beef in a way that privileges the kind of meat produced in the US at the expense of that produced elsewhere. Grain-fed beef would qualify for the new import quota, while grass-fed beef would not.

They voiced their concerns at a 19 June meeting of the Dispute Settlement Body, seeking confirmation that the EU's new tariff rate quota (TRQ) would truly provide equal access for all beef exporters.

Guillermo Valles Galmes, Uruguay's ambassador to the WTO, said that the EU-US agreement "defined as high-quality meat only that of the type exported by the US," without any justification for doing so.

He claimed that the agreement could potentially cause the US' share in EU imports of high-quality beef rise from 19 percent to 54 percent. Other exporters, including Uruguay, would continue to face the 20 percent in-quota tariff within the existing TRQ, and would be displaced.

The Uruguayan ambassador also criticised the notion that the US and EU could bilaterally agree on compensation without taking into account the interests of others. "Accepting such an approach," he said, "would definitely hurt the principle of non discrimination." He stressed that compensation should be temporary, and should not "nullify or impair" others' rights. WTO dispute rules state that the implementation of panel rulings is preferable to sanctions or alternative compensation.

The memorandum of understanding signed by the US and the EU in May provides for a potential

multi-phase expansion in EU market access for high-quality beef, accompanied by reductions in retaliatory duties levied by Washington on certain EU exports.

In the first phase, the EU would open a new, tariff-free import quota of 20,000 tonnes by 3 August. The US would refrain from applying increased retaliatory duties it announced in January.

In early 2011, the two governments would have the option of proceeding to a second phase, under which the EU would expand the new quota to 45,000 tonnes, and the US would suspend all retaliatory duties related to the beef hormones dispute. Under a potential third phase, the EU would maintain the larger quota level, and the US would formally cease the increased duties.

At the centre of the controversy lies the memorandum's definition of "high quality beef": "Beef cuts obtained from carcasses of heifers and steers less than 30 months of age which have only been fed a diet, for at least the last 100 days before slaughter, containing not less than 62 percent of concentrates and/or feed grain co-products on a dietary dry matter basis that meet or exceed a metabolisable energy (ME) content greater than 12.26 megajoules (MJ) per one kilogram of dry matter. The heifers and steers fed this diet shall be fed, on average, not less than 1.4 percent of live body weight per day on a dry matter basis."

Different rules for different exporters

The EU's WTO obligations, dating back to 1995, explicitly divide its import quota for high-quality beef among Argentina, the US and Canada, Australia, and Uruguay. The in-quota duty is 20 percent; the over-quota tariff is 100 percent.

Under current legislation, introduced in August 2008, the European Commission sets out different rules for beef from different exporters to qualify as "high-quality."

Beef from the US and Canada must be mostly grain-fed: "Carcasses or any cuts obtained from bovine animals not over 30 months of age which have been fed for 100 days or more on nutritionally balanced, high-energy-content rations

containing not less than 70 percent grain and comprising at least 20 pounds total feed per day.”

Beef from Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, New Zealand, and Paraguay, on the other hand, has to be grass-fed – “exclusively fed through pasture grazing” – to qualify as “high-quality” for their separate quota shares. Cattle in these countries are primarily grass-fed (while that in the US and Canada is primarily grain-fed).

Asked by Bridges about the similarity of the US/Canada-specific rules to the definition of high-quality beef in the recent EU-US memorandum of understanding, Lutz Guellner, European Commission Spokesman for Trade, said: “The new TRQ for high-quality hormone-free beef will be non-discriminatory, open to any country that can meet the requirements. It is true that the definition in the new TRQ will be different from those in existing EU quotas, but the legislation creating this TRQ is not due to be adopted until August.”

At the DSB meeting, the EU countered the criticism that countries benefiting from its existing beef TRQ would continue to do so. The new quota, it insisted, would be “non-discriminatory” and “origin-neutral,” with any country producing beef that met the definition qualifying for import licenses under the new quota.

Sources report that the EU declined to respond to Uruguay’s question about how a single definition for high-quality beef could take the place of the multiple definitions currently applied.

The US, for its part, “confirmed the EU’s statement that the [memorandum of understanding] provides for the establishment of a tariff rate quota for beef that meets a definition that is origin-neutral.” The “pragmatic” agreement with the EU was “a better way forward” than further litigation, it said. The US also reiterated its belief in the safety of hormone-treated beef for consumers.

ICTSD reporting.

