



Bridges Trade BioRes

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

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CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate Talks Drift Slowly from Barcelona to Copenhagen

Another round of climate change negotiations concluded on Friday, 6 November, with minimal advances. The week-long meeting in Barcelona, Spain marked the last of a three-week session begun in Bangkok, Thailand in October. The Barcelona meetings were also the final round of negotiations prior to the UN climate convention's Conference of the Parties (COP), which will take place in Copenhagen, Denmark from 7-18 December.

With the COP drawing near, negotiators were tasked with trimming down long texts and making some headway on issues that would lay the foundations for smoother negotiations in Copenhagen. But less than a week before the Barcelona meeting kicked off, the Danish Prime Minister declared that he did “not think it will be possible” for a legally binding regime to be negotiated in Copenhagen. Thus, with expectations lowered, the Barcelona meeting left port with barely any wind in its sails (see Bridges Trade BioRes, 30 October 2009, <http://ictsd.org/i/news/biores/58320/>).

The objective of the meeting was to continue refining draft texts in two negotiating groups: one that focuses on the Kyoto Protocol, and another that looks at other means of achieving long-term cooperative action (LCA) to address climate change.

Both the Kyoto Protocol and LCA negotiating groups attempted to close gaps on many divisive issues by reducing options, removing brackets, and seeking clarity on details. But little progress was made in the week-long talks, and the lack of movement on many topics cast a haze over what may lay on the horizon for the climate

negotiations. Perhaps more importantly, many negotiators left Barcelona with a sense that, although climate change is a global problem, the nations of the world are not all in this boat together.

Africa Group walks out

One of the most contentious issues – which triggered the Africa Group to walk out and effectively shut down the Kyoto Protocol (KP) negotiations for a day and a half – was the debate over how much rich ‘Annex I’ countries should be required to reduce their emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs). The Africa Group, which counts more than 50 countries as members, refused to continue discussions on any issue under the KP until the rich country commitments were firmed up. Developing countries repeatedly stressed that the pledges made thus far by Annex I parties would not go far enough to achieve the scientifically established emissions levels that would be required to stabilise the climate.

Developing countries are pushing for rich nations to cut their emissions to at least 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2020, while developed countries are offering cuts between 15 percent and at the highest 30 percent. China and the members of the G77 coalition of developing nations supported the African position and pressed the chair of the meeting, John Ashe of Antigua and Barbuda, to push developed countries for stronger targets. The Africa Group rejoined the talks after Ashe promised to devote 60 percent of the remaining time to the discussion on numbers.

The numbers issue is closely tied to the question of whether the Kyoto Protocol should survive beyond its first commitment period, which will expire at the end of 2012. Many developed countries have argued that the Protocol should be retired after its first period runs out. But developing countries fervently stress that the Protocol should be kept alive for further commitment periods. The argument for the latter is, principally, that the Protocol, despite its shortcomings, is all there is to assure emissions reductions from a large number of the world’s major emitters. But some developed countries maintain that the Protocol does not go far enough, since the US and major emerging

economies like China and India are not bound by it.

The EU seems to have gotten the message from developing countries. In the closing plenary, the EU emphasised that it “stands firmly behind the Protocol and its implementation.” In a press conference at the end of the week, a representative from the European Commission said that Brussels is hearing the developing countries and understands that without a Kyoto Protocol, there will be no Copenhagen agreement.

Indeed, the possibility that no legally binding agreement will be struck at the December meeting seems increasingly likely. But some observers suggest that there could be an alternative outcome. This might take the form of a series of COP decisions, some say, while others suggest that the Copenhagen meeting could close with the announcement of a broad political declaration that would leave many details to be decided in subsequent negotiations. The latter would require a new mandate for continued negotiations, which could lead to a legally binding decision at a future date.

Keeping tabs on trade & competitiveness

A number of trade and competitiveness-related questions arose at the Barcelona meeting, but overall these issues saw little movement.

The ‘shared vision’ portion of the text underwent some odd metamorphoses. From the multi-page document, a short page-and-a-half long summary of key areas, looking suspiciously like a broad political declaration, was circulated among parties. After significant debate, the week ended with parties compiling this paper and the previous non-paper into one new non-paper. Notably, the section on trade measures such as ‘border carbon taxes’ (see related story, this issue) was included in the final document. In broad brush strokes, developed countries stressed that the shared vision should be concise, yet inclusive, and encompass actions by all countries, while developing countries stressed that it should be comprehensive and aim at the implementation of the UN climate convention.

