



Bridges Weekly Trade News Digest

Weekly trade news from a sustainable development perspective

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LEAD STORIES

India-EU FTA Talks Hit Snags on IP, Environment, Labour

India and the European Union took another step towards a far-reaching bilateral free trade agreement last week, as senior negotiators met in Brussels for a ninth round of talks.

Serious obstacles stand in the way of Brussels's desire to wrap up the negotiations, which started in 2007, this year. India is opposed to the environmental and labour provisions that members of the European Parliament want to see in an agreement. And public health groups around the world have warned that the intellectual property protections in a future EU-India FTA could threaten access to affordable medicine, in India and elsewhere. They have vowed to try to block any deal that does not include explicit safeguards for generic drugs.

During the talks from 28 to 30 April, officials discussed all aspects of the negotiations, with technical talks focusing on rules of origin, trade facilitation, tariffs, intellectual property rights, public procurement, and trade defence instruments like anti-dumping duties.

The EU's ambassador to India this week suggested that a compromise might be found on environmental and labour provisions, which India views as non-trade issues unsuitable for inclusion in an FTA. "Both EU member-states and the EU Parliament are very eager to find some sort of a language about these issues in the agreement. We know what is India's position. We are hearing those positions very clearly," said Danièle Smadja, according to [a report in The Hindu](#), an Indian newspaper.

An issue with more global ramifications is the prospective accord's provisions on intellectual

property. A range of public health groups, as well as several members of European Parliament, have warned that if the EU-India FTA includes certain intellectual property protections that go beyond WTO demands, it could hurt patients all over the developing world.

A 22 April letter from a group of European Parliament members to Karel de Gucht, EU trade commissioner, expressed concern that the FTA may include rules on “data exclusivity” that would limit access to the clinical test data submitted by pharmaceutical companies to regulatory agencies to prove that a new drug is safe and effective. Without access to such data, manufacturers of low-price generic drugs would have to spend additional time and money before their medicines could be brought to market. Competition from generic drugs has led to dramatic reductions in the cost of treating HIV/AIDS and other conditions.

The MEPs, who belong to a new parliamentary working group on innovation, access to medicines, and poverty-related diseases, urged the Commission to ensure that the intellectual property protections being negotiated with India did not go beyond the demands of the WTO Agreement on Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS).

Indian and EU officials have both insisted that the FTA would not affect access to medicine.

However, according to Michelle Childs, director of policy and advocacy at MSF’s Access to Essential Medicines campaign, they have not done enough to demonstrate that generics would not be threatened.

“Indian Trade Minister Anand Sharma and EU Trade Commissioner Karel De Gucht have both gone on record to say that the proposed FTA would not affect access to medicines from the generic industry,” Childs said. “But neither of them has given a public commitment that the provisions that affect generic competition are off the table. We will continue to fight against these provisions until they are officially and unequivocally out of the free trade agreement.”

MSF calls India “the pharmacy of the developing world,” and estimates that 92 percent of people

living with HIV on treatment in low- and middle-income countries currently use generic anti-retrovirals, most of which are manufactured in India.

Civil society groups from Africa, Asia, and South America have expressed concern about the EU-India FTA’s potential ramifications for access to low-cost medicine.

Signs of progress were apparent on a separate intellectual property-related issue that has been an irritant in relations between Brussels and Delhi since early last year: the seizure in European ports of some shipments of generic drugs from India en route to Brazil and Africa. India and Brazil have complained about the harm to patients in need of the medicines and threatened the EU with a WTO dispute for allegedly violating multilateral rules on freedom of transport. While patented in Europe, the drugs in question were not under patent in either the source or destination countries; European officials said that they were held under suspicion of being counterfeit.

Commission officials told Bridges that Brussels is currently revising the relevant EU legislation to ensure that trade in generics is not hindered when transiting through EU territory. While the issue did not directly figure in the FTA negotiations, the EU assured India that the intellectual property chapter of the FTA would include clear provisions to ensure that legitimate trade in generic medicines is not unduly affected when transiting through EU territory, the officials said.

Following a preliminary exchange of views on their agriculture and industrial tariff offers, both sides are believed to be reflecting on how the proposed concessions could be revised. Development campaign groups in India, including ActionAid, have been critical of the EU dairy sector’s push for India to open up its market, warning that competition from the heavily subsidised and protected EU could hurt marginal farmers’ livelihoods.

