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EUROPEAN UNION

Ukraine Trade Deal, EU Agenda in Focus as Ypres Summit Kicks Off 1

POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

UN Group Reviews Sustainable Development Goals "Zero Draft" 4

PREFERENTIAL AGREEMENTS

Officials Float Potential TPP Target Dates Ahead of July Meeting 7

CLIMATE CHANGE

Australian PM Reintroduces Legislation to Repeal Carbon Tax 9

GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS

Row over Internet Domain Names Sparks Governance, Trade Questions 11

EVENTS & RESOURCES

Events 14

Resources 17

EUROPEAN UNION

Ukraine Trade Deal, EU Agenda in Focus as Ypres Summit Kicks Off

The EU Council summit in the Belgian town of Ypres will kick off later today, with the two-day meeting slated to see EU leaders sign a highly-anticipated free trade pact with Ukraine on the event margins, as well as deals with Georgia and Moldova. The gathering is also expected to witness a potential resolution to the fight over who will be the head of the next European Commission, as well as discussions on initiatives aimed at increasing growth and investment in the 28-nation bloc.

The signing of a deal for a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area between the EU and Ukraine is likely to be one of the highlights of this week's meetings, given the controversy surrounding the pact. The two sides had originally been expected to sign the deal late last year, only for Ukraine's then-President Viktor Yanukovich to decide against it, following pressure from neighbouring Russia.

The protests that arose in the wake of that decision ultimately led to Yanukovich's ouster, and a deadly crisis that has continued to this day. Along with bringing to the fore deep-seated divisions among Ukrainians over whether to deepen ties with Brussels or Moscow, the situation has ignited broader geopolitical tensions, bringing relations between Russia and its Western partners to their lowest point in years.

Russia has warned that it will take steps to protect its economy should the EU-Ukraine deal move forward. Despite Moscow's continued opposition to the deal, the EU and Russia have, however, [agreed](#) in recent weeks to hold trilateral talks at a political level – with Ukraine – over the pact.

The EU and Russia already held their third bilateral consultation on the Ukraine Association Agreement on 16 June, primarily focusing on the relationship between the EU-Ukraine trade pact and the agreements that Kiev has with the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries.

According to a summary released by the Commission after the talks, EU officials sought to reassure their Russian counterparts that the trade deals were compatible, and urged against the suspension of any trade preferences between Russia and Ukraine. Russian officials, meanwhile, have reportedly asked for a mechanism that would ensure transparency in any changes to Ukrainian technical regulations, while noting how valuable the latter's market is to Russian agricultural and industrial goods exporters.

Georgia, Moldova deals

While the Ukraine deal has attracted the most attention, the EU is also set to sign two other Association Agreements with Georgia and Moldova, which are also former members of the Soviet Union. The prospect of these new deals has similarly been criticised by Russia, which has warned that it may take economic countermeasures in response.

EU officials, such as Commission President José Manuel Barroso, have stressed that the deals are not meant to harm Moldova's and Georgia's respective ties to Russia. The Moldova deal, for instance, "is perfectly compatible... with Moldova's free trade agreement with the Commonwealth of Independent States," he [said](#) at a conference earlier in June, urging Moscow to avoid engaging in any punitive actions against Chişinău.

All three agreements are set to be applied provisionally, the European Commission has said, in order for the countries involved to see the bulk of their benefits even before ratification by the European Parliament and EU member states take place.

EU reform debate

Coming in the wake of the European Parliament elections, which saw several euro-sceptic parties make unprecedented gains in the EU legislative chamber, the Ypres summit has been eyed as a likely opportunity to address the contentious question of who will lead the next European Commission, as well as what reforms the 28-nation bloc might take in response to the polls' results.

The debate over who should next head the EU's executive branch has openly pitted the UK against Germany. While Berlin has backed former Luxembourg premier Jean-Claude Juncker for the position, which has drawn the support of several other EU leaders, UK Prime Minister David Cameron has ardently opposed the appointment, saying that as a federalist Juncker will be unable to push the necessary EU reforms.

Choosing him, Cameron has warned, would not conform with the "reform" message delivered by voters in the parliamentary elections, which came in response to frustration over the slow economic recovery, growing fears of deflation, and high unemployment levels.

Instead, the UK leader has called for European Council President Herman Van Rompuy to lead a vote on the subject at Ypres, which would mark a notable departure for the 28-nation bloc. The European Commission president has typically been appointed by consensus, and reports have indicated that – should there indeed be a vote this week – that Britain is likely to lose.

Cameron has pledged to hold an in-out referendum on Britain's EU membership in 2017, should he win re-election next year. In the meantime, he has been pushing to renegotiate his country's terms with the EU.

A decision on the Commission President – either by vote or consensus – is expected for Friday. The outcome would then need to go to the European Parliament for approval, which is expected in July.