Discussion on cooperative sectoral approaches and sector-specific actions evolved slightly. Many parties expressed their concern that these topics might raise questions related to international trade and warned of potential risks. Two topics are under discussion on this front: bunker fuels and agriculture. On bunker fuels - dirty fuels used in air and marine shipping - the debate focused principally on whether the topic should be limited to the Kyoto Protocol negotiations and whether the proper forum for decision-making should remain the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). On agriculture, developing countries opposed the setting of global standards while stressing the need to include consideration of food security in the text (see related story, this issue).

Financing discussions addressed institutional arrangements and where funding should come from. On the latter question, the greatest attention was given to the role of public versus private finance and whether developing countries (except least developed countries) will also be asked to contribute. The role that a cap-and-trade carbon market could play in generating funds was also considered, as were various proposals on 'innovative sources' of funding. Discussion will continue on all of the above in Copenhagen.

Discussions on technology development and transfer continued to refine options for institutionalisation, leveraging, cooperation, financing, information-sharing, capacity-building, and addressing barriers. But overall, the talks resulted in little change to the text.

Despite some 'thinning' of the text at the Barcelona meeting, there were no surprises or breakthroughs on the two tide-turning issues in the talks: mitigation levels and financing. Whether agreement can be reached on such pernicious areas of disagreement may ultimately hinge on political manoeuvrings at the highest levels. So far, many world leaders have not taken a strong stance on the climate talks, at least in public. But perhaps the next four weeks will bring a change in the winds.

ICTSD reporting.

ENVIRONMENT AT THE WTO

Canada, Norway Launch WTO Complaint over EU Seal Ban

Canada and Norway have formally requested WTO consultations with the EU over Brussels' controversial ban on imports of seal products, which is scheduled come into force in August 2010. The move by the two prominent sealing nations came following the 2 November publication of the seal ban in the Official Journal of the European Union – the EU's last legislative phase.

The EU ban has triggered much debate over the appropriate grounds for barring imports of a given product. Once implemented, the ban will block trade in seal products from commercial sealing operations – such as those in Canada and Norway – which they say is “inherently cruel” and “inhumane.” But both countries have insisted that that this is not the case and that the EU has formulated policy based on inaccurate information supplied by the anti-sealing lobby.

Canada has long argued that the perception of the hunt is not based on proven scientific data – a key requirement for such a ban under WTO rules. “The Canadian seal hunt is a legitimate economic pursuit, and the EU's decision to ban the importation of seal products is based neither on science nor on facts,” Stockwell Day, Canada's Trade Minister, said in a 2 November statement. “We believe that this is a violation of the EU's trade obligations.”

Role of lobby groups questioned

Canada has accused the EU of bowing to pressure from interest groups that they say are using misleading information to close the industry. “Our government will continue to counter the misinformation campaign by the anti-seal hunt lobby groups, and we will continue to defend the interests and livelihoods of Canadian sealers,” said Gail Shea, Canada's Minister of Fisheries and Oceans.

But critics of the Canadian sealing industry say it is the Canadian government that is being pressured by lobby groups to help buoy an “insignificant” industry. “Canadian politicians seem to have no problem spending \$10 million in tax payer dollars in a desperate attempt to save a dying \$1 million industry,” said Sheryl Fink, Senior Researcher with International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), a US-based anti-sealing organisation.

Exact numbers on the size and profitability of the commercial seal hunt have been a point of contention between the sealing industry and its critics.

IFAW says the majority of Canadians disapprove of the government’s move to challenge the EU ban at the WTO. The group also says that even if Canada is successful in its bid to overturn the ban, two-thirds of Canadians believe the commercial seal hunt has no future.

Indigenous exemption not enough for Inuit

The EU ban provides an exemption for seal products harvested by indigenous peoples, but only if the products are traded “as part of a non-commercial exchanges between Inuit communities for cultural, educational or ceremonial purposes.”

Chuck Strahl, Canada’s Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, argued that the exemption fails to address the concerns of Canada’s indigenous communities. “Inuit groups have told us that this will do nothing to protect their access to European markets, and past experiences with such exemptions have shown us that they are not effective,” Strahl said.

The request for consultations is linked to an existing dispute launched by Canada over national bans in Belgium and the Netherlands on seal products (see Bridges Trade BioRes, 5 October 2007, <http://ictsd.net/i/news/biores/9132/>). The issue over the national bans has not yet been resolved, but Canada says it hopes all issues related to seal bans in Europe will be resolved through the new consultations.

Norway follows suit

Three days after Canada’s 2 November move, Norway also requested consultations at the WTO on the grounds that the ban violates trade rules.

