



Bridges Weekly Trade News Digest

Weekly trade news from a sustainable development perspective

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LEAD STORIES

China Fights to Keep Markets Open

China launched WTO dispute cases against two major world economies on Friday, flexing its muscles on the world stage in an effort to gain greater access to developed country markets amid the economic downturn. In a two-part move on 31 July, Beijing challenged EU anti-dumping tariffs on Chinese steel fasteners as well as a US ban on the country's chicken imports.

The two new dispute cases are evidence of China's "increased maturity" at the WTO and its growing willingness to use the global trade body's dispute mechanism to fight for its interests, an article in the state-run Xinhua news service said on Sunday. China has been relatively quiet on the dispute front since it joined the WTO in 2001, having launched only a handful of cases despite being a rather frequent target of other countries' complaints. But the Asian Giant is gradually becoming more engaged in the WTO's work, and its influence in the organisation is growing.

"As a major trade power, it's natural that China gradually increase its influence in the world commerce body and plays a more mature role in the making and enforcing of WTO regulations," the Xinhua article said.

And Beijing is gearing up to fight back against what it has called "a discordant resurgence of protectionism." An article in the state-run China Daily noted that, from September 2008 to June 2009, "the main World Trade Organization members" – including the US and the EU – initiated 77 dispute cases against China, worth an estimated US\$ 9.8 billion, more than double the previous year's number.

Zhou Xiaoyan, deputy director of China's Bureau of Fair Trade for Imports and Exports, told China

Daily that the government will use the tools available at the WTO to fight for its businesses.

“The US is abusing trade protectionist tools to help its own industries tide over the economic slowdown,” Zhou said. “The loss for Chinese businesses is huge.”

First up: EU anti-dumping tariffs

In the first act of its dual move on Friday, Beijing made an official request for consultations with the EU over tariffs that the 27-nation bloc imposes on imports of Chinese steel fasteners – screws, bolts, and the like. The EU enacted the tariffs – which range from 26.5 percent to 85 percent and are worth an estimated US\$ 809 million – in January with the aim of helping European producers compete with the Chinese imports. Brussels says the Chinese components are illegally under-priced, or ‘dumped’, in the EU market. The WTO allows its members to impose retaliatory anti-dumping tariffs if they can show that artificially cheap imports are causing substantial harm to their domestic producers.

“Anti-dumping measures are not about protectionism, they are about fighting unfair trade,” EU spokesman Lutz Guellner said in a statement on Friday. “The decision to impose measures was taken on the basis of clear evidence that unfair dumping of Chinese products has taken place with state distortion of raw material prices. This is harming the otherwise competitive EU industry, with potentially dire long-term effects.”

Beijing’s complaint against Brussels marks the first time that China has launched a dispute against the EU. In contrast, Brussels has initiated more than 140 ‘anti-dumping investigations’ into Chinese trade policy measures over the past three decades, according to a statement from Beijing that was released on Friday.

Following China’s 31 July request, the parties will now begin a series of bilateral consultations; if that process fails to produce a resolution after 60 days, China can ask the WTO’s Dispute Settlement Body to establish a panel to hear its complaint.

Next target: US poultry ban

Also on Friday, Beijing requested that the DSB establish a panel to hear its complaint against the United States’ ban on imports of Chinese poultry. Washington has refused entry to China’s chicken products on health grounds since 2007. The extension of the ban was made explicit in March, when US President Barack Obama signed into law a federal budget that included a line, in Section 727, that specifically forbids imports of Chinese poultry products. The clause drew a harsh response from Chinese trade officials, who denounced the ongoing ban as clearly discriminatory.

Following up on its threats, Beijing requested consultations with the US on the matter in April (see Bridges Weekly, 22 April 2009, <http://ictsd.net/i/news/bridgesweekly/45436/>), but after 60 days of bilateral talks, the parties failed to reach a resolution. On 20 July, China requested that the WTO’s Dispute Settlement Body establish a panel to hear its complaint, but the US blocked the move, exercising a right that the WTO allows each of its members once during a dispute case (see Bridges Weekly, 22 July 2009, <http://ictsd.net/i/news/bridgesweekly/51321/>). But Beijing repeated its request for a panel on 31 July; this time, the request went through.

In a statement released Friday, the Chinese Ministry of Commerce decried Washington’s “naked discriminative protection measures.”