The two-day summit is also slated to see the EU's 28 leaders discuss the bloc's agenda for the coming five years, particularly regarding economic growth and investment.

A draft document of the summit's conclusions, seen by Reuters, reportedly suggests steps geared toward improving growth and investment, particularly in light of long-running high public debt levels.

The statement was drafted by Van Rompuy, together with Italy, who will take on the bloc's rotating presidency for the next six months.

This could include, for instance, "differentiated fiscal consolidation" – in other words, more flexibility in the EU's budget rules. Such a move could receive the backing of Germany, Merkel indicated on Wednesday, in what has been seen as a potential concession to Italian premier Marco Renzi.

Berlin, which has long been sceptical to any change in the bloc's rules – which limit member state budget deficits to 3 percent of GDP and require public debt reductions – could be willing to allow these to be applied more flexibly, the German chancellor indicated.

ICTSD reporting; "Georgia ready for EU deal 'complications' from Russia," FINANCIAL TIMES, 16 June 2014; "Georgia ready for EU deal 'complications' from Russia," FINANCIAL TIMES, 16 June 2014; "EU, Russia, Ukraine agree to discuss Kiev's EU trade deal," REUTERS, 13 June 2014; "UPDATE 3-EU draft urges more focus on growth, jobs," REUTERS, 23 June 2014; "Cameron prepared to be isolated in challenge on Juncker presidency," FINANCIAL TIMES, 23 June 2014; "Germany and Italy align on EU policy, Britain set for showdown," REUTERS, 25 June 2014.

POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

UN Group Reviews Sustainable Development Goals "Zero Draft"

The UN working group charged with formulating a proposed set of sustainable development goals (SDGs) met recently for its penultimate session in New York, with delegates for the first time considering a "[zero draft](#)" that will serve as a basis for the group's recommendations due out this summer.

The 21-page zero draft under review contains 17 suggested goals and 212 associated targets, and was circulated by the group's co-chairs at the beginning of June. The Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (OWG) – as the UN group is formally known – had previously based its discussions on a series of working documents, building on the results of a 12-month "stock-taking" phase that ended in February. (See BioRes, [9 June 2014](#)).

Although the latest meeting initially opened in formal mode, participants took up the co-chairs' suggestion to revert to an informal manner for the remainder of the week in order to facilitate detailed discussion on draft goals 7-17, continuing the approach taken during inter-sessional consultations held from 9-11 June. Those meetings saw detailed discussion on draft goals 1-6.

Observers at last week's meeting said that countries appeared to make detailed statements regarding what they would and would not find acceptable for each goal, without moving into concrete bargaining.

OWG co-chairs Macharia Kamau, Permanent Representative of Kenya and Csaba Kőrösi, Permanent Representative of Hungary, have primarily sought to build consensus throughout the process, although participants have at times questioned if and when line-by-line negotiations will commence.

The plan to develop a set of SDGs was a key result of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), held in June 2012 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. UN member states later opted to use a constituency-based system of representation for the OWG, meaning that countries share seats and also sit in five regional groupings.

The group's SDG recommendations will be considered later this year by the UN General Assembly (UNGA), as part of a broader process to outline a post-2015 development agenda, which will replace the current Millennium Development Goals (MDG) when they expire next year.

Slimming down

At the end of the first day of meetings, the group's co-chairs circulated an unofficial revised list of goals based on conversations from the previous week's informal sessions. In the list, they proposed whittling the 17 draft goals down to 15 by merging those involving poverty and inequality, as well as combining climate change with sustainable production and consumption.

Both suggestions reportedly proved controversial, sources say. Climate change issues in particular have emerged as among the trickier "21st century" topics to include in the SDG framework. Given that the Rio+20 mandate requires an integration between economic,

social, and environmental dimensions of development, its inclusion is seen as critical by many countries and civil society observers.

While there was ongoing support last week in various quarters for a stand-alone climate change goal, delegates were concerned to ensure that this objective not pre-judge or rely on time-specific outcomes from the ongoing international climate negotiations under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

The UNFCCC negotiations are geared toward sealing a global climate deal by December 2015 and questions remain as to how the two processes will eventually interact. (See BioRes, [17 June 2014](#)).

Alternative suggestions for grouping the climate change goal with others, such as those on energy or environmental issues, attracted only scattered support, compared to the idea of integrating climate change targets across the SDG framework as a whole. A fourth suggested option would be to have a “placeholder” goal, whose content would be decided following agreement in the UNFCCC.

Calls have also been made throughout the process by various countries and civil society groups alike to ensure that the proposed list of SDGs remains manageable and communicable. Some observers suggest that this implies that the current list will need to be further reduced.

