

# BRIDGES WEEKLY

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## DISPUTES

# WTO Panel Finds Chinese Export Restrictions on Rare Earths Illegal

A WTO dispute panel has found that China's restrictions on rare earths exports are in breach of global trade rules, in a highly-awaited ruling that focused heavily on how to balance natural resource policies with international trade obligations.

The restrictions cited in the dispute involve a series of duties and quotas that Beijing imposed in recent years upon the export of various rare earths, together with tungsten and molybdenum. China, the world's leading producer of such minerals, had claimed that the limits were necessary to protect these exhaustible natural resources and the environment, given the extremely damaging impacts of the extraction process.

These 17 rare earth elements have unique magnetic, heat resistant, and phosphorescent properties and are crucial ingredients in the manufacturing process of many high-tech and green energy products, including wind turbines, engines for electric and hybrid vehicles, and medical equipment.

Despite a recent turn towards other sources such as Greenland and Australia, China is still responsible for 90 percent of all rare earths production, according to the US Geological Survey, while having just under a quarter of the world's supply of these minerals.

The dispute was first lodged at the WTO in early 2012, with the US, EU, and Japan each submitting nearly identical complaints against the Asian economic powerhouse.

The group had argued that the Chinese export restrictions were aimed at increasing global prices of these minerals – which had spiked following the implementation of these measures – while also favouring domestic industry, rather than for the natural resource conservation goals that Beijing had outlined. (See Bridges Weekly, [14 March 2012](#))

"China's decision to promote its own industry and discriminate against US companies has caused US manufacturers to pay as much as three times more than what their Chinese competitors pay for the exact same rare earths," US Trade Representative Michael Froman [said](#) on Wednesday.



International Centre for Trade  
and Sustainable Development

**Export duties: "No basis" in accession protocol**

In its ruling, the panel found that there was "no basis" in the accession protocol that China had agreed in joining the WTO in 2001 for justifying the use of export duties under Article XX of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

Article XX establishes a number of justifications for otherwise illegal measures on the grounds that they are needed to fulfill greater public policy objectives, such as resource conservation or public health. Beijing had argued that this article justified the use of export restrictions, if deemed necessary to protect human, animal, or plant life and health.

The panel found that paragraph 11.3 of Beijing's accession terms, which requires the Asian economy to eliminate all of its export duties, does not include any basis for justifying export duties by invoking the GATT Article XX exception. The finding was in line with a 2012 Appellate Body ruling on Chinese export restrictions on nine raw materials, which also found those measures to be WTO-illegal; Beijing had asked the panel to re-examine that finding in this case. (See Bridges Weekly, [1 February 2012](#))

Notably, one of the three panellists reviewing the dispute disagreed with this assessment, arguing that China can indeed rely on Article XX for a possible exception. However, the dissenting panellist said that even if Beijing did have recourse to that article, it has not made a strong enough case to justify the use of these duties.

**Panel finds export quotas unjustified**

With regard to export quotas, the panel found that Beijing's use of these measures appeared to be related more to its industrial goals, rather than to the conservation objectives that China had outlined in its defense.

Beijing had argued that it could involve Article XX(g), an exception that requires a measure to relate to the "conservation of exhaustible natural resources," if these are "made effective in conjunction with restrictions on domestic production and consumption."

"No WTO member has, under WTO law, the right to dictate or control the allocation or distribution of rare earth resources to achieve an economic objective," the panel said in its report, adding that members' right to adopt conservation schemes "is not a right to control the international markets in which extracted products are bought and sold."

The dispute panel did qualify that assessment by adding that WTO members can consider their industrial and developmental goals, together with conservation ones, in designing conservation policies.

Regarding Beijing's claim that it has made efforts to also limit domestic production and consumption, the panel said that it was not able to conclude whether these attempts were, indeed, "restrictions." Even if they were, they said, the burden of the country's conservation policy is not split between foreign and domestic consumers in an "even-handed" way, as Beijing had claimed.

"In our view, China has not explained how the export quota operates and works together with restrictions on domestic production or consumption for the conservation of rare earths," they said. "On the contrary, the panel considers that China's export quota and the restrictions on domestic users or producers of rare earths referred to by China do not seem to work coherently towards the goal of conservation."

