



Bridges Trade BioRes

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

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HAZARDOUS WASTE

Brazil Takes Action over UK Waste Shipment

Brasilia plans to pursue legal recourse against the United Kingdom for illegally exporting 1,400 tons of waste that were mislabeled as recyclable plastic. Brazil has invoked the settlement mechanism of the Basel Convention – a treaty that regulates cross-border movement of hazardous waste – and has threatened to request consultations with the UK at the WTO's Dispute Settlement Body (DSB).

"I'm surprised to learn that trash was improperly imported, with a false characterisation, from Britain into Brazil," Roberto Messias Franco, the head of Brazil's environmental agency, said in a statement. "Brazil is not the world's dump."

The waste, which arrived in 99 shipping containers at three Brazilian ports between February and May of this year, consisted of an assortment of household and clinical materials, including syringes, condoms, batteries, food scraps, cleaning products, and baby diapers, Brazilian media reported. A ship carrying the trash set sail from the Brazilian port of Santos on Wednesday en route back to the UK.

Background on the Convention

Brasilia notified the Basel Convention secretariat on 27 July that it is requesting consultations with London, which is the first step in the treaty's dispute settlement process. The international agreement has governed the cross-border movement of toxic waste since 1992.

The Basel Convention was born from a need for international environmental standards amid increasing global commerce. As developed countries began tightening their environmental

regulations in the 1980s, hazardous waste producers sought out cheaper disposal facilities, frequently located in developing nations. The agreement established a framework for ensuring that waste was properly discarded and stored. Of the 172 countries that have signed the treaty, all but three – Afghanistan, Haiti, and the US – have ratified it.

The convention also established principles for ‘environmentally sound management’ of waste, with the aim of protecting human health by minimizing production of hazardous materials when possible. These principles include prevention, recycling, and use of cleaner technologies.

Brazil must demonstrate hazardous nature of cargo

Before moving forward, Brazil is required to prove that the shipment is, in fact, ‘hazardous waste’. This can be done either through the Convention or through national legislation in either country. Under the Convention, Brazil is required to demonstrate that the British exports fall within the waste streams listed in Annex I of the treaty (including pharmaceutical waste, byproducts from production of latex and plasticizers, and wastes containing dangerous chemical compounds) and that the products exhibit hazardous characteristics listed under Annex III (products that are flammable, poisonous, toxic, etc.).

The ultimate goal of the Basel Convention settlement mechanism is to ensure that waste is safely disposed – not to punish the members. A country that has illegally exported hazardous material is often required to re-import the waste and ensure it is handled in a prudent manner.

If Brasilia and London cannot resolve the dispute through consultations, the South American country can make a submission to the committee for Monitoring Implementation and Compliance, which provides a non-adversarial mediation service to help the parties resolve disputes.

Brazil and the United Kingdom are both active members and “very committed to the convention,” according to Nelson Sabogal, an official at the Basel Convention Secretariat.

Brasilia has yet to request consultations with London at the WTO, but plans to do so soon. The WTO case will also be based on the Basel Convention, the Associated Press reports.

Domestic remedies

In addition to the international claims, both Brazil and the UK have raised the issue within their domestic judicial systems.

Brasilia has fined companies that imported the waste – including Stefenon Estrategia e Marketing, Bes Assessoria e Comercio Exterior, and Alphatec – and required the firms to pay for its shipment back to the UK. “If they don’t send the rubbish back they will be fined [a daily rate] until this is resolved,” said Ingrid Oberg, head of the Brazilian environment agency IBAMA in the port city of Santos. Brazilian law does not permit the import of household waste for any purpose, including recycling.

The United Kingdom is still investigating the source of the waste, but three men have been arrested in the area of Swindon, England, roughly 130 kilometres west of London, in connection to the case.

“The Environment Agency enforces the export of recyclable waste from England and Wales, and will not hesitate to prosecute any company or individuals found to have breached the strict laws on the export of waste,” said Liz Parkes of Britain’s Environment Agency.

“The United Kingdom has taken a strong global lead to stamp out the illegal waste trade, in order to protect people and the environment,” she added.

