

# BRIDGES WEEKLY

Global trade news from a sustainable development perspective

VOLUME 16, ISSUE 30, 12 SEPTEMBER 2012

## ENVIRONMENTAL GOODS

APEC Leaders Clinch  
Environmental Goods List ..... 1

## CLIMATE CHANGE

Bangkok Sets Stage for Doha  
Climate Meet ..... 5

## WASHINGTON

US Election Enters Home  
Stretch ..... 8

## DISPUTES

Argentina Trade Tensions  
Escalate with Six New WTO  
Cases ..... 11

Solar Panel Spat Heightens  
China-EU Trade Frictions ..... 13

Argentina, EU in Confrontation  
over Biodiesel Imports ..... 15

Disputes Roundup: Australia  
High Court Defends Tobacco  
Labelling; DSB Busy Over  
Summer ..... 17

## CLIMATE CHANGE

Australia to Link Carbon  
Trading Scheme with EU ..... 18

## EVENTS & RESOURCES

Vacancies ..... 20

Events ..... 20

Resources ..... 22

## ENVIRONMENTAL GOODS

# APEC Leaders Clinch Environmental Goods List

Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) leaders' meeting in Vladivostok, Russia last week agreed on a list of over 50 environmental goods for liberalisation by 2015, following up on a commitment made in 2011. The summit of leaders and ministers, which wrapped up on Sunday, also saw the 21-country grouping issue language discouraging protectionism – including export restrictions – amid discussions over the need to focus on growth in the Asia-Pacific during the ongoing eurozone crisis. On the sidelines, ministers and leaders of the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement also met to review progress in the negotiations.

### Environmental goods list

In the 2012 [Vladivostok Declaration](#), leaders – in line with the Honolulu Declaration agreed at last year's summit (see Bridges Weekly, [16 November 2011](#)) – outlined a [list](#) of 54 environmental goods – including solar panels and wind turbines – where applied tariff rates would be cut to five percent or less by the end of 2015, "taking into account economies' economic circumstances and without prejudice to their positions in the World Trade Organization."

Sources note that the list under discussion was originally much smaller, telling Bridges that the increase to 54 items occurred just days prior to the final leaders' discussions on 8-9 September. Like any other trade negotiation, it was a "bumpy process," one source familiar with the talks said, adding that the final count of 50-plus products is what officials saw as a "respectable number" for now.

The source added that the final result reflects the interests of all APEC economies, with any good that was deemed sensitive by any of the 21 countries being excluded from the final tally.

There is the potential for other items to be added to the list in the lead-up to 2015, sources commented to Bridges, noting that the list could eventually become a "living exercise."

While the commitment is technically non-binding – APEC members face no penalties for non-compliance – country officials stressed openly that the list is key toward meeting the region's green growth goals, and trade sources noted privately that the declaration's non-binding nature might actually have helped negotiators in being more adventurous in their liberalisation.



International Centre for Trade  
and Sustainable Development



"Tariff cuts on these environmental goods not only advance our own green growth goals by making these environmental goods cheaper and more accessible, but also will have a meaningful impact on trade and job creation in the region," Deputy US Trade Representative (USTR) Demetrios Marantis said, noting that over US\$1 billion in his country's environmental goods exports to the Asia-Pacific region faced tariffs greater than five percent.

The topic of liberalising environmental goods and services has struggled to make headway within the WTO, a fact that leaders acknowledged at the gathering.

"Ladies and gentlemen, let me note that under the umbrella of WTO similar efforts have already been proceeding for over 10 years – and so far they have brought no results," Russian President Vladimir Putin told reporters at the end of the summit. "Meanwhile, we were able to accomplish this list in just a few months, and this list of environmental goods was finalised during the meeting."

While the APEC list is not tied to the WTO discussions, observers note that the conclusion of such a list might send a positive signal to the talks in Geneva.

APEC leaders are next expected to address non-tariff measures, trade sources say, as notifications of these by the group's members have steadily increased in recent months; the regional grouping is also likely to work on building momentum toward liberalising trade in services.

### **Export restrictions discouraged**

The 21-country grouping also issued notably strong language on the thorny topic of export restrictions, which food security experts have long argued contribute to price spikes and should therefore be avoided.

"Recognising that bans and other restrictions on the export of food may cause price volatility, especially for economies that rely on imports of staple products, we reiterate our pledge against protectionism," APEC leaders said in their final communiqué.

"We are determined to ensure fair and open markets, reduce price volatility, and establish greater regional and global food security and confirm our commitment to develop food markets infrastructure, reduce post-harvest losses along the entire food supply chain."

The language, observers note, despite being non-binding given the nature of the APEC grouping, is particularly timely given the drought facing various major grain producers, such as the US. During the meeting, WTO Deputy Director-General Rufus Yerxa [stressed](#) the importance of avoiding a repeat of such policies, which, he argued, exacerbated the 2007-2008 food crisis.

"This is the time to avoid making things worse," Yerxa said. "This is the time to avoid making export restrictions," he continued.

Ahead of the meeting, questions had been raised as to whether host Russia – also among those affected by drought – would be reviving its controversial 2010 wheat export ban, which was scrapped last year. (See Bridges Weekly, [1 June 2011](#))

However, Putin was quick to dispel this notion during public comments at APEC, [telling](#) business leaders that Russia "will continue its substantial contribution to stable food supplies, including on the Asia-Pacific markets."



Putin noted that Russia currently has the capability to export grains at the level of 15 to 20 million tonnes annually, a number that is expected by some specialists to reach 30 to 40 million tonnes by 2020, should production levels reach the anticipated 120 to 125 million.

### **Currency, protectionism**

In their final declaration, Asia-Pacific leaders also included language regarding exchange rates, a topic that is often difficult within the group due to tensions over China's valuation of its currency – particularly with the US as a fellow APEC member. Globally, the discussion over exchange rates has also put developed economy policies in the spotlight over the past year, with the US and the EU – the latter of which is not an APEC member – being accused of “exporting the crisis” to developing nations due to excessively loose monetary policy.

“We reaffirm our commitment to move more rapidly toward market-determined exchange rate systems and enhance exchange rate flexibility to reflect underlying fundamentals, avoid persistent exchange rate misalignments, and refrain from competitive devaluation of currencies,” leaders said. However, the currency issue, while addressed by APEC negotiators, appeared to take a less high-profile role this year, having at last year's summit captured headlines due to US President Barack Obama's then-uncharacteristically harsh public criticism of the renminbi.

In a nod to the increasing fears of protectionism in light of the ongoing eurozone crisis, APEC leaders also reaffirmed their pledge to refrain from implementing new barriers either in investment or in goods and services trade through the end of 2015, along with avoiding the above-mentioned export restrictions, and to rollback protectionist measures.

### **Eurozone crisis leads shift in focus to Asia-Pacific growth**

Much of the APEC discussions focused on the ongoing eurozone crisis, with leaders noting in their declaration that “the events in Europe are adversely affecting growth in the region.” With Europe's struggles in the background, various APEC leaders commented publicly that the Asia-Pacific region could be key to boosting global economic recovery.

“It is absolutely clear that the most important region for economic growth this decade – and probably the next decade – will be the Pacific,” Mexican President Felipe Calderón said, comments that were echoed by Russia and other countries.

The APEC region currently accounts for 44 percent of world trade and 54 percent of global economic output, according to Reuters. APEC exports are, according to PricewaterhouseCoopers, expected to triple to US\$14.6 trillion in the next ten years, while non-APEC countries are likely to only see their exports double to a fraction of that amount during the same timeframe.

