

# BRIDGES WEEKLY

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## WASHINGTON

# US Congress Gears Up for "Fast Track" Trade Fight

Trade policy is set to headline the Washington congressional agenda in the coming months, after senior US lawmakers submitted last week a long-awaited bill that, if passed, would help in ratifying trade deals with 11 Pacific nations and the 28-member EU.

The [bill](#), which numbers at over 100 pages, aims to restore Trade Promotion Authority (TPA), which expired in 2007. The provision is also known as "fast track," and allows the US executive branch to negotiate trade deals and then submit them to Congress for a straight up-or-down vote, without amendments. It also sets US "negotiating objectives," while outlining requirements for the President's consultations with Congress in this area.

The new legislation was submitted in the Senate Finance Committee by its chairman, Max Baucus – a Democrat – together with the panel's highest ranking Republican, Orrin Hatch. In the corresponding House committee, known as Ways and Means, the bill was submitted by Chairman Dave Camp, a Republican.

"Renewing TPA will help advance a robust trade agenda that will help American businesses, workers, farmers, and ranchers by giving them greater access to overseas markets," Hatch [said](#).

US Trade Representative Michael Froman [welcomed](#) the introduction of the legislation, pledging to work with Congress as discussions on TPA's final shape unfold.

"The United States cannot afford to stand on the sidelines," Froman said. "USTR is negotiating agreements in new ways that will not only open markets, but will do a better job of supporting American jobs and reflecting our values around the world – on labour, the environment, access to medicines and other issues."

## White House: Fast track a "priority"

The latest version of TPA was in force from 2002 until 2007, and applied to the past three trade deals ratified by Congress – Colombia, Korea, and Panama. The legislation proposed last week would, if passed, be in force for four years, with the option of renewing for an additional three years.



International Centre for Trade  
and Sustainable Development

TPA has long been a controversial subject in Washington, with many lawmakers complaining that they do not have enough input into trade deals as they are being negotiated. The previous iteration of TPA barely passed Congress in 2002, and then only after a bitter legislative fight.

Democrats have been particularly wary of the legislation, both due to transparency questions and concerns over the negative impacts that some sectors may experience from lower trade barriers. The top Democrat on the Ways and Means Committee, Sander Levin of Michigan, has [openly](#) criticised the legislation submitted by Baucus, Camp, and Hatch as falling “far short of adequately replacing the 2002 TPA model” in various areas, particularly regarding transparency and negotiating objectives.

Levin has pledged instead to submit his own version of the legislation for consideration, stressing that the renewal of Trade Adjustment Assistance – which provides support to US workers displaced by the effects of trade – must go hand in hand with TPA.

Some Republicans, including House Speaker John Boehner, have said that the Obama Administration has not been vocal enough in its support of TPA, particularly with the US President's own Democratic Party.

“I made clear to the President that this can't pass unless there is bipartisan support for it,” Boehner [said](#) last week. “And this goes back months, and yet we've seen scant attention to this issue by the administration in terms of encouraging Democrat leaders and Democrat members to vote for it.

White House officials, including Froman, have sought to allay such criticisms in recent months, particularly as the US and 11 other Pacific Rim countries have ramped up their efforts to conclude the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Agreement. Having missed their 2013 target for finishing the talks, TPP ministers are set to meet again in February in the hopes of resolving their outstanding issues.

Last year's launch of trade negotiations with the EU – known formally as the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership – has imbued the TPA renewal efforts with an additional sense of urgency. The ability to send completed trade deals to Capitol Hill for a clean vote, without amendments, is seen as key for the US' trading partners in order to avoid having these agreements unravelled in Washington.

“Trade promotion authority is a priority, not in theory but in fact, for the administration,” White House Press Secretary Jay Carney [told](#) reporters last week, calling it a “key part” of Washington's economic strategy.

“[The] Trans-Pacific Partnership, the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, these are important proposals that we want to see acted on, and trade promotion authority is an important part of that,” Carney added.