While officials in Brazil complained that the shipment smelled strongly of decomposing material, they reassured citizens that there were little or no public health risks. “It never really became a danger to health because it never left the port,” Oberg told Reuters.

ICTSD Reporting; “Outraged Brazil Ships Rubbish Back To Britain,” REUTERS, 6 August 2009; “Brazil indignant over British waste imports,” AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, 19 July

2009; "Brazil to denounce Britain to WTO after receiving hazardous waste shipment," ASSOCIATED PRESS, 23 July 2009; "UK waste prompts Brazil complaint," BBC NEWS, 24 July 2009. "Brazil prepares to return UK rubbish, fines firms," REUTERS, 20 July 2009.

BIOPIRACY

Peru Successful in Bid to Protect Traditional Knowledge

Peru has blocked several foreign companies from securing patents on products they say were developed using Peruvian traditional knowledge (TK). In the past several months, Peru's National Commission Against BioPiracy has been able to show authorities from France, Japan, Korea, and the US that products submitted for patents failed to demonstrate the innovation and inventiveness required for patents.

"This is a good example of how coordinated action between the state, the business sector and civil society can prevent inappropriately granted patents related to genetic resources and traditional knowledge," remarked Andrés Valladolid, technical coordinator at the Commission.

National and international recognition and protection of TK is a critical issue for many developing countries, and especially Peru, who is among ten countries with the most extensive biodiversity in the world. However, these efforts come at a time when many Peruvians say that national protection of traditional knowledge is being undermined by free trade agreements (FTAs).

FTAs complicate IP issues

This past December, the Peruvian government passed a series of laws to meet implementation requirements for their much-anticipated FTA with the US. Adjustment of internal intellectual property (IP) regimes prior to the entrance into force of an agreement is a common feature of bilateral agreements with the US. However, some observers say the changes have resulted in

stronger IP enforcement within the FTA after implementation.

Many interest groups argue that the new regulations expose native biodiversity, and the traditional knowledge of it, to bioprospecting and patenting. Experts say the new rules remove the ban on patenting plant life, a measure established in 2000 by Decision 486 of the Andean Community, a trade bloc comprised of Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru. According to reports, sanctions for not having a certificate of origin for a genetic resource or licensing contract, in the case of TK, when applying for a patent are now limited to a fine.

Acting in stark contrast to the national government, Peru's Cusco regional government released, in the same month, new laws against biopiracy that support the protection of indigenous knowledge. The measures include provisions for prior informed consent from indigenous and local communities, benefit-sharing with communities, and limitations upon the creation of patent rights over genetic resources.

"The new law is a good example of how local governments can create the appropriate legal and institutional framework, as well as the mechanisms to implement it, to ensure that biopiracy does not prey on the creativity of indigenous peoples and local communities," Alejandro Argumedo, director of Asociacion ANDES, a Cusco-based indigenous organisation, told SciDev.net. However, María Scurrah, a Peruvian scientist specialising in farmer's rights, indicated the new law could come into conflict with national laws regarding the recording of indigenous knowledge.

Protecting TK should be facilitated: Commission

Protecting genetic resources and TK is a challenging and complicated task for Peru, which is endowed with a territory rich in biodiversity, but a lack of sufficient capacity. Thus, the Commission has limited its focus to products derived from *Lepidium meyenii*, *Plukenetia volubilis* Linneo, and *Myrciaria dubia* — three plants well known among indigenous Peruvian populations for their medicinal properties.

In the case of *Plukenetia volubilis* Linneo (also known as *Sacha inchi*), the vine has been traditionally cultivated by the people of the Amazon for over 3000 years for its almonds, which are highly concentrated in fatty acids. Commission efforts seek to protect this traditional knowledge as companies in the cosmetic and food markets pursue patents for compounds derived from the plant.

However, advocates say identifying possible cases of biopiracy in patent applications and patents granted can be challenging. For instance, some country rules only allow third parties to intervene after a patent has been granted making the work to reverse the patent far more difficult. Additionally, gaining access to the necessary information can be time-consuming.