This latter finding was praised by the complainants, who stressed in their public statements that they did not object to China's goal of putting in place environmental policies, but rather to their design and implementation.

"The verdict is clear: export restrictions cannot be imposed supposedly to conserve natural resources if domestic use of the same raw materials is not limited for the same purpose," the EU [said](#) on Wednesday upon the report's release.

### **Sovereign right question addressed**

Notably, the dispute had raised the difficult question of how to balance a country's international trade obligations with the UN principle that gives members permanent sovereignty over their natural resources.

In its ruling, the panel found that rare earths – once extracted and put on the market – are subject to WTO rules.

### **Next steps**

Both the complainants and respondents have 60 days to appeal the findings of the panel. Under WTO rules, the Appellate Body can review aspects of law – such as legal interpretation – but generally will not interfere with the factual findings of the original panel.

Chinese officials have said that they are reviewing the panel report and will move forward in line with WTO dispute settlement procedures, without specifying whether that will involve an appeal. However, many trade observers expect the case to advance to the appeals stage, given the systemic questions involved.

ICTSD reporting.

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## PREFERENTIAL AGREEMENTS

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# Leaders Call for Strong EU-US Trade Deal as Ukraine Crisis Deepens

Efforts to forge a trans-Atlantic trade pact will lead to a substantial boost in growth and jobs while lessening Europe's economic dependence on Russia, leaders from the US and EU affirmed on Wednesday at a high-level summit in Brussels. Both sides also reiterated earlier promises not to weaken domestic environmental and consumer protections as a result of the bilateral trade pact.

The much-touted meeting between US President Barack Obama, European Council President Herman Van Rompuy, and European Commission President José Manuel Barroso comes nine months since the launch of negotiations for the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (T-TIP), with many looking to this week's summit for political leadership as the talks enter the tougher stages.

The visit to Brussels is Obama's first since taking office in January 2009, and marks just the second formal EU-US leaders' summit of his presidency. The previous leaders' summit was held in Washington in late 2011, and prompted the launch of the high-level working group that ultimately recommended that the two sides negotiate a bilateral pact. (See Bridges Weekly, [30 November 2011](#))

The US President's four-day tour of Europe also comes just two weeks after negotiators wrapped up the fourth round of trans-Atlantic trade talks, which saw some advances but were still said to be in the early stages. The next round of negotiations will take place in Washington before summer, officials said earlier this month. (See Bridges Weekly, [20 March 2014](#))

### **EU, US "continue to share" same goals**

With the T-TIP talks set to enter the more difficult stages, one of the key questions on trade observers' minds was whether the US and EU would reaffirm the original goals outlined at the negotiations' launch, or if they would instead hint at scaling back such ambitions.

For instance, one question ahead of the summit was what the leaders would say regarding tariff elimination in the trans-Atlantic pact. The two sides have already exchanged initial tariff offers, with the EU saying shortly thereafter that the US submission was not as ambitious as it had hoped. (See Bridges Weekly, [20 February 2014](#))

"The United States and the EU continue to share the same goals spelled out in the February 2013 Final Report of the High Level Working Group on Jobs and Growth," the leaders said in their joint statement on Wednesday.

Without making a specific reference to tariff elimination, they said that "these goals include expanding access to each other's markets for goods, services, investment, and procurement."

They would also continue to aim for "increasing regulatory compatibility while maintaining the high levels of health, safety, labour, and environmental protection our citizens expect of us; and formulating joint approaches to rules that address global trade challenges of common concern," the statement said.

In their remarks, the two sides also sought to counter concerns that a mega-regional like the EU-US trade pact could detract from efforts to advance multilateral negotiations at the WTO, noting the importance of the global trade body.

"Even as we undertake this joint endeavor, we underscore the importance of the World Trade Organization and the timely implementation of the outcome of the 9<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference in December 2013, including the Trade Facilitation Agreement," they said in the summit statement.

"T-TIP can be transformative in creating a more open global trading system," Barroso told reporters.

