



Bridges Weekly Trade News Digest

Weekly trade news from a sustainable development perspective

Volume 14 • Number 5, 10 February 2010

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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 Ballexert 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. Your support to BRIDGES and the BRIDGES series of publications is most welcome; if interested, please contact Andrew Crosby, Managing Director at acrosby@ictsd.ch or (+41) 22 917 8335.

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LEAD STORIES

Mixed Messages from the White House amid New Focus on Trade

The White House appears to have awoken from its year-long slumber on trade matters, but the political climate for liberalising trade in the world's biggest national economy remains problematic.

The action began on 27 January, when US President Barack Obama, addressing a joint session of Congress for his State of the Union address, highlighted trade as an important tool for economic recovery and job creation, calling for the US to double its exports in five years.

A week later, Commerce Secretary Gary Locke explained how the White House intends to achieve those goals. The administration will create the first-ever “government-wide export-promotion strategy” that will receive “the focused attention” of the president and his cabinet, Locke said in an address at Washington’s National Press Club on 4 February. The new National Export Initiative will work on three fronts: expanding trade advocacy at home and abroad; helping companies, especially small- and medium-sized firms, access the credit they need to export their products; and enforcing trade rules so that US exporters will not be unfairly blocked from foreign markets.

“This initiative will correct an economic blind spot that has allowed other countries to chip away at America’s international competitiveness,” Locke said.

Three FTAs still pending

Turning to new markets, the Commerce Secretary mentioned the work that the US Trade Representative’s Office is doing to open up trade with “key growth areas” in Asia and elsewhere, as

well as the USTR's efforts to strike "an ambitious and balanced" deal to end the WTO's Doha Round talks. Locke referred briefly to Washington's three pending bilateral trade deals – with Colombia, Panama and South Korea – noting that the White House aims to address "outstanding concerns" with each of the pacts.

Another major figure in the Obama administration offered a different take on those deals last week. Answering questions before the House of Representatives' Committee on Ways and Means on 3 February, Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner responded that the three pending deals are "absolutely" part of the White House's plans to boost exports this year. However, a statement issued subsequently by the US Treasury Department seemed to backpedal from Geithner's remark. There are still some "outstanding concerns" with the trade deals now on the table, the statement said, adding, "Once these issues are resolved, the administration looks forward to working with Congress on the best time to move the agreements forward."

The three deals in question were negotiated by the Bush administration but have yet to win lawmakers' approval. Each has faced its own set of political hurdles: the pact with Colombia has been opposed by labour unions, who say the country has a bad record of protecting workers' rights; the US auto industry, fearing an influx of cheap imports, has pushed back against the South Korean deal; and some fair-trade NGOs have warned that an FTA with Panama could increase the flow of US money to shady tax shelters in the Latin American country.

"This administration inherited these three agreements that were controversial and sort of stalled with Congress," says Chuck Dittrich, Vice President for Regional Trade Initiatives at the National Foreign Trade Council, a Washington-based business lobby group. "My opinion now is that they've taken ownership of these agreements. These are no longer Bush administration agreements; these are US agreements at this point," Dittrich says.

Asked whether the deals might be approved this year, Dittrich said he "would be pleasantly surprised" if any of the agreements were enacted

before November's mid-term elections. But he added that passage of the deals should not be the only "performance measure" for the White House on trade, given that the administration plans to spend this year "laying the groundwork" by building public support for a more liberal trade agenda.

Obama: one year in

On the campaign trail in 2008, candidate Obama wooed voters by promising to reform the North American Free Trade Agreement and to fight for the interests of US farm exporters overseas. But during his first 12 months in office, Obama made little mention of trade and took little action on it – the one notable exception being his announcement in September of new tariffs on Chinese tyre imports. Trade was put on the political backburner as his administration fought domestic battles over healthcare, the economy, and wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

But since he brought trade back into the spotlight with his State of the Union speech, the president has begun facing calls, largely from within his own party, to take a stronger stand on trade. Senator Arlen Specter, Democrat of Pennsylvania, pressed Obama last week on whether the president would support the revocation of existing trade deals with China, which he accused of "international banditry" in the form of illegal subsidies and dumping.