The Commission says the major challenge in conducting analyses of applications is the lack of reference to the origin of the resource or knowledge, or mentioning of such a resource or knowledge used to develop the invention. Bringing greater transparency to this aspect of the patent system is the current focus of negotiations to align objectives of the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) with the WTO Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) agreement.

Peru pushing for TRIPS reform

Both individually and in association with other countries – such as Brazil, Ecuador, India, Venezuela, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Thailand, India, and others – Peru has made various submissions aimed at inserting a provision in the TRIPS Agreement. If successful, the initiative would require patent applications using biological resources and traditional knowledge to disclose the origin and source of those resources or that knowledge, thus helping to prevent biopiracy. Proposals have also been submitted that would require applicants to provide evidence of prior informed consent and benefit sharing arrangements.

In a 2006 communication to the WTO TRIPS Council, Peru maintained their objective was “by no means a question of dismantling the patent system,” stating that their efforts reflect a desire to

promote innovation “whilst maintaining a degree of fairness and equity among the stakeholders involved in the system.”

Informal talks on possible amendments to the TRIPS agreement, which will resume in early October, are proceeding at a high political level. Among the considerations is the disclosure of origin amendment, also known as the CBD proposal. Of the major IP issues being discussed, WTO Director-General, Pascal Lamy, indicated that willingness exists for discussions on this issue, with all governments in agreement that the prevention of misappropriation of genetic resource is desirable with differences stemming only from concerns regarding how to ensure that TRIPS “effectively supports those objectives.”

More Information

The text of the regional Cusco government laws (O.R. N° 048-2008-CR/GRC) can be found here: <http://www.regioncusco.gob.pe/portal/contenido.php?id=211>

ICTSD Reporting; “The struggle against IPR in the Andes,” GRAIN, July 2009; “Proponents Fight To Keep IP Issues At High Level At WTO,” IP WATCH, 30 July 2009; “Peru's patent win strikes blow against biopiracy,” SCIDEV.NET, 16 July 2009; “Stronger IP Enforcement Finds A Home In Bilateral Trade Agreements,” IP WATCH, 21 April 2009; “Revised laws 'could promote biopiracy' in Peru,” SCIDEV.NET, 19 February 2009; “Peruvian region outlaws biopiracy,” SCIDEV.NET, 21 January 2009; “Combating Biopiracy–The Peruvian Experience,” COMMUNICATION FROM PERU, WTO COUNCIL FOR TRADE RELATED ASPECTS OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS, 13 August 2007

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

WIPO Conference Tackles Climate Change, Biodiversity

A high-profile World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) conference held recently in Geneva suggested a greater willingness from the

UN agency to engage on public policy issues such as climate change, public health, biodiversity and food security.

Speakers included a number of heads of UN agencies and multilateral organisations - such as the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) - in addition to government officials, representatives of the private sector and civil society.

At the closing of the two-day conference, the Chairman of the SCP, Maximiliano Santa Cruz, from Chile, announced that the conference had been “useful to open our minds to new solutions and an invitation to think outside the box.” He added that “while the IP may have an adverse effect on some areas of development, it can also be an important part of any solution.”

The Director-General of WIPO, Francis Gurry, underlined that the conference deepened dialogue on the issues discussed. The meeting “reflected the efforts of the intellectual property community to reach out to the social and economic context that intellectual property is designed to address.”

Climate change monopolises agenda

Climate change took a centre stage at the conference in view of the looming international negotiations on climate change in Copenhagen in December, when the parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) will try to ink a new deal to mitigate global warming.

The role of intellectual property in technology transfer has emerged as a controversial subject in the negotiations. At the WIPO conference, the gap in perspectives on this issue was apparent.

David Lammy, the United Kingdom’s Minister for Higher Education and Intellectual Property, underscored that the IP system is critical in delivering a global solution that provides for the widespread diffusion and transfer of climate change technologies. He also indicated that his country favoured pooling patents to help companies from developed and developing

countries build on the benefits of each others’ technologies.

Haroldo Machado Filho, a Brazilian science and technology official, pleaded for the establishment of a public multilateral fund for purchasing licenses with a view to facilitating the transfer of climate change technologies. Filho added that there is a need to consider criteria for compulsory licensing based on situations of national emergencies or urgency related to climate change.