### **Doha**

Leaders also stressed the “value and centrality of the multilateral trading system as embodied in the WTO,” adding that their officials in Geneva should continue exploring “different, fresh, and credible negotiating approaches” toward concluding the Doha Round of trade talks. They particularly noted APEC economies' commitment to advancing the discussions on a possible trade facilitation agreement – which has been lately suggested in Geneva as a possible ‘early harvest’ Doha Round deliverable – and advancing other development-related issues.

However, questions over the future of the Doha Round also were raised by some APEC leaders, with Chilean President Sebastián Piñera openly declaring during a visit to Australia following the Asia-Pacific summit that the trade talks are “dead.”



"Everybody knows that it's dead but nobody wants to kill it," he said. "That's why I think APEC has been good," adding that the regional grouping was helping move global trade forward despite the Doha impasse.

The summit marked the first since APEC host Russia's entry into the WTO became formalised last month, a fact that was not lost on event attendees. Putin, in a [speech](#) during the week's activities, stressed that "mutual trust and clarity" would be Moscow's approach in the now 157-member global trade body.

"As a full-fledged member of this organisation we will play an active part in drawing up fair rules for international trade," Putin said. "We think it essential in this respect to set the special norms that will enable countries to support particular economic sectors that are most vulnerable and sensitive to global instability."

### **TPP update released; former end-2012 goal date appears no longer in sight**

Ministers from countries currently negotiating the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPP) – all of which are APEC members – also released a [report](#) to TPP leaders updating them on the progress made in the nine-country negotiations since last year's APEC gathering in Honolulu.

In a joint [statement](#), TPP leaders on Sunday stressed that the advances made during the past year's negotiating rounds made them "confident" that the possibility of concluding "a comprehensive, next-generation regional agreement" was within reach.

However, no mention was made of a deadline for concluding the trade deal, and US officials – who have been the most vocal advocates for finalising the negotiations this year – similarly avoided suggesting any concrete date.

"Substance will drive timing – that's what's really important," Deputy USTR Marantis told Reuters last week. "If you look at how much progress we've been able to make in such a short amount of time, we're looking to wrap up as much as possible over the course of 2013."

Current TPP members include Australia, Brunei, Chile, Singapore, New Zealand, Malaysia, Peru, the US, and Vietnam. Canada and Mexico, which were formally invited to join the discussions in June, will be permitted to join the talks next month, bringing the total number of TPP countries to eleven. (See Bridges Weekly, [20 June 2012](#)) Japan, however, has yet to officially request an invite to be admitted into the negotiations due to domestic controversy over the pact, and did not do so during this year's APEC meet.

With Russia serving as APEC host, questions were raised as to what interest Moscow might have in joining the TPP. However, responses to this idea among Russian officials have been lukewarm, with First Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov telling reporters before the summit that Moscow does not currently "share the conviction of the Americans of the need to build a trans-Pacific trade zone."

The 14<sup>th</sup> round of TPP negotiations are currently underway in Leesburg, Virginia, ending this Saturday 15 September; Bridges will provide an update on the results of this current round in next week's edition.

ICTSD reporting; "APEC trade boost for growth facing challenge from territorial rows, other tensions," ASSOCIATED PRESS, 7 September 2012; "Russia, looking east for business, cool on US-led Asia trade group," REUTERS, 28 August 2012; "WRAPUP 2-Asia-Pacific nations pledge growth, fret over economy," REUTERS, 9 September 2012; "Asia-Pacific nations agree to slash duties on 'green' technology," REUTERS, 7 September 2012; "Asia-Pacific Forum to Cut Import Duties for Green Technologies," NEW YORK TIMES, 7



September 2012; "Doha talks 'dead': Chile president," THE WEST AUSTRALIAN, 10 September 2012.

---

## CLIMATE CHANGE

---

# Bangkok Sets Stage for Doha Climate Meet

UN officials are praising delegates for the "concrete progress" made at an irregular negotiating session on climate change, which wrapped up last week in Bangkok. Advancements on key issues were notably more positive than expected and some negotiators say the upcoming Doha climate talks are in a better position to succeed than they were before the meeting. Critics, however, have been quick to point out that wide gaps still remain and that countries will have to do much more to achieve measureable progress on curtailing climate change.

The Bangkok meeting – held from 30 August to 5 September – was hastily planned earlier this year, when it became clear that delegates had made less than expected progress at the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change's (UNFCCC) regularly scheduled mid-year meeting in Bonn, Germany (see Bridges Trade BioRes Review, [June 2012](#)). Last December in Durban, South Africa, negotiators were tasked with scaling-up work on the Durban Platform (ADP) over 2012 and concluding talks on two major, long-standing issues before the end of the year: the Ad-Hoc Working Group on the Kyoto Protocol (AWG-KP) and the Ad-Hoc Working Group on Long Term Cooperative Action (AWG-LCA).

Following the week-long meeting, UN climate chief Christiana Figueres said the measurable progress achieved in Bangkok will help ensure that the Convention's end of year meeting in Doha, Qatar is a success.

"The investment in Bangkok has paid off," Figueres said. "Government negotiators have pushed forward key issues further than many had expected and raised the prospects for a next successful step in Doha."

### **CBDR issue complicates Durban Platform**

The UNFCCC's eighteenth Conference of the Parties (COP 18) in Doha is targeted as a stepping stone toward achieving consensus on the ADP's goal of creating a new global climate pact by 2015, to be implemented by 2020. The goal is to achieve the highest possible level of cooperation amongst all parties, close the emissions gap in order to limit global temperature rise to 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, and be grounded in transparent, effective rules.

The most difficult aspect of the negotiations is the lack of explicit reference to equity and the principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR), which acknowledges the historical emissions of developed countries – a cornerstone of the Kyoto Protocol. The session in Bangkok featured two workshops on these principles.

Bangkok saw continued wrangling over CBDR, with developing countries urging the avoidance of formulas or a "one size fits all" approach. They said that mitigation actions should be nationally determined and not internationally imposed and underscored the need for technological and financial support.



The EU in Bangkok stressed absolute economy-wide emission reduction targets be implemented for those "most capable" and insisted that developing countries should do as much as they can. Meanwhile, the US suggested that universal participation, access to new technologies, and linking climate policy to development, among other things, will encourage more action.

The ADP discussions also focused on ways to increase ambition in the short-term (up to 2020) and over the longer-term (post 2020). Over the past few months, numerous suggestions have been tabled, ranging from eliminating fossil fuel subsidies and promoting energy efficiency to creating a global carbon market.

### **Kyoto Protocol limps forward**

The Kyoto Protocol is due to enter into a second commitment period in January 2013, but with almost every developed country outside the EU having abandoned it, the treaty has become severely weakened.

Negotiators still must establish the length of the second commitment period, resolve the question of whether the many surplus (unused) emissions allowances from the first commitment period can be carried forward into the second, and recommend a solid legal form for implementing the second commitment period, as there will be some time gap in between the first and second period.

Developing countries expressed deep concern over the lack of progress in the KP talks in Bangkok. A group of developing countries issued a joint statement saying they fear that Kyoto's environmental integrity is "eroding before our eyes" and calling on developed countries to boost emissions commitments "without conditions."

Small island developing states, which are projected to be the hardest hit by rising sea levels, told delegates that the consequences of a 3 degrees Celsius increase above pre-industrial levels have not been fully appreciated. Least developed countries (LDCs) also noted that movement on other tracks (ADP and LCA) depended upon making progress on the Kyoto issue.

The KP working group in Bangkok did, however, produce a draft document outlining potential decisions on the future of the treaty and exploring ways to resolve clashes over the length of the second commitment period. The chair of the working group for the Kyoto Protocol, Madeline Diouf, is now expected to produce a negotiating text ahead of the Doha summit.