Indian and EU officials at varying levels of seniority are expected to discuss the FTA talks in meetings scheduled for the upcoming months. The timing of the next round of FTA negotiations will be determined this summer.

ICTSD reporting; "Indian Farmers Won't Say Cheese," INTERPRESS SERVICES, 3 May 2010; "Non-trade issues not to hamper trade talks with EU," THE HINDU, 4 May 2010.

OTHER NEWS

US Lists IP Complaints in Special 301 Report

The United States has released a report of its intellectual property grievances, placing a dozen countries – including Canada, China and India – on its “priority watch list” for IP violations.

Washington insists that the report, which is published annually, is essential to the protection of US economic interests, but critics say that it is wrongly used to intimidate developing countries into adopting US-style IP policies that could keep essential medicines out of the hands of the poor.

The theft of US intellectual property overseas is “an export killer of American businesses and a job killer for American workers” USTR Ron Kirk said on Friday. Washington’s annual listing of IP complaints, which is known as the Special 301 report, “is important because it serves as the foundation for a year-round process used to secure meaningful reforms,” he added.

The report – which is named for a section of the US Trade Act of 1974 – has been published every year since 1988, when amendments included in the Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act made it mandatory. This year’s version was released on 30 April.

The report certainly has its critics, and they have been more vocal than usual this year.

Representative Henry Waxman, a California Democrat and the chair of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, wrote a strongly worded letter to the USTR last week, arguing that the 301 process has gone too far in the past.

The reports have “repeatedly left an impression that the United States is willing to narrow our

trading partners’ rights under TRIPS and, in turn, ignore or dismiss altogether their public health needs in favour of increased pharmaceutical protections,” Waxman wrote, referring to the WTO’s Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights.

The public health group Médecins Sans Frontières also slammed the report, accusing the US government of “threatening” and “bullying” developing countries.

“The terrible irony is that these pressure tactics would, if successful, limit the scope of actions countries can take to promote access to generic medicines, and undermine even the US government’s own global health efforts,” said Emi MacLean, US director of MSF’s access to medicines campaign.

Whether and how the 301 report leads to actual policy changes outside the United States is difficult to say, although the political pressure it generates can be significant.

“Countries don’t like to be on the watch list,” said Sean Flynn, Associate Director of the Program on Information Justice and Intellectual Property at American University’s Washington College of Law. In an interview, Flynn noted several examples of “listed” countries that updated their IP laws before any international agreement required them to do so. The threat of actual trade sanctions is relatively small: the US has suspended trade benefits on only a few occasions over the past 15 years, Flynn said. But countries may fear that being tagged on the “watch list” could scare away foreign direct investment or hurt their political ties with the United States.

That sentiment may not hold true in Canada, which has been on the priority watch list more than once, according to Canadian law professor and digital rights activist Michael Geist. “As a starting point, it should be noted that the Canadian government does not take this exercise particularly seriously,” he wrote on his blog on Friday, noting the heavy influence that some members of US industry have over the contents of the report. He called the process “an embarrassment” and “a bullying exercise.”

The US pharmaceutical industry certainly stands by the 301 process. Christopher Singer, the president of the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America – an association that represents a number of major drug makers – applauded the report in a statement issued on Monday.

“Worldwide respect for intellectual property is the engine that will enable patients around the globe to receive the benefits of future discoveries of life-saving medicines,” Singer said.

USTR holds first-ever public hearing

In a first, the USTR held an open hearing to solicit opinions from the public as it prepared the 301 report for 2010. Civil society – namely public health advocates – showed up in healthy numbers at the day-long consultation, which was held in March. The hearing “had some noticeable effect” on the report’s content, said Flynn, who took part in the consultation. “As a whole,” however, the report “is still very bad for access to medicines,” he added.

This year’s report has taken a small step in the right direction on one front, Flynn noted. The most promising development, he said, is on the subject of what’s known in the IP world as “linkage.”

Several countries, including the US, forbid their drug regulatory agencies from approving a new medicine for the domestic market if any patent has been “claimed” on the drug, regardless of whether that patent has actually been granted. Such requirements are controversial even in the United States, where some public health advocates claim that the linkage requirement encourages drug companies to continuously re-file patents for minor improvements to existing products (a practice known as “ever-greening”). The requests can be challenged in court, but while the new patent is being litigated – a process that can easily take years – the “claimed” drug still has the market to itself.