### **Transparency, currency manipulation**

In an effort to address transparency concerns, the legislation proposed last week would ensure that every member of Congress has access to the text of any trade deal under negotiation. The US Trade Representative would also be required to meet and consult with any interested US lawmaker upon their request.

The bill also includes a clause saying that, should it be found that the President has “failed or refused to notify or consult” Congress on a specific trade deal, then fast track can be disapproved for that particular pact.

In a notable first, the legislation includes as one of its negotiating objectives a provision regarding currency manipulation, specifically directing countries “to avoid manipulating

exchange rates." While the term has long been bandied about in the US Congress when discussing China's strict valuation of the renminbi, or yuan, lately concerns have grown over the actions of Japan's central bank, which has undertaken an aggressive course of monetary easing policies in an effort to combat the country's long history of deflation.

Japan recently become one of the TPP's 11 members, giving additional incentive for some lawmakers to call for "fast track" provisions that would address the relationship between exchange rates and trade.

### **Timeline?**

A hearing on the new legislation is already scheduled in the Senate Finance Committee for later this Thursday, though a hearing in the House Committee on Ways and Means has not yet been announced.

Obama is set to give his annual State of the Union address on 28 January, and some analysts have speculated that the US President could make a public call to Congress to pass TPA quickly. The prospect of Senator Baucus soon leaving Congress to become the US' next ambassador to China is also expected to spur TPA proponents to push its expedited approval.

ICTSD reporting.

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## CLIMATE CHANGE

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# EU Member States Sign Off on Short-Term Carbon Market Fix

EU member states signed off last week on a plan to withhold as many as 400 million carbon allowances from its Emissions Trading System (ETS) this year, in a move geared at propping up the bloc's struggling carbon market until a long-term solution can be found.

The Climate Change Committee's vote last Wednesday, where all 28 EU member states were represented, marked the final stage in a process that began well over a year ago, when the European Commission first submitted its so-called "backloading" proposal.

The regulation aims to address the overwhelming glut of carbon permits on the EU market, which has caused the prices of such allowances to plummet in recent years to an average of less than €5 per metric tonne – far below the ideal levels for fostering investment in renewable technologies and moving away from carbon-intensive energy sources.

According to the terms of the backloading regulation, 900 million allowances would be withheld from auction from the years 2014-2016. These would then be reintroduced in 2019 and 2020.

Exactly how many permits are withheld in 2014 will depend on the quarter in which the implementation of the proposal begins. For instance, 400 million allowances could be withdrawn this year if the implementation process is done by the end of March. If implementation starts between April-June, this number would fall to 300 million.

Uncertainty around the final timing hurdle has prompted divergent carbon market forecasts. Some estimates, including those compiled by Bloomberg New Energy Finance, suggest that backloading the permits could raise their price to an average of €7.5 this year. On the other hand, a survey by Reuters indicated that 10 analysts had lowered their forecasts for EU carbon permit prices in 2014 to a €5.35 average.

The Commission has asked that backloading begin as soon as possible, and is therefore urging the European Council and European Parliament to shorten the "scrutiny period" for the regulation – traditionally three months – in order for implementation to begin by late March.

### 2030 framework

The unveiling of the EU's highly-anticipated 2030 climate and energy framework – due out next Wednesday – is expected to intensify the debate over how to make the EU ETS, a key part of the bloc's climate strategy, sustainable in the long-term.

Critics and supporters of backloading both agree that postponing the auction of these permits is not enough to deal with the carbon market's failings, and officials have widely called for a deeper structural reform of the cap-and-trade scheme.

"While backloading will help stabilise the carbon market in the coming years, we must tackle the more structural challenges," EU Climate Commissioner Hedegaard [said](#), promising that the Commission would address these questions in the 2030 proposal.

The EU's executive arm has also emphasised the importance of an ETS solution in order to avoid national tax-based policies and a fragmentation of the single market. An ETS emissions cap sets a reduction goal of 21 percent by 2020 compared with 2005 levels.