Carl Holton, Chief IP counsel of General Electric, said intellectual property and market incentives play an essential role in facilitating technology transfer. “Companies do not transact business unless they have confidence they can protect their investments,” he added. Holton emphasised that WIPO should be the world authority on clean technology and IP.

WIPO’s Director-General also stressed that the IP system offers a proven means of encouraging investment in clean technologies, while also pointing to the fact that many climate change technologies are not protected by intellectual property rights, or IPRs, and that technology transfer goes far beyond intellectual property.

The Bolivian ambassador in Geneva recalled, during the discussion, her country’s position at the UNFCCC that environmentally sound technologies should be mandatorily excluded from patenting in developing countries.

Broad interest in IP issues related to biodiversity

In addition to climate change, bio-diversity and food security were debated extensively at the conference.

The discussion on biodiversity focused on the means to ensure fair and equitable benefit sharing from biodiversity. Manuel Ruiz, from the Peruvian Society for Environmental Law, argued that the current IP system has led to the “displacement of native biodiversity”, the “misappropriation of genes and traditional knowledge” (see related story, this issue) and “strict access...legislation” that has negatively impacted research and development (R&D). Ruiz emphasised the need

to review national IP systems, patents especially, based on national contexts and needs and suggested the development of methodologies to address how patents impact biodiversity conservation in particular.

Kiyoshi Adachi, from the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) emphasised that facilitating transfers of technology (ToTs) under the CBD requires that in developing IP policies, stakeholders prioritize the public domain rather than just commercial interests and base their decisions on empirical evidence.

Observers say public policy debate long overdue

Discussions at the conference reflected a wide variety of views on intellectual property and public policy challenges held by diverse stakeholders.

Sisule Musungu, president of the Geneva-based think tank IQsensato, noted in a comment on the conference, that while “WIPO can play a useful coordinating role in dealing with or addressing the relationship between IP and a range of public policy issues. It would be dangerous, however, if it was left alone to determine the rules that govern the relationship between those public policy issues and IP.” He added that the conference would be an “interesting indicator as to whether WIPO will coordinate or control the agenda going forward.”

For many observers, the conference was a long overdue development as WIPO had shied away in past years from openly addressing public policy concerns and had pursued a narrow intellectual property agenda. In addition, member states had demanded that WIPO collaborate more closely with other UN agencies, particularly in the context of the WIPO Development Agenda recommendations.

ICTSD Reporting.

IN BRIEF

US Groups Push for EGS Agreement, With or Without Doha

Several major US trade groups have asked President Barack Obama to lower trade barriers for environmental goods and services (EGS), even if it means removing the talks on green trade from the WTO's Doha Round of trade negotiations.

The request came in the form of a letter signed by eight major US trade and business groups, who would like EGS trade liberalisation fast tracked. The slow pace of the almost eight-year-old trade Round is causing increased frustration among green businesses, who say trade barriers are hampering what should be a thriving industry.

“Lowering trade barriers on green goods and services would be good for the environment and the US economy,” the letter reads. “US businesses and workers would also benefit from the removal of disproportionately high tariffs and non-tariff barriers that US exporters face on green goods and services in a large and rapidly growing export market.”

The groups say that negotiating an EGS agreement outside Doha would expedite trade liberalisation in an area where there is already much global consensus. However, critics caution that allowing certain areas to be negotiated outside Doha could doom the Round by leaving only a shell of contentious issues to be negotiated.

Still, industry officials say the negotiation of a separate information technology agreement in 1995 demonstrates that the proposal is feasible.

While the groups say they are not dead-set on removing the issue from the Doha agenda, they asked the president to seek out other forums. “We believe that either the Forum on Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) or the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), which have initiated important work on reducing barriers to green goods and services, could serve as the basis for

interim commitments in advance of an agreement at the WTO,” the groups stated.

Analysts say US green businesses are concerned about the growth of the EGS sector in more industrialised developing countries, such as India, Brazil, and China. Thus, there is great interest in bringing a rules-based green market to these countries that would like to have access to the developed world’s intellectual property but do not want to open their doors to their EGS.