Obama demurred. "Our future is going to be tied up with our ability to sell products all around the world, and China is going to be one of our biggest markets, and Asia is going to be one of our biggest markets. And for us to close ourselves off from that market would be a mistake," the president said.

Despite the White House's new rhetoric on trade engagement, critics point out that more than a year after Obama took office several posts on the administration's trade team remain empty, most notably the position of US ambassador to the WTO – a fact that is not lost on WTO delegates in Geneva.

But the appointments, which have been held up by partisan and parochial bickering in the Senate,

could be finalised soon. Obama threatened on Tuesday to push through some of his nominees during Congress's week-long February recess, which starts on Monday. Such a move would allow the appointees to serve until the end of 2011 without lawmakers' approval.

"We can't afford to allow politics to stand in the way of a well-functioning government," Obama said.

ICTSD reporting.

OTHER NEWS

Special Safeguard Mechanism: G-33 Rebuts Exporter Claims

Two new informal documents from the G-33 developing country group have responded to exporters' criticisms of the proposed 'special safeguard mechanism' – a new tool that would allow developing countries to impose additional safeguard duties on imports in the event of a surge in import volumes, or a sharp drop in prices – ahead of a small-group meeting that the chair of the WTO's farm talks is holding this Thursday.

The two technical submissions complement a broader political proposal that was circulated at the end of January. The documents examine whether the special safeguard mechanism (SSM) should take into account seasonal variations in production and trade, and also whether a volume surge and price depression should occur simultaneously as a condition for imposing safeguard duties – both of which are key demands from exporters.

'Seasonal' trade

In their paper on 'seasonality', the G-33 warn that a distinction must be made between 'seasonality in trade' and 'seasonality in production'. While growing seasons may mean that production of certain products is skewed towards particular months of the year, these trends do not necessarily translate into increased international

trade during those periods – for example, in the case of raw materials that are subsequently processed into non-perishable secondary products, and then traded throughout the year.

The group also argued that previous WTO mechanisms, such as the special agricultural safeguard, or SSG, have looked at seasonality from an importers' perspective. The SSG has been primarily used by developed countries to shield their domestic producers.

The G-33 paper reviews trade in cereals (rice, wheat, barley and corn); oilseeds (soybeans and soy pellets, meal and oil); ten different types of fruit; nine vegetable products; and sugar. Different products are characterised by widely differing production and trade patterns, the group concludes.

The document also looks at trade data from countries in both the southern and northern hemispheres (Argentina, Uruguay and the US). Because countries in both hemispheres also serve as import destinations, the group argues that no clear seasonality of trade emerges in many cases. "Exporters in general have diversified their markets and do not put "all their eggs in one basket," the paper claims.

Even in a single country, for some products no clear seasonality pattern can be discerned, says the group. "For US wheat, large disparities in year-on-year data suggest that a pattern is not necessarily consistent across the years."

While some products and product groups do show more marked seasonality at an individual country level, exports may still continue almost throughout the year – as in the case of US strawberry exports. In this case, the group asks, should strawberries be considered a seasonal product? If so, "should Argentina's export data be used as a reference for the determination, or the US's data?"

The group concludes that including the seasonality concept "in the SSM architecture would only add to its complexity without providing any additional value."

“Cross-checks”

Exporters have long argued that a “cross-check” or link should be made between the presence of a volume surge and a price depression, on the basis that if import volumes are increasing but prices are not falling, there is continued demand from domestic consumers. The latest G-33 submission spells out the group's reasons for rejecting this argument.

The G-33 looks at trends in wheat, rice and maize trade at the global level, and examines the extent to which these correlate with price movements over a 15-year period. “Movements in both import volumes and prices do not necessarily coincide,” the group concludes.