At the start of the public consultation on the 2030 framework last March, the Commission proposed a 40 percent greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction goal, in order to put the trading bloc on track towards slashing GHG emissions between 80-95 percent by 2050.

In a "Trends to 2050" report released over the end-of-year holidays, however, Commission research found that the bloc is only likely to reduce its emissions by a third in 2030, and by less than half in 2050.

The legislative process for establishing 2030 targets is expected to take at least a year. Speculation over what the Commission's recommendations for these targets might be has intensified in recent weeks, with the Financial Times reporting that EU commissioners have been considering a series of options, such as scrapping the renewables target, or seeking a compromise in making it non-binding.

Concerns over energy prices have played into the debate. European utilities last year called for a dramatic re-think of the bloc's energy policy, lobbying hard for reductions in renewables subsidies – a particularly sensitive topic at the EU level.

In a twist of events in late November, the Commission sent a draft letter to Berlin warning it would investigate the possibility that energy surcharge discounts offered to German industries such as cement, steel, and chemical plants may be a misuse of incentives and exemptions.

European industry as a whole has watched enviously this past year as the US shale gas boom cut costs for their trans-Atlantic rivals. Earlier this month, Reuters reported on a draft Commission paper which indicated that – despite paying two and four times as much for electricity and gas respectively – European industrial energy users have buffered these costs through energy efficiency. The paper nevertheless warned that EU-US price differentials may be cause for concern in the long-run.

ICTSD reporting; "EU considers scrapping 2030 binding renewables targets," FINANCIAL TIMES, 13 January 2014; "Analysts lower EU carbon price forecasts," REUTERS, 14 January 2014; "Pollution Costs to Rise as EU Backs Market Fix: Carbon & Climate," BLOOMBERG BUSINESSWEEK, 8 January 2014, "Brussels says energy-intensive industry is coping well despite US price gap," EURACTIV, 7 January 2014, "EU probes green charge exemptions for German industry," REUTERS, 18 December 2013.

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## NATURAL RESOURCES

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# Indonesia Enacts Mineral Export Ban

Indonesia on Sunday implemented a controversial ban on exports of raw minerals in an effort to help stimulate domestic processing. Cited as one of the most significant economic policy decisions of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's tenure, critics warn that the move could seriously threaten the country's nickel and bauxite US\$2 billion annual export revenue.

The ban secures a law introduced in 2009 by the Indonesian government for all miners to process domestically by 2014. However, analysts suggest that subsequent confusion around the details of the 2009 law, combined with low global commodity prices, failed to prompt the construction of local smelters – leaving many companies underprepared.

According to the Indonesian Mineral Entrepreneurs Association, the ban has already led to the lay-off of almost 30,000 mine workers.

In order to limit some of the initial economic pain, the government approved on Monday changes that will temporarily allow for the export of certain minerals. While mineral ore exports such as nickel and bauxite have been banned outright, exports of so-called mineral concentrates – including copper, iron ore, manganese, lead, zinc, and ilmenite – will be permitted for the next three years, Energy and Mines Minister Jero Wacik explained on Monday.

Ore is the rawest form of minerals; concentrates, by comparison, are minerals with some of their initial impurities removed, though these still require substantial refining.

Concentrates will be subject to minimum purity requirements and a progressive export tax. According to Indonesian officials, the tax for copper concentrate will start at 20 percent, rising to 60 percent of a shipment's value by 2016. A moratorium on mineral concentrate exports will take effect from 2017 onward.

Monday's reprieve was welcomed as particularly good news for US mining giants Freeport McMoRan Copper & Gold and Newmont Mining Corp, which together generate 97 percent of the country's copper.

Over 60 companies have already begun – or have provided assurances of their intention – to build domestic smelters, Indonesian officials say; these firms will be able to export processed minerals.

### Requests for clarity

The ban announced this weekend lacks clear written guidelines, with the resulting uncertainty quickly sparking concern among industry officials. "It's confusing," said Faisal Emzita, executive director of the Indonesia Nickel Association. "This is playing around with really sensitive issues."