“These unilateral measures fundamentally violate WTO rules, significantly impede the ordinary Sino-US trade in poultry products, and substantially impair the rights and benefits that Chinese enterprises deserve to enjoy,” the statement said.

In a statement released Friday, the office of the US Trade Representative said that authorities in Washington have not yet determined whether poultry imports from China meet Washington’s food safety standards. The USTR said that it was “disappointed” with Beijing’s decision to pursue the case, but added that it hoped the dispute would not hinder the flow of goods between the two countries.

“The United States and China have a broad and deep trade relationship and we continue to work

together closely on a bilateral and multilateral basis to resolve any problems that may arise," the statement said.

ICTSD reporting; "Trade complaints reflect China's maturity as WTO member," XINHUA, 2 August 2009; "China a major target of trade protectionism: Official," CHINA DAILY, 31 July 2009.

OTHER NEWS

Africa Pushes for Trade Reforms at AGOA Forum

African leaders are urging reform of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) – a trade agreement between 39 sub-Saharan African countries and the United States – at this week's eighth annual AGOA forum. The meeting, which began on Tuesday and will conclude on Thursday, provides a regular opportunity for leaders from the member states to discuss strategies for improving inter-regional trade.

The bill, which was signed by then-US President Bill Clinton in 2000, gives sub-Saharan Africa trade preferences for over 6,400 products, granting African producers duty- and quota-free access to US markets. Its goal is to stimulate trade and investment between the regions and facilitate the expansion of Africa into the global economy.

AGOA expands on the Generalised System of Preferences, a set of formal exceptions from the WTO's 'Most Favoured Nation' principle, which allows developed countries to offer developing countries lower tariff rates on specific goods. The agreement was originally supposed to expire in 2008 but was extended by former US President George W. Bush until 2015.

Africa Wants to Diversify Exports

African leaders argue the agreement should be restructured to promote diversity among African exports, given the region's development challenges. "Sub-Saharan exports to the US continue to be largely dominated by energy-related

products, and efforts to diversify the range of products are yet to be fully realised," explained Uhuru Kenyatta, Kenya's Deputy Prime Minister, in a speech on Monday.

"Exports from the region continue to face enormous challenges such as lack of competitiveness, supply capacity constraints, weak infrastructure base, low flow of private investments from the US, lack of access to finance, and low technical capacity, among other factors," he added.

According to data from the US International Trade Commission, 90 percent of goods and services trade last year under AGOA went to four countries: Nigeria, Angola, South Africa and Gabon. Exports from three of those countries – all but South Africa – are dominated by energy-related products, namely oil and gas. African exports of natural resources, such crude oil, precious metals, and oil seeds, have grown under AGOA while exports of manufactured goods like motor vehicles, computer machinery, consumer electronics, and apparel have dropped.

African Union Deputy Chairperson Erastus Mwencha of Kenya called on Washington to help African countries diversify their exports, which would enable them to further penetrate the US market. He also said AGOA needed to be more investment friendly. "This element is lacking in the act and that is an area that we could try to reinforce in AGOA," he said in a speech Tuesday. "Many investors will always be hesitant to embark on AGOA programs especially when they don't know that they will be eligible."

Mwencha suggested that the parties transform AGOA into a permanent trade agreement to further strengthen relations between the US and sub-Saharan Africa. African textile producers seconded the call. "We would like to see AGOA as a more permanent trade agreement, similar to the European Economic Partnership," Jaswinder Bedi, chairman African Cotton and Textile Industries Federation, told Reuters. Bedi explained that potential investors are scarce because AGOA is set to expire in six years, leaving the textile industry's future uncertain.

Washington Responds

The Obama administration has signaled strong support for African development, but Washington may not sign on to all of the suggestions made by its African partners. Anticipating some criticisms of AGOA ahead of the forum, US Trade Representative Ron Kirk indicated that “[t]he answer is not expanding the list of AGOA products,” but instead “increasing the utilisation of AGOA.”

“As President Obama said [during his recent trip to Ghana], what we are trying to achieve with our African partners is ‘more than growth numbers on a balance sheet,’” Kirk wrote in an op-ed that ran in several local Kenyan newspapers on Monday. “We are working to create opportunities, new jobs, and brighter futures for Africans and Americans alike.”