The paper also cites [an ICTSD study](#) showing that the availability of the SSM would be more than halved if the safeguard could only be used when a volume surges and price depression occurred simultaneously. The paper also reviewed work by the South Centre and the FAO that reached similar conclusions.

“A considerable time lag” can occur between an import surge and its impact on domestic prices and industry, the group argues – with such time lags being particularly acute in developing countries, due to “complex and thick layers of distribution chains and inadequate infrastructure.” The group warned that the proposed ‘cross-check’ would “unresponsive to practical needs.”

In addition, because many developing countries will in reality be unable to monitor real time price and volume data for all tariff lines all the time, the cross-check requirement would in effect make the SSM unworkable, the group observed. The poorest and smallest countries would also be the most affected by any such requirement.

Talks continue

The chair of the agriculture negotiations, Ambassador David Walker, is convening a small-group consultation on the SSM on Thursday. A follow-up meeting on Friday, open to all WTO members, is expected to share progress so far with the broader membership.

ICTSD reporting.

Industrial Goods Talks Tackle Non-Tariff Barriers

With no movement on the principal sticking point in the Doha Round industrial goods talks, negotiators last week continued to inch forward on establishing new rules for addressing non-tariff barriers.

WTO members remain at an impasse over the extent to which large developing countries like China and India should participate in initiatives to cut deeply or eliminate tariffs on entire industrial sectors such as chemical products, auto parts, and electronics. The developing countries note that the negotiating mandate specifies that participation in such ‘sectorals’ would be optional. The US and other industrialised nations covet unfettered access to the fast-growing emerging markets.

In recent months, therefore, officials have been focusing their energy on non-tariff barriers, or NTBs. Last week, they continued to discuss proposals for the automotive, electronics, and textile sectors. They also looked at ‘remanufactured goods’ – used products that are refurbished and provided with a warranty – and a proposed ‘horizontal mechanism’ for quickly adjudicating trade problems arising from NTBs.

The automotive sector is marked by a wide array of differing standards that compel auto makers to re-tool cars and trucks to meet the specifications of each target market. The EU has proposed moving towards harmonising technological regulations and standards in the sector. Despite a new revised paper from Brussels (TN/MA/W/118/Rev .1), other major auto producers remain hesitant. The US called it “unrealistic” and said it would deprive countries of the ability to follow their own standards. Japan argued that countries with different geographies, climates, and population densities need different standards.

On 5 February, Luzius Wasescha, the Swiss ambassador who chairs the negotiating group on

non-agricultural market access (NAMA), noted that many WTO members did not seem to share the EU's perception that the rules in the existing WTO Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) were inadequate for the automotive sector.

Speaking to the negotiating group at the end of four days of consultations, he said that members were not "harmonious" on how far they wanted to go beyond the existing TBT agreement, which allows countries to deviate from international standards for "legitimate objectives" such as local circumstances. Wasescha urged countries to consult with the auto industry while exploring how to move forward.

Talks on NTBs in the electronics sector have been marked by similar disagreement. The Swiss ambassador urged countries to consult with industry and hold workshops in order to help everyone understand the issues at stake.

Several developing countries, including India and Brazil, are wary of trade in 'remanufactured goods'. Many of them do not differentiate between 'remanufactured' and 'used', one trade diplomat told Bridges. They fear that such products – warranty notwithstanding – might last less long than new ones, and trade in remanufactured goods could become a pretext for dumping waste from rich nations. Japan, the US, and Switzerland have called for a 'work programme' in the Council for Trade in Goods that would involve reviews and seminars on NTBs affecting remanufactured goods. The sceptics noted that such seminars were possible even without a formal work programme.

A substantial majority of WTO members, from the EU and Canada to the African and LDC groups, favours the creation of a 'horizontal mechanism' for promptly addressing trade irritants arising from non-tariff barriers. The US is unconvinced; it would prefer that countries take particular problems to relevant WTO committees. Another wrinkle comes from the fact that Japan, Korea, and Taiwan don't want such a mechanism to address trade barriers linked to sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures – even though fish products are covered by the NAMA negotiations.