Freeport, for instance, had already halted exports from its Grasberg site – the world's fifth largest copper mine – prior to the ban, suggesting it would not resume operations until further details were provided.

"Everybody's in a wait and see phase," commented Agus Suhartono, Ibric Nickel's chief operating officer. "It is a very strange situation."

The ban is expected to have a mixed impact on miners, depending on their current and future processing capacity. PT Vale Indonesia will not be affected, according to Reuters, as the company's nickel ore is already processed into nickel-in-matte prior to shipment. Meanwhile, numerous small firms shipping low-grade ore will likely take a significant hit.

Global nickel prices rallied as a result of the news from the world's top nickel ore exporter, recovering from a previous four-year slump. The commodity saw a 4 percent jump on Friday and a further 1.4 percent rise on Monday on the London Metal Exchange.

Indonesia is also home to the world's top gold mine, as well as sizeable refined tin and thermal coal mines. The country's collective mineral exports weighed in at US\$10.4 billion in 2012, around five percent of its total exports, according to the World Bank.

Rival commodity exporters such as Australia, the largest producer of bauxite, anticipate mopping up redirected commodity trade flows. "This is likely to lead to extra interest from overseas aluminium refiners, particularly China," said Miles Prosser, executive director of the Australian Aluminium Council.

ICTSD reporting; "Indonesia export ban leaves mining in turmoil, nickel prices rally," REUTERS, 13 January 2014; "Indonesia Gives Details on Its Mineral Export Ban," WALL STREET JOURNAL, 13 January 2014; "Nickel miners jump on Indonesia unprocessed minerals ban," FINANCIAL TIMES, 13 January 2014.

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## DISPUTES

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# Russia Launches WTO Dispute Against EU Import Duties

Russia filed its first-ever WTO complaint last month ([DS474](#)), targeting EU duties on imports of ammonium nitrate and certain steel products. The move is expected to strain the already tense relationship between the two trading partners, which has worsened noticeably in the past year.

At issue in Moscow's complaint ([DS474](#)) are a series of "cost adjustment" [methodologies](#) used by Brussels in calculating dumping margins in its anti-dumping investigations and reviews for these products. In trade parlance, dumping refers to the practice of selling goods overseas at prices lower than their normal value.

Among other concerns, Moscow [claims](#) that the EU in calculating these dumping margins did not account for the actual cost of energy – such as electricity and gas – used in the manufacturing process.

EU Trade Spokesman John Clancy has said that the Commission is "confident that the measures indicated by Russia in its request for consultations are consistent with WTO rules," pledging that the 28-nation bloc will enter the consultations "in good faith."

Under WTO rules, Russia and the EU have 60 days to conduct consultations to find a mutually acceptable solution to the dispute. If this fails, the complainant may then request for a panel to be established to hear the case.

Moscow's first foray as a complainant in WTO proceedings will likely be watched closely by the trade community. Russia has made clear that it will be an active participant in the global trade arbiter's dispute settlement system, with Russian Economic Development Minister Alexei Ulyukayev promising last September vigorous use of the forum to lessen trade barriers and "protect the interests of our producers and exporters."

### Tensions running high

Brussels and Moscow have already found themselves at loggerheads on multiple occasions over the past year, with EU officials openly questioning Russia's adherence to WTO rules. See Bridges Weekly, [19 September 2012](#))

Last July, Brussels launched a formal dispute against Moscow against a contentious "vehicle recycling fee" – Russia's first case as a respondent. (See Bridges Weekly, [24 October 2013](#)) Japan has also challenged the Russian vehicle "recycling" programme named in the EU complaint.

The EU and Japan claim that the measure is discriminatory, and therefore in violation of WTO rules, since vehicles produced in Russia or in one of its customs union partners – Belarus and Kazakhstan – can qualify for an exemption from paying the fee. Imported automobiles from outside the customs union, by comparison, are not eligible for an exemption. (See Bridges Weekly, [24 October 2013](#))

Russia has since amended its domestic legislation to remove the exemption for domestic automobiles, with the change coming into effect last week.