### **Growth, jobs, and strategic ties**

The potential for increasing growth and jobs through the trans-Atlantic pact has been widely-touted by its proponents, who note that the two sides already have the world's largest trading relationship. In making their case for a T-TIP pact to a sceptical public, leaders have lately stressed that these gains will not be limited only to large corporations, but will also be felt by smaller-scale producers.

The EU, for instance, released a series of documents following the last negotiating round that highlighted the potential benefits for small and medium-sized enterprises, and leaders from both sides reiterated on Wednesday that T-TIP's benefits will not exacerbate income divides.

US officials, for their part, have repeatedly said that the trade pact – if designed properly – will not worsen income inequality, which has become a topic of growing concern in Washington as lawmakers debate whether to renew "fast track" trade powers for the US executive.

"Part of the suspicion about trade is whether globalisation is benefitting everybody... or small segments of our economies," Obama said at the summit's closing press conference on Wednesday afternoon.

Trade, he continued, is important for "helping those at the bottom, those in the middle... and that's the test that I'm going to apply on whether it makes sense for us to move forward in a trade deal."

### **Ukraine**

Along with the potential economic windfall, the rationale for concluding a trans-Atlantic pact in the near future has taken on additional meaning in recent weeks, as the Ukraine crisis deepens and relations between Russia and many Western powers grow increasingly strained.

The US and EU have both imposed sanctions, such as asset freezes and travel bans, on individuals associated with the past month's developments in Crimea, which was annexed by Russia just days ago. The region, which was previously part of Ukraine, recently voted to split off from Kiev and join Moscow, a result that many Western countries have deemed illegitimate.

Other joint efforts by the US and EU include the [decision](#), together with the rest of the G-7 powers, not to attend Russia's summit of G-8 industrialised nations in Sochi in June. Instead, the group – which also includes Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the UK – will meet in Brussels, unless Moscow decides to change course.

Efforts to isolate Russia further, while supporting Ukraine's ailing economy, have been pursued in a series of international channels. The situation marks a stark departure from the recent improvements in the relationship that Moscow had with Brussels and Washington, which just a couple of years ago had supported Russia's entry into the WTO and – in the US' case – decided to remove Cold War-era trade restrictions on the country.

The potential impact of the recent Russia sanctions on the global economy has not been ignored, Obama said on Wednesday, noting that this is a factor in these decisions. Barroso, meanwhile, noted that the recent developments have helped prove the case for ensuring the continued strength of the EU-US relationship.

Given the heavy dependence of some EU member states on Russia for their energy supplies, the potential for T-TIP to make it easier for the EU to source more energy from the US was touted by leaders as one of the potential benefits of a completed trade pact.

Whether Russia may choose to cut off energy supplies to EU member states as a response to sanctions has been a looming question over Brussels, which has lately highlighted the need to be less reliant on trade with Moscow.

Speaking to reporters following the summit, Obama noted that one key benefit of T-TIP is that it would make it easier to issue export licenses for liquefied natural gas, thus helping Europe diversify its energy sources away from Russia.

#### **T-TIP consumer, environmental policies**

In the months since the T-TIP negotiations were launched on the sidelines of last June's G-8 summit, civil society groups on both sides of the Atlantic have questioned whether the goal of increasing regulatory compatibility could lead to weaker regulations and standards.

The possibility of including an investor-state dispute settlement mechanism, along with other investor protections, has also been lambasted in some quarters as having the potential to open the door to lawsuits that may compromise key public policy objectives, such as those relating to the environment or health.

In Europe, officials decided in January that they would be putting the investment portion of the T-TIP negotiations temporarily on hold, in order to have enough time to publish their negotiating objectives in this area and solicit public comment. (See Bridges Weekly, [23 January 2014](#))

In his remarks on Wednesday, the US President acknowledged that the public has "legitimate questions" regarding the long-term benefits of trade deals, particularly over preserving "hard-won victories" over consumer and environmental protections.

"I have fought my entire political career, and as President, to strengthen consumer protections. I have no intention of signing legislation that would weaken those protections," he told reporters, adding that the same applied to environmental standards.

Instead, he urged the public to "wait and see" what is in the final agreement, adding that there was "no point in getting excited about potential agreements on trade provisions that haven't been drafted yet."