Wasescha said that countries needed to engage in "conceptual reflection" on what countries want this mechanism to be. "Do we want a rapid, pragmatic mechanism for dispute prevention or do we want to satisfy all the lawyers" by reflecting all the risks likely to arise "over the next three or four centuries?" he asked. "I don't think we need to look for legal perfection."

He called for responses from members by the end of this month.

ICTSD reporting.

International Patent Filings Drop for First Time in 32 Years

The World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) has reported a 4.5 percent decrease in international patent filings under the Patent Cooperation Treaty in 2009, marking the first time in the PCT's 32-year history that filings have dropped. But according to Francis Gurry, Director General of WIPO, "The decline in PCT filings [was] not as sharp as originally anticipated."

While sharp declines were seen in many industrialised countries, a number of East Asian countries posted growths. Japan, the second largest user of the PCT registered a growth of 3.6 percent while China posted the largest growth, an increase of 29.7 percent.

As expected, the United States remained the country of origin for the most patents with 45,790 patents filed, or just under one third of all patents. Despite this, the filing rate in the United States dropped 11.4 percent. Additionally, Germany's filing rate dropped sharply, falling 11.2 percent from 2008. However, the largest decline by one of the top 15 countries of origin was realised by Israel, which saw a decrease of 17.2 percent.

The drop in patent filings could have a significant impact on WIPO's finances. Over 95 percent of WIPO funding comes from the sale of services to the private sector. The PCT system accounts for about three quarters of this funding. However, the Secretariat is optimistic and believes that the

cost-cutting measures have left WIPO well prepared for dealing with the situation.

Carsten Fink, Chief Economist at WIPO, predicted that there will be a modest recovery of patent filings in 2010 but he conceded that there are “great amounts of uncertainty” attached to that forecast.

Despite the fact that developing countries make up 78 percent of the membership to the PCT, they only accounted for 14 percent of the patent filings. Of these 14 percentage points, 10 of them are shared between China and South Korea alone. According to Director General Gurry, “[the maximisation of] participation in the PCT is a key priority” of the Organization.

The Patent Cooperation Treaty was launched in 1978 as a tool to streamline the act of filing patents worldwide. An estimated 155,900 patents were filed via the PCT in 2009, a decline from the 163,249 that were filed in 2008.

SCP meeting stumbles on ‘non-exhaustive list’

The announcement on PCT filings comes after extensive discussions on patent issues at the meeting of WIPO’s Standing Committee on the Law of Patents (SCP) which met during the last week of January. The SCP meeting witnessed important discussions on a number of issues selected among a “non-exhaustive list” that was agreed upon in 2008. Major topics discussed at the meeting included standards and patents, technology transfer and a new proposal by Brazil to create a programme to examine limitations and exceptions to patent rights.

However, the most contentious subject related to the future plans of the SCP. At issue was whether to include certain topics in the “non-exhaustive list” to be discussed at later meetings. Brazil proposed the inclusion of a new programme of work to debate its proposals on exceptions and limitations to patent rights. However, developed countries disagreed with the inclusion of Brazil’s proposal for future discussions. Divergences also focused on how discussions on technology transfer and IP should be addressed.

A text by the chair that emerged from informal consultations had called for a study on how the patent system supports technology transfer prompted a proposal by Asian countries suggesting that such study should be about how the patent system can impede technology transfer. Developed countries indicated their preference for a more neutral formulation. At one point, African and Asian countries proposed two add two new issues to the list: the impact of the patent system on developing countries and patents and food security. However, developed countries were reluctant to expand the ‘non-exhaustive’ list and indicated that the issues suggested were already addressed under the broader topic of patents and public policy.

As the meeting came to a close, negotiations broke down as to what to add to the ‘non-exhaustive list’. The next meeting of the SCP will be held on 11 to 15 October 2010.