Discussions last week, however, saw continued support for retaining distinct ocean and biodiversity goals, a broad goal on sustainable economic growth and decent work for all, as well as more traditional MDG topics like health and education. Experts nevertheless expect the group's co-chairs to continue to present delegations with various options for combining current goals and removing overlaps in targets in order to slim the framework down.

The co-chairs have also indicated that where targets are removed from the framework, they may be included in an annex to the OWG's final report, which suggests they could still feature in the UNGA's deliberations.

Means of implementation

In the zero draft released at the beginning of June, the co-chairs put forward a compromise structure for the means to achieve the various development goals and targets. Means of implementation (MoI) was suggested as the final goal, “strengthen and enhance the means of implementation and global partnership for sustainable development.”

That goal's subsections then outline 46 target options for each of the previous goals.

Trade-related targets were put forward as options to realise several of the proposed SDGs. These included, among others, ending hunger and improving food security by implementing measures to curb excessive food price volatility; aiding oceanic conservation through elimination of harmful fisheries subsidies; and promoting inclusive, sustainable economic growth through an open, rules-based, non-discriminatory, and equitable multilateral trading system.

Discussion last week in these areas largely supported the inclusion of many of these targets. Several countries suggested adding references to the rules of the international trading system, in order to ensure that the targets contained within the framework – for example around economic incentives – did not distort trade.

MoI has historically proved to be a contentious issue in multilateral discussions of this type and has consistently flared up as a challenging topic in the OWG. A number of countries

have indicated they are unwilling to agree on the substance of the goals without commitments as to how they will be realised.

Questions of structure and sequencing regarding MoI targets were reiterated during this latest meeting, with participants debating how and when to classify and place different kinds of MoI. There was some support for the idea of identifying targets for goal-specific implementation actions under the relevant goals, while clustering MoI targets that would support the achievement of the entire framework under a separate "global partnership" goal.

Those that opposed this idea, however, argued that the approach risked conflating "what" should be achieved with "how" it is to be achieved. Even more contentious was the issue of whether the OWG should proceed to identify MoI commitments, particularly around finance, in its draft framework, or wait until the related financing discussions are completed.

Parallel to the work undertaken on the SDGs, countries are engaged in discussions around the various sources and effective use of sustainable development financing through an Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing. While the two processes are linked, it remains to be seen how the latter will feed into the crafting of the new goals.

Convergence reportedly exists within the Committee that an open, well-regulated multilateral trading system, improved market access, and a conclusion of the WTO's Doha Round talks are essential for achieving sustainable development. In its deliberations, the Committee has also considered the changing landscape of trade, such as how global value chains affect financial planning.

The Committee will hold its final meeting in August and thereafter produce a draft report on financing in the post-2015 agenda for consideration by the UNGA.

One round left

The OWG now has one remaining round to pull together a balanced, integrated, and universal set of proposed SDGs. The group will meet again formally on 14-18 July, with informal sessions taking place on 9-11 July. The co-chairs have indicated they will provide a "tweaked" version of the zero draft by 30 June. This is slated to include fewer targets and will reportedly better reflect the balance of views in the group.

Meanwhile, the first UN Environment Assembly (UNEA) is currently underway in Nairobi, Kenya. Under the auspices of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the gathering has brought together ministers, delegates, and stakeholders to discuss the SDGs and the post-2015 development agenda, as well as the challenges posed by booming illegal wildlife and timber trade.

How the outcomes of the various ongoing processes contributing to the post-2015 development agenda will tie together remains an unanswered question. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon is due to produce a synthesis report later this year, which may shed some light on the process moving forward.

ICTSD reporting; "Summary of the Twelfth Session of the UN General Assembly Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals," ENB, IISD Reporting Services, 12 May 2014.

PREFERENTIAL AGREEMENTS

Officials Float Potential TPP Target Dates Ahead of July Meeting

The 12 Pacific Rim countries negotiating a sweeping trade deal could have a document ready by the end of the year, US President Barack Obama said last Friday. Other officials, however, have been more cautious in their predictions, suggesting that 2015 might be a more likely scenario for clinching a Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Agreement, in light of the domestic political climate in many countries and the various issues that remain unresolved.

Meeting in Washington with New Zealand Prime Minister John Key, the US leader highlighted his upcoming trip to Asia as an opportunity for confirming a pact, though whether it actually would be a finalised deal – versus an agreement in principle, as seen in the case of the Canada-EU trade agreement last year, for example – was not made clear.

"Our hope is by the time we see each other again in November, when I travel to Asia, we should have something that we have consulted with Congress about, that the public can take a look at, and we can make a forceful argument to go ahead and close the deal," Obama said on Friday, while telling reporters that a lot of work must be done within that time period.

The two leaders also discussed a timeline for how the countries involved could reach such a deal, Obama said. The US President is set to travel to Asia in November for a meeting of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) leaders, which is being hosted by China – itself not a TPP member.