The groups also stressed the importance of an EGS agreement in demonstrating the Obama administration’s commitment to tackling climate change in the lead-up to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) meeting in Copenhagen this December.

“Not only would it increase trade in environmental goods...but it would further the avowed Obama administration objective of addressing climate change and building the green economy,” said Jeremy Preiss, vice president and chief international trade counsel for United Technologies Corp.

The letter was signed by the Business Council for Sustainable Energy, the Coalition of Service Industries, the Emergency Committee for American Trade, the Information Technology Industry Council, the National Association of Manufacturers, the National Foreign Trade Council, the Organization for International Investment, the Retail Industry Leaders Association, and the United States Chamber of Commerce.

Supporters of the initiative say they hope it will be backed by global leaders at September’s G20 meeting in Pittsburgh, US.

ICTSD reporting; “Remove environmental goods talks from Doha-US groups,” REUTERS, 4 August 2009; “US industries press for ‘green’ trade accord,” CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR, 5 August 2009.

EU Seal Ban Approved, Canada Mulls Next Move

EU foreign ministers agreed to ban the import of seal products at a meeting on 27 July, amid pressure from domestic constituents. The ban has been hailed as a victory for animal rights groups but has drawn strong criticism from Canada, which says the embargo violates international trade rules. Canada’s annual seal hunt is the largest in the world and is an integral part of some coastal Canadian economies, generating some US\$2.4 million per year.

The ban would apply to all goods that contain seal products, such as fur, meat, and omega-3 diet supplements made from seal oil. However, the regulation contains an exemption for seal products produced from the traditional hunts of Inuit communities in Alaska, Canada, Greenland, and Russia. The ban does not prohibit shipment of seal products through EU member countries.

No countries voted against the proposal in Monday’s meeting, although Denmark, Romania and Austria abstained. Austria said that it wants to see even tougher regulations on seal products. The EU parliament voted 550-49 to pass the ban in May (see Bridges Weekly, 20 May 2009, <http://ictsd.net/i/news/bridgesweekly/46965/>).

The announcement of the vote drew a quick reaction from Ottawa, saying that the ban is unwarranted and plans to raise the issue with the WTO’s Dispute Settlement Body (DSB). By requesting consultations at the DSB, Canada will initiate bilateral consultations on the matter. If those talks fail to produce a resolution after 60 days, Ottawa will have the right to launch an official appeal, asking the international trade court to rule on the issue.

On the eve of the EU vote, Canada’s trade minister, Stockwell Day, and fisheries and oceans minister, Gail Shea, urged EU ministers to reject the ban. “Canada’s seal hunt is lawful, sustainable, and humane, and the Government of Canada has worked hard to defend Canada’s position internationally over the last few years,” they said in the statement issued on Sunday.

"Canada has clearly lived up to its obligations, and our position remains that any ban on a humanely conducted hunt such as Canada's is completely without cause," they added.

Day and Shea accused the EU of pandering to special interest groups. Lobbyists make emotional appeals by incorrectly portraying white coat seal pups as the targets of the hunt, Shea explained, but these animals have not been hunted in Canada for two decades.

Day said it is therefore "inappropriate" for a trade decision such as this to not be scientifically based. "We want it made very clear that there should be a clause which reflects any country that is following the humanitarian, scientific and environmental guidelines established by the EU themselves, should in fact be exempted from this particular ban."

Still, the EU says public concern over the hunt could not be ignored. "The legislation was proposed because we had received tens of thousands of letters from concerned European citizens about the way the seals were killed," EU spokeswoman Barbara Helfferich told Canada's CBC News. "We have always argued that the killing methods must be humane."

Several animal rights groups say they are pleased with the result. "There is a wonderful sense of accomplishment today after years of hard work," said Lesley O'Donnell, Director of the International Fund for Animal Welfare's EU office. "We expect commercial sealing to continue its inevitable decline until it is wiped out once and for all."

ICTSD reporting; "Canada to launch protest against seal product ban," CTV, 27 July 2009; "Seal product ban approved by EU," CBC NEWS, 27 July 2009.