ICTSD reporting; “First-Ever Drop In Filings Under Patent Cooperation Treaty Seen In 2009,” IP-WATCH, 8 February 2010; Breakdown In WIPO Patent Committee Could Symbolise Deeper Differences,” IP WATCH, 1 February 2010.

IN BRIEF

Total EU Farm Subsidies Grow Despite Drop in Production-Linked Payments

New subsidy figures from the EU show a sharp increase in total support levels, to over €90 billion in the 2006/2007 marketing year – despite a drop in production-linked payments that are deemed to distort trade.

The latest official notification to the WTO shows that total EU support levels have returned to levels not seen since the previous decade, with €90.7 billion of support being reported to the global trade body for 2006/2007 – up from €75.6 billion in 2002, when support was at its lowest in the last fifteen years.

The most trade-distorting payments, classed as 'amber box' at the WTO, are however at a historical low, with the EU reporting only €26.6 billion under this category. Amber box payments have been falling steadily and now stand at about half the level they were at a decade previously.

The sharpest decline in the latest figures is in the 'blue box' category of production-limiting payments, which have dropped to €5.7 billion from €13.4 billion in the 2005/2006 marketing year, and from €27.2 billion the year before that. While still considered to be 'trade-distorting' at the WTO, blue box payments are generally seen as less damaging than amber box support.

The drop in blue box support has been more than compensated for by an increase in 'green box' payments, which are meant to have no, or at most minimal, effects on trade or production. These have increased to €56.5 billion - up from €40.3 billion the previous year, and over twice 2004/2005 levels.

A small amount of trade-distorting support is also exempt from reduction commitments at the WTO, so long as the support amounts to no more than 5 percent of the total value of production. According to the new notification, in the 2006/2007 marketing year, the EU provided €1.85 billion of this type of support, which is known as 'de minimis'.

The dramatic changes in the structure of EU subsidies reflect the gradual implementation of the most recent reforms to the bloc's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). The 2003 Fischler reforms, named after the EU agriculture commissioner of the time, continued a process of 'decoupling' farm support from production - leading to a shift away from 'amber' to 'green' support in the EU's notifications to the WTO.

The latest draft agreement tabled under the Doha Round of trade talks would establish a new €22 billion ceiling for the EU's overall trade-distorting support (OTDS) - composed of its amber box, blue box and de minimis spending. Although the latest notification suggests that the EU's OTDS was as high as €34 billion in 2006/2007, ongoing CAP reforms are expected to reduce this figure to

close to the proposed ceiling by the time the new OTDS cap would actually apply.

Exporting countries in Geneva expressed concern about the growth in the EU's green box subsidies, with one delegate noting warily that these payments "appear to be providing an awful lot of support to the farming community."

ICTSD reporting.

China Sets Anti-Dumping Penalties on US Poultry Imports

China's Ministry of Commerce announced new anti-dumping penalties on imports of US chicken products last Friday, a move likely to upset one of the few US industries that profitably exports to China.

The Chinese Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) released its preliminary ruling after investigations showed that dumping of US chicken products on the Chinese market had "caused substantial damage to China's domestic industry," according to a press release. "Dumping" refers to a practice of strategically selling goods below cost in order to undercut competitors.

For the companies that complied with MOFCOM's anti-dumping investigation of their sales, the penalties range from 43.1 percent for Tyson Foods to 80.5 percent for the Pilgrim's Pride Corporation. Most firms were hit with a penalty of 64.5 percent. The companies that did not comply will be given anti-dumping penalties of 105.4 percent, the top tariff, unless they comply before the investigation is finalised.

China is the largest foreign market for US chicken exports. In 2008, the Chinese consumed almost 800,000 metric tonnes of US poultry, valued at US\$ 722 million, according to the USA Poultry & Egg Export Council. Tyson Foods sent approximately 14 percent of its US\$ 1.6 billion in international poultry sales to China.

