



# Bridges Weekly Trade News Digest

*Weekly trade news from a sustainable development perspective*

Volume 13 · Number 9, 11 March 2009

## LEAD STORIES

Fight over Generic Drug Seizure Takes Centre Stage at TRIPS Council Meeting..... 1

## IN BRIEF

World Bank Predicts Steepest Drop in Trade in 80 Years..... 4

Kirk, Pledging Strict Enforcement, Looks Set to Take Top US Trade Job..... 4

China Boosts Agriculture Spending in Face of Global Crisis..... 5

MEPs Call for EU-India FTA to be Finalised Next Year..... 6

## WTO In BRIEF

WTO to Hear Mexican Complaint over US Tuna Ban..... 7

WTO Calls on Brazil to Focus on Market Competition..... 7

Canada Threatens WTO Suit as EU Edges toward Seal Ban..... 8

## EVENTS & RESOURCES

Events..... 9

Resources..... 11

Bridges Weekly Trade News Digest© is published by the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD), an independent, not-for-profit organisation based at Ch. de Balexert 7, 1219 Geneva, Switzerland, tel: (+41) 22-917-8492; fax: 917-8093.

To subscribe to Bridges Weekly Trade News Digest or access back issues, visit <http://ictsd.net/news/bridgesweekly/>.

Bridges Weekly Trade News Digest is made possible through the generous support of the Government of the United Kingdom (DFID) and ICTSD's core donors including the Governments of Finland, Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden; Christian Aid (UK) and NOVIB (NL). Bridges Weekly also benefits from support for the Bridges series of publications from donors including the Rockefeller Foundation and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

Excerpts from Bridges Weekly Trade News Digest© may be used in other publications with appropriate citation. Comments and suggestions are welcomed and should be directed to the Editor or the Director.

Contributors to this issue of Bridges Weekly Trade News Digest© are Andrew Aziz, Ammad Bahalim, Paige McClanahan and Meredith Payton. Editor: Paige McClanahan. Director: Ricardo Meléndez-Ortiz.

## LEAD STORIES

### Fight over Generic Drug Seizure Takes Centre Stage at TRIPS Council Meeting

Developing countries ramped up their criticisms of the EU last week, saying that its recent seizure of a shipment of generic drugs en route from India to Brazil violated trade rules on intellectual property and had significant implications for the availability of affordable medicines in poor countries.

The criticisms were made at a meeting of the WTO's Council on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS Council) in Geneva on 3 and 4 March. Participants at the gathering also broached long-standing disagreements on three issues: extending to all products the strong protection currently accorded to geographical indications of wines and spirits (GI extension); making it mandatory for patent applicants to disclose the origin of any genetic resources and/or associated traditional knowledge involved in their inventions; and the establishment of a register for geographical indications (GIs) of wines and spirits.

### Brazil, India sound off on drug seizure

But the most heated exchanges of the meeting concerned the drug seizure, which has been generating controversy since it first made headlines in January (see Bridges Weekly, 28 January 2009, <http://ictsd.net/i/news/bridgesweekly/38841/>).

The tiff began in early December, when Dutch customs officials confiscated 500 kilograms of the drug losartan potassium that was docked in a port in the Netherlands while in transit to Brazil. The Dutch authorities held the shipment for 36 days before releasing it to the exporter, who sent the

drugs back to India, where they had been manufactured.

At a meeting of the WTO's General Council in early February, Brazil and India chastised the EU for confiscating the drugs, which are used to treat high blood pressure, calling the seizure unjustifiable and charging that it had prevented Brazilian citizens from obtaining life-saving medications (see Bridges Weekly, 4 February 2009, <http://ictsd.net/i/news/bridgesweekly/39772/>).

"Measures of this nature have an adverse systemic impact on legitimate trade of generic medicines, South-South commerce, national public health policies and the principle of universal access to medicines," the Indian representative told delegates on Tuesday.