In recent years, the USTR “has been pushing similar rules in other countries,” Flynn said, even in places that do not have especially robust patent application systems. This has triggered fears

among some public health advocates that large pharmaceutical countries will be able to “game the system” in developing countries, thus making medicines less affordable for the countries’ citizens.

But the USTR’s stance on “linkage” changed this year. Instead of pushing the policy across the board as it has in the past, this year’s report mentions the issue only in the case of countries that have already agreed to establish such policies in free trade deals with the US, Flynn noted. To public health advocates, this shift represents a small step in the right direction.

Other sections of the report are less promising, critics have said. In some places, they argue, the report directly contradicts commitments that the US government has made in other contexts.

The Doha Declaration on TRIPS and Public Health, a statement that WTO members – including the US – adopted in 2001, explicitly grants signatory governments the right to require pharmaceutical companies to hand over patents on specific drugs. The declaration also gives members “the freedom to determine the grounds upon which such licences” – which are known as compulsory licenses – are granted. The 301 report reiterates this point, noting that the US “respects our trading partners’ rights to grant compulsory licenses.”

But the report is not consistent on this front, noted James Love, Executive Director of Knowledge Ecology International. Elsewhere in the report, the USTR mentions compulsory licensing in its listing of complaints against China (which made the priority watch list) and Ecuador (which made the watch list, one step below).

ICTSD reporting.

WTO Ag Negotiators Chug Along with Technical Work

For the first time in more than a month, negotiators met on 3 May with the chair of the WTO's agriculture negotiations, Ambassador David Walker of New Zealand, to map out a direction for the Doha Round farm talks.

Officials in Geneva are expected to focus on templates and data between 3 and 17 May. Later this month, Walker may start small group consultations on the "annotated and bracketed" elements – topics, such as the Special Safeguard Mechanism (SSM), on which members have not reached agreement.

By dividing the talks into two tracks, one focused on the unresolved issues and another on technical discussions, the chair hopes to spur some movement in the negotiations.

A stocktaking exercise earlier this year allowed the chair to focus attention on the SSM and other areas that need more work, including sensitive products, tariff rate quotas, tariff caps, tariff simplification, "Blue Box" subsidies and cotton support.

Templates vs. substance

The discussions on the templates and data are aimed at helping delegations prepare for the complex process of calculating each country's commitments under an eventual Doha deal. The talks have at times been tense. Argentina, Brazil, the Cairns Group of farm-exporting countries, the EU and India intervened on Monday to note their concerns about the process surrounding the templates.

In March, the WTO's G20 coalition, a group of efficient agricultural exporters (not to be confused with the G20 major economic powers), issued an unofficial paper calling for the discussions to ensure transparency and recognise that members want a "bottom-up approach" in the talks.

A few delegates have been particularly vocal about the need improve access to each other's data. For example, some countries have hesitated to share

data on domestic consumption that would be needed to calculate quotas and domestic support. Speaking to Bridges, a delegate asked, "If we have no data, how can we measure domestic cuts?"

The G20 document and others that were discussed at the 3 May meeting echoed the need to strike a balance between the group's work on templates and its substantive discussions of the text. Some members have been particularly sceptical of investing more than a year "in a process that doesn't carry out substantive improvements" in the negotiations.

Noting that progress has been slow on some of Walker's focal issues, Geneva-based delegates continue to emphasise the role of the United States in concluding the Doha Round of trade talks.

The arrival of Michael Punke, Deputy US Trade Representative and Ambassador to the WTO, in Geneva last month was perceived by a delegate from a major emerging economy as a "positive sign." However, the delegate added, "I wouldn't expect anything at this time."

Punke held a meeting with senior trade officials from Brazil, India, China and the EU in Paris last week. The gathering was intended to "explore how to take things forward," according to a trade official from a country that participated in the talks. But the talks reportedly achieved little progress.

Addressing trade delegates at a meeting of the General Council on Tuesday, WTO Director-General Pascal Lamy laid out his own take on how the eight-year-old trade round should proceed.