Barroso echoed the remarks, adding that the mandate given to the European Commission by member states "does not allow for any kind of weakening of our standards." In areas where regulatory convergence is not possible, the two sides might instead aim for mutual recognition, he said.

ICTSD reporting; "U.S. Official Lobbies for Trans-Atlantic Trade Pact," THE NEW YORK TIMES, 23 March 2014.

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## AGRICULTURE

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# Farm Subsidies: Cairns Group Paper Riles India, China

An informal paper by the Cairns Group of farm exporters has found that trade-distorting agricultural subsidies in developed countries are four times those of poorer countries, as a share of the value of production. However, the paper, which was presented at an informal WTO meeting last week, has sparked concern from India and China, who question the methodology used to calculate their own farm support levels.

Trade sources told Bridges that the two developing country trading powers were upset that the Cairns Group analysis conflated subsidies that are capped under WTO rules with others that are not subject to any current ceiling on spending.

"China and India strongly objected to the approach," one negotiator said.

The Cairns paper shines a spotlight on agricultural subsidy trends in ten major farm trading countries, by looking at how these domestic support patterns have evolved over time. The WTO members included in the analysis are Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, the EU, India, Indonesia, Japan, the US, and Russia.

### Data gaps

The Cairns Group noted that backlogs and delays in official data reporting to the WTO have meant that significant holes remain in the analysis.

"The lack of complete and timely notifications makes it difficult to observe current trends in domestic support," they said.

For example, Indonesia "is currently working to fill in certain gaps," the sponsors explained, in particular by providing information on its public stockholding programmes.

At the WTO's ninth ministerial conference in Bali last December, members agreed to refrain from bringing trade disputes over public stockholding programmes for food security purposes in developing countries, so long as they provide new data on spending levels to the global trade body. (See Bridges Daily Update, [7 December 2013](#))

However, to date no country has formally asked to take advantage of the additional flexibility that was agreed at the conference. Members have also pledged to work towards a "permanent solution" to the constraints on public stockholding identified by developing countries in the run-up to the Bali meeting.

### How green is "green"?

Farm support in the EU and US has declined "dramatically," the group finds, when defined as the current total aggregate measure of support – in other words, the "amber box" spending, including "de minimis" support, that is seen as most trade distorting under WTO rules.

EU support fell from US\$35.3 billion to US\$8.5 billion from 2001 to 2010, while in the US payments fell from US\$14.5 billion to US\$4.7 billion from 2001 to 2011.

Trade-distorting payments in the EU have fallen as successive reforms have moved the bloc away from market price support and “coupled” farm payments that link subsidies to production, and towards decoupled income support payments. (See Bridges Weekly, [27 February 2014](#))

In the US, high prices for farm goods in recent years have also meant that government schemes to support farmers when prices drop have not paid out as they have in earlier periods. (See Bridges Weekly, [16 January 2014](#))

At the same time, both trading powers have greatly expanded their reliance on green box payments, which are exempt from any ceiling under WTO rules, on the basis that they cause not more than minimal trade distortion.

While some green box schemes, such as food stamps for poor consumers, are widely seen as minimally trade-distorting, other types of payments – such as investment aids or decoupled income support payments – are viewed by some analysts as having a more significant impact on trade and production.

### **Low-income, resource-poor producers**

India and China have objected to the use of a new measure of “total trade distorting support” (TTDS) to calculate subsidy levels, trade sources said.

“The paper creates a new term - a new concept,” one trade official said.

While current WTO rules allow developing countries to provide unlimited amounts of input and investment subsidies to resource-poor, low-income producers, the Cairns Group figures include these payments along with other types of farm support that would be capped by the “de minimis” ceiling on trade-distorting support.

This is set at ten percent of the value of production for most developing countries, with separate provisions for payments that are product-specific and those that are not. Exceptionally, China is subject to a lower ceiling of 8.5 percent.

Both China and India have large populations of small farmers, although to date only India has made substantial use of the provisions allowing developing countries extra leeway to provide input and investment subsidies to these producers.

Cairns members report that TTDS levels in China rose from US\$320 million in 2001 to US\$13.9 billion in 2008, and in India from US\$8.2 billion in 2001 to US\$37.6 billion in 2008.