Brazil asserted that, far from being an exceptional case, as the EU had argued in front of the WTO's General Council in February, incidents like the December drug seizure "occur rather frequently." The Dutch authorities had no right to seize the drugs, the Brazilian representative said, because the medicine in question is not patent-protected in India, the country of origin, or in Brazil, the shipment's destination. Whether the drugs were under patent in the country of transit was "utterly irrelevant," the Brazilian representative said, calling the seizure an "excessive and inappropriate interpretation" of intellectual property law.

"Not only is this a violation of the WTO disciplines, but it runs counter to the spirit of everything developing countries negotiated under TRIPS to get the flexibilities that would allow public health concerns of developing countries to be taken into consideration, to be protected," Roberto Azevedo, the Brazilian ambassador to the WTO, said after the meeting, Reuters reported. Brazil had not ruled out bringing a WTO dispute on the matter, Azevedo said.

Several international health NGOs joined Brazil and India in censuring the EU's actions.

"In order to avoid more wrongful seizures of legal generic medicines in transit through Europe, the European Commission must immediately review and modify its regulation," Sophie Bloeman from Health Action International said.

She pointed that the EU was demanding similar IP enforcement provisions in its free trade agreements with developing countries. "This could prove to be disastrous for access to medicines in their regions," Bloeman said.

But the EU, stressing that it has long been committed to helping developing countries access low-cost medicines, said that its policies are in line with international rules.

"Many countries actually should be grateful to European customs, who most likely have saved lives and certainly in developing countries, because fake medicines are more spread in developing countries than developed countries," Luc Devigne, the top EU official at the meeting, told Reuters.

Devigne added that the EU's tight control of drug shipments was fully justified by the "significant and worrying level" of the current trade in illegal medicines. In 2007, Devigne noted, 40 percent of the 76 million counterfeit and pirated goods that were seized by EU customs officials were intercepted in transit. He also emphasised that the Dutch authorities had "temporarily detained" – not seized – the drugs in question.

The dispute highlights a potential rift between WTO rules and EU law. A regulation issued by the European Council in 2003 authorises customs officials "to destroy goods found to infringe an intellectual property right or dispose of them outside commercial channels" without providing compensation "of any sort." The provision applies even if the goods in question are only in transit through EU territory.

But EU lawmakers, in a letter to the European trade and customs commissioners dated 6 March, called for the existing regulation to be amended to prevent it from "disrupting legitimate trade." "Seizures of generic drugs within the EU are becoming an increasing widespread problem," they added, noting that Dutch authorities had seized another shipment of medicines, this time HIV/AIDS drugs en route to Nigeria from India, at Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport in December.

At the multilateral level, the existing intellectual property architecture (which includes the WTO's

Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, or TRIPS Agreement) holds that patents are territorial and protected according to each country's national system. Losartan potassium is patented in Europe, where DuPont and Merck Sharp & Dohme own the patent and marketing rights to the drug. But the medicine is not patented in India, where the drugs were manufactured, or in Brazil, where they were to be sold.

A group of NGOs sent a letter to WTO Director-General Pascal Lamy, calling on him to help facilitate a compromise between the opposing parties.

In a written response delivered last week, Lamy signalled that he would be willing to serve as a mediator in the dispute, should the countries involved ask for his help.

"I understand that the matter is...being further explored at the bilateral level between the Members concerned," Lamy wrote. "I nevertheless remain ready to help Members who require my assistance to find a solution to a disagreement with other Members, if this disagreement were to persist."

### **Discussion continues on GIs, TRIPS amendment**

Moving on to the regular business of the TRIPS Council, delegates discussed a number of issues on which talks have largely stalled recently.

A number of developing and least-developed countries, joined by Switzerland and the EU, emphasised the high and growing support among the WTO Membership for their proposal, presented last summer (in document TN/C/W/52), to establish a GI register, extend GI protections, and adopt an amendment to the TRIPS Agreement to require disclosure of origin requirement (see Bridges Weekly, 23 July 2008, <http://ictsd.net/i/ip/13903/>).

The EU, supported by Switzerland, pointed out that more than two thirds of WTO Members now support that proposal. Thus, the Council should now move to text-based negotiations, they said. So far the three TRIPS issues touched on in last summer's proposal have been discussed

separately. Only the register is officially part of the Doha Round 'single undertaking' at the WTO, but very little - if any - progress has occurred in the talks. Informal consultations on the GI extension and the disclosure requirement have revealed deep divisions on whether negotiations on either area are even necessary.

