



Bridges Weekly Trade News Digest

Weekly trade news from a sustainable development perspective

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LEAD STORIES

EU, Canada Kick off Trade Talks

The EU and Canada have launched negotiations toward a free trade agreement that would cut tariffs, liberalise trade in services, and ease rules on labour mobility. But the negotiators of the deal, which would be the EU's first with a developed country, will have to navigate an ongoing spat over seal imports that has already threatened to derail the talks.

A trade deal could also allow Canada to lessen its reliance on the United States, where consumer demand has plummeted since the onset of the economic crisis last year. The 'Buy American' clause that was written into the US stimulus package has stirred fears in Ottawa that Washington will increasingly be turning to protectionist measures to shield its domestic producers from the downturn. More than three quarters of all Canadian exports now go to the country's southern neighbour.

The US relationship aside, a bilateral deal could bring real income gains worth €8.2 billion to Canada and €11.6 billion to the EU, according to a 'scoping' study commissioned by the European and Canadian governments. EU exports to Canada would go up by more than 24 percent under a potential trade pact, the study found, while Canadian exports to the 27-member EU would get a 20-percent boost.

But tariffs on goods that pass between the two trading partners are already low – less than 3 percent – in most major trading sectors; the few higher duties that remain in place could prove politically difficult to dismantle. Of the major trading sectors, only processed foods receive substantial protection: Canada slaps a 30 percent import tariff on EU processed food imports, while Brussels taxes similar Canadian products at a 17 percent rate. High tariffs remain on a few

sensitive, but less traded, products as well: fish and seafood products are strongly protected by the EU, while Canada shields its domestic producers of footwear, textiles and apparel with import tariffs as high as 18 percent.

But the bulk of the gains from a potential trade deal are expected to come not from tariff cuts but from reductions to obstacles to trade in the services sector, which includes activities such as banking, telecommunications, architecture and consulting. Existing impediments to the cross-border flow of services include foreign ownership caps, restrictions on the type or number of services that can be provided by foreign firms, as well as registration or nationality requirements that preference domestic companies. But reducing such barriers by between 2 percent and 10 percent could translate into measurable GDP gains for the two trading partners – more than €5 billion for the EU and roughly €3.6 billion for Canada, the scoping study found.

In addition to the traditional challenge of cutting tariffs and other trade barriers, the negotiators are also going to tackle intellectual property issues, the environment, science and technology, and labour mobility, including the temporary entry of businesspeople.

Although the major negotiating areas have already been outlined, the ultimate success of the talks is far from guaranteed. One issue in particular – a proposed EU ban on imports of all seal products – has already emerged as a potential stumbling block. Danny Williams, the premier of the eastern coastal province of Newfoundland and Labrador, vowed in February that he would not support the trade talks out of protest over the EU's threat to ban imports of seal products. Williams, whose province is home to roughly 6,000 sealers, insists that the proposed embargo, which is strongly supported by animal rights activists, "has no basis in science or sustainable harvesting practices."

Under the Canadian federalist system, any deal would have to be approved by lawmakers at both the national and provincial or territorial levels. In some cases, provincial and territorial governments would be required to pass legislation to implement certain parts of the deal; as such, provincial representatives have been asked to participate in

the talks, "with a view to making binding commitments" to implement the agreement, according to a joint EU-Canada report.

But Williams' February announcement "nearly derailed the entire process" of the talks with the EU. Anya Oram, charge d'affaires for the European Commission delegation in Ottawa, admitted to the St. John's Telegram of Newfoundland. Williams repeated his call earlier this month, after the European Parliament voted overwhelmingly in support of the embargo (see related story, this issue). Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper has indicated that he will press forward in the talks despite the threat of the ban, but Williams appears to remain unsatisfied.

Vote of no confidence in Doha?

Before the talks were officially launched on 6 May, EU Trade Commissioner Catherine Ashton insisted that the start of the negotiations between the two major economies sends "a powerful signal" of a belief in open markets "at a time when protectionist sentiment is on the rise."

But another view would hold that what the talks really signal is a lack of confidence in the Doha Round of trade talks at the WTO, which have faltered repeatedly since they were launched in the autumn of 2001 and suffered their latest major setback last summer. In 2006, Canada and the EU put off negotiations toward a trade and investment treaty "until the outcome of the WTO Doha world trade negotiations became clearer," according to the European Commission. Three years later, there is no evidence of such hesitation; with Doha stalled, the countries are seeking out another venue for liberalising trade.