### **Future of LCA unclear**

While talks under the LCA were projected to wrap-up in 2012, with select outstanding issues to be taken up under the ADP if necessary, it is not yet clear if this will occur in Doha. The ongoing LCA work programme aims to mobilise financial resources for emissions reductions, adaptation to climate change's impacts, and technology deployment. It further seeks to establish solid rules for monitoring, reporting, and verifying existing emissions-reduction pledges, while also encouraging an increase of ambition in line with science.

This scope of work runs to more than 55 concurrent agenda items, which are at different stages of negotiation. A handful of trade-related issues fall under this umbrella, two of which – international transport and response measures – were discussed in Bangkok.

International transport discussions under the LCA have focused on the regulation of the use of bunker fuels – the highly polluting fuel used in maritime transport and aviation. Discussions focused on narrowing down the five options currently on the table. Options



range from sets of criteria to be managed under the UNFCCC with associated principles, such as CBDR, to the US position that bunker emissions be managed under the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) – the UN agencies tasked with regulating the respective industries.

The issue of response measures – which deals with the social and economic impacts that countries could experience as a result of the measures other countries take to mitigate climate change, including those related to trade – continued to attract widely divergent views on whether a decision text should be prepared for Doha and which body should consider the issue of unilateral measures made by countries.

Some proposals for a text on response measures say that unilateral measures are not allowed under any circumstance, while other proposals say that unilateral measures are allowed as long as they do “not constitute a means of arbitrary or unjustifiable discrimination or a disguised restriction on international trade.” Parties seem to agree that they should “cooperate to promote a supportive and open international economic system.”

While developing countries want to have only technical discussions in the new forum on response measures – established in Durban – and leave the real decisions to the LCA or ADP, the EU says that it wants constructive solutions in the forum. Developing countries, however, say they doubt whether developed countries want to have discussions on unilateral measures at all. Australia and Singapore called for negotiations on response measures in the WTO. Looking forward, it is likely that Doha will give a clear mandate to the forum to discuss substance.

### **Doha home stretch**

Negotiations in Bangkok were ratcheted up a notch in tone and spirit compared to this year's Bonn meeting and a more positive tone has clearly been set for Doha than what would have been the case otherwise. But while it is clear that negotiators are moving forward, critics still say it is not adequate to address the urgency of the threat of climate change. Many environmental groups underscored that the recent extreme weather seen throughout the world - droughts, floods, Arctic melting, and hurricanes - will only increase if negotiators fail to realise their targets.

“The time for finger-pointing, blame-casting, and hiding behind the inaction of other countries is over,” said Alden Meyer, director of strategy and policy at the Union of Concerned Scientists. “We cannot afford those kind of games. What we need is political will for action and we need much greater ambition.”

The next step before COP 18 will be the “Pre-COP Ministerial Meeting” in Seoul from 21-23 October. The high-level meeting will set the political groundwork for Doha, which will take place from 26 November – 7 December.

ICTSD reporting.



## WASHINGTON

## US Election Enters Home Stretch

With the national conventions for both major US political parties now in the rearview mirror, the country's presidential and congressional election season has kicked into high gear as candidates vie to win over voters before the polls open on 6 November. Meanwhile, as US lawmakers return from the August recess for the few remaining days of the pre-election legislative session, questions abound as to whether efforts to repeal decades-old restrictions on trade with Russia and enact a new Farm Bill will bear fruit before November.

### Democrats, Republicans unveil party platforms

The last two weeks saw Republicans, then Democrats, hold their respective national conventions to formally nominate their presidential candidates. The weeklong, back-to-back events, also saw the two parties release and sign off on their official – though non-binding – 2012 “party platforms,” which outlined what each sides’ stances on a host of issues – including trade – would be if they win office in November.

On trade, the two sides show little differences in their overall approach, focusing more on the ways and degrees in which they would implement their policies. For instance, the Republican Party [platform](#), like its Democratic Party [counterpart](#), takes a strong position on trade with China, in line with earlier comments that have been made by both campaigns in the months leading up to the party conventions.

Both sides continue to disagree over who will be ‘tougher on China’, with Republicans in their platform referring to Beijing as the “chief offender” among those governments that have used “a variety of unfair means to limit American access to their markets while stealing our designs, patents, brands, know-how, and technology.”

While the Republican platform also says that China’s currency practices require a “firm response from a new Republican administration,” the document does not include Romney’s oft-repeated promise to formally name China a currency manipulator on his first day in office should he win in November, going only so far as to say that “a Republican President will insist on full parity in trade with China and stand ready to impose countervailing duties if China fails to amend its currency policies.”

Republicans have criticised the White House for not taking a sufficiently hard line on China. Democrats, for their part, have emphasised in their platform that Obama has already – on both the public and private level – urged Beijing “to take steps to appreciate its currency so that America is competing on a level playing field.” Democrats also note that the Obama administration has filed WTO disputes against China at twice the rate of the prior administration, among other trade enforcement efforts.

Notably, both sides expressed support for the ongoing Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) talks, which has been one of the most prominent components of the Obama trade agenda. Republicans, however, have also called for the reinstatement of the expired Trade Promotion Authority – which basically allows a US President to submit trade deals to Congress for a “fast-track” up-or-down vote without amendments – and criticised the Obama administration for not actively seeking its renewal.



The Republican platform also suggests a so-called "Reagan Economic Area," which would be a "worldwide multilateral agreement among nations committed to the principles of open markets," without providing more detail about how such an agreement would track with the WTO.

Along with engaging with Asia via the TPP and other means, Romney particularly aims to focus on greater trade with Latin America countries, former Commerce Secretary and Romney trade adviser Carlos Gutierrez told Bloomberg. Creating a trade zone in the Americas that would link existing deals would "make the hemisphere more globally competitive," he said.

The Democratic platform, meanwhile, along with advocating for the TPP, notes that the protracted efforts to enact free trade agreements with Colombia, Panama, and South Korea successfully came to a close under Obama's tenure, adding that such deals will have a major impact in boosting US jobs. .

Their platform also says that a second Obama administration would work toward expanding "free and fair trade in the Americas as well," promising to pursue "additional opportunities to expand commerce and promote shared prosperity," echoing similar comments made by the President during this year's Americas Summit. (See Bridges Weekly, [18 April 2012](#))

### **Timeframe for Jackson-Vanik up in the air**

Along with zeroing in on Beijing, Washington's trade relationship with Moscow has taken on an increasingly prominent role on the election circuit over the past month. Russia's membership in the WTO became official on 22 August; however, it still remains uncertain whether and when the US Congress will repeal the Jackson-Vanik amendment, a Cold War-era measure that denies most-favoured nation status, or Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR), to countries with limited freedom of emigration.

While Washington has granted Moscow annual waivers to Jackson-Vanik since the mid-1990s, the legislation remains on the books, prompting fears that Russia's new WTO status could leave the US at a competitive disadvantage compared to other countries that do not impose such restrictions.

Prior to the August recess, legislation to repeal Jackson-Vanik for Russia had made it through the Senate and House committees that deal with trade; however, the law has yet to hit the floors of either chamber. The Senate version of the bill includes the text of the Sergei Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act, a proposed law that would sanction Russian officials for alleged human rights violations and has prompted pledges from Moscow of retaliatory action. The House version does not yet include the human rights text, which is expected to be worked in during one of the later stages of that chamber's legislative process.