Using the same measure, they found that support in the EU fell from US\$36.1 billion in 2001 to US\$10.3 billion in 2010, and in the US from US\$21.5 billion to US\$14.4 billion between 2001 and 2011.

While there is no precedent at the WTO for using TTDS to measure support, a draft deal negotiated under the Doha Round would have included cuts to overall trade distorting support – in other words, the sum of trade-distorting amber box, blue box, and de minimis payments. It would also have provided for separate cuts to each of these categories, and new limits on product-specific payments.

### **Reinvigorating Doha**

While the Cairns paper was shared with members as a contribution to the normal review process in the WTO's Committee on Agriculture, some trade sources consider its analysis to be potentially relevant to the current efforts at preparing a Doha Round “work programme” by end-2014.



"Substantial reductions" in trade-distorting support were among the issues members had agreed to address when the talks were launched in the Qatari capital in November 2001.

A recent [report](#) from New Zealand ambassador John Adank, the chair of the WTO agriculture negotiations, warned that discussions on a Doha work programme are still at an "early stage" of renewed engagement.

"Many members do not yet have definitive views on a range of issues to which they are now turning their minds after a gap of some years," the chair observed.

Although negotiators came close to striking a deal in 2008, the talks languished for several years, until the prospect of a breakthrough on a "small package" of measures in Bali re-energised discussions.

Adank has now invited all WTO members to an informal meeting this Friday to exchange views on how to achieve further progress.

ICTSD reporting.

## IN BRIEF

## Australia-Japan Trade Talks Push for April Finish

Ministerial-level meetings this week to advance negotiations for a Canberra-Tokyo trade pact continued to struggle over automobile and agriculture tariffs, despite hopes that the two sides would be able to announce significant progress ahead of Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott's visit to Japan next month.

Negotiators are trying to finish the seven-year talks during Abbott's high-profile Asia trip, in time for the two sides to sign a deal during Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's own visit to Canberra in July.

The push to close the deal quickly is part of a broader effort that Australia is making to strengthen ties with its Asian partners, with the Australian Prime Minister [confirming](#) last October that he hoped to conclude the ongoing trade talks with Japan, China, and South Korea within the subsequent 12 months.

Some of the main issues that have arisen in the Australia-Japan talks were also seen in Canberra's negotiations with Seoul, which were completed this past December. (See Bridges Weekly, [12 December 2013](#)) Like South Korea, Japan is asking for Australia's automobile import tariffs to be slashed from their current levels of five percent in return for improved market access to Japan's agricultural sector.

The agriculture component of the Japan deal has proven particularly controversial, with the Australian National Farmers Federation (NFF) concerned over possible "carve-outs" that would protect the Japanese "big five" agricultural commodities – namely rice, sugar, beef, dairy, and grain. The farm group says it was disappointed that rice was an exception to the Seoul deal and is reportedly pressuring Canberra not to make similar concessions to Tokyo.

Japanese tariffs on imported beef – Australia's largest export to the Asian island economy – are another major sticking point. While these tariffs currently stand at 38.5 percent, Australia is reportedly asking that this be reduced to under 19 percent, while Tokyo has suggested 30.

Japan's reluctance to liberalise its agricultural sector has proven similarly contentious in the 12-country Trans-Pacific Partnership talks, of which Australia is also a part. The US has been one of the most vocal advocates for greater agricultural market access in these areas, and many trade observers say this issue is the biggest hurdle for concluding the negotiations.

ICTSD reporting; "Farmers want fair deal from Japan FTA," THE AUSTRALIAN, 20 March 2014; "July Date for Australia-Japan Free Trade Deal?" THE DIPLOMAT, 30 January 2014; "Japan, Australia fail to agree on tariffs in FTA talks," KYODO NEWS, 25 March 2014.

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## WTO Panel to Hear US-China Trade Remedies Dispute

The US-China row over the use of trade remedies escalated another notch on Wednesday, after a WTO panel was established to review whether a series of US anti-dumping measures is in line with Washington's international obligations.

This particular [complaint \(DS471\)](#) involves 13 separate anti-dumping measures imposed by the US on Chinese products, such as oil-well pipes. Beijing initially requested consultations on the matter in December. (See Bridges Weekly, [12 December 2013](#)).