Back in Washington, the merits of trade deals have come under growing scrutiny by lawmakers and the public alike, particularly in light of the ongoing debate over how to resolve – or at least not exacerbate – income inequality.

To ratify international trade deals – such as the TPP – without risking the addition of amendments on the Congressional floor, lawmakers must pass a renewed version of Trade Promotion Authority, or "fast track," legislation. Though a version of "fast track" was introduced in both US legislative chambers earlier this year, it has been unable to advance.

Obama Administration officials have said that once lawmakers and the public see a finalised, high-ambition TPP, they will be more willing to accept "fast track," and that the onus is thus on negotiators to develop the best deal possible.

Observers say, however, that US trading partners are likely to be wary of making difficult concessions in the negotiating context without the guarantee of "fast track" being in place to prevent a completed deal from being unravelled in Congress.

Key, Robb indicate 2015 date

Despite Obama's suggestion of a November TPP document, other officials have been more cautious in their predictions, with Australian Trade Minister Andrew Robb saying last week that a finalised deal is more likely in early 2015.

"I think this year is out," Robb said in Canberra late last week, noting that negotiations are about 80 percent of the way done. "The last part is the most difficult."

Key has similarly said that a Pacific Rim deal this year is probably unlikely, given the upcoming US midterm elections in November.

"It's better to wait a little bit longer and get a better deal than sacrifice it the other way around," he told reporters on Monday, a few days after his meeting with Obama.

Chief negotiators from the TPP countries – a group that, along with the US and New Zealand, also includes Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Singapore, and Vietnam – will next meet in early July in the Canadian capital city of Ottawa.

That meeting was touted by TPP ministers and senior officials at their meeting in Singapore last month as an opportunity to help intensify their engagement, with a view to finalising the trade talks in the near future. (See Bridges Weekly, [22 May 2014](#))

Japan to stay?

One of the biggest questions remaining for the 12-country trade deal is whether the US and Japan will be able to resolve their disagreements over agricultural market access. Washington and Tokyo represent the two largest economies in the negotiations, and reaching an agreement on this issue – as well as on automobiles – is seen as essential for the TPP to move forward.

During his trip to Washington last week, the New Zealand premier suggested that – should Japan be unable to make the necessary concessions – then the 11 other countries should consider continuing on their own.

"If they can't meet those terms and the other 11 partners can, then we should get on and do a deal with those 11 partners," Key said last week, in comments reported by Reuters. He added, however, that the ideal scenario would be to keep Japan in if possible.

Several bilateral meetings between US and Japanese officials have been held over the past few months, in the hopes of bridging such divides. While Washington has pulled back from its original request of tariff elimination on all agricultural products, now pushing for elimination to the "maximum extent possible," the particularly sensitive nature of farm trade in Japan has made it difficult to reach a mutually acceptable resolution. (See Bridges Weekly, [12 June 2014](#))

ICTSD reporting; "Obama says hopes for Pacific trade pact in November," REUTERS, 20 June 2014; "Australia's Trade Minister Expects Long Slog for Trade Deal," THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, 18 June 2014; "UPDATE 1-NZ suggests cutting Japan out of Pacific trade talks," REUTERS, 19 June 2014; "TPP Negotiators to Meet in Canada in Early July – Source," THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, 24 June 2014; "TPP unlikely to be finalised this year – PM," THE NEW ZEALAND HERALD, 23 June 2014.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Australian PM Reintroduces Legislation to Repeal Carbon Tax

The Australian Liberal government on Monday reintroduced legislation to repeal the country's carbon tax, three months after opposition parties Labor and the Greens rallied in the Senate to defeat the first attempt.

"The people have spoken and now it's up to this Parliament to show it listened," Prime Minister Tony Abbott told lawmakers when introducing the bill. "The Australian people have passed their judgement on the carbon tax," he continued.

The legislation, expected to quickly pass through the House of Representatives where the current coalition government holds a majority, will then be among the first orders of business for the new Senate when it takes office on 1 July.

Abbott has said that he hopes the new Senate will move quickly to "scrap this toxic tax." Some senators have nevertheless criticised the government for imposing a seemingly unreasonable timeframe for such a crucial vote.

Should the carbon tax be repealed, the Australian government has said that it plans to introduce a "Direct Action Plan" in its place, which will include another market-based mechanism known formally as the Emissions Reduction Fund (ERF). This will see the government purchase emissions reductions from pre-approved projects, following an auction process.

The Direct Action Plan has, however, largely been panned by the Labor Party, with opposition leader Bill Shorten calling it a "multibillion-dollar boondoggle." Shorten has said that Labor will only support the carbon tax repeal if meaningful climate action policy takes its place.