The linkage of the Jackson-Vanik repeal to the human rights legislation has been controversial in Washington; while some have said that tying the trade measure to the Magnitsky bill is necessary leverage to get Moscow to bolster its human rights policies, others have argued that the topics must be dealt with separately. The debate has left the timeframe for the re-instatement of PNTR largely uncertain as a result.

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, [speaking](#) at this past week's Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit, expressed hope that Congress would be able to lift the Russia trade restrictions this month. (For more on APEC, see related article in this issue) In early August, House Majority Leader Eric Cantor – a Republican – similarly [said](#) that Russia PNTR would be on his chamber's agenda upon Congress' return from the summer break.



On Tuesday, however, Cantor expressed a more sombre outlook, noting that, "unfortunately, we don't see the bipartisan coalition needed to pass [the legislation]."

Top lawmakers from both parties have lately conceded that holding a vote on Russia PNTR may have to wait until after the election, given the contentious nature of the subject during an already charged campaign season. Senior Democratic aides told the Wall Street Journal on Monday that Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid – a Democrat – is unlikely to table the bill before November, in order to avoid risking the seats of vulnerable Democratic incumbents.

Meanwhile, the Romney campaign, which has repeatedly – and controversially – referred to Russia as the US' "number one geopolitical foe," has in recent weeks come out in favour of linking the Magnitsky and trade bills.

"Gov. Romney believes that permanent normal trade relations (PNTR) should only be granted to Russia on the condition that the Magnitsky human rights bill be passed," campaign policy director Lanhee Chen said in a statement last week.

The Obama administration, while having said that the human rights issue does need to be addressed, has argued against linking it with the trade legislation, though some officials have admitted that the linkage might happen anyway.

### **New Farm Bill on hold?**

Meanwhile, the process for bringing together a new piece of omnibus legislation that would determine the US' federal agriculture spending for the next five years continues to struggle on in Washington, particularly with the 30 September expiration date of the current Farm Bill fast approaching. With movement on the legislation not expected by most in the near future, the prospect of enacting a short-term extension of the current Farm Bill has been tabled as an option in order to avoid going back to 1930s-era farm spending levels.

The current US drought – which has been termed one of the nation's worst such crises in recent history – has put the already high-profile Farm Bill process front and centre, as concerns build both domestically and internationally on what effect the weather situation will have on food prices. (See Bridges Weekly, [18 July 2012](#))

The House passed a US\$383 million bill in August in response to calls from livestock farmers for relief from the drought. The Senate, however, did not budge. Senate Agriculture Committee Chair Debbie Stabenow – a Democrat from the US state of Michigan – instead called on the House to pass the Farm Bill that its Agriculture Committee had concluded before the summer recess. Democratic leaders such as Stabenow are insistent that a new Farm Bill be passed rather than an extension issued for the current legislation. Republican leaders are mum, with reports indicating that action will come after the fall elections.

ICTSD reporting; "Romney Backs Latin American Free-Trade Zone," BLOOMBERG BUSINESSWEEK, 22 August 2012; "Business groups headed to conventions to push lawmakers on Russia trade bill," THE HILL, 19 August 2012; "Clinton Tells Russia That Sanctions Will Soon End," THE NEW YORK TIMES, 8 September 2012; "Pile of Bills is Left Behind as Congress goes to campaign," THE NEW YORK TIMES, 2 August 2012; "Romney backs Russia trade bill only with human rights added," REUTERS, 6 September 2012; "Democrats Weigh Farm Bill Threat," ROLL CALL, 12 September 2012; "Russia Trade Vote Looks Delayed Until After Election," WALL STREET JOURNAL, 10 September 2012.



---

## DISPUTES

---

# Argentina Trade Tensions Escalate with Six New WTO Cases

Tensions have continued brewing over the past four weeks between Argentina and its trading partners, taking the form of six new WTO cases filed during the Geneva-based organisation's summer break. While the US, Japan, and Mexico have joined the EU in formally complaining at the global trade arbiter over Argentina's import policies, Buenos Aires has also lodged its own series of WTO challenges, targeting both Washington and Brussels in three separate disputes.

### US, Japan, Mexico join EU in challenging Argentine import restrictions

Over the past few weeks, the US, Japan, and Mexico have each filed separate WTO complaints over Argentina's import controls ([DS444](#), [DS445](#), and [DS446](#)). Coming less than three months after the EU launched proceedings in connection with the same Argentine measures, Washington, Tokyo, and Mexico City argue that the policies pursued by Buenos Aires are protectionist and amount to a violation of international trade rules. (See Bridges Weekly, [30 May 2012](#))

Argentina's rules, the complaints say, discriminate between imported and domestic goods and create an unnecessary barrier to international trade. They "do not appear to be related to the implementation of any measure justified under the WTO Agreement."

One measure being challenged is the recent requirement that all importers file online affidavits and then wait for government approval before importing, which entered into force this past February. Another is the long-standing rule requiring import licences for certain goods before entering the country. The relevant paperwork, detractors claim, is often systematically delayed or refused by Argentine authorities without justification or explanation.

While import licenses are permitted under WTO rules, they must be approved automatically; any non-automatic import licenses must comply with specific WTO requirements, including that they be issued within 60 days.

Mexico, Japan, and the US have also raised concerns over Argentina's requirements that importers balance imports with exports, increase investment in production facilities in Argentina, increase local content of products manufactured in Argentina, and refrain from transferring revenue abroad.

Such measures, the complainants argue, do not pursue any public policy aims justified under the WTO Agreement. Instead they are "aimed at advancing the Argentine Government's stated policies of re-industrialisation, import substitution, proliferation of non-tariff barriers, and elimination of trade balance deficits."

The Argentine government has long held the position that its measures reflect legitimate policies that are crucial to mitigating the negative impacts of unfair trade practices implemented by developed nations.

"It's as if there was a legal form of protectionism, the one that developed countries engage in, and a populist one when it involves emerging economies," Argentine President Cristina Kirchner argued last May in front of a Bariloche audience. "[Protectionism] is also being



confused with the concept of patriotism and defence of our own interests." (See Bridges Weekly, [30 May 2012](#))

### **Tit for tat? Argentina challenges EU, US over biofuels, lemons, and beef**

In what is being described by critics as an apparent act of retaliation, Argentina has filed its own series of WTO complaints against the EU over biofuels (see related story in this issue) and the US regarding market access for Argentine beef and lemons ([DS443](#), [DS447](#), and [DS448](#), respectively). Certain beef products and lemons are both banned from entering the US market for alleged sanitary and phytosanitary standard (SPS) concerns.

"The US market has been closed to Argentine lemons since 2001," the Argentine Foreign Ministry explained in a [statement](#). "Although US public health authorities approved the entry of lemons back in 2000 when 20,000 tonnes of citrus products were exported, a judge of said country later decided to reinstate the prohibition at the request of protectionist lobbies, taking away the power of US health authorities."

"In reality, Argentine lemons are victims of a judicial trade barrier," the ministry added, noting that Argentine citrus products are exported to other countries "with very high health standards," including the Netherlands, Spain, and Italy.

Argentine beef is similarly banned on SPS grounds, namely over concerns about foot-and-mouth (FMD) disease that Buenos Aires has continuously criticised as arbitrary and unfounded.

"Although the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) has recognised the southern Patagonia region as being free of foot-and-mouth disease, without vaccinations, since 2003, the US government has instead echoed its protectionist lobbies and delayed the recognition of this situation, just as it has unreasonably delayed the authorisation for the importation of fresh, chilled, or frozen beef from the FMD-free zone, a designation that the OIE has granted the rest of the country since 2007."