Negotiators have been employing a "cocktail approach" to the Doha Round negotiations since the conclusion of a stocktaking meeting at the end of March, said Lamy. There are three ingredients in this cocktail, Lamy said: consultations led by the chairs of the negotiating groups; bilateral and plurilateral meetings among members; and his own consultations with delegations in various groupings.

"We have the blender; we know which are the ingredients. It is just about time we start shaking

them to be able to serve the cocktail before the ice melts,” he quipped.

ICTSD reporting.

WIPO Committee Adopts Development Agenda Coordination Mechanism

The fifth session of the Committee on Development and Intellectual Property (CDIP) at the World Intellectual Property Organization ended on Friday with a significant breakthrough: delegates agreed on a coordination mechanism for the implementation of the WIPO Development Agenda (DA).

The CDIP oversees the implementation of the 45 WIPO Development Agenda recommendations, which were adopted in 2007 with the aim of integrating development concerns into all of WIPO's activities, from norm setting to technical assistance.

On the first day of the meeting, Egypt announced the creation of the Development Agenda Group (DAG), a coalition of 18 developing countries that want to ensure the effective implementation of the WIPO DA. Two more countries (Syria and Zimbabwe) had joined the DAG by the end of the session.

The most significant issue during this session's deliberations was the issue of “coordination mechanisms and monitoring, assessing and reporting modalities” for the implementation of the Development Agenda. Two proposals have been put forward since last year. One came from a group of “like-minded” developing countries – Algeria, Brazil and Pakistan and later supported by India, Egypt and Mozambique. This proposal suggested that the CDIP “convene special sessions for coordination, monitoring and assessing the implementation of the Development Agenda.” It also called for “a regular biennial review” by a group of independent IP experts nominated by member states. India pointed out that simple reporting by the Secretariat was not a substitute for member-driven and external review.

Another proposal was advanced by Switzerland on behalf of developed countries. It suggested that the CDIP should be at the same level as all other WIPO committees, with the General Assembly being the overarching body. It agreed that the creation of an audit mechanism was essential to ensure transparency but opposed institutionalising an audit body in the CDIP. The proposal also emphasised the need to ensure that no new financial burden was imposed as a result of the mechanism envisaged; it suggested having a single independent review in 2015.

After prolonged informal negotiations throughout the week, a consensual text was agreed on the last day. It was decided that no new special coordination session was to be held but instead that coordination was to be established as a “CDIP standing agenda item,” and sufficient time was to be ensured for discussing the coordination mechanism within the CDIP sessions. The agreed coordination text also emphasised the need to “strengthen existing mechanisms within WIPO” and that all “WIPO Committees stand on an equal footing.” A compromise regarding the independent review was also reached with a single review to be held at the end of the 2012/2013 biennium with ‘the Terms of Reference and the selection of independent IP and development experts agreed by CDIP’. It was also decided to that “the relevant WIPO bodies” should “include in their annual report to the Assembly a description of their contribution to the implementation of the respective Development Agenda recommendations.”

Delegates at the meeting also reached agreement to move forward on a number of thematic projects aimed to act on several DA recommendations. One such project will examine IP and the public domain, with the goal of deepening the development benefits of a rich and accessible public domain. A project on technical capacity building was also discussed and agreed upon. It is geared towards promoting the use of appropriate technical and scientific information to address development challenges facing least-developed countries, or LDCs. The project will be implemented in three LDCs.

A project entitled “Intellectual Property and Product Branding and Marketing for Business

Development” was also agreed upon. According to a document prepared by the Secretariat, the project will primarily support small and medium-sized enterprises in developing and least-developed countries “in the appropriate use of IP, particularly geographical indications and trademarks in product branding.”

The project on IP and socio-economic development, which was presented by WIPO’s chief economist, was also discussed and adopted. It consists of a series of studies carried out in developing countries on the relationship between IP protection and various aspects of economic performance. Topics include domestic innovation, the international and national diffusion of knowledge, and institutional features of the IP system and its economic implications. Countries agreed that the project could help policymakers in those countries learn how to design and implement a development-friendly IP regime.