Other countries take notice

The announcement of the negotiations between the two rich-country economies has caught the attention of other major players in the international market. Manufacturers in the United States have certainly taken note.

"The EU already has a free trade agreement with Mexico. Now they're negotiating one with Canada and that leaves us out," Frank Vargo of the US'

National Association of Manufacturers told reporters in April, according to Reuters.

“This has always been our concern: other countries are going to negotiate deals that will either dilute our market access or will put us at a significant disadvantage,” Vargo said.

Other major economies will also take an interest in “the EU-Canada answer to protectionism,” Bill Emmott, a former editor of *The Economist* magazine, and Roy MacLaren, a former Canadian trade minister, wrote in an op-ed in *The New York Times*.

“Asian countries will not fail to recognise that with trans-Atlantic liberalisation afoot, it is time that they negotiated seriously with the West for fear of losing competitive access to a potentially yet more massive trans-Atlantic economy,” they wrote.

Additional information

To download a copy of the EU-Canada ‘scoping study’, please click here http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2008/october/tradoc_141032.pdf

To read the 20 February statement of Premier Danny Williams, please click here <http://www.releases.gov.nl.ca/releases/2009/exec/0220n07.htm>.

ICTSD reporting; “Europe and Canada,” *THE NEW YORK TIMES*, 5 May 2009; “US should consider trade pact with EU: manufacturers,” *REUTERS*, 28 April 2009; “Premier ‘nearly derailed’ Canada-EU talks,” *UPI*, 11 May 2009; “Canada-EU trade talks: a 60-year-old dream,” *THE ECONOMIST*, 7 May 2009.

SPECIAL SECTION: AGRICULTURE

NGOs Cry Foul over Rich-Country ‘Land Grab’ in Developing World

A recent jump in rich country land purchases in the developing world has caught the attention of analysts in trade and human rights circles. In many cases, governments and private sector parties to such deals have remained mum on the details of the acquisitions, a fact that has caused some concern among NGOs, who worry that the scale of the acquisitions could potentially undermine development and food security objectives. But The World Bank insists that the large-scale purchases of developing country farmland can facilitate the transfer of technology and technical know-how, and ultimately have positive impacts on local populations.

Large-scale land acquisition by food-importing countries is not a new phenomenon; the roots of the practice stretch back to the colonial era. After decades of neglecting farms, today's investors are once again betting that agriculture will be a source of growth in the coming years. The deals currently reported to be on the table are often the hundreds of thousands of hectares and in the millions, or even billions, of dollars in economic assistance.

In a preliminary report, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), a specialised agency of the UN, cited the growing use of biofuels and last year's unprecedented spike in food prices as triggers of the increased demand for farmland in developing countries. The mandatory use of biofuels in major importing markets such as the US and the EU drove up prices for some farm goods, while oil-rich countries faced higher food bills due to record-breaking agricultural commodity prices. Meanwhile, at least 25 countries enacted export restrictions and other trade-limiting measures in an effort to ensure adequate domestic food supplies.

China, South Korea, and the oil-rich states of the Persian Gulf have emerged as major new purchasers of farmland abroad, according to a

study by GRAIN, a Barcelona-based grassroots NGO, which recently examined deals whose details have been made available in the press. The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) conducted a similar review of publicised transactions.

The Gulf countries, as a whole, depend on imports to feed their citizens, many of whom are low-wage migrant workers who are highly sensitive to increases in food prices. According to GRAIN, the Gulf region's food import bill jumped from US\$8 billion in 2003 to more than US\$20 billion in 2008. With a population that is expected to double in the next 20 years, the scarcity of arable land and water will likely prevent the region from attaining any measure of self-sufficiency in food, according to the Gulf Research Council.

In contrast to the Gulf countries, China is self-sufficient in terms of its food needs. However, the pressures of increased urbanisation wiped out nearly 9 million hectares of farmland between 1996 and 2006, an amount similar to the size of the land deals currently being discussed in aggregate. Other players in the land deals, namely South Korea and Japan, also rely heavily on imports to meet their domestic food needs. According to news reports, Japan already has over 12 million hectares of farmland abroad, an area nearly three times the size of its domestic agricultural land.