Kirk is expected to tell African textile producers that the US can only cut cotton subsidies as part of a larger agreement that sees emerging economies like China and India agree to open their markets to more US cotton exports.

US Secretary of State Hilary Clinton also addressed the forum, stressing that good governance in Africa is critical for economic growth. “True economic progress in Africa will depend on responsible governments that reject corruption, enforce the rule of law, and deliver results for their people,” Clinton said on Tuesday. Clinton’s presence has been taken as a signal of the Obama administration’s commitment to the trade agreement, Kenya’s Daily Nation reports.

“Investors will not be attracted to states with failed or weak leadership, crime and civil unrest, or corruption that taints every transaction and decision,” she said.

But her message was not all doom and gloom. “You know that too often the story of Africa is told in stereotypes – about poverty, disease and conflict,” Clinton told delegates. “Such notions are not only stale and outdated, but are wrong. Africa is ripe with opportunities – some waiting to be seized together.”

AGOA is only available for countries that have established or are making progress toward developing certain policy objectives, including

market-based economies, the rule of law, minimal trade barriers, intellectual property protection, anti-corruption policies, poverty alleviation, health care and education, and protection of human rights. Thirty-nine out of the 48 sub-Saharan African countries are now eligible for benefits under AGOA.

Despite the legislation, trade between the US and the AGOA countries remains limited. Goods from sub-Saharan African countries represented 3 percent of all US imports in 2008, and just over 1 percent of US exports were shipped to the region that year.

Additional information

For detailed information about AGOA and its impacts, visit <http://www.agoa.info/>.

ICTSD reporting; “Africa seeks amendments to AGOA deal,” XINHUA NEWS, 5 August 2009; “Great trade hopes for Kenya as Clinton due for talks,” DAILY NATION, 4 August 2009; “Africa textile makers want US trade deal extended,” REUTERS, 3 August 2009.

IN BRIEF

Colombia and Peru – Minus Ecuador – Forge ahead in EU Trade Talks

Negotiators from Colombia and Peru completed a fifth round of negotiations toward a free trade deal with the EU last month, despite the marked absence of Ecuador from the discussions. Although an estimated 30 to 50 percent of the tabled issues have yet to be resolved, officials said the talks achieved significant progress in several areas.

The Ecuadorian delegation, which had been tentatively engaged in the talks since they were launched in 2007, suspended its participation in the negotiations after President Rafael Correa reportedly met with state ministers, the chief negotiator of Ecuador and other officials.

The country's withdrawal from the talks had been rumoured for weeks (see Bridges Weekly, 27 May 2009,

<http://ictsd.net/i/news/bridgesweekly/47399/>).

On 10 June, Ecuador's government reportedly sent EU negotiators a letter outlining a 'Memorandum of Understanding on Bilateral Political Dialogue and Cooperation,' and laying out the country's concerns on several issues, including government procurement, investment, labour rights and social guarantees of Ecuadorian migrant workers in the EU. Quito says that the EU still has not responded to the letter.

Quito's absence from the negotiations is also due in part to a long-running dispute with the EU over its banana tariffs (see Bridges Weekly, 3 December 2008,

<http://ictsd.net/i/news/bridgesweekly/35126/>).

Ecuador wants Brussels to comply with a WTO ruling that concluded that the EU's tariffs on banana exports from Latin America are too high. So far, though, Brussels has yet to do so.

"If the EU doesn't comply with the WTO, we won't continue to negotiate that trade agreement," Ecuador's Correa said last month in his regular weekend radio-and-television broadcast. "In the end we might lose a few dollars; however, we won't lose our dignity."

Colombia and Peru push ahead

With Ecuador on the sidelines, negotiators from Colombia and Peru got down to work. Among other things, the parties agreed to remove unnecessary technical barriers to trade, and to facilitate trade by promoting the exchange of information and simplifying certification processes. The negotiators also agreed to strengthen institutions and make improvements to infrastructure, equipment, and human resources, according to official information from Colombia's Ministry of Commerce.

Despite positive sounds from officials, some in civil society are wary of the negotiations. Several non-governmental organisations closely following the talks – including DAR, Foro Ecológico, CIMA, Traffic, and CooperAcción RedGE – disagree with the governments on the results they

have claimed to achieve in sustainable development.