Two years in

The controversial tax, introduced by then-Prime Minister Julia Gillard in 2011, entered into force in July 2012, and primarily targets Australia's largest emitters. (See Bridges Weekly, [4 July 2012](#))

Levies were initially fixed at A\$23 (€16.43) per metric tonne of carbon during their first year, rising annually at a rate of 2.5 percent. The tax was then scheduled to move to a floating price emissions trading scheme (ETS) in 2015.

At the time, the move was slated as a bid to help Australia – one of the world's largest per capita emitters – move away from domestic dependence on coal and transition towards more sustainable energy supplies. Opponents of the tax, however, warned that the cost to both coal exports and the Australia public would be too much to bear.

Elected last September, Abbott made the repeal of both the carbon and mining taxes – each sources of intense public ire since their introduction – a signature of his election campaign. (See Bridges, [12 September 2013](#)).

The Australian leader has also been vocal about his opposition to carbon taxes and similar pricing schemes at the international level. Meeting with Canadian Prime Minister Stephen

Harper in Ottawa earlier this month, the duo openly lambasted carbon taxes and emissions trading schemes as inefficient and economically costly ways to tackle climate change.

The move came within days of the Obama Administration announcing draft plans to drastically slash emissions from all existing US power plants, and following the US President's assertion that his preferred method of tackling climate change at the domestic level would be a carbon pricing scheme. (See BioRes, [12 June 2014](#)).

Conditional repeal support

Following hot on the heels of the carbon repeal legislation news, Palmer United Party (PUP) leader and mining magnate Clive Palmer announced on Wednesday that his three senators would support the carbon tax repeal, albeit tied to several conditions.

The provisos include retaining the country's 20 percent renewable energy target, keeping a low-carbon lender known as the Clean Energy Finance Corporation (CEFC), and implementing a framework to encourage a fair, global emissions trading scheme. Regarding the latter, Palmer suggested that Canberra could put in place a domestic system with a zero carbon price, to be scaled up once Australia's major trading partners established their own schemes.

The move will likely come as a blow to Abbott's government, which has sought to shut down the CEFC. In May, the coalition government also moved to dismantle Australia's federal renewable energy agency, subsuming its activities into the Department of Industry. (BioRes, [15 May 2014](#))

The PUP leader was joined at the press conference by former US Vice President Al Gore, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2007 for his climate activism.

Citing recent evidence of climate action in the US, as well as by other major emitters including China, Gore said that Palmer's conditions represented steps in the right direction for addressing climate change.

"All of these developments add up to the world moving to solve the climate crisis and that is why it is so significant that Clive Palmer has announced that his party will support the continuation of the renewable energy target," he said on Wednesday.

For its part, the Abbott government also sought to swing the announcement in its favour, despite the conditions.

"What we have seen today is vindication for the government, because our plan to deliver families genuine savings by abolishing a policy which is fundamentally failing is set to be passed by the Senate," Environment Minister Greg Hunt told reporters.

Tough road ahead

Although Palmer's move may shift voting dynamics on the issue, the coalition government has already added two extra weeks to the Parliament's schedule, reportedly in anticipation of what are expected to be protracted negotiations. The carbon tax and related repeals bills will be considered by the Senate starting from 7 July.

ICTSD reporting; "Incoming senators under pressure: Tony Abbott reintroduces carbon tax repeal bills," THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD, 23 June, 2014; "Australian lawmaker Palmer wants to scrap carbon tax, seeks conditions," REUTERS, 25 June 2014; "Clive Palmer places conditions on support for carbon tax repeal," THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD, 25 June 2014; "Blackout on green projects if target for renewables is axed," THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD, 7 June 2014.

GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS

Row over Internet Domain Names Sparks Governance, Trade Questions

The planned allocation of a series of new web domain names such as .wine and .vin by the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) has sparked a row over the implications this might have on international trade agreements, including one currently being negotiated between the US and EU.

This week's annual meeting of the internet naming body, which ends today in London, is also expected to tackle global governance questions as it prepares for next year's expected transition from being a US-controlled organisation to an international one, whose format and terms have yet to be determined.

Domain names

A domain name is a website identifier with unique features attached to it – normally an IP address expressed in numbers – that is created according to the rules of the DNS naming system. These names are meant to be both easily recognisable and memorable, and indicate ownership or control over a particular resource, such as a computer, network, or service.

ICANN, which was formed in 1998 in the US state of California as a non-profit organisation, has the task of coordinating the internet's naming system, including the allocation of generic top-level domains, or gTLDs, such as .com or .org. It operates under contract with the US Commerce Department, with the current agreement set to expire next year.

In 2011, ICANN [announced plans](#) to authorise a series of new gTLDs, such as .london and .amazon, in order to improve the direction of web traffic. The application process for such domain names began in 2012, drawing nearly 2000 applications. Those have since undergone an evaluation process, and those applications that pass can then move on to contracting.

