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WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

WTO Members Weigh Options as India Pushes Food Security Link on Trade Facilitation Deal

Indian officials indicated late on Wednesday that they would not be able to support the implementation of the WTO's Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) unless they see their concerns on food security addressed, according to multiple media reports. The news, coming just ahead of a key WTO meeting, has reignited old tensions among the global trade body's members while leaving the next steps for the TFA unclear.

Thursday's meeting of the WTO General Council, which is set to be its last before the annual August break, had been expected to serve as a check-in point for members to discuss progress on a planned work programme for eventually concluding the Doha Round trade talks. Members have until the end of this year to negotiate such a programme.

The spotlight, however, has now shifted back to the already-agreed TFA, which aims to ease customs procedures and reduce red tape at the border.

The TFA was one of the main deliverables from the WTO's Ninth Ministerial Conference in Bali, Indonesia last December, and marked the organisation's first global trade deal since opening its doors in the mid-1990s.

31 July deadline

Trade ministers had agreed in Bali that the General Council – the WTO's highest decision-making body outside of ministerial conferences – would have until 31 July of this year to adopt the Protocol of Amendment that would bring the Trade Facilitation Agreement into the organisation's legal framework.

By that date, WTO members would also annex Category A notifications – in other words, those commitments developing countries will implement immediately upon the deal's entry into force – and open the pact for ratification by the membership over a one-year period, ending on 31 July 2015.

Once the deal is ratified by two-thirds of the membership, the TFA will take effect for those members. The agreement would then take effect for those remaining members once they ratify it themselves.

However, questions emerged earlier this month over whether India might block the next step in the implementation of the TFA, when its representative told a meeting of the Preparatory Committee on Trade Facilitation that it would not be able to back the adoption of the Protocol until it saw more movement on addressing New Delhi's concerns on public food stockholding.

Back to Bali

The Indian statement has essentially restarted a fight that had dominated most of the Bali ministerial last December. Ahead of the conference, the G-33 coalition, led by India, had called for WTO rules to be updated in order to grant developing countries greater flexibility for food purchased at administered prices when building stocks for food security purposes.

New Delhi had adopted in 2013 a multi-billion dollar food security scheme, and had been concerned that under current WTO rules it could face a dispute settlement challenge for breaching the global trade body's subsidy limits.

At the ministerial conference, India's then-Commerce Minister, Anand Sharma, had initially insisted that his country would not back down on its demand for agreeing a permanent solution in Bali on food stocks, stressing that his country's right to food security was "non-negotiable."

After several days – and nights – of negotiations, the stand-off had appeared resolved when WTO members committed to undertake a work programme that would develop recommendations for a "permanent solution" on the public stockholding subject in time for the organisation's eleventh ministerial conference, expected in 2017. (See Bridges Daily Update, [7 December 2013](#))

In the meantime, trade ministers signed off on an interim solution that would provide a "peace clause" preventing members from bringing legal disputes against existing public stockholding programmes in this area. Countries with such programmes would need to ensure that their programmes do not distort trade or "adversely affect" the food security of other members, and are required to provide information on said programmes.

Raising eyebrows

India's recent decision to re-link trade facilitation with food security had caught many in the international trade community by surprise, given that the subject had appeared settled in Bali.

Some developed country delegates said that it was not clear what exactly India is looking for, given that there is an interim solution in place, and a clear commitment and parameters to talk about a permanent solution.

The lack of concrete requests from India, one said, has been "raising a lot of eyebrows in Geneva," as has the seemingly late push on the subject.

Furthermore, one source said, an informal meeting on agriculture on Wednesday reportedly saw India back a revised paper from the G-33 developing country coalition that features essentially the same terms as the group's original proposal on public stockholding [from late 2012](#).

The proposal circulated Wednesday also featured provisions relating to "special products," where developing countries would be given extra flexibility to make small or no tariff cuts, as well as a special safeguard mechanism (SSM) that would allow developing countries to increase tariffs in certain situations.