Tanzania, speaking on behalf of the group of least-developed countries, or LDCs, and Egypt, speaking on behalf of the African group, said that they were disappointed that Members had been unwilling to introduce requirements on disclosure origin, prior informed consent and compliance with access and benefit sharing (ABS) systems into the patent system. Developing countries have long insisted that such provisions are necessary to ensure the equitable sharing of benefits from genetic resources.

The United States, supported by Argentina, Australia, Canada, Costa Rica, Japan, New Zealand and Taiwan, reaffirmed its long-held position that a disclosure requirement would stifle innovation and be ineffective in stopping biopiracy and the misappropriation of genetic resources and traditional knowledge. There is no need to amend the TRIPS Agreement, they argued; rather, Members should rely on national patent systems once these would be fully installed worldwide.

Moving on to other items on the Council's agenda, Ukraine provided the Council with an overview of its intellectual property laws; Tonga's review was postponed to the end of 2009. The review of legislation in Cuba, Fiji, Grenada, Saint Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Suriname is still outstanding. China notified the Third Amendment of its Patent Law of December 2008, Morocco its new legislation on GIs, and Slovakia as well as Switzerland some amendments to their IP Laws.

The meeting of the TRIPS Council concluded with the nomination of Karen Tan, Singapore's ambassador to the WTO, as the new chairperson. Tan will succeed the current chair, Denis Francis, the WTO ambassador from Trinidad and Tobago. ICTSD reporting; "EU, developing states clash over generic drug swoop," REUTERS, 4 March 2009; "Dutch seizure of HIV drugs highlights

patent friction,” THE FINANCIAL TIMES, 4 March 2009.

---

## IN BRIEF

---

---

### World Bank Predicts Steepest Drop in Trade in 80 Years

---

World trade is set to register its first drop since 1982 and its biggest decline in 80 years, the World Bank said in a report released this week.

Thus far, some of the sectors that have been most affected include urban-based exporters, construction, mining and manufacturing. The sharpest losses are expected to be felt in East Asia.

The crisis will have significant and long-lasting implications in poorer parts of the world. Indeed, developing countries currently face a ‘financing gap’ of between US\$ 270 billion and US\$ 700 billion, the World Bank said, stressing that levels of funding that have been pledged by international financial institutions would not be able to meet poor countries’ needs this year. If the ongoing economic crisis meets some of the more pessimistic predictions, “unmet financing needs will be enormous.”

Such an outcome could have long-term implications for developing countries. The economic slowdown is likely to push people who are hovering on the brink of poverty into a more serious degree of deprivation, the report warned, and developing countries will struggle to cope with the increased numbers of their citizens who need government support.

Out of the world’s 116 developing countries, 94 have experienced a slowdown in economic growth.

“Preventing an economic catastrophe in developing countries is important for global efforts to overcome this crisis. We need investments in safety nets, infrastructure, and small and medium size companies to create jobs and to avoid social and political unrest,” World

Bank President Robert Zoellick said upon the release of the report.

The analysis was drawn up for a meeting of finance ministers from the Group of 20 world economic powers to be held on Saturday.

In similarly gloomy economic news, the head of the International Monetary Fund yesterday told a group of African leaders in Dar Es Salaam that they should brace for what will likely be the worst year for the economy since 1945.

“The IMF expects global growth to slow below zero this year, the worst performance in most of our lifetimes,” IMF chief Dominique Strauss-Kahn said on Tuesday. “Continuing deleveraging by world financial institutions, combined with the collapse in consumer and business confidence is depressing domestic demand across the world.”

ICTSD reporting; “IMF: World economy to shrink for first time in 60 years in ‘great recession’,” THE GUARDIAN, 10 March 2009.

---

### Kirk, Pledging Strict Enforcement, Looks Set to Take Top US Trade Job

---

Ron Kirk, the former mayor of Dallas, Texas, appears destined to become the next US Trade Representative following a positive hearing before the US Senate Finance Committee on 9 March.