About half of the chicken products exported to China are chicken feet. The parts would be sold as scrap to be turned into animal feed in the US, but

they are considered a delicacy in China. Almost all the chicken feet produced in the United States are sent to China, producing a solid profit for US poultry companies.

“Chicken feet and wings are not wanted in the US, so they sell them to China, [and] they dump them below cost,” said Wang Xiulin, president of the Chinese Poultry Association. “Last year, the Chinese poultry industry was really hurting so we asked for this investigation.”

The US Trade Representative’s Office says that it is “following the investigation closely.”

“We will want to ensure that MOFCOM follows the applicable WTO rules,” said Carol Guthrie, Assistant US Trade Representative for Public and Media Affairs. “We will study MOFCOM’s preliminary determination...and will consult with US industry.”

The penalties are the latest development in a long string of Sino-US trade disputes. The Chinese Ministry of Commerce started investigating dumping allegations against US poultry in September, just two weeks after the US had imposed tariffs on Chinese tyre shipments.

The US had also instituted anti-dumping duties on Chinese oil-well pipes of up to 99 percent, a move that provoked China to investigate US automobile imports. The US Department of Commerce is investigating alleged dumping of Chinese copper pipes and tubes as well as Chinese-made blankets and magnesia carbon brick.

The trade disputes take place against a background of tense relations between the two countries due to proposed US arm sales to Taiwan, US President Barack Obama’s decision to meet with the Dalai Lama this month, and Google’s threat to pull out of China.

“This is probably the result of political tension, although a trade war between the two economies is unlikely,” said Li Qiang, a managing director at Shanghai JC Intelligence Company.

ICTSD reporting; “China to Impose Dumping Penalties on US Chicken,” BUSINESS WEEK, 5 February 2010; “Wrapup 2-Chicken Parts Join

Menu of US-China Disputes,” REUTERS, 5 February 2010.

WTO IN BRIEF

China Brings Anti-Dumping Case against EU in Shoe Dispute

China has requested consultations with the European Union over anti-dumping duties of as much as 16.5 percent that the 27-nation bloc has imposed on Chinese leather shoe exports since 2006.

“China believes that the anti-dumping investigations and the findings made by the EU violated various obligations under the WTO, and consequently caused damage to the legitimate rights and interests of Chinese exporters,” said China’s Ministry of Commerce in a statement.

In a case that will raise issues of China’s non-market economy (NME) status with respect to the EU, Beijing has challenged three European regulations as being inconsistent with the bloc’s obligations under WTO’s Anti-Dumping Agreement and China’s Accession Protocol.

First, China argues that due to China’s NME status, the EU specified dumping margins for China as a whole, instead of for individual exporters. It argues that such a calculation is unreasonable, not objective, and discriminatory. Second, China is challenging a second EU regulation imposing and collecting the duties on the grounds that, among other things, various aspects of Brussels’ dumping calculations and process were wrong, unfair, or biased.

Third, China contends that the EU’s decision to extend duties after a 2008-2009 expiry review was inconsistent with the Anti-Dumping Agreement. Following that review, EU member states voted to extend anti-dumping duties through April 2011, despite the fact that the EU’s Anti-dumping Advisory Committee, which also has representatives from each member state, had voted to reject an extension.

The EU is standing by its duties.

"Anti-dumping measures are not about protectionism, they are about fighting unfair trade," acting EU trade spokesman John Clancy said. "The decision to impose measures was taken on the basis of clear evidence that dumping of Chinese products has taken place and that this is harming the otherwise competitive EU industry."

But some European footwear firms do not see eye-to-eye with the EU.

"Ironically, the measure hurts European business and consumers the most," said the European Footwear Alliance, which represents Adidas, Rockport and Timberland, among others. "The extension of the footwear duties opens the door to retaliatory measures on EU exports to China and puts paid to European leaders' repeated pledges to defend free trade."