Sanitary concerns regularly cause tensions among WTO members, with several SPS-related disputes being lodged at the global trade arbiter during the past year. For instance, in January South Korea lifted its ban on the importation of Canadian bovine meat after settling their decade-long spat; meanwhile, a panel was established in June to hear a dispute between Washington and New Delhi in connection with an Indian ban on US poultry, which India claims is aimed at preventing avian influenza outbreaks (See Bridges Weekly, [25 January 2012](#) and [27 June 2012](#)).

Buenos Aires' decision to move ahead with the beef and lemon complaints drew a pointed response from Washington, with Nkenge Harmon – a spokeswoman for the US Trade Representative (USTR) – telling Reuters that the US is "surprised and disappointed at Argentina's reaction."

The move "appears to be part of a disturbing trend in which countries engaged in actions that are inconsistent with their WTO obligations retaliate with counter complaints rather than fix the underlying problem raised in the complaint," she said.

In each case, the countries will have 60 days to resolve the matters in consultations. Should the parties be unable to reach a resolution, the complainants will have the right to ask that a WTO panel be established to hear the case. If this occurs, one single panel would be established to hear all four cases – EU, US, Mexico, and Japan – against Argentina. Should the beef and lemon cases also reach the panel stage, these would be heard by separate panels.

ICTSD reporting; "US defends restrictions on Argentine lemons, beef," REUTERS, 22 August 2012.



---

## Solar Panel Spat Heightens China-EU Trade Frictions

The European Commission last week ratcheted up tensions with Beijing by launching an investigation into allegations that Chinese solar panel exports were being sold below market value – a practice known in trade parlance as “dumping.” The move comes in response to a 24 July complaint filed by the European Pro Sun coalition, a group of 25 European solar panel manufacturers headed by the German-based SolarWorld.

The solar panel row is politically charged in Europe, with Berlin anxious to ensure that Germany's valuable trade relationship with China remains strong. The two economies are deeply intertwined, with German investment in Chinese companies topping €26 billion and China investing some €1.2 billion in German companies. The Guardian reports that in 2011, the European Union overall was responsible for some 80 percent of China's global trade in solar products, worth an estimated €21 billion.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel recently indicated her strong preference to resolve the dispute through dialogue and negotiations, rather than through the European Commission.

Merkel's comments, which emerged during a 28 August meeting in Beijing with Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao, appear to put her at odds with the harder line being pushed by European manufacturers and EU Trade Commissioner Karel De Gucht.

Some other European manufacturers, including the world's second largest polysilicon maker, Wacker Chemie AG, have also stated their opposition to the filing. Meanwhile, the European companies that filed the complaint have requested that punitive tariffs be imposed on Chinese solar products.

### China rebuffs charges

China's Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) expressed “deep regret” over the launch of the investigation. The ministry has consistently called the dumping allegations “baseless” and insisted that the move will harm the entire photovoltaic (PV) industry.

“The PV industries of China and EU are interdependent and mutually beneficial,” MOFCOM said in a statement. “Restricting Chinese PV products not only hurts the interests of PV industries on both sides, but also will destroy the sound development of global PV industry and clean energy.”

Some analysts say they were surprised by the Commission's move in light of recent statements from China. At his meeting with Merkel, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao suggested the issue had been diffused somewhat.

“To solve the anti-dumping dispute through conversation is an important agreement reached between the two governments today, a showcase of a great way to resolve trade controversy,” Wen said.

But on 5 September, China Daily – the country's official state newspaper – said Beijing would retaliate with trade curbs if Brussels went ahead with the investigation. China has reportedly been lobbying hard in Brussels against the probe.



### Final ruling expected in late 2013

The case marks the second time this year that China has faced allegations of dumping its solar products. In May, the United States Commerce Department determined that Chinese producers and exporters had been selling solar cells in the United States at a significant loss and imposed cumulative anti-dumping duties of up to 250 percent on them (see Bridges Weekly, [23 May 2012](#)).

According to US-based research firm IHS, the European Union has a higher burden of proof for determining whether dumping did actually occur, and it is unlikely they would follow the United States' example.

In a [statement](#), the Commission outlined how it will conduct an investigation through a series of questionnaires sent out to various interested parties regarding exports, production, sales, and imports of solar panels and their key components. The information will then be verified by the Commission.

The panel is expected to release its provisional findings by June 2013. Based on the evidence, the Commission will then decide whether to impose provisional anti-dumping duties, continue the investigation without imposing provisional duties, or terminate the investigation.

A key factor in the investigation is what is known as the "Union interest test." In essence, despite the outcome of the investigation, the EC will have to decide whether imposition of anti-dumping duties will be overall more costly to the European Union economy than what the benefit would be to the Pro Sun coalition.

A definitive decision on the imposition of retaliatory measures is expected to be published in the Official Journal of the European Union by 5 December 2013.

ICTSD reporting; "Merkel Wants To Resolve Chinese Solar Trade Dispute Through Talks," SOLAR INDUSTRY, 30 August 2012; "Merkel marks 'special' China relationship," FINANCIAL TIMES, 30 August 2012; "Chinese, Germany suggest solar panel talk," CHINA DAILY USA, 30 August 2012; "Nations urged to settle solar dispute via dialogue," CHINA DAILY, 31 August 2012; "Merkel Seeks Solar Talks to Prevent China Dumping Case in Europe," BLOOMBERG, 30 August 2012; "Merkel faces EU clash over China," FINANCIAL TIMES, 30 August 2012; "US-China Renewable Energy Row Escalates with Solar Duty Announcement" ICTSD, 23 May 2012.



---

## Argentina, EU in Confrontation over Biodiesel Imports

The ongoing sparring between Argentina and the EU over trade reached new heights last month, with Buenos Aires filing a WTO complaint against Brussels regarding Spain's alleged discrimination against imports of biodiesel originating from the South American nation ([DS443](#)). The move comes amid intensified competition in the agro-fuel sector between the two trading partners, and in spite of earlier pledges by Argentine officials that the issue would not reach the global trade arbiter. Meanwhile, the EU has launched its own investigation into alleged dumping of biofuels on the EU market by Argentine and Indonesian exporters.

### Spanish, EU policies under fire at WTO

Back in 2011, Argentine biofuel exports to Spain were worth €750 million, which together with Indonesian imports accounted for nearly three quarters of the Spanish market, according to [Spain's Renewable Energy Producers Association](#).

The Spanish [rules](#) at issue, which specifically favour biofuels produced in the European Union, were adopted in April this year as part of a broader piece of legislation that implements the EU's [Renewable Energy Directive](#). With the aim of increasing the use of biodiesel in transportation fuels, both the Directive and the Spanish implementation law mandate that every transportation fuel be mixed with a certain amount of biofuels.

According to the April changes, only EU-produced biofuels may be counted toward this blending requirement. Fuels that have been merely mixed – but where the biofuel component itself has been produced abroad – do not qualify under the new rules. In addition, the new law foresees a quota system for EU-certified manufacturers that cannot be used for foreign-produced fuels.

In effect, this means that countries such as Argentina may continue to export their raw biofuel input – such as soybeans – to Spain; however, their already-produced fuels are, in effect, blocked from entering the market.

"It is important to note that the principal providers of biofuels to Spain and the EU are developing countries," the Argentine Ministry of Foreign Affairs [commented](#) regarding its decision to bring the dispute. "This [case] involves a measure that, like others taken over decades both by the EU and other developed countries, in practice has the effect of preventing or limiting the rise of [developing country] industries in global value chains, limiting the role of developing countries to that of raw material suppliers."

The formal complaint received by the WTO further states that the Spanish legislation "would create discrimination between the product of European origin and that of other origins, implying a de facto prohibition on imports of biodiesel from outside the community... This would totally exclude the Argentine product from the market."