G-20 negotiations

Many had hoped that last Saturday's meeting in Sydney of trade ministers from the G-20 major economies could have yielded a result on the India subject, only for negotiations there failing to lead to a resolution.

Officials familiar with the talks have stressed, both publicly and privately, that India is not against the TFA itself.

"There was no dissent on the significance, the importance, and the timetable that's laid out in the agreement that everyone said," Australian Trade Minister Andrew Robb [told reporters](#) this weekend, while acknowledging that some countries had concerns over the pace of implementing some of the other Bali decisions. Overall, he noted, "everyone, including India, recommitted publicly to the package."

The Australian trade official acknowledged, however, that work still remained in the days following the G-20 meeting to "even further satisfy India and maybe other countries."

The text of the [chairman's summary](#), issued by Robb's office on Saturday, said that G-20 members "undertook to show leadership in our support for the full implementation of all elements of the Bali outcome agreed at the 9th WTO Ministerial Conference in December 2013, including the Agreement on Trade Facilitation, consistent with agreed timelines."

Indian officials, for their part, publicly disagreed with Robb's summary of the G-20 discussions, telling Reuters that the statement made no mention of India's food security concerns and some of the questions raised by developing countries.

WTO launches TF facility

In a related development, WTO Director-General Roberto Azevêdo announced earlier this week the launch of a new initiative aimed at ensuring that developing and least developed countries (LDCs) receive the assistance they need to implement the trade facilitation pact.

The new WTO Facility, officials explained, would build upon existing efforts by other stakeholders, such as bilateral donors or multilateral agencies, in the area of technical assistance and capacity-building support.

Functions of the Facility would include, for instance, helping LDCs and developing countries assess their needs and identify potential development partners; providing support to identify sources of implementation assistance; and providing project implementation grants for implementing TFA provisions when efforts to get funding elsewhere have failed.

Officials made clear on Tuesday, however, that the Facility will only begin its work when the Protocol of Amendment inserting the TFA into the WTO Agreement is adopted.

"It is important now that members implement the Trade Facilitation Agreement so that developing countries can receive this technical assistance and so that we can move ahead with the other elements of the Bali package and negotiations on the Doha Development Agenda," Azevêdo [said](#) at the launch.

Experts say the Facility will likely help answer some of the questions developing countries have raised over whether they will have the necessary support to take on some of the TFA's more costly provisions.

"The launch of the WTO TF Facility should provide some comfort to developing members that the funds and the willingness to support the implementation of the WTO TF

Agreement are there," said Dr. Mohammad Saeed, a senior trade facilitation adviser at the International Trade Centre, in e-mailed comments to Bridges.

"Recent similar initiatives, such as that of the World Bank and the ITC Trade Facilitation Programme which was launched [on 22 July] are also clear signals that international organisations are willing to assist developing countries benefit from the Agreement," Saeed added.

Several international organisations have also affirmed their commitment toward a coordinated approach in providing assistance to developing, transition, and least developed countries in implementing the TFA.

The co-signers of that latter statement were the ITC, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the UN Conference on Trade and Development, the UN Economic Commission for Europe on behalf of various regional commissions, the World Bank Group, and the World Customs Organization.

South Africa question

The Facility's launch was announced jointly with the coordinators of the African, Least Developed Country (LDC), and the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Groups, in what sources say appeared to be a tacit indication that they are likely to back the adoption of the Protocol.

While India's stance has largely stolen the spotlight over the past few weeks, whether the African and LDC Groups would approve the Protocol had also appeared uncertain until recently, after African Union trade ministers called in April for the implementation of TFA to be done provisionally, pending the conclusion of the Doha Round.

The African Group had appeared to back down from this stance in recent weeks. (See Bridges Weekly, [10 July 2014](#)) However, sources note that South Africa, which has also expressed concerns over a perceived lack of balance in the Bali deal, has continued to call for provisional implementation of the TFA. One developed country source noted that it is unclear what exactly South Africa is looking for, in terms of balance.