Kirk’s bid had run into problems in early March when the vetting process turned up tax errors that had the former Dallas mayor paying US\$10,000 in back taxes.

However, the hearing appeared to dismiss the issue as unintentional and irrelevant to his ability to function as USTR. Committee Chairman Max Baucus made note of the issue, saying that Kirk had made “regrettable, but I believe, honest mistakes.”

At the hearing, which was noted for its brevity, Kirk confirmed that his agenda would focus more on enforcing rules governing already established

trade deals, rather than actively pursuing new agreements. "I do not come to this job with 'deal fever'," Kirk commented, alluding to the multitude of deals seen under the Bush Administration. "We will not do trade deals just for the sake of doing deals."

And while ongoing free trade negotiations with Panama and Colombia still appear to be on track, the US-South Korea trade deal could be on shaky ground with the potential new USTR. "The agreement as it is just simply isn't fair, and if we don't get that right we'll be prepared to step away from that," Kirk said. Pundits say re-thinking the deal would help the Obama government ease pressure from Detroit over foreign competition in the domestic auto market. However, South Korea has said in the past that it will not renegotiate the pact.

Observers say that as a well-known free trader, Kirk faced little opposition from Republican Senators on Monday. Kirk underscored his position on free trade at the hearing, saying that he wants to work with US trading partners to move the long-delayed WTO Doha Round forward and says he supports the initiative by the US Congress to establish 'referees' at the WTO to help enforce trade rules.

Kirk also noted that, with him at the helm of trade issues, the US would put diplomatic pressure on China to champion free trade and shift its economy away from a reliance on exports and manufacturing and. The US would also urge the WTO to push Beijing on this front, Kirk said.

The Senate Finance Committee is expected to hold a vote on Kirk's appointment on 12 March. A yes vote would set the stage for a full Senate vote on the matter. Kirk is now widely expected to win approval on both occasions.

Kirk's nomination was announced in December by then-President-elect Barack Obama (see Bridges Weekly, 16 January 2009, <http://ictsd.net/i/trade-and-sustainable-development-agenda/37926/>).

"U.S. panel to vote Thursday on USTR-nominee Kirk," REUTERS, 10 March 2009; "Former Dallas Mayor Ron Kirk breezes through Senate

confirmation hearing," DALLAS NEWS, 10 March 2009; "Obama's trade pointman vows strict enforcement," AFP, 10 March 2009; "Trade Nominee Stresses Rules Over Deals," THE ASSOCIATED PRESS, 10 March 2009.

---

## China Boosts Agriculture Spending in Face of Global Crisis

China's response to the global financial crisis, a stimulus package worth US\$ 585 billion over two years, includes a five-fold increase in spending on agriculture, boosting it from US\$18 billion to US\$106 billion. The government is expected to spend nearly US\$ 26 billion to stock commodities such as grains and edible oils.

China's rural population of nearly 700 million depends heavily on agriculture as a source of income and livelihood. Although the Chinese economy has grown at nearly double digit rates for a decade, rural income has grown by only 6 to 8 percent. Similarly, growth in agricultural output, for example in grains, has not kept pace with wider growth, ranging between 0.7 and 9 percent in the last five years.

Although Chinese agricultural output has risen, some experts attribute the gains to bumper harvests rather than underlying improvements in domestic agricultural productivity. Some in the private sector, such as Liu Yonghao, chairman of the New Hope Group, China's largest agricultural producer, believe that China must "raise rural productivity before we can really raise rural consumption."

Raising rural consumption has been an important component of Beijing's plans to keep the economy growing. To that end, measures on subsidies for electronic appliances and other goods have been included in the stimulus package. The government has also made plans to address unemployment, as income earned by migrant workers contributes more than half of the income of the entire rural population, according to Song Hongyuan, director of the Research Center for the Rural Economy in the Ministry of Agriculture. Nearly 10 million migrant workers have already

lost their jobs as a result of the global economic contraction.