In its panel request, China alleges that the US Department of Commerce inappropriately used "targeted dumping" methodology – including the controversial practice of "zeroing" – in calculating dumping margins. In trade law jargon, targeted dumping refers to a situation where dumping – the practice of selling products overseas at prices lower than their domestic value – is targeted to a specific region, period, or purchaser.

If targeted dumping is found, an importing country can use an alternative method of calculating dumping margins that determines normal value using an average of market prices, which is permissible under WTO rules as long as certain conditions are met. Beijing alleges that Washington has not complied with these requirements.

Under the practice of zeroing, the US then ignores certain data when calculating anti-dumping duties. Specifically, it "zeroes out," or ignores, instances where the good in question is actually being sold at a higher price in the US than in its home market. Washington's practice of zeroing has been subject to a large number of WTO disputes, with members hoping that the dispute settlement system can help clarify whether this practice is indeed in line with international trade rules, in the absence of progress in the Doha Round talks. (See Bridges Weekly, [8 February 2012](#))

Beijing also disputes the validity of the US Commerce Department's "single rate presumption" for countries designated as "non-market economies" (NMEs) – which itself is another long-standing sticking point between the two sides. China charges that presuming all producers and exporters are one single entity under state control – as the NME designation does – and then assigning them a single dumping rate unfairly ignores relevant information from producers and exporters.

An earlier panel request was made in February, which was blocked at the time by Washington. Under WTO rules, respondents to a complaint are allowed to block an initial request for a panel. However, when a second request is made, a panel is automatically established.

ICTSD reporting.

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## Japan-Ukraine Automobile Row Reaches Panel Stage

Japan's dispute with Ukraine against the latter's safeguard measures on imported passenger cars has advanced to the panel stage, after Tokyo presented its second panel [request](#) at the WTO dispute settlement body on Wednesday. ([DS468](#))

Safeguard rules allow countries to increase duties or quotas on certain products beyond agreed limits when an increase in imports caused by unforeseen events threatens to cause serious injury to domestic producers.

The Ukrainian safeguards at issue took effect last April, and are scheduled to last for a period of three years. These additional duties – which range between 6.46 percent and nearly 13 percent – cost the Japanese auto industry as much as 1.94 billion yen, or US\$19 billion, according to estimates [released](#) by the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry last month.

Japan first lodged the complaint last October, arguing that the level of these safeguards is higher than what is needed to counter "serious injury," and citing concerns over the investigation procedures. Tokyo had filed its first panel request in February, which Kiev blocked. (See Bridges Weekly, [7 November 2013](#))

Kiev is one of the global trade body's newest members, having joined in 2008. The dispute is the second that Ukraine has faced during that time.

ICTSD reporting.

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## EVENTS & RESOURCES

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# Events

### Coming Soon

31 March – 27 April, online. CHAIRING INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES. This e-Learning course, hosted by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), aims to help provide the necessary skills to delegates who may be elected or appointed to chair meetings, along with teaching delegates how to understand the actions of international conference chairs and what these actions may mean. For more information, visit the course [website](#).

1-2 April, Mexico City, Mexico. ICAO INTERNATIONAL AVIATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SEMINAR FOR THE NORTH AMERICAN, CENTRAL AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN (NAAC) REGION. This seminar, held by the International Civil Aviation Organization, will provide participants with information on present and future impact and trend assessments of aircraft engine noise; the work of ICAO's Committee on Aviation Environmental Protection (CAEP); and the UN body's policies and guidance material with regards to the environment. More information can be found [here](#).

1-3 April, Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo. GREEN GROWTH KNOWLEDGE PLATFORM REGIONAL PRACTITIONERS' WORKSHOP. This event, hosted by the Green Growth Knowledge Platform, aims to set a vision for green growth in the African continent. Participants will review the rationale for greener growth in the regional context; discuss ways to facilitate policy dialogue and knowledge sharing; and evaluate issues regarding practical implementation. Participants will also explore potential linkages between natural resource management, renewable energy, and greening infrastructure, with the goal of establishing a vision for green growth in the continent. For more information, visit the event [website](#).