Next steps uncertain

Though a cabinet meeting to confirm the Indian position has reportedly been delayed to today, reports indicate that New Delhi is likely to hold firm on its position.

In light of the expected Indian decision, how WTO members will decide to proceed ahead of the 31 July deadline was unclear as Bridges went to press.

For instance, the Preparatory Committee on Trade Facilitation needs to finish its work in drafting both the Protocol itself, and the General Council decision for its adoption, both steps that would need to be completed by the end of this month.

Whether members will try to salvage a consensus in time for the end-July deadline – or instead decide on an extension – was an open question at the time of this writing, with delegates unwilling to speculate ahead of the General Council meeting given the uncertainty surrounding the situation.

Several said, however, that it was unlikely that members would try to negotiate during the Thursday meeting itself.

Many trade sources speaking to Bridges ahead of Thursday's meeting warned that, should members fail to meet their 31 July deadline for the TFA protocol, it could pose problems for efforts to eventually conclude the broader Doha Round.

"Talking about post-Bali agenda while failing to implement the TFA isn't just putting the cart before the horse, it's slaughtering the horse," said US Trade Representative Michael Froman in a post on social media site Twitter ahead of Saturday's G-20 meeting.

Other developed country sources commenting to Bridges before Thursday's General Council meeting echoed that concern, saying that if WTO members cannot even implement what has already been agreed, then trying to negotiate a post-Bali work programme for finishing the Doha talks would be extremely difficult, if not unfeasible.

"If there's no post-Bali on the implementation side, then there's no post-Bali at all," one suggested. "That's just a statement of fact."

Another noted that they were not sure how members' disappointment would manifest itself formally on Thursday. "Certainly informally, people are making it clear that all bets are off," the official said, noting that some are perceiving it as an attempt to renegotiate the Bali deal.

"It's hard to see the majors really being comfortable talking about other things... when there is so much uncertainty about the ability to agree anything and make it stick," the official continued.

ICTSD reporting; "India keeps world guessing ahead of landmark trade deadline," REUTERS, 22 July 2014; "India will not back WTO protocol unless concerns addressed – sources," REUTERS, 23 July 2014; "India to block WTO trade facilitation pact," BUSINESS STANDARD, 23 July 2014.

PREFERENTIAL AGREEMENTS

TTIP Negotiators Advance Technical Work as EU Begins Leadership Transitions

Trade negotiators from the US and EU completed their sixth round of talks for a bilateral trade and investment pact last week, focusing mainly on technical discussions which officials say will pave the way for tougher political decisions down the road. The weeklong meetings, hosted in Brussels, come as the EU begins transitioning to new leadership across its institutions, sparking questions over what this will mean for the trans-Atlantic pact.

Market access: services offers discussed

Improving bilateral market access in the areas of goods, services, and government procurement is one of the main areas that Transatlantic Trade and Investment Pact (TTIP) negotiators are hoping to address in a final deal.

The two sides exchanged tariff offers in February, with EU officials criticising the US offer at the time as not being sufficiently ambitious. While negotiators said on Friday that technical discussions on the subject have continued, new offers have not yet been tabled, and neither side confirmed when revised offers might be submitted.

The tariff offers, EU chief negotiator Ignacio Garcia Bercero told reporters, "have not been a very significant part of the past week's discussions." Meanwhile, chief US negotiator Dan Mullaney did reiterate that Washington's "key ambition is full liberalisation, tariff elimination across the board."

Both European and American negotiators have now tabled offers on services market access, though the EU offer – as anticipated – did not include financial services, given that the two sides are at odds over whether financial services regulation should be addressed under the bilateral pact.

The latter has been a key demand by Brussels, which argues that having a regulatory framework in this area will facilitate bilateral cooperation in preventing future financial crises. Washington, for its part, has maintained that this subject is already being addressed in various other forums.