Food security concerns as well as declines in rural incomes are informing Chinese policy on agriculture. The stimulus package contains many provisions on the use of renewable energy, but it is unclear whether current intensive farming practises will change. According to Lin Erda of the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences, agricultural yields will decline by 14 percent to 23 percent by 2050 if water issues and environmental degradation are not addressed.

China, among WTO Members is a relatively low subsidizer of agriculture. Its Percent Producer Support Estimate, an OECD measure that aims to capture agricultural subsidies, has hovered around 7 percent in recent years. Meanwhile, major developed country agricultural producers such as the US and EU have averaged 18 and 33 percent, respectively. Heavy subsidizers such as Switzerland and Norway have figures nearing 70 percent.

The manner in which the Chinese stimulus package is used may be more important than its scale. The right set of policies could avert a future food crisis and "green" domestic agricultural productive capacity. However, a misstep could lead to lower employment and income in rural China.

ICTSD reporting.

---

### **MEPs Call for EU-India FTA to be Finalised Next Year**

The European Parliament's Trade Committee wants to see a free trade agreement between the EU and India finalised before the end of 2010, according to report from the committee that was released last week. The document expressed the lawmakers' disappointment with the slow pace of the talks between the two countries.

Negotiations toward a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) were launched in 2007, but some hurdles have arisen in the talks, including on intellectual property rights and

liberalisation in the services sector (see Bridges Weekly, 5 March 2008, <http://ictsd.net/i/news/bridgesweekly/11087/>).

The EU Committee on Foreign Affairs emphasised the importance of finalising the agreement, stressing that the EU-India relationship was "a strategic partnership... firmly based not only on close economic relations but also on shared values of democracy and human rights, fundamental freedoms, pluralism, the rule of law and multilateralism."

The EU, which accounts for more than a fifth of India's merchandise exports, is the South Asian giant's largest trading partner. If concluded, the free trade agreement, or FTA, is expected to add further trade and investment and business opportunities. The deal would also slash tariffs on goods and services travelling between the two trade partners.

But future progress in the talks has been hindered by a handful of non-trade issues – namely, the treatment of religious minorities, human rights and democracy issues among others. Some members of the European Parliament (MEPs) put forward a proposal in December that would insert human rights and democracy issues into the CEPA talks. The proposal also called for an international investigation into alleged unmarked mass graves in Jammu and Kashmir.

But India is not open to such an expansion of the agenda of the talks. "These are ploys to put pressure on India through non-trade issues at a time when the global slowdown is impacting them," said an official close to the talks, as reported by the Daily Times of Pakistan.

The MEPs' report also stressed the importance of assuring that the agreement does not limit Indians' access to essential medicines or obstruct any of New Delhi's development goals.

"The Committee of Development stresses the need to ensure that the Free Trade Agreement would not restrict powers needed by the Indian Government to address poverty and inequality," the Committee said in a statement.



The report from the European Parliament also called on the European Commission to help Indian producers meet European import standards.

ICTSD reporting; "EU committee urges expediting free trade pact with India," SINDH TODAY, 5 March 2009; "India's trade talks with EU may collapse," THE DAILY TIMES (PAKISTAN), 6 March 2009.

---

## WTO IN BRIEF

---

### WTO to Hear Mexican Complaint over US Tuna Ban

The WTO's Dispute Settlement Body will consider a complaint from Mexico that US rules on 'dolphin-safe' tuna unfairly discriminate against its exports, according to an agenda for the 20 March meeting of the DSB that was released Tuesday. Mexico City believes it has a 90 percent chance of winning the suit, the Mexican news agency Notimex reported.

US law dictates that the 'dolphin-safe' label cannot be used on tuna caught in encircling, or 'purse-seine', nets, which often trap dolphins along with the fish. Mexico, however, contends that its fishing practices are fully sustainable and comply with the guidelines accepted by the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission, of which the US is a member.

A 2007 ruling by the US Court of Appeals banned the import of tuna carrying the seal of approval of the International Dolphin Conservation Programme (IDCP). The case was brought by an environmental group, which sued the Secretary of Commerce after he concluded that there was not enough evidence to prove that the use of purse seine nets, which are allowed by the IDCP, harmed depleted dolphin stocks in the Eastern Tropical Pacific Ocean. The court ruled that this decision was 'arbitrary and capricious', and overturned it.