Whether the EU and Japan will continue with dispute proceedings is still unclear at this stage. The EU had submitted its first panel request in October, which Russia rejected; should Brussels decide to re-file its request, a panel would automatically be established to hear the complaint.

The two trading partners also spent the past several months embroiled in a public tug-of-war over the EU's efforts to sign association agreements with Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova.

Ukraine, under what the EU deemed was undue pressure from Russia, ultimately decided against signing the deals – a decision that sparked riots in the streets of Kiev. Georgia and Moldova, meanwhile, followed through in signing their respective EU agreements. (See Bridges Weekly, [12 December 2013](#))

ICTSD reporting; "Russia to Use WTO to Protect Domestic Producers," RIA NOVOSTI, 28 September 2013; "Russia files first trade complaint against EU," AFP, 24 December 2013; "Russia enforces law to even playing field on auto recycling fee," KYODO NEWS INTERNATIONAL, 7 January 2014.

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## US Challenges China Compliance with WTO Steel Ruling

In a landmark move, the US issued a formal challenge on Monday against China's compliance with an adverse WTO ruling, marking the first time that the Asian economic powerhouse has faced such a claim.

The WTO Appellate Body, which is the global trade arbiter's highest court, had confirmed in 2012 that certain Chinese trade remedies against imports of US-made "grain oriented flat-rolled electrical steel" were inconsistent with international trade rules ([DS414](#)). This type of steel is primarily used by the power generation industry, such as in large electric machines, transformers, rectifiers, and reactors.

The anti-dumping and countervailing duties imposed by China "cut off more than US\$250 million in exports of this high-tech steel product," US Trade Representative Michael Froman [said](#) in announcing the decision, claiming that Beijing has yet to correct these "inconsistencies."

"Today's action shows that when the United States steps up to the plate on trade enforcement, we will follow through," he added.

Chinese officials were quick to respond, issuing a formal statement outlining the measures they have taken to comply with the ruling.

According to the Chinese Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM), Beijing has already conducted a series of "reinvestigations" involving the relevant trade remedies. Following these reinvestigations, the ministry decided to maintain the level of anti-dumping duties for the two major US steel exporters, AK Steel Corporation and Allegheny Ludium Corporation. For all other companies, these rates were decreased from 64.8 to 13.8 percent.

Countervailing duties have also been reduced from 6.3 to 3.4 percent for the top two exporters and from 24 to 3.4 percent for all other companies.

"China has thus fully complied with the WTO ruling within a reasonable period of time," MOFCOM officials [said](#).

Based on an earlier [agreement](#), the two parties will now have 15 days to conduct consultations in an effort to resolve the issue. If this fails to produce a mutually acceptable solution, Washington may request at any time that a panel be established to hear the complaint, and Beijing would be required to agree to this request.

ICTSD reporting.

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## EU Takes Aim at Brazilian “Tax Advantages” in WTO Dispute

The EU filed a formal WTO complaint against Brazil in late December, targeting a series of tax measures that it claims provide unfair advantages to the South American country's manufacturing sector.

In the request for consultations ([DS472](#)) – the first stage of WTO dispute settlement proceedings – the EU highlighted a series of tax measures and charges that Brazil has imposed in the automotive sector over the past two years.

This began in September 2011 with a 30 percent tax increase on motor vehicles, with an exemption for domestically produced cars and trucks. This was then followed by a new tax regime called “Innovar Auto,” launched in 2012 and set to expire in 2017. The EU also flagged tax measures affecting the electronics and technology industry, along with goods produced in Free Trade Zones, and tax advantages that Brasilia provides for exporters.

Brussels claims that these measures impose a higher tax burden on imported goods than on their domestic equivalents, while conditioning tax advantages to the use of locally produced goods. These policies have, the EU [says](#), harmed their exporters while providing Brazilian producers with unfair advantages.