Against the background of increasing competition from the South American agro-giant, Spanish industry had been pushing for this type of regulation for several years. Back in April, Spanish newspaper El País reported that in 2011 President Cristina Kirchner had successfully lobbied against Madrid enacting such a measure.



Following Kirchner's April announcement that Buenos Aires would be nationalising Spanish-owned oil and gas company Repsol YFP's Argentine subsidiaries (see Bridges Weekly, [18 April 2012](#)), however, Spanish officials quickly cautioned that Madrid would push back in areas such as trade, energy, and diplomacy. The biofuel ban was put into law only days after, following an emergency meeting of the country's cabinet ministers.

Indonesia, Spain's second largest biodiesel supplier after Argentina, is currently considering whether to join the dispute.

### **EU to look into allegations of dumping by Argentina, Indonesia**

Spanish biodiesel producers are also pursuing their interests at the regional level, together with their EU bloc counterparts. Following an investigation request by the European Biodiesel Board (EBB), the European Commission [announced](#) last week that it would be launching an investigation into accusations regarding whether millions of tonnes of Argentine biodiesel is being dumped on the EU market.

The announcement follows an initial investigation that had revealed that "the volume and the prices of the imported product under investigation have resulted in substantial adverse effects on the overall performance and the financial situation of the Union industry."

"Prices of soybeans, the raw material, are more expensive in Europe than biodiesel imported from Indonesia and Argentina," Raffaello Garofalo, EBB Secretary General, [commented](#) in the complaint. "It's like saying steel costs more than a car. It's impossible to compete."

The EBB, which represents manufacturers accounting for more than 25 percent of EU biodiesel production, claims that Argentine and Indonesian imports have been undercutting EU biodiesel prices by between US\$60 and US\$110 per tonne.

"Both countries maintain differential export taxes (DET) regimes, whereby final products are sold at a much lower price than raw material," the EBB claimed in a [press statement](#). "By having significantly higher export taxes for the raw materials used to produce biodiesel than on biodiesel itself, DET artificially discourages raw materials exports in favour of biodiesel exports."

According to EU industry, European biodiesel producers have been reducing their output due to the increased competition, resulting in a high number of bankruptcies.

Argentina has been pursuing a progressive policy geared at building a national biofuel industry, leading it to becoming the world's second largest biodiesel producer, while it tops world rankings in global soymeal and soybean exports. Imports of biodiesel from Argentina and Indonesia have risen rapidly since 2008, amounting to 2.5 million tonnes in 2011, a figure that represents more than 90 percent of such imports into the EU.

This sparring between Argentina and the EU is only the latest clash over market interest in the highly competitive renewable energy sector. Trade disputes in the green energy sector have grown in number in recent years as many countries view green subsidies or environment-based trade restrictions as a form of protectionism or as a means of covering actual protectionism with a "green blanket."

Reliance on sustainability standards such as those promoted in the EU Directive, for instance, has long been a contentious issue, with Argentina and Indonesia among such standards' most vocal critics. Although the above cases do not directly concern the sustainability standards themselves, disputes of this type continue to keep the issue firmly on the trade and sustainable development agenda.



ICTSD reporting; "Argentina pidió ayuda a Bruselas en 2011 para vender su biodiesel," EL PAÍS, 25 April 2012.

---

## Disputes Roundup: Australia High Court Defends Tobacco Labelling; DSB Busy Over Summer

The high-profile fight over Australia's plain packaging legislation for cigarettes hit a new milestone last month, with the country's highest court upholding the controversial policy. Back in Geneva, the row is expected to continue on the WTO front, as Ukraine – one of three countries challenging the law – submitted its first panel request. Trade lawyers were generally kept busy during the WTO's August recess, with members lodging seven new disputes – six of which concerned Argentina (see related story, this issue) – and two panel requests, including Ukraine's, over the past month alone.

### Plain packaging wins in Canberra

On 15 August, Australia's High Court upheld the government law on mandatory plain packaging for cigarettes, which requires packets to show graphic health warnings and to be sold in a single colour without any brand logos.

Leading tobacco manufacturers, such as Philip Morris and British American Tobacco, had challenged the Plain Packaging Act as being both unconstitutional and an infringement of their intellectual property rights. In a brief [statement](#), the country's highest court explained that a majority of its judges did not agree, noting that it would publish its reasoning behind the decision at a later date.

Supporters of the law have welcomed the judgment as an important step for public health in Australia, and observers argue that such a ruling will pave the way for other countries to follow Canberra's lead.

For instance, Indian officials have recently said that New Delhi is considering implementing a similar policy, with Amal Pushp, director of tobacco control at the country's health ministry, telling AFP last week that India is "watching the developments in Australia with interest." A fight between tobacco companies and the New Zealand government is also brewing over Wellington's push to implement legislation modelled after the one enacted by Australia.

The fight over Australia's plain packaging law is set to continue in other legal arenas, however. Ukraine, which raised a WTO complaint against Australia in March (see Bridges Weekly, [21 March 2012](#)) had its first attempt to set up a WTO panel last week rejected by Australia. A second request, which Australia will not be able to refuse, is expected at the end of September.

Similar WTO complaints have also been lodged by the Dominican Republic and Honduras. (See Bridges Weekly, [25 July 2012](#)) The three cases are likely to be heard together, meaning that the case will only be able to move forward once all three complainants have successfully requested panels.



The plain packaging law is also being reviewed by an investor-state arbitration panel under the Bilateral Investment Treaty between Hong Kong and Australia.

### **DSB moves ahead on steel, electronic payment**

In its first meeting after the summer break on 31 August, the Dispute Settlement Body (DSB), at India's request, established a panel to hear New Delhi's complaint over countervailing, or anti-subsidy, duties implemented by the US against hot rolled steel products from India ([DS436](#)). (See Bridges Weekly, [18 April 2012](#))

Meanwhile, following China's decision not to appeal, the DSB also adopted the July panel report that had found Beijing's restrictions on electronic payment services illegal ([DS413](#)). (See Bridges Weekly, [18 July 2012](#))

United States Trade Representative Ron Kirk welcomed the DSB ruling. "Most of the world's leading providers of the services that enable credit and debit card transactions are headquartered in the United States. These companies employ tens of thousands of American workers," he noted.

"A more efficient credit and debit payment system in China will also enable consumers to buy more goods, including made-in-America products," Kirk added.

ICTSD reporting; "India mulls plain packaging of cigarettes," THE AUSTRALIAN, 5 September 2012; "Tobacco firms battle plain packaging in NZ," THE AUSTRALIAN, 22 August 2012.

---

## CLIMATE CHANGE

---

# Australia to Link Carbon Trading Scheme with EU

Canberra has announced its decision to restructure its controversial fixed-price carbon pricing mechanism and fully link its carbon market with the European Union's emissions trading system (ETS). The 28 August announcement was hailed by EU climate commissioner Connie Hedegaard as the next step "towards establishing a robust international carbon market."

The proposed linkage holds a special significance for Europe's carbon market, which has been trying desperately to reverse a trend that has seen carbon permit prices fall significantly. Proponents in Europe say they hope that Australian businesses could provide a boost for the waning market once they are able to purchase European permits beginning in 2015.

Those in favour of linking the schemes say it helps give global legitimacy to the cap-and-trade system.

"Linking the Australian and European Union systems reaffirms that carbon markets are the prime vehicle for tackling climate change," said Greg Combet, a Labor Party member of Australia's parliament. Combet added that negotiations are still underway on the possibility of further linking Australia's scheme with New Zealand's.