Mexico asserts that the US restrictions on tuna imports violate several WTO rules, including national treatment and most-favoured nation obligations. The country also claims that the measures have forced more than a third of its tuna fleet to shut down.

"The greatest strength we have is our compliance with what had been agreed upon on safeguarding dolphins and improving our tuna fishing technology to the point that we have practically zero dolphin bycatch, as is stipulated by fisheries norms," Ramon Corral Avila, the head of Mexico's National Aquaculture and Fishing Commission told Notimex.

The tuna issue "is more a commercial problem than a biological one. It is a zero-tariff barrier where we have a free trade treaty," he added.

Mexico requested consultations with the US on the matter in October of last year (see Bridges Weekly, 30 October 2008, <http://ictsd.net/i/news/bridgesweekly/32386/>). The consultations were held in December but did not lead to a resolution.

The dispute dates back to 1991, when Mexico first objected to the US embargo of Mexican tuna products under its Marine Mammal Protection Act.

ICTSD reporting; "WTO to look into US rules on 'dolphin-safe' tuna," AP, 10 March 2009; "Expectations high in US tuna dispute," NOTIMEX, 11 March 2009.

---

### WTO Calls on Brazil to Focus on Market Competition

---

Despite recent economic reforms, Brazil should promote market competition and guard against protectionism to help sustain its economic growth, a WTO review of Brazil's trade policies concluded this week. To that end, Brasilia should by reduce import prohibitions and help ensure greater predictability for foreign investment and trade, the report said.

The Trade Policy Review Body, which met 9 and 11 March to review the report, praised Brazil for continued strong output growth, declining unemployment rates, growing diversified exports, and intensively diversifying its export markets. Thanks in part to such reforms, the Brazilian economy grew at an average rate of 4.5 percent per year between 2004 and 2007, the WTO said in the review, and posted an impressive 6.3 percent growth rate in the 12 months leading up to September 2008. Nevertheless, inflation and high interest rates pose a problem for Brazil's potential growth and should be closely monitored and controlled, the WTO cautioned.

Brazil is the world's tenth-largest economy in terms of GDP and represents one of the most dynamic traders in the world. Brasilia has long regarded the multilateral trading system as a strong priority in its foreign trade policy, the WTO said.

Brazil is the world's second-largest producer of ethanol and the leading exporter of the biofuel, supplying the United States, Central America, Caribbean countries, and the Netherlands. Since 2003, production of ethanol fuels has increased by an average 11.7 percent per year; the WTO estimates that production reached almost 27 million cubic metres in 2008. Between 2002 and 2007, the market price of ethanol jumped by 45 percent, the report noted. Brasilia de-regulated ethanol prices in 1998.

In its response to the review, the European Union raised concerns about trade barriers in the country and encouraged Brazil to align its trade policies with international standards.

"Unfortunately, not much is known about Brazil's regional trade policy. As we all know, transparency is a key pillar within the WTO, and we urge Brazil to comply with its transparency obligations in terms of WTO notification of its regional trade initiatives," the EU Trade Commission said Monday.

The WTO examines each of its Member's trade policies at regular intervals; this was Brazil's fifth Trade Policy Review.

ICTSD reporting.

---

## Canada Threatens WTO Suit as EU Edges toward Seal Ban

A committee of European lawmakers voted last week to ban all seal imports into the EU on the grounds that the hunt is inhumane, provoking a strong reaction from the Canadian government, which maintains that such a ban would cripple a key domestic industry.

"We have told [the EU] repeatedly that we will exercise all our options, Canadian fisheries minister Gail Shea said in an interview with Embassy Magazine on Monday. "And if that means going to the WTO, so be it."

But the ban, which would prohibit the import, export, or even transport of any seal products in any of the EU's 27 member countries, still faces some hurdles to implementation. The full European Parliament is set to vote on the proposed embargo on 1 April; EU governments also have to approve the measure before it takes effect.