The scale of the acquisitions

Although thorough statistics are not available, the few figures that have been made public reveal some staggering purchases. Many of the deals are either permanent or involve 50- or 99-year leases; the areas being negotiated range from 25,000 hectares for a Jordanian deal in the Sudan to more than 2.8 million hectares for a Chinese deal for palm oil production in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Though the deals are in various states of negotiation, GRAIN has documented nearly 200 such agreements, while IFPRI gathered data on nearly 60.

The main parties to these deals include governments, sovereign wealth funds (via their subsidiaries), agribusiness, investment banks,

commodities firms, and other natural resource extraction companies, according to a study by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD). EU- and US-based private firms are looking for land everywhere – from Mozambique to Ukraine – but the Gulf states have tended to focus on regions in which they have historical ties. For example, some of the largest acquisitions from the Gulf are in the Sudan and Pakistan. Chinese, South Korean, and Japanese firms are focusing on areas in Africa and Asia where they can produce food, animal feed, and even energy crops.

In the case of Gulf countries, government officials have taken the lead in finding partners in host countries, but have left the execution of the deal in the hands of private sector actors. Deals originating in other regions seem to be driven even more explicitly by private firms. That said, clear and accurate statistics on these large-scale land acquisitions are generally not available; without such data, it is difficult to determine clear trends, other than that the purchases are increasing in frequency.

Who benefits?

Perhaps the biggest question that analysts are asking of these deals is who they are benefiting and who, if anyone, they may be harming. The lack of transparency surrounding the agreements has been criticised by many of the researchers working on the issue, who say that the lines between the private firms and the governments that are negotiating these deals are often blurred.

Prospective buyers often offer a combination of loans, infrastructure investment, and commodity transfers – as well as cash – to the host countries. Given the dearth of public and private investment in agriculture in developing countries in recent years, poorer countries are eager to secure funding that will allow them to make better use of what may be an under-utilised resource.

Experts at the World Bank, who are working to formulate their research objectives on the subject, emphasise that such deals can provide opportunities for the transfer of technology and know-how to developing countries – if the right conditions are in place. But others, such as Raul

Montemayor of the Federation of Free Farmers of the Philippines, believe that “goons and rogue elements” are facilitating the land acquisition process and that farmers, even if they gain employment in the large farms established by the deals, will be earning less than they do today.

In order for such purchases "to realise the full potential benefits," the World Bank is urging investors in the deals to respect existing property rights, which are often undocumented and customary; to perform sound financial and economic analysis of the viability of the investment; to ensure that investors have the technical and financial capacity to execute their proposals over the long term; and to be open and transparent in the process of selection of the land and project, so long as doing so does not pose "unnecessary transaction costs or delays."

NGOs and other actors are calling for increased transparency in the deals, and have called on the parties involved to make public the contracts for the purchases. So far, though, the contracts have largely remained sealed. Given that the land deals reach into the millions of hectares and will result in the transfer of rights for decades, if not permanently, the acquisitions are bound to affect the standard of living of many of the most economically vulnerable people in the world, the NGOs say. While the motivations for the secrecy are not clear, some have accused high-level government officials of corruption.

Developing countries' use of trade measures may be limited

The IISD study points out that the land deals may have implications for the ability of host countries to manage their trade policy. Since many of the investors are interested in securing food for their populations, it is likely that the purchases contain provisions that would allow them the right to export the farm goods produced.

For example, during the food price spike of last year, some countries, such as India, Vietnam, Pakistan, and Argentina, imposed export restrictions on farm goods as a matter of food security policy. In the case of Pakistan, the United Arab Emirates sought an exemption for the goods that were produced on their land holdings.

Though the government of Pakistan said it would grant such an exception only for 'agricultural free zones', it ultimately eliminated export restrictions on the products just a few months later.

The WTO guarantees its Members protection from constraints on exports for foreign investors, but the rights of people affected by the deals may be limited by the nature of the contract and the international investment agreements under which it falls.

Land as a human rights issue

Given the potential problems surrounding large scale land acquisitions, some actors are approaching the issues from a human rights perspective. In a conference organised by 3D, a trade and human rights NGO, participants called for a clear set of guidelines for the massive land deals.