Over 1300 new gTLDs could become available in the coming years, ICANN says. While the planned release of these new domain names has been welcomed by some, others have warned that doing so could pose a series of problems for the protection of geographical indications and trademarks.

For instance, companies may have to buy up several domain names, in order to ensure that so-called cybersquatting – defined as the "abusive registration of trademarks as domain names" – does not occur.

Among those concerned is the UN's intellectual property organisation, which warned in March that this move could disrupt today's strategies for protecting trademarks online.

"The proliferation of potential web addresses, with the expected roll-out of 1400 new gTLDs, will force trademark owners to adjust their priorities in terms of registration and protection choices," World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Director General Francis Gurry [said](#) at that time, noting the difficulties trademark owners already have with regards to smaller budgets and growing uncertainty.

Trade implications?

Potentially included in these planned new gTLDs are .wine and .vin, which has sparked a row between certain EU member states – such as France, Spain, and the UK, as well as the European Commission itself – and the California-based organisation.

At issue is the question of geographical indications (GIs), which are meant to identify goods by their geographical origin and which possesses certain qualities or traits due specifically to that origin. Well-known examples include Parma ham or Camembert cheese.

The protection of product names associated with geographical places has had a long tradition. The concept of GIs as such entered into common usage with the conclusion of the WTO's Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property (TRIPS), which addresses the matter in Section 3, Part II, particularly in Articles 22 and 23. The latter of these provides additional protection for wines and spirits; under Article 23, these must be protected even if the manner in which producers from other geographical regions present such goods would not prompt consumer confusion about their source.

Yet how the issue of new domain names might relate to the protection of geographical indications offered by the WTO's TRIPS Agreement, concluded in 1994, or other international trade negotiations currently underway, remains unclear.

EU officials have said that the planned ICANN move on the .wine and .vin gTLDs could allow producers of goods that are not "genuine" to gain access to these new domain names, and thus undermine their authentic counterparts in the market.

"There is a real fear that web users could be misled by sites which bear the name of a well-known wine geographical indication (GI), but which in fact have no legitimate relationship with that product," the [European Commission](#) said in April, after ICANN agreed to put the .wine and .vin applications on hold for two more months in order to allow more time for applicants to negotiate.

Furthermore, French officials have said, the way these domain names have been granted is very technical, and could hamper protections for such products that are under negotiation elsewhere. The protection of GIs has already emerged as a contentious issue in the ongoing bilateral talks between the EU and US for a trade deal, known formally as the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP).

Indeed, the ICANN domain name issue could hurt the TTIP trade talks, said French minister for digital affairs Azelle Lemaire earlier this month, in a letter to European Commission President José Manuel Barroso that was co-signed by other senior officials from her country.

"These decisions could imperil the current talks on the transatlantic [trade] partnership by forcing the imposition of a model by the means of technical discussions on internet naming," they said, according to the Financial Times.

Winemakers on both sides of the Atlantic are concerned over the possible implications of the move. "The importance of protecting winegrowing place names is critical to all winegrowing regions of quality; it is not solely a European issue," said Linda Reiff, who heads the US-based Napa Valley Vinters, in comments reported by The Australian.

In an [analysis](#) of the .wine and .vin issue by law professor Jérôme Passa commissioned by ICANN, the author says that the two contentious gTLDs, as well as similar common noun gTLDs such as .cheese or .fromage, do not constitute geographical indications within the meaning of intellectual property law, and thus are not subject to protection. The professor

however clarifies in his conclusion that “as regards the applications for the assignment of the new gTLDs ‘.vin’ and ‘.wine’,... there is no rule of the law of geographical indications, nor any general principle which obliges ICANN to reject the applications or accept the applications under specific conditions.”

Governance questions emerge as US steps back

The planned gTLD release has been derided by some officials as an example of “opaque” policymaking, and has prompted calls for transparency and a new system. Along with the rollout of new domain names, another one of the major changes underway at ICANN is the plan to cede the organisation's control from the US to a new international body late next year.

French officials, according to the Financial Times, have been urging the establishment of a “general assembly” of stakeholders, with an intergovernmental body that operates on a one-country, one-vote system.

While France has been among the most vocal in urging reform of the internet governance system, other countries – such as China and Russia – have also called for a change.

ICTSD reporting; “France lashes out at internet naming body Ican,” FINANCIAL TIMES, 22 June 2014; “Winemakers baulk at vino-flavoured domain names,” THE AUSTRALIAN, 24 June 2014; “EU challenges US hegemony in global internet governance,” 6 December 2013; “France sparks .wine address row ahead of Ican meeting,” BBC, 23 June 2014.