IN BRIEF

EU Member States Seek Solution for Biotech Crop Debate

Austria, with the support of several other EU states, tabled a proposal to change the way the bloc regulates the cultivation of genetically modified (GM) crops. The proposal aims to make minor amendments to EU Directive 18/2001, which would allow Member states to independently decide their position on the controversial issue, rather than the decision making process taking place in Brussels.

The Austrian initiative, tabled Tuesday at a meeting of EU environment ministers in Luxembourg, proposes a ‘socioeconomic’ rationale that would allow countries to regulate or prohibit completely the cultivation of biotech crops. For example, one diplomat explained that a wine-growing country could prohibit the cultivation of GM crops next to vineyards as the quality of wine could be affected by their proximity to the engineered strains.

“The legally soundest solution we envisage is a set of minor amendments to relevant EU legislation, which should introduce the right of an individual member state to restrict or prohibit indefinitely the cultivation of authorised GMOs on its territory,” the note reads. “Such an ‘opt-out’ clause could be formulated in quite straightforward legal terms and could easily be integrated into the existing legislation.”

But while the proposal is based on a socioeconomic rationale, the note acknowledges that there is currently no methodology available for defining or evaluating the concept. “Such criteria could be discussed and agreed upon during the process of discussion on socio-economic aspects that started with the adoption of the Council conclusions of 2008,” the note reads.

Currently, only one crop – MON810, a maize variety distributed by the company Monsanto – has been approved for cultivation in the EU. However, the EU’s failure to lift national bans in France and Greece in February led to a string of

similar initiatives around the Union. In addition to the two countries, Austria, Hungary, Luxembourg, and Germany now have national bans on cultivating MON810.

Biotech giant Monsanto has been frustrated by the spread of GM restrictions in Europe and has launched legal action against Germany over its ban (see Bridges Trade BioRes, 1 May 2009, <http://ictsd.net/i/news/biores/45945/>).

The current bans take advantage of a temporary 'safeguard clause' that allows EU states to implement restrictions or bans if the country determines that there is a risk to human health or the environment. The new Austrian proposal aims to replace the safeguard clauses, which must be perpetually renewed, with a more permanent solution.

While the proposal seeks to facilitate national bans on GM cultivation, some environmentalists have expressed concerns with the bill. "We're not very enthusiastic about the proposal," said Corinna Zerger, the Green Party's Advisor on Food Safety and Quality. Zerger says that allowing countries to decide their own biotech policy will allow GM cultivation to continue in biotech-friendly EU countries.

The other countries supporting the Austrian proposal are Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, and Slovenia.

Additional information

Austria's proposal, 'Genetically Modified Organisms - A Way Forward', can be accessed here:

<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/09/st11/st11226-re01.en09.pdf>

ICTSD Reporting.

Joint WTO-UNEP Report Details Linkages between Trade and Climate Change

A new report, jointly published by the WTO and the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), offers policy makers and other stakeholders an in-depth analysis of the links between trade and climate change. Underscoring that most sectors of the global economy will be affected by climate change, the report indicates serious implications and opportunities within global trade.

To promote a greater understanding of the linkages between climate change and trade, the report study looks at the issue from four different but correlated perspectives: the science of climate change; trade theory; multilateral efforts to tackle climate change; and national climate change policies and their effects on trade.

In a summary of the current state of scientific knowledge, the study highlights the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) findings that the warming of the earth's climate system is "unequivocal" and human activities are "very likely" the cause of the present situation. More troubling, the report says, is the persistence of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that remain in the atmosphere for long periods of time with no reduction in emissions projected for the coming decades.

In discussing the analytical frameworks used to conceptualise the impacts of climate change, the report identifies the links between increased economic activity and increases in GHG emissions. However, the report also highlights the ability of trade to facilitate a reduction in GHGs by encouraging technology transfer to developing countries. Widespread adoption of climate change mitigation technologies would be enhanced by a more open global market, reducing the emission intensity of goods and their production processes.

However, speaking at the report's launch at the WTO on Friday, organisers cautioned that challenges still remain in developing trade and climate change policies that complement one another. For instance, small vulnerable economies (SVEs), such as Jamaica, Mauritius, and Palau are

at exceptional risk to the effects of increasing GHG emissions; a situation, they say, that has mostly been created by the world's developed economies. SVEs tend to be more vulnerable to rising sea levels, in addition to more intense hurricanes and landslides, which can devastate economies that depend on agricultural trade.