Olivier De Schutter, the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food, argued that the legal instruments that are needed to address concerns of food security are already in place. The governments negotiating the land deals should keep a greater proportion of food grown on foreign holdings in their territories when prices go up, De Schutter said, and national parliaments and courts should monitor the deals being cut. Investment in agriculture should first serve the right to food for local populations, he added.

Additional information

To access the IFPRI report, please click here: <http://www.ifpri.org/pubs/bp/bp013.asp>

To access the IISD report, please click here: <http://www.iisd.org/publications/pub.aspx?pno=1122>

ICTSD reporting. "Hopes and Strains in China's Overseas Farming Plan," ECONOMIC OBSERVER ONLINE, 30 June 2008.

IN BRIEF

**Brazil, China Sign Oil Deal, Call for
Shift away from US Dollar**

Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva paid a visit to his Chinese counterpart, Hu Jintao, this week, with a view to boosting trade between the two emerging economies and promoting what Lula called a “new economic order” that relies less on the US dollar.

The Asian giant, ever hungry for raw materials, became Brazil’s largest trading partner earlier this year, outpacing the United States. Brazil’s exports to China, which consist primarily of iron ore and soy products, jumped to US\$ 5.6 billion earlier this year, up from US\$ 3.4 billion for the same period in 2008.

"I think the trip that I am about to embark on...is one of the most important I am going on to defend a new economic order and a new commercial policy in the world," Lula told journalists before he left Brazil, AFP reported.

In the biggest deal signed over the course of the two-day meeting, Lula and Hu agreed on a credit-for-oil swap in which the China Development Bank will provide up to US\$ 10 billion in loans to help fund Brazilian oil production off the country’s south coast. In exchange, Brasilia has promised that it’s state-run company Petroleo Brasileiro, or Petrobras, will supply Sinopec, its Chinese analogue, with up to 200,000 barrels of oil per day for the next decade. The deal, which was signed late in the day on 19 May, is expected to offer a more secure supply for Sinopec, which produces only one fifth of the oil it needs.

The leaders also discussed a proposal to conduct bilateral trade through the Brazilian real and the Chinese renminbi, not the US dollar, as they have done in the past.

"It's absurd if two important trading nations such as ours continue to carry out our commerce in the currency of a third nation," Lula said in an interview with China's *Caijing* magazine.

Brazilian Foreign Minister Celso Amorim told journalists after the meetings ended that the countries’ central banks were looking into the currency question. The proposed shift follows China’s recent challenge to the primacy of the US dollar in the international economy. In March, Zhou Xiaochuan, the governor of the People’s Bank of China, said in a speech that a currency system run by the International Monetary Fund should supplant the dollar as the world’s primary reserve currency.

A series of other pacts were finalised over the course of the three days of meetings. In a big win for Brazilian exporters, China agreed to lift its import restrictions on Brazilian chicken and to accept more imports of the country’s beef. Officials also struck deals on Brazilian port construction, the joint launch of two satellites, and biofuels exports to China.

ICTSD reporting; “Brazil turns to China to help finance oil projects,” *THE WALL STREET JOURNAL*, 18 May 2009; “Brazilian leader Lula in China,” AFP, 18 May 2009; “China deals bolster Brazil trade ties,” *THE FINANCIAL TIMES*, 20 May 2009; “Brazil’s Lula signs oil, financial agreements with China,” AFP, 19 May 2009; “Sinopec to Gain From Brazil Deal as Oil Reserves Fall,” *BLOOMBERG*, 20 May 2009; “China challenges power of the dollar as it flexes its economic muscles,” 24 March 2009, *TIMES OF LONDON*.

WTO IN BRIEF

**Canada Promises WTO Suit over
EU Seal Ban**

The European Parliament has voted overwhelmingly to ban imports of seal products into the 27-nation bloc, a move that quickly prompted Canada to go forward with a lawsuit against the embargo at the WTO.

“We’re moving ahead with an appeal,” Canadian Trade Minister Stockwell Day told *Canwest News Service* on 5 May. “We’ll go to the WTO because

it's clear in WTO regulations that if one country wants to ban the products of another, it has to have clear scientific, medically acceptable reasons for doing so, and this EU ban is not based on hard science," Day said.

In a 550-49 vote taken on 5 May, the European Parliament banned all imports of seal products to the 27-nation bloc. The proposed ban still has to win the endorsement of each of the EU's national governments, but could take effect before the start of next year's hunting season if it is approved.