“In our view, the EU decision is contrary to WTO rules on a number of key points,” said Jonas Gahr Støre, Norway’s Foreign Minister. “We will not let this go uncontested. We have therefore requested formal WTO dispute settlement consultations.”

The non-EU Scandinavian country says the sealing industry is a sustainable and carefully regulated part of Norway’s wildlife management policy and proposed that the EU work together with seal-hunting countries to ensure that proper harvesting methods are used.

Canada is the largest seal product producer in the world. One third of its seal products go to the EU market. The quota for Canada’s seal harvest in 2009 was set at 280,000 while Norway’s was 47,000.

By requesting consultations at the WTO’s Dispute Settlement Body, the two countries have initiated bilateral consultations on the matter. If talks fail to produce a resolution after 60 days, Ottawa and Oslo will have the right to launch an official appeal, asking the international trade court to rule on the issue.

ICTSD Reporting; “Canada Takes WTO Action Vs EU’s Seal Pds Ban,” THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, 2 November 2009; “Canada Files WTO Complaint Over EU Seal Product Ban,” BLOOMBERG, 2 November 2009, “Norway makes WTO complaint against EU seal product ban,” AFP, 5 November 2009.

SPECIAL SECTION: COPENHAGEN COUNTDOWN

In the lead-up to the UNFCCC's 15th Conference of the Parties, each issue of Bridges Trade BioRes will feature background and analysis on key issues facing negotiators as they prepare for December's meeting in Copenhagen. The following two articles focus on the role of agriculture in the climate change puzzle and the ongoing debate over the use of unilateral trade measures in the name of climate protection, respectively.

Agriculture and Climate Change

Current negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) are working towards a new agreement that will serve to enhance the implementation of the Convention. The Convention, together with its Kyoto Protocol, include commitments that address climate mitigation and adaptation globally, but implementation has historically been weak. Recent scientific evidence and public pressure are pushing countries to ratchet up their efforts in order to avoid the disastrous consequences that, according to the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and other sources, will ensue if atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases exceed amounts that would trigger a temperature rise above 2 °C.

The new agreement intends to more meaningfully include the US - which is a signatory to the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol (but never ratified the latter) - and developing countries - which have no fixed mitigation commitments under the Convention or its Protocol. One area under negotiation in the context of discussions on mitigation is that of "cooperative sectoral approaches and sector-specific actions." Agriculture has received pointed attention in these talks.

Two options posed in the current draft text

Agriculture accounts for 14 percent of global GHG emissions. The economic, social, and environmental impacts of climate change on the agriculture sector will be significant, varied, and complex. In a few cases, these impacts could be positive, but in most - as a result of increased

floods, droughts, and even the expansion of biofuel production - global food security could be considerably threatened.

Countries are currently working on a draft text that is broken down into sections, which are being negotiated by sub-groups on the topics signalled within the Bali Action Plan - a decision that initiated the new negotiations and outlined the areas that the new agreement would include. The cooperative sectoral approaches sub-group text, which is currently riddled with brackets and alternative paragraphs, contains a specific section on the agricultural sector.

In the negotiations, the issue unifies interests across developed and developing country lines, but also heightens sensitivities about potential trade impacts. A short paragraph in the draft text stresses the importance of development priorities but also emphasises the need to ensure activities in the sector do not "result in barriers to or distortion of the international trade system of goods and products of the agricultural sector" - a clear reference to potential sectoral targets, carbon labelling, carbon 'footprinting', border tax measures, or other national approaches that could impact global trade competitiveness.

The text poses two alternatives. The first option instructs Parties to make efforts to enhance mitigation in the agriculture sector. The second instructs them to promote and cooperate in the research, development, application, and diffusion of technologies, practices and processes, as a means to enhance sector-specific mitigation. In other words, whereas in the first option sector-specific mitigation efforts would be a binding obligation that could be achieved through various means, including through promotion and cooperation, in the second option mitigation in the agricultural sector is an outcome that could result from such promotion and cooperation.

Food security overlooked?

A significant omission from both options appears to be an explicit reference to the importance of food security.

The first option contains an important reference to the efficiency and productivity of agricultural

production systems - widely seen as critical to addressing global food security over the long term in a sustainable manner, especially in developing countries. It also contains a number of references - albeit bracketed - to considerations that could be important to developing countries, such as the need not to harm the interests of small and marginal farmers; the need to take into account traditional knowledge and processes; the need to acknowledge linkages between mitigation and adaptation; the need for agricultural production systems to be improved in a sustainable manner; and the need to promote and cooperate on technologies, practices, processes and methodologies. As all of these elements are bracketed, it remains unclear which, if any, might remain in an eventual compromise text.