For their part, Brazilian officials say that their policies are in line with WTO obligations, with Foreign Minister Luiz Alberto Figueiredo insisting that his government has “solid arguments” in its favour.

Some of the EU's largest car manufacturers have launched or expanded their manufacturing operations in Brazil in order to take advantage of the tax system, a fact that analysts say could pose difficulties for Brussels. BMW, for instance, has publicly [spoken](#) out in support of the Brazilian “Inovar Auto” regime in the past.

The complaint comes as the EU and Mercosur – a group of which Brazil is a member – continue their efforts to wrap-up their long-running trade negotiations. The talks, which also involve Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Venezuela, have proven famously difficult since their launch nearly 15 years ago. Officials say that this new dispute is unlikely to have any ramifications on the EU-Mercosur process.

The EU is one of Brazil's main [trading partners](#), accounting for one-fifth of the South American country's total trade in 2012. Brazil, meanwhile, is the EU's eighth largest trading partner, making up just over 2 percent of the bloc's total trade.

Parties to a WTO dispute have 60 days to conduct consultations to resolve their differences. If this fails, the complainant may then request that a panel be established to hear the case.

ICTSD reporting; “EU Enters Trade Battle with Brazil Over High Taxes: Daily,” THE RIO TIMES, 19 December 2013; “EU takes Brazil to WTO over ‘protectionist’ taxes,” REUTERS, 19 December 2013.

## IN BRIEF

## Argentina Files WTO Complaint Against EU Biodiesel Duties

Argentina and the EU are set to face off once more at the WTO, with Buenos Aires filing a formal complaint last month over Brussels' decision to impose duties on imported Argentine biodiesel. The dispute ([DS473](#)) is the third one that the South American country has launched against the EU's biodiesel trade policies in less than two years.

The duties at issue were confirmed by EU member states this past autumn, following a European Commission investigation into whether Argentina's biodiesel producers were selling their product abroad at prices below their normal value – a practice known in trade jargon as dumping. (See Bridges Weekly, [24 October 2013](#))

In its complaint, Buenos Aires claims that Brussels unfairly calculated these final anti-dumping duties – which range from €217 and €246 per metric tonne – by using insufficient and improper data.

Argentina is the world's top supplier of biodiesel; together with Indonesia, the two countries represent 90 percent of the EU's market share of the product. Indonesian producers were also investigated by the European Commission last year, and face anti-dumping duties of their own.

While the EU has said that the duties are necessary to level the playing field for its own producers, Argentina insists that European industry is oversized, and lacks the necessary raw material and vertical integration to be truly competitive.

"Rather than undertaking reforms to improve its own competitiveness, European industry has sought and found an administrative – and completely arbitrary – response from Brussels, one that closes the European market to efficient biodiesel producers such as Argentina," the Argentine Foreign Ministry [said](#), warning against the financial impact that the duties would have on its own domestic industry.

Under WTO rules, parties to a dispute must conduct consultations for a minimum of 60 days in an effort to resolve their differences. If this fails, the complainant may then request that a panel be established to hear the case.

ICTSD reporting.

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## US Farm Support Still Largely Food Stamps, New Data Shows

Payments that help poor households buy food continued to make up the bulk of US agriculture spending in 2011, according to new US data submitted to the WTO last week. Forms of support believed to be most trade-distorting were at their third-lowest levels in over a decade.

With the total notified support standing at US\$139 billion, nearly US\$103 billion went to schemes such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), better known as food stamps. With the economic recovery still rocky, many in 2011 faced unemployment and poverty, leading them to lean more on the social safety net.

The scale and size of the food stamp programme has been one of the most contentious topics in Washington lawmakers' ongoing attempts to design a new US Farm Bill. Democrats have sought to shield the scheme from cuts that Republican lawmakers have insisted upon. A final bill is likely to reduce expenditures on SNAP.

Trade-distorting support, or "amber" box payments in WTO jargon, has fluctuated in recent years. However, it remains well under the low levels of even the late 1990s, when the Uruguay Round Agreement on Agriculture persuaded the US Congress to reform farm policy.