The US is pushing for a negative list approach to services, like the one used in its own offer. Under a negative list, all services are included unless specifically excluded. The EU's offer uses a "mixed list" approach.

"We do think that it is extremely important in this negotiation for us to have strong services commitments, and we think that these commitments should be based on a negative list approach... over a broad range of services, including telecommunications, including e-commerce, and including financial service market access," said Mullaney on Friday.

Public procurement offers have not yet been exchanged, officials said on Friday, though negotiators did use the past week to discuss "all aspects" of the subject.

"For the EU, procurement is one of the most fundamental elements of these negotiations," Garcia Bercero said on Friday. "Both sides set as [their] objective to substantially improve

access to government procurement opportunities at all levels of government on the basis of national treatment."

He noted that discussions with the US are indeed focusing on all procurement levels, not just at the central-level as some have said.

Mullaney, for his part, noted that the High Level Working Group report that was issued before the TTIP's launch did agree that both sides would seek substantially improved market access in procurement.

There is "a bit of myth circulating out there, especially in Europe," that the US procurement market available to Europeans is much smaller than what the EU has made available, he said. The US negotiator referred specifically to the reservations that the EU has taken in the WTO's Government Procurement Agreement (GPA), of which both are parties.

Concrete objectives?

The regulatory agenda of TTIP has been touted as the area where potentially the most significant economic gains can be made. However, it has also been among the most controversial, with some civil society groups questioning whether domestic regulations and standards aimed at protecting public health or the environment could be weakened as a result – a fear that negotiators have repeatedly attempted to dispel.

Sectors under discussion for regulatory cooperation include cars, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, medical devices, cosmetics, engineering, textiles, information and communication technologies (ICT), and pesticides.

One of the main goals in the upcoming months, the EU chief negotiator said, would be to develop "concrete objectives" between the two sides on what they wish to achieve in TTIP in this area, along with the necessary steps regulators would need to take to fulfil these objectives.

These concrete objectives, Garcia Bercero clarified, would be "just a step in the process," noting that he was not suggesting that this would necessarily be a result by the end of this year, given the complex nature of this work.

Energy chapter question undecided

Whether or not to include a chapter on energy in the trade pact – rather than just addressing specific energy issues in other related parts of the agreement – remains undecided, officials said.

The decision, Mullaney told reporters, is mainly an "architectural question," while noting that having an ambitious TTIP in the end will ultimately "make it easier to get export licences, for instance, in the export of natural gas."

Both sides affirmed that technical discussions were held last week to better understand each other's regulatory regimes in this area.

Meanwhile, discussions on areas such as labour and environment and small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) were also held, as were talks on state-to-state dispute settlement. In the latter area, the two sides are working on the basis of a consolidated text.

Garcia Bercero confirmed that the two sides are finalising consolidated texts in SMEs and trade facilitation. Sustainable development/labour and environment is not at that stage

yet, with the two sides still discussing what elements they would wish to address in the negotiations before elaborating their textual proposals.

One year in

The trans-Atlantic talks were launched just over a year ago, on the sidelines of a G-8 summit in Northern Ireland, with the two sides holding their first negotiating round a month later. (See Bridges Weekly, [20 June 2013](#) and [18 July 2013](#), respectively)

The task of strengthening the world's largest trading relationship was hailed by leaders at the time as a way to "fire up" both the European and American economies, both working to cement their recovery processes.

The EU, for instance, has struggled to shake persistent unemployment levels, particularly among young people. The public dissatisfaction over the pace of the recovery – and some of the measures used to achieve it – was blamed in part for a significant political shake-up seen in the European Parliament earlier this year, where euro-sceptic parties such as Marine Le Pen's French National Front made major gains in the legislative chamber.

The result had implications for other EU leadership slots as well, with European Commission President-elect Jean-Claude Juncker's nomination causing a rift between UK Prime Minister David Cameron and most of his fellow EU leaders, leading to an unprecedented vote on the subject. (See Bridges Weekly, [3 July 2014](#))

Juncker, whose nomination was approved by EU parliamentarians on 15 July, pledged that his Commission would negotiate "a reasonable and balanced trade agreement" with the US, and that the deal would be one of his main priorities.