The new scheme, often referred to as a carbon "tax," requires Australia's 294 top polluters to purchase a permit for every metric tonne of carbon pollution produced (see Bridges Weekly, [4 July, 2012](#)).

Covering around 60 percent of the country's emissions, the controversial scheme is expected to have a strong impact on the highly-polluting coal industry. With coal being Australia's second-highest export commodity – Australia is the world's leading coal exporter – critics say the cap-and-trade scheme will result in widespread layoffs.

Coming on the heels of the 2010 campaign in which Prime Minister Julia Gillard adamantly denied her desire to pursue a carbon tax scheme for Australia, the prime minister's bold decision to then impose such a tax was met with opposition upon its announcement a year ago. Following its narrow passage in the Australian Parliament, the initiative immediately came under fire from opposition leader Tony Abbott, who has pledged to scrap the new system if his party takes power in the coming election.

This fresh restructuring of the tax scheme has provoked renewed protest from Gillard's critics. As part of its new linkage with the EU, the Australian government has agreed to drop the A\$15 a tonne price floor set by Gillard's original system, a move Abbot classified as the government's acknowledgement that it has the carbon tax "fundamentally wrong."

Under the Australian scheme, carbon prices will be fixed at A\$23 (€18.7) per metric tonne and rise annually at 2.5 percent until 2015. At that time, the lower-priced European permits – currently selling at €8.16 – will be available for purchase in Australia. Australian permits will not be available in Europe for another three years.

At least one [report](#) predicts that Australian buyers will take advantage of the lower-priced allowances, thereby decreasing the supply of European permits on the market. In time, this should lead to a much-needed rise in the value of European permits as the prices between continents converge, the report says.

The controversial scheme has been highly divisive in Australia, with massive industry protests against the scheme in the months leading up to the narrow passing of the Clean Energy Act last November (see Bridges Weekly, [9 November 2011](#)).

But despite the vocal opposition of critics who feel the Australian economy will be negatively impacted by the scheme, a number of Australians say it is a much-needed tool in the fight against greenhouse gas emissions, given that Australia is one of the world's highest per capita emitters.

ICTSD reporting; "Australia to join EU carbon market," FINANCIAL TIMES, 28 August 2012; "Australia to join EU's emissions trading system," EURACTIV, 28 August 2012; "LINKING EMISSIONS TRADING SCHEMES: A SHORT NOTE," IAEE, 1 December 2011.



---

## EVENTS & RESOURCES

---

# Vacancies

**The IDEAS Centre in Geneva** is looking to fill a position for an expert in WTO accession with expertise in services negotiations. The successful candidate would work with a team of international trade experts, delivering policy and negotiating advice to selected governments currently acceding to the WTO. Candidates should possess a university degree in law, economics, political science, or related international development fields, and work experience with governments and international organisations. For the full job description, please visit the IDEAS Centre [website](#).

**The Office of the Chief Trade Advisor (OCTA)**, in Port Vila, Vanuatu, is seeking an economic advisor on a project that aims to enhance OCTA's capacity to provide technical support and capacity building to the Pacific Forum Island Countries (FICs) in their Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations (PACER) Plus negotiations. Candidates should possess a master's or equivalent degree in economics, and at least seven years of experience working on economic issues related to trade and/or regional trade integration, preferably in developing small island states or institutions dealing in this context. For the full job description, visit the OCTA [website](#).

**The United Nations World Food Programme's Geneva office** is seeking candidates for an internship in communications and public information. Interns will prepare background material for UN media briefings, translate texts into English and French, and draft presentations and articles for the WFP website and other media, among other responsibilities. Applicants must have completed at least two years of undergraduate studies and must be enrolled in a university or graduate school throughout the duration of the internship. Fluency in French and English is required. For more information, visit the WFP [website](#).

**White & Case LLP** is seeking to hire a junior Associate for its International Trade Practice in the firm's Geneva office. Applicants should possess a law degree and practical experience in WTO law, whether at a law firm, as a delegate to the WTO, or as a lawyer in the WTO Secretariat. The post requires outstanding written communication skills in English. For more information, visit the firm's [website](#).

---

# Events

## Coming soon

17 September, London, UK. CHINESE INVESTMENT IN EUROPE. This event, hosted by Chatham House and serving as part of the EU-funded Europe China Research and Advice Network (ECRAN) project, will discuss China's efforts to invest abroad as a means of deepening the globalisation of its economy. The discussion will focus primarily on Chinese investment in Europe and will see the launch of two ECRAN papers on the subject. For more information, visit the Chatham House [website](#).



17 September, Washington, US. THE STATE OF LEARNING IN AFRICA. This event, sponsored by the Center for Universal Education at Brookings (CUE), will feature the launch of the "Africa Learning Barometer," a region-wide assessment and online interactive tool examining the state of learning in Africa. The event includes discussion on the data and trends from the barometer, and their implications for the continent's business and development in the future. For more information, please visit the Brookings Institution [website](#).

17-21 September, The Hague, Netherlands. ADVANCED WTO TRAINING PROGRAMME ON 'RECENT TRENDS AND EMERGING ISSUES'. This training programme, hosted by the T.M.C. Asser Instituut, is designed for diplomats and trade lawyers. Through this event, organisers aim to provide participants with the knowledge, insights, and practical skills that will enable them to implement WTO rules and to engage in its dispute settlement procedures. For information on the programme and to register, please visit the event [website](#).

17-21 September, Paris, France. SECOND ITU GREEN STANDARDS WEEK. This event, organised by the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) and TechAmerica Europe, aims to bring together policymakers, engineers, government officials, regulators, and standards experts, among others, to raise awareness of the importance and opportunities of using information and communication technology (ICT) standards to build a green economy. The week will include forums on "Greener Smarter Better Cities, Boosting Smart Grids through Energy Efficient ICT," "Environmental Sustainability for the ICT Sector" and, among other issues, "Greening the ICT Supply Chain." For more information, visit the event [website](#).

### **WTO Events**

An updated list of forthcoming WTO meetings is posted [here](#). 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.

18-19 September: Committee on Regional Trade Agreements

19-21 September: Trade Policy Review Body

### **Other Upcoming Events**

24-26 September, Geneva, Switzerland. WTO PUBLIC FORUM 2012. Convening under the theme "Is multilateralism in crisis?" the Public Forum is the WTO's largest annual outreach event. It aims to provide a platform for participants to discuss the latest developments in world trade and to propose ways of enhancing the multilateral trading system. The event regularly attracts over 1,500 representatives from civil society, academia, business, the media, governments, parliamentarians, and intergovernmental organisations. For more details about this event, visit the WTO's [website](#).

24-26 September, Washington, US. GREENGOV SYMPOSIUM. The White House Council on Environmental Quality will present this symposium, which will be co-sponsored with the Association of Climate Change Officers. The event aims to bring together leaders from governments, the private sector, non-profits, and academia to identify opportunities to create jobs, grow clean energy industries, and curb pollution by incorporating sustainable practices into the federal government's operations. The programme will focus on sustainability challenges and best practices, clean energy, education and engagement, green buildings and, among other topics, greening the supply chain. To learn more, please visit the GreenGov [website](#).



24 September-16 November, online. NEGOTIATING CHANGE: FROM DURBAN AND BEYOND. This eight-week web-based course aims to develop participants' understanding of the climate change policy framework by building an appreciation of the science, causes, and impacts of climate change, the history of the policymaking process and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) framework. The course also considers the pertinent challenges currently facing diplomats and international decision makers in making progress with what is currently on the negotiating table. The course targets mid-to-senior level government officers, as well as staff of intergovernmental/nongovernment organisations. It also targets entry-level and mid-career diplomats working in a multilateral setting, as well as private sector specialists and students. For more information, please visit the course [website](#).