The formal limit on "amber" payments is US\$19.1 billion, with 2011 figures falling well shy of that at US\$4.65 billion. Dairy and sugar continue to receive the bulk of such support, with these commodities seeing slight increases from 2010 levels.

Minimally trade distorting support, or "green" box payments, continue to grow. Aside from domestic food aid, environmental payments and disaster relief saw the biggest uptick, reaching US\$125 billion. Other categories, such as general services, contracted slightly.

US spending on overall trade-distorting support would be capped at US\$14.5 billion under the long-running Doha Round of trade talks, which would set a ceiling on the sum of amber, blue, and de minimis payments. This sum would have been US\$14.37 billion in 2011, according to the new figures.

A Geneva-based trade official speaking to Bridges indicated that they await the passage of a new US Farm Bill to assess policy changes in the long run, as support shifts to potentially trade-distorting crop insurance programmes.

ICTSD reporting.

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## EVENTS & RESOURCES

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# Events

### Coming soon

20 January, London, UK and online. MISCONCEPTIONS, REALITIES AND UNANSWERED QUESTIONS: CHINA'S ENGAGEMENT WITH AFRICA. This event, hosted by the Overseas Development Institute, will focus on the relationship between China and Africa, particularly with regard to China's role in the continent's economic development. Participants will also explore priority areas that could warrant further attention. The event will also feature an introduction to the China-Africa Research Programme being launched jointly by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). More information is available at the ODI [website](#).

22-25 January, Davos-Klosters, Switzerland, WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM ANNUAL MEETING 2014: THE RESHAPING OF THE WORLD – CONSEQUENCES FOR SOCIETY, POLITICS, AND BUSINESS. This high-level event, hosted by the World Economic Forum, will focus on a range of global issues that the international community is currently facing. The aim of this event is for participants to develop the insights, initiatives, and actions necessary to respond to current and emerging challenges, given the latest trends that are driving global, regional, and industry transformation. For more information, visit the event's [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.

22 January: Dispute Settlement Body

29 January: Committee on Agriculture

### Other Upcoming Events

31 January, Washington, US. CONGRESSIONAL TRADE AGENDA. This event, hosted by the Washington International Trade Association, will feature various US congressional trade leaders, who will share their perspectives on the upcoming year's trade agenda on Capitol Hill. The discussion will be held on an off-the-record basis. Additional details, including the event's press policy, are available [here](#).

4 February, Geneva, Switzerland. SEEDS, INNOVATION AND THE COMPETITION OF INTERNATIONAL REGIMES. This session will be hosted by the Quaker United Nations Office on the sidelines of the World Intellectual Property Organization's (WIPO) Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore. Discussions will focus on the effect of legal regimes on small-scale farmers' use and management of genetic resources, including innovation, and how these farmers' needs and expertise can be used more effectively in identifying questions and solutions. In the context of the IGC negotiations, panelists will discuss the possibilities for designing a coherent legal regime that supports all types of innovation and

management systems, including those of small-scale farmers. More information is available [here](#).

3-21 March, Washington, US. TRAINING SEMINAR: INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC PROCUREMENT. This training seminar, hosted by the International Law Institute, covers the institutional, legal, financial, and procedural issues involved in the procurement of goods and services by public entities and discusses reform programmes to improve transparency, efficiency, and accountability. The seminar is designed for government officials, academics, legal, and other private sector professionals. More information on the event is available [here](#). A full schedule of seminars planned for 2014 can be found at the ILI [website](#).

9-10 June, London, UK. GLOBAL TRADE: A TRADE SYSTEM FOR THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY. This event, hosted by Chatham House, will focus on the future of global trade governance and consider what might come next for trade liberalisation. Topics for discussion include non-tariff trade barriers, governance of global supply chains, and shaping the future of global trade relationships. To learn more, or to register, visit the Chatham House [website](#).