The countries have 60 days to reach an agreement; otherwise, China can request a WTO Panel to review the dispute.

Another Case for Vietnam?

Vietnam – which initiated its first WTO case last month and has faced EU leather shoe anti-dumping duties at 10 percent – may also join the consultations.

"Vietnam is closely watching China's suit against the EU in the WTO for its anti-dumping duties on leather shoe exports and will take appropriate actions," Nguyen Phuong Nga, Vietnam's Foreign Affairs Spokesperson, told Reuters.

Shoes produced in China and Vietnam represent an estimated 30 percent of the EU market, while EU manufacturers employ 260,000 people in Europe, The New York Times reported.

ICTSD reporting; REUTERS, "UPDATE 3-China Launches Dispute at WTO over EU shoe duties", 4 February 2010; NEW YORK TIMES, "China Lodges WTO Complaint Over E.U. Shoe Tariff", 4 February 2010.

EVENTS & RESOURCES

Events

Coming up this week

10-12 February, Madrid, Spain. BE SMART, BE SUSTAINABLE: RESTRUCTURING THE CITY OF TOMORROW. Under the auspices of the Spanish EU Presidency, EUROCITIES' Forums on Economic Development and Environment will hold a joint event with participation of the OECD to debate how cities can rethink their role and structures in the context of the challenges of climate change and recession. The meeting will examine strategies cities are adopting to address climate targets and improve economic performance. Presentations will be given on these various methods, including investments in green jobs, eco-innovation, greening small and medium enterprises and use of appropriate planning tools. Representatives of the Spanish presidency of the EU, the European Commission and the European Parliament have been invited to comment on how the EU can help cities move towards greater sustainable economic development. For further information, please contact Eva Baños de Guisasola: eva.banos@eurocities.eu or Marie Ranty: marie.ranty@eurocities.eu; or visit the website at http://www.eurocities.eu/main.php?content=http://www.eurocities.eu/include/lib/sql_news_card.php?id=1652.

11 February, Brussels, Belgium. ENERGY, THE ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT: START OF A NEW DECADE. The French Institute of International Relations (IFRI) is the main French independent research and debate institution dedicated to international affairs. The annual conference of the Energy Program of IFRI will focus on four main themes: Energy and Climate Policy Scenarios for 2020; How to Mesh Investments and Recovery; How to Mesh Industrial Competitiveness and Emission Reduction Targets; and Beyond Copenhagen. Speakers at the conference will include Thierry de Montbrial, President of IFRI; Günter Oettinger, Commissioner-designate for energy; and Pierre Gadonneix, Chairman of the World Energy Council. For more information, please refer to

http://www.ifri.org/?page=contribution-detail&id=5811&id_provenance=79&provenance_context_id=.

12-13 February, New Haven, United States. ACCESS TO KNOWLEDGE (A2K) AND HUMAN RIGHTS CONFERENCE. This conference at Yale Law School seeks to lay the conceptual and strategic groundwork for to build bridges between A2K and human rights communities and to pursue common goals of promoting greater access to knowledge, culture, technology, and tools for innovation worldwide. It will feature an international line-up of academics and practitioners addressing topics including technologies of dissent, freedom to innovate, digital education and the right to health. For more information, please contact Violette Ruppner: tel: +4122-320-21-21; fax: +4122-320-69-48; email: info@3dthree.org; or consult the website at <http://www.law.yale.edu/intellecualife/a2k4.htm>.

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.

10+12 February: Trade Policy Review Body: El Salvador

10 February: Committee on Government Procurement

11-12 February: Symposium on Government Procurement

11 February: Council for Trade in Services

17 February: Working Party on the Accession of Bosnia and Herzegovina

17 February: Committee on Trade and Environment

Other upcoming events

18-19 February, Paris, France. 9TH OECD GLOBAL FORUM ON COMPETITION. This meeting will focus on state aids and subsidies and collusion and corruption in public procurement. Participants will also discuss a peer review of competition law and policy in Brazil. The GFC provides an opportunity for policy dialogue between OECD member countries and non-members. The discussion benefits from the input of the Competition Committee, whose work has already generated substantial results in many countries, such as the voluntary adoption of 'best practices', substantial analytical convergence, the establishment of strong networks of enforcement authorities, and enhanced co-operation in international merger reviews, cartel investigations and other cases. For more information, please see http://www.oecd.org/pages/0,3417,en_40382599_40393118_1_1_1_1,00.html.