The project on IP and technology transfer, which had been debated at previous sessions, continued to attract divergent views from developed and developing countries. Specifically, members disagreed with regard to definitions, and the terms of reference for the proposed new technology transfer platform. Developed nations once again expressed the need to ensure that the project did not go beyond the WIPO mandate and asked for a “neutral balanced approach.” Brazil mentioned the need of the proposal to take into account that technology transfer is specific to each region and cannot be implemented with a “one size fits all” approach. At the close of the discussions, the secretariat promised to prepare a document that sums the areas of agreement among the different countries. That document will be considered at the next CDIP session.

Developing countries commented widely on a study by the secretariat entitled “Patent Flexibilities in the Multilateral Legal Framework.” Some such countries requested a specific focus on health-related flexibilities as well as concrete guidelines on how to implement the flexibilities at the national level. Egypt on behalf of the DAG stated that while the study was “elaborate and insightful” it was still viewed as an evolving document that still requires much work. Developed countries argued that there is a need to

ensure the study was “complementary and not overlapping” with discussions in other bodies such as the Standing Committee on Patents (SCP).

While member states welcomed a report by the secretariat on WIPO’s contribution to the United Nations’ Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), developing countries emphasised the need for “concrete empirical evaluation” and “indicators,” as the report only provided an overview of the way in which WIPO activities can impact the MDGs. India proposed that UN Rapporteurs on Human Rights – such as the right to food and right to health – might address the next session of the CDIP.

Another hurdle came on the last day of the session with the publication of the guiding principles of the DAG. A number of developed countries as well as Nigeria did not consider the document to be a “working document” of the CDIP as it did not contain specific new proposals. Rather, they argued that it should be considered a more general “information document.” After some discussions on the procedural aspects of the submission of documents by member states, it was agreed ultimately that the document will be a working paper of the session.

The sixth session of the CDIP will be held from 22 to 26 November 2010.

ICTSD reporting.

IN BRIEF

European Environmentalists Fuming over Biofuels Report

An official EU document obtained by Reuters using freedom of information laws predicts that Europe’s demand for biofuels is likely to contribute to climate change and harm the environment. The report suggests that the greenhouse gas emissions from biodiesel can be as much as four times greater than emissions from diesel or gasoline.

The document was the final of four studies intended to analyse the ramifications of proposed changes in European policies on the biofuels trade, focusing on global agriculture and environmental change.

“The EU’s biofuel policy is looking more and more unsustainable and if not urgently reviewed will lead to deforestation, more climate changing emissions and damage to the environment,” said Adrian Bebb, agrofuels campaign coordinator for Friends of the Earth Europe following the Reuters report. “It is time to end this madness and bring in real solutions to the climate crisis.”

The EU has already come under fire for failing to release similar documents. Environmentalists have also stirred up a fuss over the recent release of an EU report that found that the increased use of biofuels in the 27-nation bloc could trigger food shortages in developing countries and negatively impact the climate.

The EU’s target of 10 percent of road transport fuel to come from “renewable sources” by 2010 could severely impact the environment, the new report finds. It further suggests that any increase above 5.6 percent of transport fuels from biofuels could “erode the environmental sustainability of biofuels.” An increase of just 4.6 percent could severely increase greenhouse gas emissions, the report found.

“For the third time in six weeks the [European] Commission is forced to release studies about the climate effects of biofuels,” said Nusa Urbancic of Transport and Environment (T&E), a Brussels-based campaign group promoting sustainable green transportation. “And for the third time these studies show that land use is the most important factor in deciding if biofuels make sense or not.”

A coalition of environmental groups including T&E has now launched legal action against the European Commission over its failure to freely release documents outlining the negative environmental impacts of biofuels, such as the one obtained by Reuters. The lawsuit accuses the Commission of breaching several European laws designed to promote transparency, democracy, and legitimacy in European policy-making.

ICTSD reporting; “Europe’s Biofuel Policy unsustainable new research confirms,” FRIENDS OF THE EARTH EUROPE, 26 March 2010; “Once-hidden EU report reveals damage from biodiesel,” EURACTIV, 22 April 2010; “Global Trade and Environmental Impact Study of the EU Biofuels Mandate; Final Report,” European Commission, March 2010.

WTO IN BRIEF

Syria Set to Begin Talks to Join the WTO

WTO members have cleared the way for Syria to begin the process of becoming a member of the WTO eight years after the Arab country submitted its first bid to join the global trade body.