The second option places a cooperative approach at the heart of mitigation strategies. It explicitly specifies that measures taken should not result in barriers to, or distortion of, the international agricultural trading system. It also calls on the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) to develop a mitigation work programme, and invites Parties to submit their views on this. Given the evident need for further analysis and rapid progress on agricultural climate change issues, this would appear to be a welcome inclusion.

Another bracketed clause specifies that sectoral approaches shall not lead to carbon offsets or initiatives that adversely impact forestland; while the goal here appears to be to ensure a focus on international sectoral cooperation, rather than an uncoordinated focus on national emissions targets, some observers say that it may be helpful to rephrase the drafted text to clarify this. Other say that the text could also be revised to cover carbon sinks more generally, in addition to forestland.

Countries may further refine this text during a negotiating session taking place this week in Barcelona, Spain (see related story, this issue). The Barcelona meeting is the final negotiating session prior to the Copenhagen Conference of the Parties this December.

ICTSD reporting.

Border Carbon Adjustment

Should countries be allowed to apply a penalty – in the form of a tariff or an obligation to purchase carbon credits - on imports from other countries that use less stringent emissions practices?

Opinions vary widely on this question, both within and outside the countries intending to apply such measures. But opinions are especially split within the global climate change negotiations, in which 192 nations are striving to find consensus on an international deal that is both effective and equitable. With four weeks left until the Copenhagen meeting, and a draft text that is evolving at a snail's pace, this issue promises to be particularly contentious in the final stretch.

Known variably as border carbon adjustments (BCAs), border tax adjustments (BTAs), or border tax measures, (BTMs), it all boils down to the same thing: unilateral measures that a state imposes when a good is imported from an industry or firm in a country that has not 'comparably offset' the greenhouse gas emissions associated with the good's production. The BCA could be a flat tariff, a tax, or a requirement for the importer to purchase carbon credits that would compensate the country with more stringent regulations for the loss of competitiveness that it incurs because of its emissions standards.

Advocates of BCAs claim that the measures are intended to address three factors. First, competitiveness concerns where some industries in developed countries consider that a BCA will protect their global competitiveness vis-a-vis industries in countries that do not apply the same requirements. The second argument for BCAs is 'carbon leakage' - the notion that emissions might move to countries where rules are less stringent. A third argument, of the highest political relevance, has to do with 'leveraging' the participation of developing countries in binding mitigation schemes or to adopt comparable measures to offset emissions by their own industries.

Indeed, from a political perspective, both experts and politicians argue that it may be impossible for

some countries, notably the US, to take strong climate action in the absence of BCAs.

BCAs could, in theory, be applicable to any importing country. In practice, however, they would initially be directed at developing countries, and would be primarily aimed at exports of those industries that exceed a certain threshold of global emissions, or that account for more than a certain percentage of the BCA-imposing country's imports of the good in question.

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) differentiates between the global responsibilities of developed and developing countries regarding mitigation. Currently, the Kyoto Protocol only binds developed countries to emissions reduction targets. A future global agreement will also most likely differentiate between developed and developing countries on the basis of their "common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities," as laid out in the UNFCCC, taking into consideration the historic responsibility of developed countries whose industrial development precipitated the current climate crisis.

Developing countries oppose the measures

Proponents also argue that BCAs would motivate developing countries to increase their mitigation action. However, from a developing country perspective, at least three arguments run counter to that idea: 1) that the use of BCAs is a *prima facie* violation of the spirit and letter of multilateral trade principles and norms that require equal treatment among equal goods; 2) that BCAs are a disguised form of protectionism; and 3) that BCAs undermine in practice the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

The issue has sparked heated discussions in the context of the global climate negotiations and will likely be a point of contention through negotiations at the Conference of the Parties (COP) in Copenhagen this December. The issue arises in two sections of the current draft negotiation text for a new climate deal. At a negotiating session in June, India and China, supported by dozens of developing countries, introduced language in two areas of the draft text

to prevent the use of such measures. The current text reads as follows:

"Developed country Parties shall not resort to any form of unilateral measures including countervailing border measures, against goods and services imported from developing countries on grounds of protection and stabilization of the climate. Such unilateral measures would violate the principles and provisions of the Convention, including, in particular, those related to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities (Article 3, Paragraph 1); trade and climate change (Article 3 paragraph 5); and the relationship between mitigation actions of developing countries and provision of financial resources and technology by developed country Parties (Article 4, Paragraphs 3 and 7)."