International policy responses will be critical to determine an effective multilateral response to reduce global GHG emissions. The report discusses national policy efforts that employ a range of mechanisms, such as regulatory measures enforcing standards and regulations, as well as taxes and tradable permits.

The study's authors say the implications of climate change for regulatory and economic structures are innumerable. The joint WTO and UNEP report aims to provide essential information on the role of trade in mitigating and adapting to climate change impacts.

Additional information

The full report can be accessed here: http://www.unep.org/pdf/pressreleases/Trade_Climate_Publication_2289_09_E%20Final.pdf

ICTSD Reporting.

US Must Tackle Climate Change Now: Report

Americans are already feeling the effects of climate change and the country should take immediate action to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, according to a new US federal government report.

The study draws upon years of scientific research, as well as new data not available during previous national assessments reports, and warns actions taken today will dictate the severity of future impacts. According to the study, efforts to reduce carbon dioxide emissions would slow the pace and degree of climate change and, if taken immediately, would be most effective.

"This report stresses that climate change has immediate and local impacts – it literally affects people in their backyards," said Jane Lubchenco, administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which was the lead agency on the study.

This is the first analysis in over a decade to look at national climate change impacts. The report, entitled 'Global Climate Change Impacts in the United States', provides current information on changes in temperatures, rainfall patterns and sea level, and also focuses on the regional and sectoral effects of these changes.

The study warns that intense heat waves will increasingly threaten human health, transportation and energy systems, and crop and livestock production. The authors also say that increased rain will yield more flooding, waterborne diseases, negative effects on agriculture, and disruptions to energy, water, and transportation systems.

Also on water issues, the report says that increasing water demands paired with reduced summer runoff will lead to competition for water supplies in some regions (especially in the western US) and rising water temperatures and ocean acidification will degrade coral reefs and the rich ecosystems they support, which will have major implications for tourism and fisheries. They further warn that a sea-level rise of over three feet on top of storm surges will threaten coastal communities, and flooding will be more frequent and coastal erosion will intensify.

Increases in insect infestations and wildfires are also expected.

While the assessment is not intended to direct or dictate a specific policy approach, the authors aim to highlight the necessary choices that will be required to adapt and respond to climate change. Information in the report is meant to be a resource for a broad spectrum of stakeholders affected by climate change, including farmers, local officials, public health officials, water resource officials, and business owners.

Wesley Warren at the Natural Resources Defense Council said the timing of the report is fortunate. "In President Obama we have a leader who is

taking America in a new direction on energy, supported by leaders in Congress, business, labor and others who are increasingly aware of the opportunity presented by a clean energy economy." Looking toward international negotiations in Copenhagen, Warren added that the US needs to move quickly in developing strong legislation to "create jobs, protect the planet, and restore America's leadership on this issue."

Additional resources

The full report can be accessed here: <http://globalchange.gov/publications/reports/scientific-assessments/us-impacts>

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enhance future food security by exploring recent analytical work, primarily from the OECD and FAO. For more information, visit http://www.oecd.org/document/24/0,3343,en_2649_33797_42303192_1_1_1_37401,00.html

29 June-1 July, Jakarta, Indonesia. FOURTH ANNUAL BIOFUELS MARKETS AND JATROPHA ASIA. Following similar events in Bangkok, Singapore, and New Delhi, this conference will bring together 40 leading biofuels and jatropha thought leaders to provide insight into the latest developments in ethanol, biodiesel, jatropha and next generation feedstocks. For more information, contact Kit Ojigbo: email: Kit.Ojigbo@greenpowerconferences.co.uk; internet: <http://www2.greenpowerconferences.co.uk/v8-12/Prospectus/Index.php?sEventCode=BF09061D>

EVENTS AND RESOURCES

Events

Coming up in the next six weeks (26 June - 7 August)

28-30 June, Marseille, France. FIFTH URBAN RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM - CITIES AND CLIMATE CHANGE: RESPONDING TO THE URGENT AGENDA. This symposium, supported by the World Bank, OECD, UN Habitat, UNFPA and other donors, will address the impacts of city and urban growth on climate change; measuring and anticipating the consequences of climate change on urban quality of life, city assets, and local and national economies; and assessing alternatives to increase the resilience of cities and related costs and incentives required for successful implementation. For more information, contact the organizers: email: urbansymposium@worldbank.org; internet: <http://www.urs2009.net/index.html>