25 February, Jakarta, Indonesia. TRADE KNOWLEDGE NETWORK (TKN) SOUTHEAST ASIA'S RESEARCH WORKSHOP ON TRADE, ENVIRONMENT & FOOD SECURITY. This research workshop is intended to serve as a discussion forum enabling TKN Southeast Asia to gather input from relevant policy-makers and other stakeholders in the region. The event is expected to involve relevant ASEAN-related bodies, its member government representatives in Jakarta, the Association's dialogue partners, international organisations, industries, professional experts, and non-governmental organisations. For more information, please contact the TKN Southeast Asia Coordinator at: achandra@iisd.org.

18 March, London, UK. GLOBAL FINANCIAL SERVICES: THE IMPACT OF REGULATION ON COMPETITIVENESS. As the global financial crisis shows early signs of receding, this is a key moment to ask what will be the likely future shape and structure of financial services firms. If moves to regulate the industry more tightly are successful, what impact will this have on financial firms' ability to do business? At this event sponsored by Chatham House,

polymakers and financial services industry leaders from the major economies will discuss the role, structure and regulation of the financial services industry, and which forums, mechanisms and institutions will be effective in restoring confidence in its activities. For more information, please see <http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/gfs/>.

Resources

TARIFF ANALYSIS ONLINE. World Trade Organisation. This service was recently added to the WTO's set of online tools for finding out information on customs tariffs last week. It includes a great amount of detail on the tariffs that WTO members have legally bound and the rates they are actually charging, summary import statistics, and the ability to analyse these interactively. The service draws on the WTO's Integrated Database (IDB) of tariff and import data and its Consolidated Tariff Schedules of members' tariff commitments. Users can search various criteria and obtain analytical reports of the results. The development of the new service is in line with the Market Access Committee's decision last summer to make detailed information on tariffs available to the public. A link to the service and accompanying information can be found at: http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news10_e/tar_03feb10_e.htm.

TRADE, FOOD, DIET AND HEALTH: PERSPECTIVES AND POLICY OPTIONS. By Corinna Hawkes, Chantal Blouin, Spencer Henson, Nick Drager and Laurette Dubé. Wiley-Blackwell, December 2009. As global populations have become more overweight and obese, incidences of diet-related chronic illness have risen significantly. This book examines the role the global food trade has played in that change, examining how cross-border food trade, international and regional agreements, liberalisation of trade and investment and the growth of trans-national food corporations affect what people eat and their health. The multidisciplinary group of contributors offers a balanced perspective on the opportunities and

risks trade poses for dietary trends and practical policy options to address this growing global concern. Information on this text is available at: <http://eu.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-1405199865.html>.

THE ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTION. By Gerald Nelson, Amanda Palazzo, Claudia Ringler, Timothy Sulser and Miroslav Batka. ICTSD-IPC Platform on Climate Change, Agriculture and Trade, December 2009. Written by researchers at the International Food Policy Research Institute, this issue brief discusses why trade flows are especially important in agricultural adjustments to climate change, particularly in light of recent research that suggests carbon fertilisation laboratory test results cannot be duplicated in the field. An open and equitable agricultural trade system is necessary to address both climate change and food security concerns. Yet, as this paper also argues, it would be unwise to rely solely on trade to help us adjust to climate change. Along with ongoing efforts to maintain an open and equitable global food system, the international community must also commit significantly to sustained investment in agricultural productivity. This publication can be accessed at: <http://ictsd.org/i/publications/66988/>.