The proposed embargo includes an exemption for seals taken by Canada's Inuit communities, which consider the seal hunt vital to their cultural heritage. But the Inuit leader Mary Simon said that she was not satisfied with the exception.

"Inuit are devastated at today's vote," Simon said in a statement on 5 May. "The stated exemption in the legislation will not help us as the markets will once again be effectively destroyed. As Inuit leaders have stated across the Arctic, once you destroy a market for one group, it is destroyed for all."

Danny Williams, the premier of Newfoundland, an eastern province that is home to the bulk of the country's roughly 7,000 sealers, called on Prime Minister Stephen Harper to press the seal issue in ongoing talks toward a trade agreement with the EU. Harper responded that he would raise the matter, but added that he did not want the seal controversy to 'contaminate' the negotiations.

Norway, another major player in the seal trade, has also threatened to bring a WTO challenge to the EU's ban (see Bridges Trade BioRes, 1 May 2009, <http://ictsd.net/i/news/biores/45941/>).

Animal rights activists, who lobbied hard on behalf of the ban, welcomed the results of the vote.

"I hope that the ban on the trade in seal products will save hundreds of thousands of seals from being clubbed and shot under cruel conditions in Canada and elsewhere," said Carl Schlyter, Vice-Chair of the European Parliament intergroup on animal protection.

"The EU is making history by closing its borders to the products of cruel commercial seal slaughters," said Rebecca Aldworth, the director of Humane Society International, Canada. "Tuesday's historic vote will spell the beginning of the end of commercial sealing in Canada."

The Canadian seal hunt, one of the biggest in the world, is worth an estimated US\$ 7 million. The seals are valued for their pelts, as well as their meat, oil blubber, and organs.

ICTSD reporting; "Canada vows to take seal ban fight to WTO," CANWEST, 5 May 2009; "Seal products banned in Europe," TELEGRAPH.CO.UK, 5 May 2009; "Williams reignites war of words with Harper over seal hunt," CBC NEWS, 6 May 2009.

Appellate Body Urges US to Comply with 'Zeroing' Ruling

The WTO's Appellate Body, the organisation's highest court, has called on the US to comply with an earlier ruling that found that the Washington violates world trade rules in its treatment of unfairly priced imports.

The complaint, which was brought by the EU, centres on Washington's use of 'zeroing', a controversial method of determining whether and by how much trading partners are 'dumping' (exporting at artificially low prices) their goods in the US market. Under this calculation, US trade authorities ignore, or treat as zero, instances in which goods command higher prices in the US market than abroad.

WTO rules permit countries that receive dumped goods to retaliate with anti-dumping measures, which usually come in the form of higher tariffs, against the offending country. But critics argue the zeroing method exaggerates the amount by which goods are dumped and allows Washington to secure inappropriately high duties on competing imports. With the sole exception of the United States, all of the WTO's 153 Members oppose the use of zeroing. Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Japan,

Korea, Mexico, Norway, Taiwan, and Thailand were all third parties to the EU's complaint against the US.

The WTO's Appellate Body has consistently ruled against zeroing, but Washington has continued to employ the approach.

In its compliance report, which was made public last week, the Appellate Body (AB) urged the US to comply with a December 2008 ruling of a WTO compliance panel, which concluded that Washington's use of zeroing contravenes the WTO's Anti-Dumping Agreement (ADA).

"To the extent that the US has failed to comply with recommendations and rulings of the [Dispute Settlement Body] in the original proceedings, they remain operative," the AB report said.

"The Appellate Body recommends that the DSB request the US to implement fully the recommendations and rulings of the DSB."

But the AB report also upheld sections of the December decision that rejected some of the EU's claims that Washington had failed to comply with previous rulings on zeroing.

A study conducted by William Nye of the US government's Department of Justice concluded that using the zeroing methodology will almost always result in an increase in the anti-dumping duty "and will sometimes create a duty where none would have been imposed" if the calculation had not been used. Nye estimated that zeroing adds 3 percent to 4 percent to the typical anti-dumping duty imposed by the US.

Additional information

To access William Nye's report, please visit http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1313172.

ICTSD reporting.