29-30 June, Paris, France. GLOBAL FORUM ON AGRICULTURE. Under the theme "Agricultural Outlook: Preparing for the Future," this OECD-sponsored forum will examine the medium and longer term prospects for the agricultural sector and the policies required to

1-3 July, Singapore. NEW THINKING ON WATER GOVERNANCE: A REGIONAL CONSULTATION WORKSHOP ON IMPROVING WATER GOVERNANCE. With the goal of reforming water governance in Asia, this conference, jointly organised by the Asian Development Bank and the Institute of Water Policy (IWP) at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore, will facilitate networking and knowledge sharing on water governance and launch the program on water governance in Asia. For more information, contact organisers: email: water@adb.org; internet: <http://www.adb.org/documents/events/2009/Improving-Water-Governance/default.asp>

8 July, London, UK. DIALOGUE ON FOREST GOVERNANCE AND CLIMATE CHANGE. Jointly organised by Chatham House and the Rights and Resources Initiative, this event is the first in a series of meetings aiming to promote learning and frank discussion on the key issues facing forests and forest communities as the world scales up efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Pre-registration is essential and must be received by Wednesday 1 July to guarantee admission. For more information, contact the organisers, email: climate-forest.registration@chathamhouse.org.uk; internet: [11](http://www.illegal-</p>
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8-10 July, Beijing, China. CLEAN ENERGY EXPO CHINA. Held in conjunction with Asia's largest wind energy technology fair, Wind Power Asia, this event aims to provide a broad perspective on the development of the entire renewable energy industry, and offer a one-stop trading platform for leading manufacturers, suppliers, and technology and service providers in the clean energy industry. For more information contact Cynthia Hor: tel: +65 6500 6716; fax: +65 6296 2771; email c.hor@koelnmesse.com.sg; internet: <http://www.koelnmesse.com.sg/CEEC/index.html>

Other upcoming events

16-22 August, Stockholm, Sweden. WORLD WATER WEEK. With a special focus on transboundary waters, this conference, organised and directed by The Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI), will focus on new thinking and positive action toward water-related challenges and their impact on the world's environment, health, economic, and poverty reduction agendas. For more information, contact the organisers email: confirmation-sweden@mci-group.com; internet: <http://www.worldwaterweek.org/registration>

23 August, Nairobi, Kenya. SECOND WORLD CONGRESS ON AGROFORESTRY. This event, organised the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF), in collaboration with the UN Environment Programme and the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) of the University of Florida, will look at several major topics including the use of markets as opportunities and drivers of agroforestry land use, tree-based rehabilitation of degraded lands and watersheds, and climate change adaptation and mitigation. For further information, contact the organisers: email: wca2009@cgiar.org; internet: <http://www.worldagroforestry.org/wca2009/>

31 August-4 September, Geneva, Switzerland. WORLD CLIMATE CONFERENCE. Hosted by the World Meteorological Organisation, this conference will establish an international

framework to guide the development of climate services which will link science-based climate predictions and information with climate-risk management and adaptation to climate variability and change throughout the world. The outcomes of the Conference will complement work underway under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Bali Action Plan and the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters. For more information, visit: http://www.wmo.int/wcc3/conf_en.php

21-22 September, Venice, Italy. 11TH ANNUAL BIOECON CONFERENCE: ECONOMIC INSTRUMENTS TO ENHANCE THE CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF BIODIVERSITY. This event, hosted by the Fondazione Eni Enrico Mattei, will focus on identifying the most effective and efficient economic instruments for biodiversity conservation. Special emphasis will be given to policy reforms aimed at increasing the commercial rewards for conserving biodiversity, increasing the penalties for biodiversity loss and circulating information on the biodiversity performance requirements of firms. For more information, contact the organisers: tel: +39-041-2711461; email: ughetta.molin@feem.it; internet: http://www.bioecon.ucl.ac.uk/04_11_ann-conf.htm

28-30 September, Geneva, Switzerland. WTO PUBLIC FORUM 2009. Under the heading “Global problems, global solutions: towards better global governance,” this forum will gather civil society representatives, governments and international organisations to discuss the role of the multilateral trading system and the Doha Round of negotiations within the context of the global economic crisis. For more information, contact the organisers: fax: +41-22-739-5777; e-mail: Publicforum2009@wto.org; internet: http://www.wto.org/english/forums_e/ngo_e/forum09_background_e.htm