EVENTS & RESOURCES

Events

Coming Soon

Present – 25 July, online. E-DISCUSSION ON PARTNERSHIPS WITH CIVIL SOCIETY. The United Nations Development Group (UNDG) is leading a project entitled "Continuing Inclusive Dialogue on the Post-2015 Development Agenda" which includes an initiative on partnerships with civil society. This initiative aims to give civil society the opportunity to contribute to UN-led consultations relating to the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda. Results of the related e-discussions will ultimately be compiled into a set of recommendations that will be showcased during a global meeting on development, tentatively scheduled for the end of October 2014 in Cambodia. For more information, visit event [website](#).

27 June, online. CHINA, THE WEST, AND THE ALTERNATIVE ENERGY INNOVATION CHALLENGE. In this Peterson Institute for International Economics webcast, a panel of experts will discuss whether the international community can find a more cooperative approach for promoting alternative energy innovations more effectively. The webcast will also address the need for establishing a more open trade regime that allows unrestricted access to the most cost-effective alternative energy solutions, regardless of their country of origin. Experts will also review the effects that various international trade disputes have had on the diffusion of these technologies, and the recent policy shifts in the US, EU, and China. For more information, visit the event [website](#).

27 June, London, UK. GLOBAL MACROECONOMIC LEADERSHIP: CREATING AN ERA OF GLOBAL GROWTH. At this Chatham House event, Oxford University Professor David Vines will outline how to recreate the period of "great moderation," which began in the mid-1980s and enabled widespread economic growth, decreased macroeconomic volatility, and wherein global economic imbalances were expected to self-correct. Vines will argue that this will require significant international adjustment, both within Europe and internationally. Vines will discuss the type of international institutional management and global financial leadership required for this result. For more information, visit the event [website](#).

30 June, London, UK. THE 2014 CHATHAM HOUSE ANNUAL COMPETITION POLICY CONFERENCE: COMPETITION POLICY IN REGULATED MARKETS. The 2014 Chatham House's Annual Competition Policy conference will assess the role of competition policy in regulated markets with a particular focus on financial, mobile telephone, and electricity markets. Speakers will discuss the effects that today's intellectual property system has on innovation, whether economic theory must be adapted to global antitrust practice, what is the right approach to benchmarking financial markets, and whether existing competition policy in the EU discourages investment in 4G networks. For more information, visit the event [website](#).

4 July, London, UK. ASIA'S EMERGING DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES. At this Chatham House event, President of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) Takehiko Nakao will discuss the development challenges facing Asia and the Pacific including inequality, environmental stress, the large infrastructure gap, and challenges related to the region's growing number of middle-income countries. He will also outline the ADB's vision for enhancing financial capacity, leveraging more private sector resources, and promoting innovative development solutions. 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.

30 June: Committee on Trade and Environment

30 June: Sub-Committee on Least-Developed Countries

1 + 3 July: Trade Policy Review Body - China

2 + 4 July: Preparatory Committee on Trade Facilitation

2 July: Committee on Budget, Finance, and Administration

3 July: Working Party on the Accession of Seychelles

7 July: Committee on Trade and Development – Dedicated Session on the Monitoring Mechanism on Special and Differential Treatment

9 – 10 July: Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

Other Upcoming Events

30 June – 3 July. Paris, France. OECD DEVELOPMENT WEEK. This weeklong event, organised by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), aims to facilitate the understanding of the implications of major global trends for policy making and global governance, as well as their potential impact on achieving more sustainable and inclusive development. This event will bring together key development actors from both OECD and non-OECD countries, the private sector, investors, civil society organisations, foundations and think tanks. For more information, visit the event [website](#).

1-3 July. Geneva, Switzerland. MULTI-YEAR EXPERT MEETING ON TRANSPORT, TRADE LOGISTICS AND TRADE FACILITATION, SECOND SESSION (TRADE FACILITATION). This event, hosted by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), will address issues related to trade logistics for developing countries. Discussions will cover a range of topics, including technical assistance and capacity building, research and analytical work, consensus building, trade facilitation implementation plans, and more. For more information, visit event [website](#).

4 July. Geneva, Switzerland. AD HOC EXPERT MEETING: NATIONAL TRADE FACILITATION COMMITTEES. At this UNCTAD event, experts will evaluate the preliminary results of the organisation's latest research on the challenge of sustainability that national trade facilitation committees/bodies face. The meeting will aim to identify what elements can serve to ensure the sustainability of a committee, what donors and international agencies can do to support the sustainability of trade facilitation bodies, and specific techniques that encourage the involvement of the private sector. For more information, visit event [website](#).

8 July, Geneva, Switzerland. GREEN GOODS INITIATIVE: A STEPPING STONE TOWARDS EFFECTIVE CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION. This public event, hosted by the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD), aims to raise awareness among the international trade constituency about the planned Environmental Goods Agreement (EGA). Specifically, the event will focus on how this initiative could potentially help

address climate change, namely by prioritising clean energy technologies and other climate-friendly goods. To learn more, please visit the ICTSD [website](#).