Gathering for a meeting of the WTO’s General Council yesterday, trade delegates approved Syria’s request for the establishment of a working party to guide the country’s accession process. A chair of that committee is expected to be appointed soon.

“This is a historic occasion for the WTO and Syria,” Syrian ambassador to the United Nations Faysal Hamoui told the General Council. “In taking this decision, the organisation has responded, as it always has done, to promote international cooperation for trade and development.”

The request that was approved on Tuesday marked the fourth time since October 2001 that Syria has asked the WTO to consider its bid for membership. Previous requests have been blocked by other WTO members. At the WTO, a consensus-based organisation, any single member can block another country’s accession.

Israel was a critical stumbling block to Syria’s bid, thanks to long-standing religious and political tensions between the two countries. This time around, the request was reportedly blocked until lunchtime, when word finally came that Israel had lifted its opposition.

A story published Tuesday on the website of Ynet News, a Tel Aviv-based outlet, reported that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu decided only “at the last minute” to lift his opposition to Syria’s bid. “It isn’t out of love for Syria, but political-trade consideration,” explained Binyamin Ben-Eliezer, Israel’s minister for industry, labour and trade, Ynet reported.

The United States, which had also blocked Syria’s accession bid in previous years, had already lifted its opposition.

Countries that are at odds politically are often able to set their differences aside to cooperate on economic matters at the WTO. But political considerations do come into play. The Palestinian Authority has repeatedly sought to join the WTO as an observer, but Israel has blocked that request. Now that Syria’s working party has been established, negotiators will begin to hammer out the details of the country’s accession package, a process that can take several years.

ICTSD reporting; “Syria to join WTO after Israel doesn’t oppose,” YNET NEWS, 4 May 2010.

EVENTS & RESOURCES

Events

Coming up this week

10-11 May, Brussels, Belgium. WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM ON EUROPE: RENEWED LEADERSHIP, NEW VISION. Europe has been hit hard by the financial and economic crisis. With most indicators pointing to continued turbulence ahead, stakeholders will have to adapt and forge closer relationships in order to mitigate risks and seize emerging opportunities. Given the high degree of geopolitical and economic interdependence in the region, the outcome of these efforts will have a far-reaching impact. With the full support and close collaboration of the Belgian government and the new European Union leadership, as well as the Forum’s key Strategic Partners, the World Economic Forum on Europe will convene 400 of the most prominent leaders from the European

Union and other parts of the world. For more information, please email Europe@weforum.org or visit <http://www.weforum.org/en/events/WorldEconomicForumonEurope/index.htm>.

11-14 May, Montreal, Canada. ICAO COLLOQUIUM ON AVIATION AND CLIMATE CHANGE. The Environmental Colloquium hosted by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) will be entirely dedicated to aviation and climate change. It will focus on strategies and programmes of ICAO, industry, academic/research institutions and international organisations to harness technological, scientific and economic solutions in the global fight against climate change. This Colloquium, in English only, will provide a forum on aviation and climate change, in particular on related key developments emanating from the ICAO’s Conference on Aviation and Alternative Fuels, UNFCCC COP/15 and the 8th Meeting of ICAO’s Committee for Aviation Environmental Protection (CAEP). For more information, please see <http://www.icao.int/CLQ10/>.

WTO Events

An updated list of forthcoming WTO meetings is posted at 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.

6 May: Committee on Customs Valuation

13-14 May: Ascension Day (WTO non-working day)

18 May: Dispute Settlement Body

Other upcoming events

24-28 May, Punta del Este, Uruguay. THE FOURTH ASSEMBLY OF THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY (GEF). The

Assembly, held once every three to four years, is the governing body of the GEF, in which representatives of 177 member countries participate. It is a strategic opportunity for GEF stakeholders to meet, take stock, and collectively strengthen strategies and actions for protecting the global environment and achieving sustainable development. The Assembly will combine plenary meetings and high-level panels, exhibits, side events and GEF project site visits. Prominent environmentalists, parliamentarians, business leaders, scientists, and civil society representatives and community leaders will discuss global environmental challenges within the context of sustainable development and other international development goals. More information can be found by contacting the GEF Secretariat: tel. +1-202-473-0508 ; fax +1-202-522-3240/3245 ; email secretariat@thegef.org or by visiting <http://gefassembly.org/j2/index.php>.