Rules Group 'Builds Momentum' while Avoiding Controversial Topics

An informal meeting of the Negotiating Group on Rules made slow progress but largely avoided controversial issues at its meeting last week. The group's talks – which cover anti-dumping and horizontal subsidies disciplines, as well as subsidies in the fisheries sector – have been marked by long-standing disagreement over a few issues. But the chair of the committee, Ambassador Guillermo Valles Galmes of Uruguay, navigated around those questions last week and instead sought to "build momentum" in the less contentious areas of the talks, as one delegate put it.

Even if the main areas of controversy are avoided, it's "important to keep going" in the talks, the delegate said. The only way that delegations will reach compromise on hot button issues like zeroing will be through the slow, iterative process of the negotiations, he noted, adding that he did not expect the chair to produce a new draft text before the current round of talks has wrapped up.

Delegates at last week's meeting expressed a broad level of support for increasing special and differential treatment for developing countries when they are the focus of anti-dumping investigations, and also backed the notion of providing such countries with technical assistance to set up their own anti-dumping authorities. Ghana, speaking on behalf of the African Group and the Group of African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries, called for a simplification of the WTO's anti-dumping rules, indicating that such a shift would allow them to better exercise their rights in that regard.

'Dumping' refers to the exporting of goods at artificially low prices, a practice that can undercut producers in the importing market. The WTO Agreement on Anti-Dumping allows Member governments to place retaliatory 'anti-dumping' tariffs on the goods in question, so long as they can prove that dumping is indeed taking place and that it is injuring the competing domestic industry.

The Friends of the Anti-Dumping Negotiations, or FANs, a 16-country grouping that includes Brazil, Canada, Mexico and Taiwan, warned that their fellow WTO Members “need to avoid the unwarranted use” of anti-dumping measures. A WTO report released earlier this month revealed that new anti-dumping investigations were on the increase in the second half of 2008 (see Bridges Weekly, 13 May 2009, <http://ictsd.net/i/news/bridgesweekly/46553/>).

Some say that the trend may be a reflection of increased protectionist tendencies amid the economic slowdown.

At the urging of the chair, the meeting featured a discussion on how the ongoing economic downturn might affect the group’s work on subsidies. China urged Members to limit their use of trade remedies, and warned that government stimulus packages could trigger an increase in countervailing-duty investigations in the future. But the EU, which said that it had been keeping a close eye on various stimulus policies, noted that governments have not violated the WTO’s Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures, which governs such matters.

Discussions on disciplines in the fisheries sector followed the outlines of a ‘roadmap’ for those talks that the chair issued at the end of last year (see Bridges Weekly, 14 January 2009, <http://ictsd.net/i/news/bridgesweekly/37803/>).

Delegations continued to disagree on the possible scope of the negotiations on bans on subsidies in the fisheries sector. Several delegations said that government payments to support aquaculture and fish processing should be disallowed, but other Members disagreed. Delegations also clashed over whether governments should be allowed to provide subsidies for small-scale fishing, worker retraining and income support.

The next meeting of the Rules Group has been tentatively scheduled for the week of 29 June.

ICTSD reporting.

EVENTS & RESOURCES

Events

If you would like to submit an event, please email bridges_weekly@ictsd.ch.

Coming up: 21-28 May

24-29 May, Copenhagen, Denmark. **WORLD BUSINESS SUMMIT ON CLIMATE CHANGE**. At this event, CEOs will discuss how their firms can help solve the climate crisis through innovative business models, new partnerships, and the development of low-carbon technologies. They will send a strong message to the negotiating governments on how to remove barriers and create incentives for implementation of new solutions in a post-Kyoto framework. The results of the meeting will be presented to the Danish government, host of COP15, and to world leaders negotiating the terms of the next international climate treaty. For more information, please visit <http://www.copenhagenclimatecouncil.com/world-business-summit.html>.

26-29 May, Leipzig, Germany. **INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT FORUM**. The International Transport Forum is a global inter-governmental platform that currently includes 52 Ministries. Together with senior representatives from government, industry and the scientific community, the 2009 Forum is an opportunity to review some of the most pressing questions posed by volatile global developments. More efficient transport can create a significant boost to support economic growth and create new confidence in the economic future. Yet protectionist and purely national responses risk accentuating the problem in the medium-term, and solutions need to be found at an international level. The 2009 Forum in Leipzig is an opportunity to be part of this cooperative impetus for change. For more information, please visit <http://www.internationaltransportforum.org/>.