Canada Drops WTO Complaint over EU Biotech Restrictions

Canada and the European Union have recently settled an ongoing trade dispute regarding Brussels' restrictions on imports of genetically

modified (GM) products. In exchange for Canada dropping its complaint at the WTO Dispute Settlement Body (DSB), the EU has agreed to meet two times per year with Canadian authorities to discuss issues relevant to trade in genetically modified organisms (GMOs). The two parties will notify this settlement to the international trade court as a mutually agreed solution.

"The European Community has committed to an ongoing dialogue with Canada on biotechnology that will continue to help improve market access," Canadian international trade minister Stockwell Day said in a statement. The result is "positive news for Canadian producers," he added.

Canada, along with the US and Argentina, filed separate complaints with the DSB in May 2003 challenging the EU's GM import restrictions (see Bridges Trade BioRes 15 May 2003 <http://ictsd.net/i/news/biores/8830/> and Bridges Trade BioRes 21 Mar 2002 (<http://ictsd.net/i/news/biores/8716/>).

In November 2006, the DSB ruled that the EU's methods of approving GM imports from 1984 to 2004 were in violation of the WTO's Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures. Part of the grounds for the WTO decision involved the EU's 'suspension of approval' (in effect, a de facto ban) of GM imports from June 1999 to August 2003 (see Bridges Trade BioRes 7 Mar 2002 <http://ictsd.net/i/news/biores/9168/>).

Following the ruling, the parties agreed to hold technical discussions on biotech-related issues, and they also agreed to a 12-month Reasonable Period of Time (RPT) for implementation of the talks. The initial deadline was set for November 2007, but Canada agreed to extend its RPT twice, first until January 2008, and then until 31 July 2009.

The Canadian complaint focused on canola, as this product had been previously banned by the EU on GMO grounds. The canola issue was resolved in March of this year when Brussels approved the last GM canola seed used by Canadian farmers, according to Trish Jordan, a spokeswoman for Monsanto Canada. Since then, Ottawa has consulted seed producers and farmers regarding the future of the trade complaint.

"All issues for Canadian biotech farmers have essentially been approved," Jordan told The New York Times. "That should allow the marketing of Canadian canola to Europe."

Canada and other countries have been lobbying the EU to accept genetically modified food since 1998, but the EU Trade Commission still faces resistance from some of its member states. Surveys also show European consumers are opposed to GMOs due to fears of health risks and the development of herbicide-resistant 'superweeds'.

Although Brussels has remained firm on its broader GM restrictions, its agreement with Ottawa may suggest that it is prepared to consider GMO products on a case-by-case basis, such as in the case of the July 2004 approval of imports of modified corn by Monsanto (see Bridges Weekly 10 November 2004 <http://ictsd.net/i/ip/39594/>). The settlement with Canada does not require the EU to modify its policies, but rather to be open to an exchange of information aimed at avoiding barriers to trade.

"The mutually agreed solution with Canada is a clear sign that this type of dialogue works," EU Trade Commissioner Catherine Ashton told Bloomberg. "I hope we can follow the same constructive approach with Argentina and the United States."

The EU's discussions with the US and Argentina are ongoing.

ICTSD reporting; "Canada Settles a Crop Trade Complaint Against Europe," NEW YORK TIMES, 15 July 2009; "EU and Canada settle WTO case on Genetically Modified Organisms," EUROPA, 15 July 2009; "EU, Canada Settle WTO Case on Gene-Modified Products (Update2)" BLOOMBERG, 15 July 2009; "EU drops ban on Canadian genetically modified canola," NATIONAL POST, 15 July 2009.