Critics warn that the EU will not commit additional resources to help the Andean countries adapt to meet stricter standards on labour rights and environmental protections. The organisations claim that environmental and labour laws have been weakened to promote trade and investment. With only weak laws on the books, any free trade agreement would remain purely declarative, as the Andean governments would lack the enforcement mechanisms to compel the parties to implement it, the groups say.

The sixth round of negotiations will take place in Brussels the week of 21 September.

ICTSD reporting; translated and adapted from Puentes Quincenal, Vol. 6, No. 14; "Correa says EU must cut banana levy for trade talks to progress," BLOOMBERG, 18 July 2009.

Switzerland – Japan FTA to Take Effect 1 Sept

A deal between Switzerland and Japan to slash tariffs on bilateral trade will take effect on 1 September, officials from the two countries announced last week. The agreement, which was signed in Tokyo in February, will be Switzerland's biggest free trade deal since the 1972 accord that it signed with the European Community.

Officials from the two countries exchanged diplomatic notes on 29 July that confirmed the launch date of the deal, the Swiss ministry of the economy said in a statement.

The pact will do away with tariffs on goods and services in a range of sectors, including industrial products, meat, telecommunications, and financial services; within ten years, 99 percent of all trade between the two countries will be duty free. The accord will also ease regulations on intellectual property rights, increase investment protections, and facilitate the movement of workers between Switzerland and Japan.

The two countries are major trading partners: in 2008, Swiss exports to Japan totalled nearly US\$ 6.7 billion, while Japanese exports to Switzerland came to roughly US\$ 3.9 billion. According to figures from the Swiss national bank, Swiss foreign investment in Japan amounted to more than US\$ 13 billion at the end of 2007, making the country Japan's eighth-largest foreign investor.

Japan, the world's second-largest economy, is Switzerland's biggest trading partner in Asia. The trade deal with Berne is Tokyo's first with a European country.

Additional information

To read the full text of the agreement, please visit <http://www.seco.admin.ch/themen/00513/02655/02731/02970/index.html?lang=en> ICTSD reporting.

EU, Papua New Guinea Ink Trade Pact

The European Union and Papua New Guinea signed a deal on 30 July that will immediately allow the Pacific country to export all of its goods duty free to the European market. In return, PNG will remove tariffs on 88 percent of imports from the EU over the next 15 years.

The EU and Papua New Guinea, joined by Fiji, initialled the accord in 2007 (see Bridges Weekly, 5 December 2007, <http://ictsd.net/i/news/bridgesweekly/7641/>), and the agreement has been in effect 'provisionally' since 1 January 2008. Fiji has yet to sign the deal, but its exports will also enter the European market duty free from now on; in exchange, the country will cut tariffs on 87 percent of European imports over 15 years.

The EU Trade Commission said in a statement that Fiji "decided to sign [the agreement] at a later stage."

EU Trade Commissioner Catherine Ashton called the deal "an important step towards a strong and

lasting EU-Pacific trade and development partnership."

"We have already seen how the initialling of the agreement has delivered results, with new investment flowing into the fisheries industry, supporting development in Papua New Guinea and creating jobs," Ashton added.

But the agreement is not without its detractors. The European fishing industry frets that the deal could push their fleets out of the Central and Western Pacific Ocean. And some members of civil society in the Pacific countries say that reducing barriers to the flow of European goods will undercut their domestic producers, perhaps costing jobs and threatening livelihoods.

Total trade between the EU and Pacific ACP countries totalled roughly €1 billion last year. The 27-nation EU exports mainly machinery, vehicles, and oil to the Pacific countries, which in turn export primarily animal and vegetable oils, sugar, coffee, tea, spices, and copper to the European market. Goods from Papua New Guinea and Fiji account for 83 percent of the EU's total trade with the Pacific region.

The deal, which is officially being billed as an Interim Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), is meant to replace a system of preferential trade rules that the EU has long granted many of its former colonies. Those preferences became illegal at the end of 2007, when a WTO waiver that allowed the temporary continuation of the schemes – which violated world trade rules – expired.

Brussels has since been working to negotiate replacement deals (the EPAs) with regional groupings of developing countries, a process that has proven quite difficult. To date, only one full-fledged EPA has been negotiated – between the EU and the CARIFORUM coalition of Caribbean countries. However, several bilateral agreements, like that between the EU and PNG, have been struck. But even as that 'interim' EPA takes effect, Brussels is continuing its push to negotiate a full-fledged, region-to-region EPA with PNG, Fiji, and 12 other developing countries in the Pacific region.