The BCA paragraph has received most discussion under the informal group on 'economic and social consequences of response measures' - one of six mitigation sub-categories under the Bali Action Plan. This sub-section is intended to consider and include provisions that would abate the impacts arising from actions taken by countries to mitigate climate change. The BCA paragraph was also introduced into the draft section on 'a shared vision,' which is the introductory section of the draft text. This section contains principles and goals for the new agreement and reflects the tone and approach of the entire text. Since initial discussions at the introduction of the paragraphs, they have not been altered or received substantial further discussion, thus leaving their consideration to Copenhagen.

BCAs in US climate legislation

Language on BCAs - both in favour and opposed - appeared in the global climate negotiating text shortly after the US House of Representatives approved draft climate legislation in June (see Bridges Trade BioRes, 26 June 2009, <http://ictsd.org/i/news/biores/49571/>). Despite some internal controversy, the issue has survived into the Senate version of the proposed legislation, known colloquially as the Boxer-Kerry Bill, where it is currently under consideration. If passed in the Senate and approved by the president, the bill will become law and the details on institutions and implementation of the BCAs

will be hammered out in an internal Senate Committee.

Despite some uncertainty as to whether the US legislation will successfully run its course, the bill now on the table has significant bipartisan backing. In a recent New York Times op-ed by Democratic Senator John Kerry and Republican Senator Lindsey Graham, the two lawmakers expressed their confidence that the legislation will pass. Notably, the senators also said that the climate legislation will have to include a BCA provision if it is to win lawmakers' approval.¹

"We cannot sacrifice another job to competitors overseas," the senators wrote. "China and India are among the many countries investing heavily in clean-energy technologies that will produce millions of jobs. There is no reason we should surrender our marketplace to countries that do not accept environmental standards. For this reason, we should consider a border tax on items produced in countries that avoid these standards. This is consistent with our obligations under the World Trade Organization and creates strong incentives for other countries to adopt tough environmental protections."

But US President Barack Obama has on numerous occasions criticised the use of BCA. "At a time when the economy worldwide is still deep in recession and we've seen a significant drop in global trade, I think we have to be very careful about sending any protectionist signals out there," Obama said in Washington in June. He has also noted that the draft legislation already included various other kinds of transitional assistance for energy-intensive industries even before the border tax adjustment provisions were reinserted, and he has underlined the importance of maintaining a level playing field internationally.

In Europe, France's President Nicolas Sarkozy has been promoting BCAs since France crafted its own draft legislation last September. Yet, despite

strong criticism from European Union's Environment Commissioner, Stavros Dimas, members of the French delegation at the climate meetings claim the country is currently working to extend the legislation to the entire European Union with some success. A number of EU member states have reportedly indicated that they would look on such an option favourably.

Apart from being a controversial issue for political reasons, analysts have long expressed doubts both regarding the efficacy of such measures with regards to leakage concerns and their compatibility with WTO-rules. Moreover, the administrative exercise that would be necessary in order to calculate carbon contents is considered to be near to insurmountable. On top of this are the political costs: trying to impose environmental considerations on countries through tariffs risk creating bad will in the negotiations on climate change, in the trade negotiations of the DDA and in the multilateral trading system. As stated by China's Minister Cheng in response to the language approved in June in the House, it will likely trigger retaliatory action, in the worst case leading to a trade war. Costs could be considerable both in terms of economics and environment

The issue of BCAs will likely remain on the table until late in the negotiations in Copenhagen. Yet the clear conflict with US forthcoming legislation casts a shadow of doubt over whether it will appear, as formulated, in the final agreement. Considering the complexity and political sensitivity of the issue, there may be need to craft some place-holding language for Copenhagen and continue negotiations on the topic into the future - a fate that is likely to be shared by many issues that cannot be readily solved in Denmark this December.

ICTSD reporting.

¹ "It is the sense of the Senate that this Act will contain a trade title that will include a border measure that is consistent with our international obligations and designed to work in conjunction with provisions that allocate allowances to energy-intensive and trade-exposed industries." Clean Energy Jobs and American Power Act, Draft introduced by Senators John Kerry and Barbara Boxer, September 20, 2009, Sec. 756. International Trade.

IN BRIEF

Kerala Fishing Industry Opposes Trade Deal

A coalition of fishing unions in the Indian state of Kerala says the recently signed Indian-ASEAN trade pact will severely impact local fisheries. The Kerala Fisheries Coordination Committee (KFCC) argues that the livelihood of some one million fishermen will be threatened by cheap imports when India's Trade in Goods Agreement with the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations takes effect on 1 January 2010.

The Indian government has responded to the charges by assuring industry representatives that certain fish products are on a list of sensitive products and, as such, will not be negatively affected. But the coalition has insisted that even marginal reductions on tariffs on sensitive products will cause prices to plummet.