EVENTS AND RESOURCES

Events

Coming up in the next two weeks (7-21 August)

10-12 August, New Delhi, India. THIRD RENEWABLE ENERGY INDIA 2009 EXPO. A melting pot for global technologies, this expo will provide an opportunity for domestic industry and global entrepreneurs to witness the latest trends in renewable technologies and cultivate business opportunities within the Indian market. For more information, contact Rajneesh Khattar: email: rajneeshk@eigroup.in; tel: +91 11 4279 5054; fax: +91 11 4279 5098/99; internet: <http://www.renewableenergyindiaexpo.com/index09.html>

16-22 August, Stockholm, Sweden. WORLD WATER WEEK. With a special focus on trans-boundary waters, this conference, organised and directed by the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI), offers a unique forum for the exchange of views and experiences between scientific, business, policy and civic sectors from around the globe. Aiming to transcend rhetoric and provide real answers to the world's water-related problems, the event will focus on potential and necessary responses in water policy, management and development to address the impact of global changes 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>

16-19 August, Stellenbosch, South Africa. GLOBAL SOUTH CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION. This conference will promote inclusive economic development and ethical trade at a grassroots level by providing opportunities to exchange ideas and best practices among small producers, traders, wholesalers, retailers, NGOs and more. To help meet the Millennium Development Goals through sustainable development, this year's theme, "beat the drum for inclusive economic development," will encourage networking and business opportunities

while also highlighting successful development examples from across the world. For more information, contact the Global South 2010 Secretariat: tel: +27 21 683 2934; fax: +27 21 683 0816; internet: <http://www.globalsouth.co.za/index.php>

Other upcoming events

16-18 September, Stockholm, Sweden. WORLD BIOENERGY - CLEAN VEHICLES & FUELS 2009. Held in association with the Swedish EU Presidency, this conference offers an integrated programme of conference sessions, excursions and networking opportunities that will focus on the practical implementation of bioenergy and sustainable transport systems. Conference sessions will cover a wide-range of topics from the socio-economic drivers in implementing bioenergy projects to establishing a sustainable market for clean vehicles and fuels. Participants will be able to build knowledge and networks based on experiences and perspectives from academia, politicians and industry specialists. For more information, contact the organisers: email: confirmation-sweden@mci-group.com; internet: <http://www.elmia.se/en/wbcvf/>

18 September, Paris, France. OECD CONFERENCE ON THE ECONOMICS OF CLIMATE CHANGE. This OECD-sponsored event will bring together high level experts, government decision-makers and representatives from civil society to discuss how climate change mitigation and adaptation can best be tackled in an economically efficient manner. Drawing on OECD experience in examining the economics of climate change, this conference will help increase the capacity of countries to identify and implement cost-efficient policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, guidance on integrating adaptation to climate change into all relevant policy areas will be provided. For more information, contact Irene Sinha: email: Irene.SINHA@oecd.org; internet: http://www.oecd.org/document/41/0,3343,en_2649_34361_43298281_1_1_1_1,00.html

22-23 September, Geneva, Switzerland. DECRG WORKSHOP: CLIMATE CHANGE AND AGRICULTURAL TRADE: RISKS AND RESPONSES. With a focus on standards and

regulatory systems relating to animal, plant, and human safety, this joint World Bank - WTO event will highlight the effects of climate change on agricultural sustainability and safety, and agricultural trade trends between developed and developing countries. The first day of the two-day event will explore the general effects of climate change on agriculture sustainability and the associated impacts on global trade flows and poverty. The second day will take a more technical approach to analyzing the specific sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) risks associated with climate change in the developing world. For more information, contact Benjamin Taylor: email: btaylor1@worldbank.org; internet: <http://go.worldbank.org/FO8HG80K10>

23-25 September, Lisbon, Portugal. TENTH ANNUAL GLOBAL CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENTAL TAXATION. Hosted by the Institute of International and Strategic Studies, this conference will focus on 'Water Management and Climate Change,' a cross-cutting issue on the agenda of every level of government that requires input from all stakeholders. Within this theme, the event will offer sessions in the following areas: water, energy, transports, policies and instruments' coordination, international environmental justice, competitiveness issues, capacity building issues, and governance issues. The event, which will include a political track along with several scientific tracks, is open to all who are interested. For further information, contact Claudia Dias Soares: email: casoares@porto.ucp.pt; internet: <http://GCET2009.com/>