ICTSD reporting.

US Weighs Consultations with Guatemala on Labour Rights

The US Department of Labor (DOL) is considering formal consultations with Guatemala in response to complaints about the country's record on labour rights. Labour standards are protected under the Dominican Republic – Central America Free Trade Agreement (DR-CAFTA), to which both countries are parties.

The AFL-CIO – the largest federation of US labour unions – and six Guatemalan unions brought the issue to the Department of Labor in April 2008. The groups filed a complaint with DOL's Office of Trade and Labor Affairs (OTLA), alleging that Guatemala City had failed to adequately enforce its labour laws since DR-CAFTA took effect in 2005. The unions charge that this amounts to a violation of DR-CAFTA Chapter 16 and the ILO Declaration of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.

The complaint cited violations of freedom of association, the right to organise and bargain collectively, and acceptable conditions for work. According to the latest annual report by the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), Guatemala has become the second most dangerous country for trade unionists since the country signed on to DR-CAFTA. In addition to numerous labour law violations, the ITUC reported nine murders of trade unionists in 2008 and two in 2007.

In January 2009, the Department of Labor's OTLA issued a report confirming the unions' allegations. But since the government was addressing the issues, Washington did not request formal consultations with Guatemala City at the time, agreeing instead to a six-month grace period. Guatemala City provided new information on several allegations of labour violations last month, prompting additional inquiry from DOL. The agency will assess the situation and decide what next steps should be taken to ensure that outstanding labour issues are resolved, according to a communiqué issued by DOL on 15 July.

In early July, 40 members of the US House of Representatives sent a letter to the president of Guatemala, Álvaro Colom, urging him to fulfil his country's labour obligations under DR-CAFTA. "It is our understanding that the government has made some, but insufficient, progress in the individual cases highlighted and has yet to begin to address the systemic concerns," the letter read. "We urge you to act upon these recommendations quickly and comprehensively."

"The ongoing problems of worker exploitation and labour violence not only harm Guatemalan working families, but also violate Guatemala's promises under CAFTA to enforce its own labour laws," said Representative Linda Sánchez, a Democrat who co-organised the congressional effort.

"It is unfortunate that this Bush□ negotiated trade agreement did not include stronger protections for workers, which is why I am committed to changing our trade model to include better enforcement and stronger labour provisions," she added.

US Trade Representative Ron Kirk announced 16 July that his office would take a stronger stand on enforcing labour provisions of trade agreements like DR-CAFTA (see Bridges Weekly, 22 July 2009, <http://ictsd.net/i/news/bridgesweekly/51318/>). Under the treaty, Guatemala could face trade sanctions of up to US\$ 15 million if the government is found guilty of repeatedly violating the treaty.

ICTSD reporting; "CAFTA-DR: seguirá vigilancia de condiciones laborales en Guatemala," PUENTES QUINCENAL, 28 July 2009.

WTO IN BRIEF

EU Takes Legal Action on Philippine Liquor Tax

The EU issued a request for consultations with the Philippines at the WTO Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) last week, citing Manila's differential tax rates for domestic and imported liquor. The EU considers the taxes to be 'discriminatory' and in violation of international trade rules.

The Philippine excise tax regime, introduced in 1997 and revised in 2004, applies a flat tax rate to spirits produced domestically, while applying a much higher tax rate to imports. Taxes on imported spirits can be 10 to 50 times higher than those on their domestically produced counterparts, Brussels claims. As a result, liquor exports from the EU to the Philippines have suffered a steep drop. Local liquor sales have grown by 8 percent since 2005, while sales of imported spirits have dramatically declined. The taxes have the greatest effect on Scotch whiskey and Spanish brandy, which account for the largest proportion of liquor imported from the EU.

"This long-running problem has prevented EU exporters from competing fairly in the Philippine market, and has led to a sharp decrease in imports of European spirits," EU Trade Commissioner Catherine Ashton said in a statement. "I hope that we can still find an amicable solution to this issue through the consultation process."

Brussels says the tax policy violates Article III:2 of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade 1994. This provision forbids WTO Members from applying internal charges on foreign goods at a rate higher than those imposed on domestic products.