The trade pact, signed in August of this year (see Bridges Weekly, 9 September 2009, <http://ictsd.org/i/news/bridgesweekly/54709/>), envisages total elimination of tariffs on a reciprocal basis and would come into effect at the beginning of next year. Tariffs will initially be slashed by 80 percent, followed by the elimination of tariffs on some 3,200 products by December 2013 and tariffs on a remaining 800 products will be brought down to zero or near zero levels by December 2016.

The agreement will allow the use of safeguards for sensitive domestic goods for up to four years if liberalisation hurts domestic industry. The current list of sensitive products includes 489 items from the agricultural, textile, auto, and chemical sectors.

But critics of the agreement say the measures do not offer enough protection. "Despite the inclusion of some fish varieties in the negative list, availability of similar fish varieties in ASEAN nations would lead to Kerala becoming a dumping ground for surplus from ASEAN countries," said V.V. Saseendran, a spokesman for the KFCC.

Saseendran said the agreement will allow over 177 species of fish to be imported under zero or reduced tariffs into Kerala.

ASEAN is one of New Delhi's most important trading partners, accounting for 10 percent of India's global trade, according Indian officials.

ICTSD Reporting; "Kerala fishermen protest India-Asean free trade pact," FINANCIAL EXPRESS, 11 November 2009.

CBD Meetings Tackle TK, ABS

Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) made progress on issues related to traditional knowledge (TK) and Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) during two ad-hoc open ended working group meetings being held in Montreal, Canada.

The first meeting, held from 2-6 November, saw some 300 participants consisting of state delegations, indigenous and local community leaders, and international organisations discuss Article 8(j) and related provisions of the CBD. Article 8(j) covers efforts to protect biodiversity to preserve and maintain knowledge, innovations, and practices in indigenous and other "local" communities. The section also addresses the promotion of such knowledge for wider application with the involvement of the innovators and the encouragement of equitable sharing of benefits.

Members of the Article 8(j) working group agreed to accept recommendations on mechanisms to promote the participation of indigenous and local communities in the maintenance of traditional knowledge on biological diversity. Participants also developed a system for the protection of traditional knowledge, innovation, and practices, as well as established elements for an ethical code of conduct to ensure respect for cultural and intellectual heritage of these communities. The recommendations will be presented at the 10th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD, set to take place from 18-29 October 2010, in Nagoya, Japan.

Balakrishna Pisupati of the UN Environment Programme's Division for Environmental Law, stressed in a statement that developing systems for traditional knowledge protection, and establishing the ethical code of conduct is critical for achieving the three objectives of the CBD, which consist of conserving biological diversity, using biological diversity in a sustainable manner, and sharing the benefits of biological diversity fairly and equally.

An ongoing meeting of Parties to the Convention taking place from 9-15 November saw delegates exchange views on the international ABS regime, which specifically focuses on establishing an international regime on access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing as a tool to effectively implement Article 15, Article 8(j), and the three objectives of the CBD.

In the first five days of the meeting, the ABS working group discussed the legal nature of the ABS regime, as well as traditional knowledge, capacity-building, and compliance within its context. Delegates have also consolidated draft text to establish a basis for later negotiations. UNEP representatives additionally emphasised the programme's commitment to the ABS regime, stating they will invest US\$5 million in biodiversity activities over the next two years.

ICTSD Reporting.

Sweden Tells All with CO₂ Emissions Food Labels

Sweden has become the first country to experiment with labels that indicate the amount of carbon dioxide emitted during the production and transportation of food products.

A 2005 government study revealed that 25 percent of Sweden's national per capita emissions are due to food products—a finding that inspired Sweden to introduce the carbon-emission ratings this summer, along with new food guidelines that give equal weight to health and environment considerations. The carbon-emission labels, which are currently voluntary, are being applied to food sold in supermarkets and restaurants.

In some cases the proposed new dietary guidelines run counter to traditional advice on healthy eating. Swedes, for example, are advised to consume less fish, despite the health benefits, because Europe's stocks are depleting. In other cases, health and environmental benefits are aligned, as when the National Food Administration recommends that consumers choose beans or chicken over red meat due to the extensive amount of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with raising cattle.

Richard Bergfors, president of Sweden's largest chain of burger restaurants, Max, said that sales of climate-friendly items have increased by 20 percent since emission ratings appeared on their menus, according to the New York Times.

However, the carbon-emission labels have drawn mixed reviews from the food industry. Some producers, such as Europe's meat industry and Norway's salmon farmers, have argued that the new label programs are overly complex and threaten profits. The complexity stems from the fact that emission outputs for specific products can vary depending on how and where it was grown, the type of soil used, and whether a dairy farmer used local or imported feed for cattle.