Draft legislation proposed by the European Commission in July 2008 allowed two exemptions, or 'derogations' in trade parlance, to the ban: one for seals hunted by Inuit communities, and the other for seals killed in countries that had proved to the EU that their hunts were conducted in a humane manner.

But EU officials voted down the second exemption this week on the grounds that commercial seal hunts are "inherently inhumane" and effective monitoring of the practice is "impossible."

The Inuit exemption was upheld, but only for products that are traded "as part of a non-commercial exchanges between Inuit communities for cultural, educational or ceremonial purposes," the draft legislation said.

Ottawa reacted harshly to the results of Monday's vote.

"It just exemplifies that despite our best efforts, the Europeans are still uninformed and they're being led by what amounts to politics and



emotions on this issue - and not the facts,” fisheries minister Shea said in an interview with The Chronicle Herald.

“The Europeans defined a problem, we addressed the problem, but they’re still voting for the ban. What it tells me is that their voting was to stop the Canadian seal hunt. Period. That’s why I think the Europeans are in an area that is outside their jurisdiction, here.”

But animal rights activists welcomed the move.

“In our opinion, [the exemption] probably would have allowed Canada to continue trade with the EU in seal products,” said Rebecca Aldworth, director of Humane Society International Canada.

“We knew this would allow countries to sanitise their hunts on paper, while essentially the cruelty in the field would go unchecked.”

Anticipating the EU’s vote, a Canadian lawmaker, Liberal senator Mac Harb, introduced legislation on Tuesday to completely ban the seal hunt in Canada.

“In the face of disappearing markets for seal products and overwhelming international opposition, it is time for Canada to recognise that we can’t resuscitate this dying industry any longer,” Harb said in a statement.

But the draft legislations went nowhere, as not a single other senator supported it. Conservative Senator Fabian Manning called Harb’s bill “appalling” and said it would “jeopardise the rights of our sealers to provide a livelihood for their families.”

ICTSD reporting; “Canadian senator makes futile bid to ban seal hunt,” AFP, 4 March 2009; “WTO retaliation threatened as EU seal ban draws closer,” EMBASSY, 4 March 2009; “EU edges toward banning seal hunt products,” CHRONICLE HERALD, 3 March 2009.

## EVENTS & RESOURCES

### Events

If you would like to submit an event, please email [bridges\\_weekly@ictsd.ch](mailto:bridges_weekly@ictsd.ch).

#### Coming up this week

12-13 March 2009, Manila, Philippines. LAUNCH OF THE CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT FACILITY FOR DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS. This conference, sponsored by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), aims to support countries in the Asia and the Pacific region in their efforts to improve development effectiveness while implementing the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA). This event will facilitate two days of peer-exchange and learning among governments, organisations and individuals from across the Asia Pacific, and attempt launch and finalise the Capacity Development Facility for Development Effectiveness (CDDE), which supports innovations and provides long-term capacity development support for country level implementation of the Paris Declaration and the AAA up to 2011 for improved development effectiveness. For more information please visit <http://www.adb.org/Documents/Events/2009/Development-Effectiveness/default.asp>

16-22 March, Istanbul, Turkey. 5TH WORLD WATER FORUM: BRIDGING DIVIDES FOR WATER. This forum will be an open, multi-stakeholder process that aims to raise awareness and understanding of water issues and propose concrete solutions addressing global challenges. Organised every three years by the World Water Council, this forum, which was last held Mexico City in March 2006, focusses on putting water firmly on the international agenda. For more information please refer to <http://www.worldwatercouncil.org/index.php?id=1842>.

#### WTO Events

An updated list of forthcoming WTO meetings is posted

[http://www.wto.org/meets\\_public/meets\\_e.pdf](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.

13 March: Committee on Trade and Development

18+19 March: Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade

20 March: Dispute Settlement Body

24 March: Council for Trade in Goods

25+27 March: Trade Policy Review Body- Fiji

### Other Upcoming Events

19-21 March, Taj Chandigarh, India. INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT. This conference, conducted by the National Institute of Technology, aims to address the challenges in the emerging areas of energy and environment to achieve sustainable development. The Conference, EnviroEnergy 2009, shall provide a forum for academicians, technologists, entrepreneurs and policy makers to exchange of concepts and emerging technologies in the fields of energy and environment. It shall include a highly focussed technical programme consisting of presentations on regular and specialised tracks at the intersection of business and technology; exhibits of new products, technologies and solutions from academia and industry will also be on offer. For more information visit <http://www.enviroenergy2009.org/>.