But Manila sees the issue differently. The Philippines' top envoy to the WTO said that the tax differences are meant to help indigenous Filipino communities that produce liquors from raw materials like coconut and sugarcane.

"Imported spirits are definitely in a different price range than the spirits they are complaining about," Philippine Ambassador Manuel Teehankee told the Associated Press. "The law provides for

certain assistance for indigenous communities using low-cost products."

European spirits manufacturers welcomed the case. The Scotch Whisky Association (SWA), which represents 95 percent of whiskey from Scotland, has seen exports to the Philippines fall from £15 million in 2003 to £3 million in 2008. "The tax regime has undoubtedly had a depressing effect on Scottish whiskey exports," SWA international affairs manager Martin Bell told Bloomberg. "There's a long line of WTO case law that makes it clear that you must tax all spirits drinks similarly. That's clearly not the case in the Philippines."

The Philippines is one of the largest markets for spirits in the Asia-Pacific region. In 2007, the International Wine & Spirits Record estimated that approximately 2 percent of spirits consumed in the Philippines were imports.

ICTSD reporting; "EU files trade complaint at WTO over Philippine taxes on imports of European spirits," THE LOS ANGELES TIMES, 29 July 2009; "EU Said to Plan WTO Case Over Philippine Liquor Taxes (Update1)," BLOOMBERG, 28 July 2009.

EVENTS & RESOURCES

Events

Coming up: 6 – 12 August

10-12 August, New Delhi, India. THIRD RENEWABLE ENERGY INDIA 2009 EXPO. The Third Renewable Energy India 2009 Expo is India's largest event on Clean 'n' Green Energy featuring Bio, Hydro, Solar, Wind, Cogeneration, Geothermal and Energy efficiency sectors. Organised by Exhibitions India Private Limited, the expo will to provide information for Indian industries and offer opportunities for global players in the Indian market. The expo will bring together new technologies from around the world. Participants will meet other professionals, learn the latest technology trends, cultivate business

relationships, and prepare for the growth of renewable energy in India. For registration information, visit

http://www.biztradeshows.com/tradefairquery.html?id=vreg&compid=2qsMnw==&eve=9635&tp&e_o_name=3rd%20Renewable%20Energy%20India%202009%20Expo&orgcompid=5981&ctry=IN.

10-14 August, Bonn, Germany. INFORMAL MEETINGS OF THE AWG-LCA AND AWG-KP. Informal meetings of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Co-operative Action (AWG-LCA) and Ad Hoc Working Group Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol (AWG-KP) are scheduled for mid-August. Parties will discuss future environmental commitments for industrialized countries ahead of the major climate summit in Copenhagen in December. Observers are invited. For more information contact: UNFCCC Secretariat at secretariat@unfccc.int or visit <http://unfccc.int/>.

WTO Events

There are no events at the WTO for the next three weeks, as the organisation is on its summer break.

Other upcoming events

16-22 August, Stockholm, Sweden. 2009 WORLD WATER WEEK. Organised by the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI), the 2009 edition of this annual event will focus on the theme: "Responding to Global Change: Accessing Water for the Common Good." This event will bring together experts, practitioners, decision makers and leaders from around the globe to exchange ideas, foster new thinking and develop solutions. By harnessing and linking best practices, scientific understanding, policy insight and decision-making, the program aims to transcend rhetoric and provide real answers to the world's water-related problems. This event features a comprehensive agenda of workshops, seminars and side events that undertake in-depth examinations of the most critical issues, complemented by prize ceremonies, field trips and events that provide an abundance of opportunities for the professional networking. For more

information, visit <http://www.worldwaterweek.org/>.