27-29 May, Barcelona, Spain. **GLOBAL CARBON MARKET FAIR & CONFERENCE**. This event, jointly organised by the International Emissions Trading Association, The World Bank,

Fira Barcelona, and Koelnmesse, will feature debates, in-depth case studies and leadership sessions with an in-depth overview of the status of the carbon market and international climate change negotiations. For further information, contact Lisa Spafford: tel: +41 (0) 22-737-0502; fax: +41 (0) 22-737-0508; email: spafford@carbonexpo.org; internet: www.carbonexpo.com.

28-29 May, Montreal, Canada. TREATY REGIMES IN PRACTICE: DOMESTIC IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. Sponsored by the CISDL with the McGill University's Faculty of Law, Hydro Quebec and Oppenheimer Research Chairs and the International Law Association, this event will focus on recent trends and best practices in domestic laws to implement the sustainable development objectives of international treaty regimes. Dialogue in this event will also focus on how these experiences are shaping new rules and institutions in the treaty regimes themselves. Individuals from international environment, development, human rights and law experts, academics, professionals and students are encouraged to register. This symposium features a wide range of keynote speakers. For more information please visit http://www.cisd.org/pdf/poster_symposium2009_screen.pdf.

WTO Events

An updated list of forthcoming WTO meetings is posted http://www.wto.org/meets_public/meets_e.pdf. Please bear in mind that dates and times of WTO meetings are often changed, and that the WTO does not always announce the important informal meetings of the different bodies. Unless otherwise indicated, all WTO meetings are held at the WTO, Centre William Rappard, rue de Lausanne 154, 1211 Geneva, Switzerland, and are open to WTO Members and accredited observers only.

21 May: Ascension Day (WTO non-working day)

25-29 May: Geneva Week

26-27 May: General Council

1 June: Whit Monday (WTO non-working day)

Other upcoming events

29-30 May, Berne, Switzerland. THE DIPLOMACY OF WTO ACCESSION: RECONCILING EXISTING TENSIONS AND ADDRESSING NEW CHALLENGES. One of the most remarkable successes of the World Trade Organization in recent years has been the expansion of WTO Membership and the continued stream of applications of countries to accede to the WTO. The March 2009 Hague Journal of Diplomacy's Special Issue on the Diplomacy of WTO Accession highlighted the dramatic changes in the process of accession to the WTO from that of its predecessor, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and its implications for the global trading system. This two-day workshop will provide an opportunity for contributors to the Hague Journal of Diplomacy's Special Issue and a distinguished group of experts to present and discuss recent work with senior trade and development officials drawn from the ranks of the World Trade Organization, the World Bank, UNCTAD and the European Commission, chief accession negotiators, and academic experts. For more information, please click here <http://ictsd.net/downloads/2009/05/wti-diplomacy-of-accession-workshop-programme-final-2.pdf>.

5 June, Paris, France. 9TH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC FORUM ON AFRICA. At this event, politicians will engage with more than 500 journalists, business people, development cooperation professionals, researchers, civil society representatives and students to debate the findings of the latest edition of the African Economic Outlook (AEO). At the 9th Forum, OECD Secretary General Angel Gurría, African Development Bank President, Donald Kaberuka and UNECA Executive Secretary, Abdoulaye Jannet will welcome key African Ministers and CEOs of global companies to debate on African strategies in times of crises, as well as the successes and challenges of the information and communication technologies on the continent. For more

information, please visit
http://www.oecd.org/site/0,3407,en_21571361_38469764_1_1_1_1_1,00.html.

12 June, Geneva, Switzerland. LINKING ENERGY, CLIMATE CHANGE AND WTO LAW: THE ROLE OF THE WTO IN THE ENERGY AND CLIMATE DEBATE. This one-day workshop, which is sponsored jointly by the World Trade Institute and International Institute for Sustainable Development, will address the links between climate change and trade liberalisation, competitiveness & leakage, and energy. Trade regimes have the potential to significantly help or hinder progress towards climate change goals. The need to incorporate climate change considerations into the trade regime asks serious questions of what can be achieved within present agreements and structures and what changes may be required. The central role that energy plays in both climate change and trade has led to suggestions that the next WTO round should be an 'energy round'. Both WTI and IISD have been working at the cutting edge of trade and climate change linkages and are completing major programmes on those issues. Results from these programmes will inform the Copenhagen negotiations and form the basis for the 12 June workshop, which will include speakers from the WTO. If you would like to register, please send an email to Olga Nartova, olga.nartova@wti.org. For more information, please click here: <http://ictsd.net/downloads/2009/05/wti-iisd-programme-12-june-2009.pdf>.