26-27 March 2009, Cape Town, South Africa. THIRD ANNUAL AFRICA TRADE AND INVESTMENT CONFERENCE. Exporta's 3rd Annual Africa Trade & Investment Conference is an international event attended by the senior decision-makers of the trade and export industry. With a consistent year-on-year growth in average

GDP, the African continent represents the final frontier for intrepid investors looking for long-term gains. Moreover, the return to traditional banking activities like trade, structured commodity and export finance mean that deals are becoming bankable that were not just a year ago. This conference looks at the opportunities that the current climate is creating, and the challenges that are still discouraging potential risk-takers from entering the fray. For more information please visit

<http://www.exportagroup.com/conferences/3rd-Annual-Africa-Trade-&-Investment-Conference-157/>.

30-31 March 2009, Auckland, New Zealand. ELEVENTH ANNUAL STRATEGIC & SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT CONFERENCE. Senior management are increasingly looking to the supply chain, and in particular the procurement function, to drive down costs while at the same time to find new and innovative ways to become sustainable. Sustainability has moved from being a nebulous social responsibility concept to being a driver of competitive advantage, a key marketing tool, and a method of extracting new efficiencies from your supply chain. This conference will look at how sustainable procurement can lead to overall operational performance. For more information please refer to <http://www.conferenz.co.nz/11th-annual-strategic-sustainable-procurement-conference.html>.

27 April- 1 May, Geneva, Switzerland. COMMITTEE ON DEVELOPMENT AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY (CDIP): THIRD SESSION. WIPO's technical assistance programmes and activities are designed, formulated and implemented in close consultation and cooperation with the countries concerned in order to respond to their specific needs. The assessment of needs and country demands will be reviewed with the country and the plan updated every biennium. Mechanisms will be developed to dovetail and integrate them with national plans. Over time, project design frameworks will be standardised for WIPO to ensure full project definition and description, quality control and approval processes, objective setting and monitoring activities, risk identification and management, performance and results definition

and appraisal. For more information please refer to  
[http://www.wipo.int/meetings/en/details.jsp?meeting\\_id=17382](http://www.wipo.int/meetings/en/details.jsp?meeting_id=17382)

[http://people.brandeis.edu/~cbown/global\\_ad/vox-03-05-2009.html](http://people.brandeis.edu/~cbown/global_ad/vox-03-05-2009.html)

---

## Resources

HANDBOOK ON TRADE AND THE ENVIRONMENT. By Kevin P. Gallagher and Edward Elgar, 2009. The volume will serve as a guide for scholars new to the field as well as students and policy-makers needing a quick reference to the research on the interface between trade and environment. Edited by GDAE Senior Researcher and Boston University professor Kevin P. Gallagher, this handbook is divided into three sections: trade and environmental quality, trade and environmental politics, and trade and environmental policy. The volume also addresses the extent to which national environmental policy and/or global environmental agreements clash with the emerging rules of the World Trade Organization and whether such environmental policies hinder export competitiveness. For more information and for ordering see: <http://www.ase.tufts.edu/gdae/Pubs/rp/TradeEnvironment.html>

MONITORING UPDATE TO THE GLOBAL ANTIDUMPING DATABASE. By Chad P. Bown (Brandeis University) March 2009. This data collection effort for the World Bank serves to update the Global Antidumping Database. The newly available information in the database tracks the implementation of new trade policy instruments such as antidumping, countervailing measures (anti-subsidy policies), and safeguards. The database shows that there was a marked increase in anti-dumping trade policies in 2008 corresponding with the timing of the spread of the global economic crisis. Overall, the number of new antidumping investigations in 2008 increased by 31 per cent compared to 2007. With only two exceptions, the data provided above are collected from the each countries' national government publications and made publically available on their websites. For access please visit