Experts have said that if these new food guidelines are strictly observed, then emissions from food production could be cut by 20 to 50 percent.

“To Cut Global Warming, Swedes Study Their Plates,” NEW YORK TIMES, 23 October 2009; “Sweden Mandates Carbon Emissions Labels on Food,” ENVIRONMENTAL LEADER, 27 October 2009.

EVENTS AND RESOURCES

Events

For a more comprehensive list of events for the trade and environment community visit the BioRes online calendar, <http://ictsd.net/news/biores/events/>.

Coming up in the next two weeks (13-27 November)

18-20 November, Singapore. CLEAN ENERGY EXPO ASIA 2009. Clean Energy Expo Asia (CEEA) sells itself as a unique trading and knowledge-sharing platform bringing together the leading players in the technology, services, finance and government sectors to address key issues in the areas of renewable energy, energy efficiency and sustainable development in the Asia Pacific region. The conference program, developed in partnership with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Sustainable Energy Association of Singapore (SEAS), will cover financing opportunities and market trends, legislation and policies, and technological innovation. For more information, contact Samuel Tumiwa: tel: +632-632-6624; fax: +632-636-2198; email: stumiwa@adb.org; internet: <http://www.adb.org/Documents/Events/2009/Clean-Energy-Expo-Asia-2009/default.asp>

23-24 November, New Delhi, India. FOURTH ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY VEHICLE (EFV) CONFERENCE AND EXPOSITION. A biannual international conference, this event aims to share a broad range of experiences with regard to measures for promoting or introducing EFVs. Additionally, the conference will discuss the problems associated with introducing EFVs and related technology to markets under existing legal and economic frameworks, and will offer participants opportunities to network and explore possible solutions. A parallel exposition is also planned to showcase related technologies. For more information, visit: <http://www.4efv.in/>

24-25 November, Berlin, Germany. 4TH INTERNATIONAL RENEWABLE ENERGY STORAGE CONFERENCE (IRES) 2009. This

annual event aims to present new perspectives, the state of technology, and especially the resulting energy storage applications that open up ground-breaking opportunities for the dynamic exploitation of electricity and heat from renewable sources. Stakeholders from the regenerative and conventional energy industries, research and development, and various areas of politics will be in attendance. It aims to act as a stimulus for their strategies to enhance the entry of renewable energy. For more information, contact the organisers: tel: +49-0228-362-373; fax: +49-0228-361-279; email: info@eurosolar.org; internet: http://www.eurosolar.de/en/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=362&Itemid=105

24-25 November, Yogyakarta, Indonesia. INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON SUSTAINABLE & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION. In conjunction with the Indonesian Catalyst Society (MKI) Meeting and the 6th Sustainable Energy and Environment (SEE) Forum Meeting, this symposium will provide a venue to explore the latest developments and trends of technology for sustainable energy and environment protection, especially in the region of South East Asia. Participants will be able to discuss cutting-edge scientific findings with researchers, engineers and practitioners with specific emphasis on the following focus areas: clean fossil fuel energy, waste treatment and environmental protection, rural energy, new and renewable energy, energy and catalysis, and efficient and environmental-friendly energy conversion processes. For more information, visit: <http://www.isseep.com/>

Other Upcoming Events:

11-14 December, Copenhagen, Denmark. DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE DAYS AT COP-15. As in the past years, this event will provide opportunities to share information on negotiations and development adaptation issues. The main goals of this program include bringing together individuals and organisations interested in development and climate related issues, sharing the latest science and best practices in development and climate change, and promoting linkages between these highly connected subjects. In past years, this event has gathered and disseminated the most up-to-date information on

the science and practice of climate change and development activities. For more information, contact Hannah Reid: email: hannah.reid@iied.org; internet: <http://www.iied.org/climate-change/key-issues/climate-negotiations-capacity-building/d-c-days-cop15>

20-21 January 2010, Las Vegas, Nevada, US. SOLAR POWER GENERATION USA. This annual event is geared towards those interested in solar technology development, manufacturing, policy making, and regulation. It will provide an outlook for the solar power generation, including an overview of the barriers to developing the solar power market, and deal with issues concerning land use, wildlife, and water. A Q & A session with the US Bureau of Land Management will also take place. For more information, contact the organisers: tel: +1-971-238-0700; email: info@greenpowerconferences.com; internet: <http://www.solarpowercongress.com/index.html>