27 September, Geneva, Switzerland. BRIDGES CHINA DIALOGUE: INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ECONOMY OF A TRANSITIONAL CHINA. This will be the fifth instalment of ICTSD's annual dialogue focused on China's role in global sustainable development governance, particularly as the country enters a new period of transition in political, economic, social, and international spheres. This event, co-organised with Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) and Indiana University Bloomington's Research Center for Chinese Politics and Business, aims to provide an opportunity for all stakeholders to consider the implications of this transition period, and evaluate how Chinese entrepreneurs, governments, and civil society organisations contribute to sustainable development both within China and globally. For more information, please visit the Bridges China 2012 dedicated [website](#).

October 21-26, Nairobi, Kenya. SUSTAINABLE ENERGY FINANCE SUMMER ACADEMY NAIROBI. The Frankfurt School - UNEP Collaborating Centre for Climate and Sustainable Energy Finance (the Centre) is offering a second Summer Academy this year, held for the first time in Nairobi, Kenya. The Summer Academy, which targets project developers, policy advisors, financiers, and consultants, aims to offer a comprehensive framework for financing renewable energy and energy efficiency projects in both emerging and developing markets, including practical, integrated knowledge and tools. There will also be various opportunities to network and solve problems with other relevant stakeholders. For more information, please visit the academy [website](#).

---

## Resources

NET FOOD-IMPORTING DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: WHO THEY ARE, AND POLICY OPTIONS FOR GLOBAL PRICE VOLATILITY. By Alberto Valdés and William Foster for the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (August 2012). This issue paper focuses on high and volatile food prices and the challenges that these pose to poor, net food-importing countries. The publication seeks to identify which countries may be most vulnerable to recent price trends, and describes tools that domestic decision makers could use to promote food security. For more information, or to download the paper, please click [here](#).

COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY (CFS) HIGH LEVEL PANEL OF EXPERTS (HLPE) REPORTS 3 AND 4. Published by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (September 2012). These two reports, prepared by expert panels on food security and nutrition, focus specifically on climate change and food security (report #3) and social protection and food security (report #4). The panel that authored both reports has been tasked by the Committee on Food Security's Plenary and Bureau to assess and analyse the current state



of food security and nutrition and its underlying causes, among other responsibilities. To learn more, or to read the reports, please visit the HLPE [website](#).

FOURTH EAC GENEVA FORUM DIGEST – MAKING THE TRIPARTITE FREE TRADE AGREEMENT WORK FOR THE INTERESTS OF EAC COUNTRIES. Published by CUTS International Geneva (July 2012). This compilation of papers from the latest meeting of the East African Community (EAC) Geneva Forum focuses on how to make the proposed Tripartite FTA suit the interests of the five EAC countries – Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda, and includes a full report on the subject as well as specific country updates. The EAC Geneva Forum brings together delegates from the missions of the five EAC countries to the WTO every two months to discuss issues of common interest. For more information, or to access the papers, please click [here](#).

LOW-CARBON TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER: FROM RHETORIC TO REALITY. Edited by David G. Ockwell and Alexandra Mallett; published by Routledge (June 2012). This book reviews the nature of low carbon technology transfer and its contemporary relevance in the context of climate change, then introducing a theoretical framework through which effective policy mechanisms can be analysed. The North-South, developed-developing country differences and synergies are then described, together with the relevant international policy context. The book also raises questions around the extent to which current approaches to technology transfer under the international policy regime might be considered to be 'pro-poor'. The book concludes by suggesting ways to deliver on existing international commitments in this area, including practical tools for decision makers. For more information, please click [here](#).

SUSTAINABLE PUBLIC PROCUREMENT IN THE SÃO PAULO STATE GOVERNMENT. By Martin Dietrich Brauch for the International Institute for Sustainable Development's Trade Knowledge Network. This case study discusses the advances made by the State Government of São Paulo, Brazil in integrating sustainability into its public procurement processes, arguing that this case serves as an important role model on how to use procurement to promote sustainable development. The study documents the initiation and expansion of the São Paulo Sustainable Public Procurement programme, explaining how its promoters overcame legal, institutional, administrative, market, and mindset hurdles, while assessing the improvements needed to expand the programme further. To access the full case study, please click [here](#).

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND NEW SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS BEYOND 2015: CLIMATE CHANGE, POOR AND VULNERABLE COUNTRIES. By Joy Hyvarinen for the Foundation for International Environmental Law and Development (FIELD). This paper argues that post-Rio+20 changes to international institutions and proposed global sustainable development goals should give priority to climate change and poor and vulnerable countries, taking into account human security. The paper suggests that the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Kyoto Protocol recognise that particularly vulnerable countries require special attention and contends that this should also be reflected in changes to international institutions and in the proposed new sustainable development goals. The paper considers human security as a potential conceptual framework for strengthening international institutions and determining new goals. It emphasises challenges for poor and vulnerable countries in a world where advancing climate change is likely to pose an increasing threat to sustainable development and human security. To access the full text, please click [here](#).



EXPLORE THE TRADE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT  
WORLD FURTHER WITH ICTSD'S BRIDGES NETWORK

## BIORES

Analysis and news on trade and environment for a global audience  
<http://ictsd.org/news/biores/>  
*English language*

## BRIDGES AFRICA

Trade and sustainable development news and analysis on Africa  
<http://ictsd.org/news/bridges-africa/>  
*English language*

## PUENTES

Latin America-focussed analysis and news on trade and sustainable development  
<http://ictsd.org/news/puentes/>  
*Spanish language*

## МОСТЫ

CIS-focussed analysis and news on trade and sustainable development  
<http://ictsd.org/news/bridgesrussian/>  
*Russian language*

## PONTES

Analysis and news on trade and sustainable development for the Portuguese-speaking world  
<http://ictsd.org/news/pontes/>  
*Portuguese language*

## 桥

Analysis and news on trade and sustainable development for the Chinese-speaking world  
<http://ictsd.org/news/qiao/>  
*Chinese language*

## PASSERELLES

Africa-focussed analysis and news on trade and sustainable development  
<http://ictsd.org/news/passerelles/>  
*French language*

PUBLISHED BY



### International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development

Chemin de Balexert 7-9  
1219 Geneva, Switzerland  
+41-22-917-8492  
[www.ictsd.org](http://www.ictsd.org)

Bridges Weekly Trade News is made possible  
through generous contributions of donors and  
partners including

### DFID - UK Department for International Development

### SIDA - Swedish International Development Agency

### DGIS - Ministry of Foreign Affairs Netherlands

### Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Denmark

### Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finland

### Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway

### Ausaid, Australia

### Oxfam Novib

Copyright ICTSD, 2012. Readers are encouraged  
to quote and reproduce this material for  
educational, non-profit purposes, provided the  
source is acknowledged.

This work is licensed under the Creative  
Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No-  
Derivative Works 3.0 License.

Your support to BRIDGES and the BRIDGES series  
of publications is most welcome; if interested,  
please contact Andrew Crosby, Managing  
Director at +41-22-917-8335.

Contributors to this issue are Andrew Aziz, Sofia  
Alicia Baliño, John Curran, Eric Riley, and Marie  
Wilke. This edition of Bridges Weekly Trade News  
Digest is edited by Sofia Alicia Baliño.

The Publisher and Director is Ricardo Meléndez-  
Ortiz. The Editor in Chief is Andrew Crosby.  
Comments and suggestions are welcomed and  
should be directed to the [editor](#) or the [director](#).

Price: €10.00

ISSN 1563-0