8 July. Tokyo, Japan. GLOBAL FOOD PRICES AND BUSINESS CYCLE DYNAMICS IN AN EMERGING MARKET ECONOMY. At this seminar, which is being hosted by the Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI), Oliver Holtemöller, head of the department of macroeconomics at the Halle Institute for Economic Research, will explore the extent to which poor countries are affected by price fluctuations in global commodity markets. Holtemöller will then discuss ways to prevent output losses, namely through reducing exposure to commodity price shocks. For more information, visit event [website](#).

Resources

FOOD SECURITY AND THE WTO DOMESTIC SUPPORT DISCIPLINES POST-BALI BY Alan Matthews. Published by the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD) (June 2014). At the WTO's Ninth Ministerial Conference in Bali, Indonesia, trade ministers committed to begin discussions with the aim of finding a "permanent solution" to the problem of food security. The goal of this paper is to assist negotiators and policymakers in this endeavour by providing a comprehensive overview of the background of the discussions in this area, as well as the interim agreement reached in Bali. The author also reviews options that members could consider as they examine possible permanent solutions to this problem. The paper can be accessed [here](#).

PUBLIC STOCKHOLDING FOR FOOD SECURITY PURPOSES: SCENARIOS AND OPTIONS FOR A PERMANENT SOLUTION. By Raul Montemayor for the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD) (June 2014). At the WTO's Ninth Ministerial Conference in Bali, Indonesia, governments decided to shield public stockholding programs from a dispute settlement challenge until a "permanent solution" was worked out. This paper examines how various scenarios could affect the measurement of domestic support under WTO rules, and suggests that a strict application of current rules could result in most of the developing countries examined in the study breaking current ceilings. The simulations also suggest that more commodities in more countries would fall within existing limits if this support were assessed and calculated differently. The paper can be accessed [here](#).

WORLD INVESTMENT REPORT 2014 – INVESTING IN THE SDGS: AN ACTION PLAN. Published by the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) (June 2014). This annual report outlines the changes in global foreign direct investment (FDI) following the 2012 slump, noting that short-term prospects appear positive. Along with reviewing investment trends, it also notes changes in investment policies, and proposes a Strategic Framework for Private Investment in the planned Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as well as a global Action Plan for Private Investment in these goals. The report can be downloaded at the UNCTAD [website](#).

INSIDE THE EURO CRISIS: AN EYEWITNESS ACCOUNT. By Simeon Djankov for the Peterson Institute for International Economics (June 2014). In this account, Simeon Djankov describes his four years of service as Bulgaria's minister of finance. The book outlines the various discussions – and disagreements – he witnessed during that time between fellow European finance officials over issues like fiscal austerity, monetary policy, banking supervision, and how to contain and overcome the economic and financial crisis. To learn more, or to preview the book, click [here](#).

CIRCULAR ECONOMY: "FRANCE AIMS TO LEAD BY EXAMPLE" STRESSES FRENCH SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OFFICIAL. Published by viEUws (June 2014). In this video interview, French Executive Commissioner for Sustainable Development Jean-Paul Albertini discusses the potential benefits of the implementation of circular economy in Europe with environmental journalist Sonja van Renssen. Albertini argues that such an economy could create jobs and help to re-industrialise economies, thereby improving and reconciling the environmental and economic performance of EU member states. The Commissioner also posits that circular economy has become a major priority for the French government. The video interview can be seen [here](#).

INVESTOR-STATE DISPUTE SETTLEMENT: AN INFORMATION NOTE ON THE UNITED STATES AND THE EUROPEAN UNION. Published by UNCTAD (June 2014). This

information note consist of a review of investor-State dispute settlement (ISDS) cases involving the United States and European Union members. The note argues that understanding patterns of ISDS activity can help to achieve best possible solutions when designing investment dispute settlement mechanisms and when negotiating international investment agreements (IIAs). The review focuses on cases brought to pursuant IIAs including bilateral investment treaties (BITs), free trade agreements (FTAs) such as the North-American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and the Energy Charter Treaty (ECT), and includes an overview of existing IIA networks, as well as the linkages between them. The information note can be accessed [here](#).

COUNTRIES IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES: AGRICULTURAL POLICY ISSUES IN THE CONTEXT OF THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION. By Lars Brink for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (2014). This paper examines the experience and main issues of 12 of the 15 new states that emerged following the disintegration of the Soviet Union within the context of the rules and commitments in agriculture under the World Trade Organization (WTO). In this report, Brink pays particular attention to domestic support in agriculture but also discusses market access, export subsidies, and export restrictions, and introduces the WTO disputes related to agriculture involving these countries. The paper can be found [here](#).

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