26 October-6 November, Bangkok, Thailand. LANDSCAPE FUNCTIONS AND PEOPLE: APPLYING STRATEGIC PLANNING APPROACHES FOR GOOD NATURAL RESOURCE GOVERNANCE. Co-organised by Wageningen International, the Regional

Community Forestry Training Center for Asia and the Pacific (RECOFTC), this course offers participants an opportunity to learn current practices for landscape-level planning approaches and to develop practical skills and experience in the use of tools applicable for landscape-level planning, monitoring, and implementation. For more information, visit: <http://www.recoftc.org/site/index.php?id=697>

4-5 November, Paris, France. GLOBAL FORUM ON ECO-INNOVATION. This meeting, organised by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), will take stock of current knowledge on policies to support eco-innovation and four policy challenges: how to make environment and innovation policies mutually supportive; how to most effectively induce eco-innovation; how to support the diffusion of eco-innovation (in particular to developing countries); and the consequences of the economic crises and the stimulus packages on existing policies and instruments. For more information, contact the organizers: tel: +33-1-45-24-82-00; fax: +33-1-44-30-61 79; e-mail: gfsd.eco-innovation@oecd.org; internet: <http://www.oecd.org/environment/innovation/globalforum>

10-11 November, Ismailia, Egypt. FOURTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON "IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON NATURAL RESOURCES" Organised by the Suez Canal University and Egyptian Society for Environmental Sciences (ESES), this conference will offer outstanding international speakers on a wide range of key topics, including: **impacts of climate change on natural resources; climate change and arid lands and desert margins; climate change and risk assessment; and climate change and sustainable development.** The deadline for registration is September 1st. For more information, contact Hassan Mansour: email: hmansour@uga.edu; internet: www.eses-catrina.com

3-14 May 2010, New York, US. EIGHTEENTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (CSD-18). This session will review the state of implementation of goals and targets for Transport,

Chemicals, Waste Management, Mining and the 10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption & Production Patterns. For more information, visit: http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/dsd_aofw_mg/mg_pdfs/mg_csd18_call_sg_repo.pdf

Resources

FISHSUBSIDY.ORG. The Pew Environment Group and EU Transparency, June 2009. This web site, which presents detailed data on European fisheries subsidies paid between 1994 and 2006, launched this week to provide decision makers and the public a detailed view on how and where EU fishing subsidies have been spent. Drawing upon data from the European Commission by the Pew Environment Group, EU Transparency has created fishsubsidy.org to provide this data in an accessible and searchable format making it a key tool towards reforming the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). The development of this resource is timely given WTO Director-General, Pascal Lamy, remarks at the first World Oceans day on 8 June calling for reform of the US\$16 billion paid worldwide in fisheries subsidies. This resource can be accessed here: <http://www.fishsubsidy.org/>

THE CARBON FOOTPRINT OF NATIONS: A GLOBAL TRADE-LINKED ANALYSIS. Edgar Hertwich and Glen Peters, Environmental Science and Technology, June 2009. This paper explores the linkages between consumption patterns and the carbon footprint of different countries using a single, trade-linked model of the global economy. The study finds footprints to be strongly correlated with per capita consumption expenditure. In analysing emissions contributions across eight categories (construction, shelter, food, clothing, mobility, manufactured products, services, and trade), food and services are found to be more important in developing countries, while mobility and manufactured goods dominate in developed countries. In linking standard emission inventories to consumption, Hertwich and Peters seek to provide a more relevant policy perspective on the global drivers of GHG emissions to benefit mitigation policy design. A

copy of the report can be accessed here:
<http://pubs.acs.org/doi/abs/10.1021/es803496a>

CLIMATE CHANGE: GLOBAL RISKS, CHALLENGES AND DECISIONS. The International Alliance of Research Universities, March 2009. This synthesis report presents an up-to-date overview of a broad range of research relevant to climate change that emerged from an international scientific congress, which was held in Copenhagen from the 10-12 March. Its goal is to help identify the causes, impacts, and possible solutions to the climate change problem. Six key messages with supporting data appear in the report. Examples, such as the exponential decrease in ice and snow surface area in the arctic plains and the disruption of the carbon cycle, are used to give insight into the stage climate change has reached. Researchers highlight the damage human activity has caused on the planet and suggest a stringent plan for helping to secure the preservation of the planet. The authors hope that global recognition and collaboration are two key factors that will help reach a consensus at the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of the Parties this December in Copenhagen. The report can be accessed here: <http://climatecongress.ku.dk/pdf/synthesisreport/>