1-4 April, Majuro, Marshall Islands. 13<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE CARTAGENA DIALOGUE FOR PROGRESSIVE ACTION. This meeting will be hosted by the Republic of the Marshall Islands, with the goal of providing an informal discussion platform for those countries that are both working toward "an ambitious, comprehensive, and legally binding regime" within the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and who also have committed themselves at the domestic level to becoming "low-carbon economies." Event organisers hope that participants will be able to discuss openly their policy positions and the reasoning behind them, with the goal of finding potential areas of convergence and joint action. More information can be found [here](#).

### 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.

31 March: Working Party on the Accession of Algeria

2 April: Committee on Trade and Development

2 April: Committee on Trade and Development – Dedicated Session on Preferential Trade Arrangements

### **Other Upcoming Events**

28 April – 25 May, online. OVERCOMING NEGOTIATION DEADLOCKS. This online course, held by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), aims to equip participants with practical skills for enhancing their individual negotiation capacities. By the end of the course, participants should be able to distinguish between different negotiating approaches and be familiar with methods for dealing with varied negotiating situations and stages. More information can be found at the UNITAR [website](#).

19-21 May, New Hampshire, US. LOCAL SOLUTIONS: NORTHEAST CLIMATE CHANGE PREPAREDNESS CONFERENCE. This event, hosted by Antioch University New England and the US Environmental Protection Agency, will bring together local planners, decision-makers, and educators to discuss ways to create resilient communities that are better prepared for handling the effects of severe weather and climate. The first two days will focus on building resilient communities, while the third day will feature the Educators' Summit, which aims to help teachers in creating climate-change related curriculums. More information can be found at the event [website](#).

8-13 June, Helsinki, Finland. IPR SUMMER SCHOOL. This summer programme, hosted by the Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) University Centre, will include a range of different events and seminars dealing with various intellectual property topics. These will include, for example, IP management and enforcement in China; Nordic perspectives on IP developments in the EU, WTO, and globally; landmark IPR cases; and the EU unitary patent. The course is designed for IP practitioners, researchers and students. More information can be found [here](#).

10-30 August, Oxford, UK. OXFORD ADAPTATION ACADEMY. This summer programme, hosted by the Global Climate Adaptation Partnership, seeks to help participants develop technical and leadership skills through actual project work and practical case studies. Participants will put together adaptation-related projects, using what they have learned from the core teaching modules, case studies, and their interaction with classmates from diverse countries and disciplines. This event is targeted at team leaders responsible for developing adaptation plans at all levels. For more information, visit the event [website](#).

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## Resources

OECD ECONOMIC OUTLOOK, INTERIM REPORT. Published by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (March 2014). This report suggests that while there are signs of recovery in the world's advanced economies – supported by good financial conditions and decreased drag from budgetary tightening – economic growth in the major emerging markets is mixed. The full publication can be found [here](#).

EU ENVIRONMENT BRIEFING. Produced by viEUws (March 2014). In this video, environment journalist Sonja van Renssen provides an overview of the latest developments in the field of European environment policy. Topics discussed include last week's European Council summit; aviation in the EU's Emissions Trading System, provisional deals on a tougher waste shipments directive, and the possible unblocking of talks on national bans on cultivating genetically modified (GM) crops. The video can be found [here](#).

CONNECTING TO COMPETE 2014: TRADE LOGISTICS IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY. Published by the World Bank (March 2014). This report ranks 160 countries on several dimensions of trade – such as customs performance and infrastructure quality – that have increasingly been demonstrated as being important to development. The authors find that the gap between the countries that perform best and worst in trade logistics remains large, despite the convergence that has been seen over the past few years, due partly to the complexity of logistics-related reforms and investment in developing countries. Further information can be found at the World Bank [website](#).

THE ECONOMICS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION IN AFRICA'S WATER SECTOR: A REVIEW AND A WAY FORWARD. By Julian Doczi and Ian Ross for the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) (March 2014). This paper reviews adaptation cost estimates and methodologies for the water sector in Africa, and addresses the climatic and socio-economic uncertainties and assumptions that underpin the planning of context-specific adaptation responses. The full report can be found [here](#).

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

## PUENTES

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*Spanish language*

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