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## Resources

SHINING A LIGHT ON FOSSIL FUEL SUBSIDIES AT THE WTO: HOW NGOS CAN CONTRIBUTE TO WTO NOTIFICATION AND SURVEILLANCE. By Liesbeth Casier, Robin Fraser, Mark Halle, and Robert Wolfe for the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) (2014). In this report, the authors suggest a new template that could be used for providing third-party notifications to the relevant WTO bodies on fossil fuel subsidies, with the goal of elucidating all subsidies that cause market distortions, especially trade distortions. The authors say that the result should be better, more comparable data for the WTO Secretariat, governments, and researchers, allowing for better-informed discussions on the subject. The publication is available [here](#).

A 'PRETTY BIG DEAL' FOR THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION. Published by the Peterson Institute for International Economics (December 2013). In this "Peterson Perspectives" interview, Gary Clyde Hufbauer outlines how the trade facilitation agreement concluded at the WTO's Ninth Ministerial Conference in Bali, Indonesia could yield advances for the multilateral trading system. The full interview is available [here](#).

EMERGING POWERS IN THE WTO: DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND TRADE IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY. By Constantine Michalopoulos (November 2013). In this book, the author examines the main factors for developing country trade performance over the past three decades, along with their own trade policies and respective market access difficulties. The author also reviews these countries' participation in the WTO and the Doha Round of multilateral trade negotiations, and addresses the future role of the WTO in the international trade system, given today's context. The book then recommends an action programme for the more effective participation of developing countries in the world trade. To learn more about the book, or to order a copy, visit the publisher's [website](#).

DEVELOPING COUNTRY *SUI GENERIS* OPTIONS: INDIA'S *SUI GENERIS* SYSTEM OF PLANT PROTECTION. By Sujith Koonan for the Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) (January 2014). This paper focuses on TRIPS-compatible alternatives to the UPOV-style plant variety protection (PVP) systems. (TRIPS refers to the WTO's Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, while UPOV refers to the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants.) The purpose of this briefing paper is to describe India's experience in this area, as part of a broader effort aimed at encouraging and supporting countries wishing to develop a PVP system suited to their own specific needs, particularly regarding their agriculture, food security, innovation, and economic development priorities. The paper is available [here](#).

UNCTAD-OECD REPORT ON G20 INVESTMENT MEASURES. Published by the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (December 2013). In this joint report, the two agencies find that G-20 members, for the most part, complied during this reporting period (May-November 2013) with their pledge to avoid introducing new restrictions on international investment. Most of the policies, the authors find, were geared toward eliminating such restrictions and facilitating investment. The report is available [here](#).

TOP 5 EU ENVIRONMENT PRIORITIES – ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW FOR 2014. Published by viEUws.eu, the EU Policy Broadcaster (January 2014). This video, featuring environment journalist Sonja van Renssen, highlights the various environment issues that are expected to be discussed by the Greek Presidency of the EU. These include, among others, aviation in the EU Emissions Trading System; the European Commission's forthcoming climate and



energy package; and the alternative fuel strategy, among others. To learn more, or to view the briefing in full, click [here](#).

DEVELOPING COUNTRY *SUI GENERIS* OPTIONS: THAILAND'S *SUI GENERIS* SYSTEM OF PLANT PROTECTION. By Pawarit Lertdhamtewe for the Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) (January 2014). This paper focuses on TRIPS-compatible alternatives to the UPOV-style plant variety protection systems. (TRIPS refers to the WTO's Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, while UPOV refers to the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants.) The purpose of this briefing paper is to describe Thailand's experience in this area, as part of a broader effort aimed at encouraging and supporting countries wishing to develop a PVP system suited to their own specific needs, particularly regarding their agriculture, food security, innovation, and economic development priorities. The paper is available [here](#).

DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION REPORT 2013: ENDING POVERTY. Published by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (December 2013). This report provides a series of statistics and analysis on trends in international aid, with recommendations of ways to end poverty. The report notes that poverty and development must be addressed through measures that focus not only on income, but also on inequality, inclusiveness, sustainability, and well-being. To learn more, or to read the paper, click [here](#).

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