7-9 October, León, Mexico. GLOBAL RENEWABLE ENERGY FORUM 2009: SCALING UP RENEWABLE ENERGY. Co-organised by the Ministry of Energy of Mexico and the UN Industrial Development Organization, this event will promote and strengthen interregional cooperation and encourage innovative multi-stakeholder partnerships aimed at scaling up investments in renewable energy. With over 1000 officials, planners, and energy experts from all world regions expected to be in attendance, the forum will enable multi-stakeholder dialogs, encourage partnerships, and facilitate the development of innovative frameworks aimed at supporting initiatives related to clean energy. For more

information, contact the organisers: email: GREFmexico2009@unido.org; internet: <http://www.unido.org/index.php?id=7341>

8-13 October, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. SEVENTH WORLD FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. This annual meeting of policy makers and leaders from the business, political, educational and academic spheres is a forum for dialogue integrating diverse points of view on globalisation, ecology and sustainable development. Guided by the major themes of climate change, mobility and sustainable development, the aim of the event is to seize the new opportunities of development brought about by climate change and use the Forum as a springboard towards an economic upturn and a review of development policies in Africa. Registration for this event is required. For more information, visit: <http://www.fmdd.fr/>

22-23 October, New Delhi, India. HIGH-LEVEL CONFERENCE ON CLIMATE CHANGE: TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSFER. This high-level conference, jointly organised by the Government of India and the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), will bring together governments, experts, industry representatives, and civil society to help formulate a roadmap for technology in the context of climate change mitigation and adaptation. The event seeks to support the UNFCCC process by advancing understanding on key actions needed to accelerate technology development and transfer in all countries in accordance with their national needs. For more information, contact organisers: e-mail: DelhiConference@un.org; fax: +1 212-963-1267/9883; internet: http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/dsd_aofw_cc/cc_cofnf1009.shtml

Resources

THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF SOYBEAN EXPANSION AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT IN BRAZIL'S AMAZON BASIN. Maria del Carmen Vera-Diaz, Robert K. Kaufmann, and Daniel C. Nepstad. The Global Development and

Environment Institute, Tufts University. June 2009. This working paper highlights the environmental costs of agricultural expansion in the Amazon, and the particular need to include environmental losses in feasibility studies for infrastructure projects. The improvement of road conditions in the Brazilian Amazon has long been a strategic focus for the Brazilian government and, as the paper underscores, a main contributing factor to increased rates of Amazonian deforestation. The resulting decrease in transportation costs has allowed soybean cultivation to become more cost competitive with foreign competitors, fuelling the expansion of this lucrative market, which is now the main deforestation pressure in the Amazon. The results also indicate that the reduction in transportation costs from paving the Cuiabá-Santarém road has increased the area where soybean cultivation is economically feasible – an area that is largely covered by forests. In reviewing the Cost-Benefit analysis of the Cuiabá-Santarém road project, the study found that when environmental impacts, such as the destruction of ecological services and products provided by the existing forests, were included, the investment generated a net loss of between \$762 million and \$1.9 billion. Given the initial analysis indicated a net benefit of \$180 million, the results of the paper demonstrate the importance of including the value of natural capital in the feasibility studies of infrastructure projects. To access this paper, visit <http://www.ase.tufts.edu/gdae/Pubs/wp/09-05TransportAmazon.pdf>.

TRAINING RESOURCE MANUAL – THE USE OF ECONOMIC INSTRUMENTS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT. United Nations Environment Programme. First Edition 2009. Responding to a need articulated by member countries through the UN Governing Council for assistance in the effective use of economic instruments at the national level, this recent publication from UNEP provides step-by-step guidance to assist trainers of policymakers and practitioners in the use of economic instruments for environment and natural resources management. Specifically, the manual is designed to assist trainers in identifying needs and priorities, designing training to meet these needs, conducting training to develop the skills of key players, and

encouraging information exchange among policymakers and practitioners. Offering substantial flexibility to trainers, the manual can be used to create a range of courses from short introductory overviews to intensive programmes for practitioners that can be aligned to local priorities. As the pressure on natural resources continues to increase and as countries face ongoing budget constraints and tradeoffs, the strategic application of economic instruments – such as pollution taxes, user fees, and other incentives to improve environmental quality – can compliment traditional command, and control regulation helping to promote sustainable development. To access this report, visit <http://www.unep.ch/etb/publications/EI%20manual%202009/Training%20Resource%20Manual.pdf>.