7-19 June, Venice, Italy. 2009 INTERNATIONAL ENERGY WORKSHOP. This workshop, jointly sponsored by the Euro-Mediterranean Centre on Climate Change (CMCC) and the International Centre for Climate Governance, represents an informal network of analysts actively working on international energy issues. The IEW provides a venue for scholars and researchers to compare quantitative energy projections and to understand the reasons for diverging views of future developments. The workshop is structured with one plenary session per day, each one hosting two key-note speeches of international experts of the research field. Then, three parallel sessions will be held at each time slot with 3 or 4 presentations each. The aim

is to select about 85 papers out of the applications. For more information please visit <http://www.iccgov.org/iew2009/2-0.htm>.

22-24 June, Vienna, Austria. INTERNATIONAL ENERGY CONFERENCE 2009: TOWARDS AN INTEGRATED ENERGY AGENDA BEYOND 2020: SECURING SUSTAINABLE POLICIES AND INVESTMENTS. Now in its tenth year, this conference aims to provide a platform for policy makers and representatives from the private and public sectors to discuss energy issues in the context of the global financial crisis. Co-organized by UNIDO, IIASA, the Austrian Development Cooperation and the Austrian Energy Agency, this event will stress the need for increased international cooperation and highlight the role the UN system and development partners can play in this agenda. For more information refer to: internet: <http://www.viennaenergyconference.org/>

Resources

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA: EFFECTS OF INFRASTRUCTURE CONDITIONS ON EXPORT COMPETITIVENESS, THIRD ANNUAL REPORT. By the United States International Trade Commission, April 2009. This report describes conditions in the land transport, maritime transport, and electricity infrastructure sectors, and examines their effects on export competitiveness in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). Infrastructure conditions in SSA have a significant effect on the ability of firms to produce and export goods and services competitively. Relatively poor infrastructure conditions place many SSA producers and exporters of goods and services at a competitive disadvantage in regional and global export markets, increasing costs and compromising product quality, rendering both merchandise and services exports less competitive vis-à-vis exporters that may not be similarly disadvantaged. However, SSA governments and the private sector are implementing various strategies, including government regulatory reform, increased investment, and new applications of technology to improve infrastructure conditions within SSA, often in

conjunction with neighbouring countries, SSA regional organizations, multilateral institutions, and non-SSA countries. To download the report, please visit <http://www.usitc.gov/publications/332/pub4071.pdf>.

THE ECONOMICS OF CLIMATE CHANGE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA: A REGIONAL REVIEW. By the Asian Development Bank, April 2009. This report provides a review of the economics of climate change in the Southeast Asian region. It confirms that the region is highly vulnerable to climate change and demonstrates that a wide range of adaptation measures are already being applied. The report also shows that the region has a great potential to contribute to greenhouse gas emission reduction, and that the costs to the region and globally of taking no early action against climate change could be very high. The basic policy message is that efforts must be made to apply all feasible and economically viable adaptation and mitigation measures as key elements of a sustainable development strategy for Southeast Asia. It also argues that the current global economic crisis offers Southeast Asia an opportunity to start a transition towards a climate-resilient and low-carbon economy by introducing green stimulus programs that can simultaneously shore up economies, create jobs, reduce poverty, lower carbon emissions, and prepare for the worst effects of climate change. To access the report, please visit <http://www.adb.org/Documents/Books/Economics-Climate-Change-SEA/>.

THE RISE AND FALL OF FAST TRACK TRADE AUTHORITY. By Todd Tucker and Lori Wallach, Public Citizen, May 2009. This book examines the colourful 220-year US history of how the president and Congress have grappled with negotiating and implementing trade agreements given the constitutional separation of powers requirements. The book concludes that Fast Track (the most recent mechanism Congress used to delegate its trade powers to the president) is a historical anomaly and counterproductive to the creation of good trade pacts. For free access to the book online, please visit: <http://www.fasttrackhistory.org/>.