21-26 August, Daejeon, Korea. 2009 TUNZA INTERNATIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCE ON THE ENVIRONMENT. The main theme of the conference is "Climate Change – Our Challenge." It is expected to attract over 200 young people worldwide, aged 15 to 24. Discussions will focus on how to reduce carbon footprints, green jobs for youth, the impact of disasters and conflicts on the environment, and sustainable lifestyles. The conference will record commitments made by youth, develop and propose regional action plans, and elect the Tunza Youth Advisory Council. A youth statement on climate change is also expected to emerge and will be presented to the UNFCCC Copenhagen Conference in December 2009. For more information contact: UNEP Division of Communications and Public Information at children.youth@unep.org, or http://www.unep.org/tunza/youth/conferences/events/TIYC2009/TIYC2009_FORM.asp

23-28 August, Nairobi, Kenya. SECOND WORLD CONGRESS ON AGROFORESTRY. The Second World Congress on Agroforestry will assess opportunities to leverage scientific agroforestry in promoting sustainable land use worldwide. The overall theme of the Congress is "Agroforestry - The Future of Global Land Use." Plenary, symposia, concurrent sessions, and poster sessions will be organised around three major topics: food security and livelihoods, conservation and rehabilitation of natural resources, and policies and institutions. The conference is organised by ICRAF-The World Agroforestry Centre, in collaboration with UNEP and the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) of the University of Florida. For more information, email wca2...@cgiar.org or visit <http://www.worldagroforestry.org/wca2009/>.

28-30 September, Geneva, Switzerland. WTO PUBLIC FORUM 2009. Under the heading "Global problems, global solutions: towards better global governance," the World Trade Organization (WTO) Public Forum 2009 will gather civil society representatives, governments and international organisations to discuss the role of the multilateral trading system and the Doha

Round of negotiations within the context of the current global economic crisis. For more information, send an email to publicforum2009@wto.org, or see the event's website

http://www.wto.org/english/forums_e/ngo_e/forum09_background_e.htm

Resources

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS AND THE LIFE SCIENCE INDUSTRIES: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE, SECOND EDITION. Graham Dutfield, August 2009. This book is an account of the co-evolution of the patent system and the life science industries since the mid-19th century. The pharmaceutical industries have their origins in advances in synthetic chemistry and in natural products research. Both approaches to drug discovery and business have shaped patent law, as have the lobbying activities of the firms involved and their supporters in the legal profession. In turn, patent law has impacted on the life sciences industries. Compared to the first edition, which told the story for the first time, the present edition focuses more on specific businesses, products and technologies, including Bayer, Pfizer, GlaxoSmithKline, aspirin, penicillin, monoclonal antibodies and polymerase chain reaction. The present edition also looks into the future, addressing new areas such as stem cell research and synthetic biology, which promises to enable scientists to "invent" life forms from scratch. The book is available for purchase from World Scientific Pub. Co., Inc. <http://www.worldscibooks.com/popsci/6917.html>

US AGRICULTURAL SALES TO CUBA: CERTAIN ECONOMIC EFFECTS OF US RESTRICTIONS (AN UPDATE). Jonathan R. Coleman, Office of Industries, United States International Trade Commission, June 2009. This paper examines the recent focus by US policymakers to lift certain restrictions on trade and travel between the United States and Cuba. The author describes trends in US agricultural exports to Cuba during 2000–08, summarises the factors that currently influence the competitiveness of US agricultural products in the

Cuban market, and provides updated estimates of the effects of lifting the restrictions on export financing terms and travel to Cuba. Even though the United States is the most competitive supplier for many products to Cuba in terms of price, quality, and delivery, the author puts forward, Cuban buyers consider such non-commercial factors as diversifying import suppliers and strengthening strategic geopolitical relationships. This paper provides an abbreviated update of a 2007 US International Trade Commission fact-finding study. For a copy of the paper, visit http://www.usitc.gov/publications/332/working_papers/ID-22.pdf.

THE STATE OF PUBLIC FINANCES: A CROSS-COUNTRY FISCAL MONITOR. Mark Horton, Manmohan Kumar, and Paolo Mauro, International Monetary Fund, June 2009. This paper, issued by the IMF's Fiscal Affairs Department, focuses on the policy response to the global crisis, covering macro-fiscal indicators, measures to support financial and other sectors, effects of fiscal policy on the real economy, evolution of market indicators of fiscal risk, and actions undertaken by countries to ensure medium-term fiscal solvency. The authors note that among the G20, fiscal deficits in both 2009 and 2010 are expected to be 5.5 percent of GDP above their pre-crisis (2007) levels. Fiscal balances are expected to improve over the next few years as the global economy recovers, but the outlook for the public debt is more worrying in many countries. The authors argue that fiscal policy should continue to support economic activity until economic recovery has taken hold and that additional discretionary stimulus may be needed in 2010. For a copy of the report, visit <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/spn/2009/spn0921.pdf>.