26-27 May, Barcelona, Spain. AGRICULTURAL PRICE VOLATILITY: PROSPECTS, CHALLENGES AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS. The agricultural sector has been deeply battered by both the food and financial crises and faces a looming climate change crisis. This seminar will examine current and projected trends in prices, review past policy responses, examine policy options available today and arrive at pragmatic recommendations on addressing volatility in the future. The meeting is being organised by the International Food and Agricultural Trade Policy Council (IPC), the University of Barcelona, and the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development. For more information, or to register, please see <https://www.z2systems.com/np/clients/agritrade/event.jsp?event=834>

28-30 May, Bonn, Germany. FIRST WORLD CONGRESS ON CITIES AND ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE. Jointly hosted by Local Governments for Sustainability, the City of Bonn and the World Mayors Council on Climate Change, Resilient Cities 2010 will offer an opportunity for participants to share the latest scientific findings, state-of-the-art approaches and effective programmes on climate change adaptation and resilience-building in cities and urbanised areas. Case examples of local adaptation practice will illustrate approaches and experiences.

The conference aims at setting the direction for future planning of and investment in urban infrastructure. For more information, please contact Alice Balbo, Conference Secretariat; tel: +49-(0)228 / 976 299-28; e-mail: bonn2010@iclei.org; or visit: <http://resilient-cities.iclei.org/bonn2010/home/>.

6-7 June, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM ON EAST ASIA: RETHINKING ASIA'S LEADERSHIP AGENDA. East Asia's lead in the global economic recovery has been underscored by increasing regional economic co-operation, robust domestic consumption and coordinated government stimulus measures. Alongside the remarkable economic momentum and progress of China and India, ASEAN's market of 580 million consumers is moving towards economic integration by 2015. The programme for the 19th World Economic Forum on East Asia will explore the many facets of the region's rising economic influence, such as how high-growth economies can improve their competitiveness through developing innovation-driven, green economies. At the same time, the discussions will consider to what extent ongoing regional integration will serve as the basis for Asian leaders to assume a greater leadership role in global co-operation. For more information, please email EastAsia@weforum.org or visit <http://www.weforum.org/en/events/WorldEconomicForumonEastAsia2010/index.htm>.

Resources

TRADE AND POVERTY IN LATIN AMERICA. Edited by Paolo Giordano. The Inter-American Development Bank, December, 2009. Understanding the complex relations between trade integration and poverty reduction is now a priority for Latin American policymakers. The chapters of this book, written by eminent authors with a long-standing record in the field, represent the current state of knowledge about trade and poverty and offer contrasting points of view about whether freer trade can reduce poverty in Latin America. One of the main lessons extracted from the book is that pre-existing

policies and socioeconomic conditions play a key role in determining how trade integration affects poverty. Because transmission channels are complex and highly contextualised, policymakers are urged to adopt complementary policies tailored to their countries' circumstances in order to ensure an equitable distribution of the gains from trade. The publication is available online at <http://idbdocs.iadb.org/wsdocs/getdocument.aspx?docnum=35024606>.

HOW HUMAN RIGHTS CAN INFORM THE WIPO DEVELOPMENT AGENDA. By Emmanuel Dalle Mulle. 3D, April 2010. This policy brief explores the links between intellectual property and human rights, in particular the right to development. It advocates for the adoption of a human rights-based approach in the implementation of the Development Agenda of the World Intellectual Property Organization. It also recommends that WIPO should organise training in human rights for Secretariat staff, promote wider participation of public interest representatives, and encourage 'out of the box' debates on alternative ways to deal with protection and preservation of traditional knowledge and biological diversity. The publication is available at http://www.3dthree.org/pdf_3D/3D_WIPO&RTD.pdf.

FREE TRADE OF PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCTS: THE LIMITS OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ENFORCEMENT AT THE BORDER. By Xavier Seuba, the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development, March 2010. This paper provides an in-depth analysis of the complex legal issues raised by European customs regulations and their relationship with the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the TRIPS Agreement and subsequent WTO instruments. The author highlights that the power granted to WTO members to set higher standards of enforcement than those stipulated by Articles 51 and 52 of the TRIPS Agreement has to be consistent with other TRIPS provisions and balanced with the key legal principle of territoriality of IPRs. For more information, please see <http://ictsd.org/i/publications/74589/>.