17-19 February 2010, New Delhi and Uttar Pradesh, India. FOURTH INTERNATIONAL RENEWABLE ENERGY CONFERENCE. This event will be the fourth global ministerial level conference on renewable energy, following Bonn Renewables 2004, Beijing 2005, and WIREC 2008. The International Renewable Energy Conference (IREC) will consist of a ministerial meeting, business-to-business and business-to-government meetings, side events (symposiums, sectoral seminars and workshops), and a trade show/exhibition. Those encouraged to attend include government representatives, members of civil society, private industries, NGOs, and advocacy groups to discuss public policies and showcase programmes related to the renewable energy sector. For more information contact the organisers: email: ss.madan@nic.in; internet: <http://mnes.nic.in/pdf/irec-mnre.pdf>

16-20 August 2010, Fortaleza, Brazil. SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CLIMATE, SUSTAINABILITY, AND DEVELOPMENT IN SEMI-ARID REGIONS – ICID 2010. With the goal of promoting secure and sustainable development in the semi-arid regions of the world, ICID 2010 aims to bring together public policy makers, scientists, and

members of civil society. Organisers of the event hope to identify and focus action on challenges and opportunities for a better future in the world's arid and semi-arid regions. The conference will generate, publish, and present recommendations to guide global, regional, national and local analysis and policies aimed at reducing vulnerability and improving the lives of the people of dry lands around the world. For more information, contact the Executive Secretariat: tel: +55-061-3424-9634; email: contact@icid18.org; internet: <http://icid18.org/index.php>

Resources

If you have a relevant resource (books, papers, bulletins, etc.) you would like to see announced in this section, please forward a copy for review by the Bridges staff to Andrew Aziz at aaziz@ictsd.ch.

ACCESS TO CLIMATE CHANGE TECHNOLOGY BY DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: A PRACTICAL STRATEGY. By Cynthia Cannady (ICTSD Programme on IPRs and Sustainable Development). September 2009. The role of intellectual property rights (IPRs) has increasingly been the subject of attention in climate change discussions on technology transfer. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) negotiating texts contain a wide range of options and proposals relating to intellectual property that reflect a diversity of views on the matter. This paper aims to provide a practical perspective on how these options and proposals would work 'in the real world' and the extent to which they would effectively allow developing countries to gain greater access to climate change technologies. The author critically examines several approaches that have been suggested for facilitating access to climate change technology by developing countries, including compulsory licensing, patent pools, patent databases and structured voluntary licensing mechanisms. This paper discusses the realistic problems facing these approaches to achieve the expected results for developing countries. Instead, the author argues for a practical two-pronged strategy. The first prong is climate change technology innovation strategy (CCTIS),

focusing on supporting climate change research and innovation in developing countries by scientists in those areas. The second prong of the strategy is 'win-win' technology collaboration agreements for climate change technology between developed and developing country parties. To access this paper, visit:
<http://ictsdxchange01/exchweb/bin/redirect.asp?URL=http://cts.vresp.com/c/?ICTSD/fd74bea6ab/62890a0c44/9d256454f7>

THREAT TO BLOCK SOUTH'S EXPORTS ON CLIMATE GROUNDS. South Centre: South Bulletin (40), September 2009. By Martin Khor. Beginning with a question on whether developed countries have the right to impose tariffs on imports from developing countries based on the amount of greenhouse gases (GHG's) emitted during their production, the author reveals arguments from both developed countries (primarily the US) and developing countries as to how this issue should be approached. The American Clean Energy Act, Security Act of 2009, and Waxman-Markey bill have been criticised by developing countries as having negative effects on their economies (particularly India and China) because exports to the US will become more costly. The author then examines recent WTO discussion panels concerning climate-related charges based on processes and production methods and whether such measures are legal under the WTO. With contentions from developed and developing countries, this article finds that the debate over climate-based import tariffs will be a significant issue in the coming years. To access this article, visit:

http://www.southcentre.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1082&Itemid=279

INTERNATIONAL TRADE STATISTICS 2009. World Trade Organization. October 2009. International Trade Statistics 2009 is a comprehensive overview of world trade up to 2008 and includes the details of merchandise trade by product and trade in commercial services by category. Each chapter is introduced by a highlights section that identifies the most salient trends in the data, including the first quarter of 2009, and illustrates them with numerous charts and maps. There is also a methodological chapter (Chapter IV Metadata) that explains essential

concepts and definitions used in compiling the statistics, and an appendix with detailed data on trade by region up to 2008. This document may prove to be a valuable reference for researchers, policy makers and anyone interested in international trade. To access this report, visit:
http://www.wto.org/english/res_e/statistics_e/its2009_e/its09_toc_e.htm