"It is anachronistic that, in the 21st century, Europeans and American still impose customs duties on each other's products. These should be swiftly and fully abolished," he said in outlining his presidency's goals last week to EU lawmakers.

The European Commission President-elect also suggested that the two sides could "go a significant step further" in either the mutual recognition of standards, or potentially reaching trans-Atlantic ones.

"However, I will also be very clear that I will not sacrifice Europe's safety, health, social, and data protection standards or our cultural diversity on the altar of free trade," he said, adding that items such as food safety and personal data protections would be "non-negotiable" for him. He will also not accept that EU courts be "limited by special regimes for investor disputes."

At Friday's press conference, EU negotiator Garcia Bercero highlighted Juncker's statement as sign of the "strong political support" that the new Commission is likely to show the trade deal, adding that "the fact that TTIP was one of the first political debates in the new Parliament illustrates the political importance attached to these negotiations."

EU concludes ISDS consultation

Earlier this year, the EU announced that it was temporarily putting on hold the part of the talks dealing with investment protection and investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS), in order to give the public a chance to weigh in. (See Bridges Weekly, [23 January 2014](#))

ISDS, in particular, has proven controversial on both sides of the Atlantic, with sceptics suggesting that such a provision could put hard-won domestic public policy regulations at the mercy of international arbitration tribunals. Supporters, however, have said that including ISDS in the deal would both help the US and EU set a new global standard in this area, along with protecting investors against unfair expropriation or discrimination abroad.

The online consultation was launched in late March, and conducted in all of the EU languages. (See Bridges Weekly, [3 April 2014](#)) The consultation now over, EU trade officials are [beginning](#) to review the results, with Garcia Bercero noting that the responses numbered at approximately 150,000, though an exact number has yet to be confirmed.

A report on the results will be released by end-2014, EU officials have said, and will feature related policy recommendations.

The new head of the European Parliament's International Trade Committee (INTA), Bernd Lange of the German Socialists and Democrats, has already said that investor state-dispute settlement should be removed from the pact – otherwise, he warned, a final TTIP might fail to pass in the EU legislative chamber.

ICTSD reporting; "Le Pen won't hijack TTIP committee, vow MEPs," EURACTIV, 16 July 2014; "New Parliament protests against EU-US trade talks," EURACTIV, 16 July 2014.

POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

UN Working Group Agrees to Proposed Sustainable Development Goals

The UN working group charged with outlining a proposed set of sustainable development goals (SDGs) adopted an [outcome document](#) on Saturday. The recommended goals will now be sent to the UN General Assembly for consideration as part of the discussions around the post-2015 development agenda.

The final 23-page document maintains the 17 goals outlined in a revised "zero draft" – released by the working group's co-chairs in early July to serve as a basis for this final meeting – with 169 targets. Sixty-two of these can be classed as "means of implementation," (MoI) or the methods to achieve each goal.

While much of the outcome document's focus and language remains unchanged from the "revised" zero draft released a few weeks ago, certain areas have been altered to reflect last week's negotiations. Many targets are more specific, for example, covering several areas of action.

Gaps nevertheless remain regarding some of the targets' numerical elements, which in certain areas contain bracketed [x] placeholders, suggesting the percentage increase or decrease may have to be hammered out later on.

The SDG effort is a direct result of the Rio+20 sustainable development conference held in June 2012 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, twenty years after the landmark 1992 Rio Earth Summit in the same city.

Countries at the 2012 meeting agreed to draw up a set of SDGs that would integrate and balance environmental, economic, and social dimensions of development. These would replace the current eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) when they expire at the end of next year.

The new goals were mandated to be action-oriented, concise and communicable, limited in number, aspirational, and universally applicable, while also accounting for different national circumstances and capacities.

Talks aimed at developing a proposed set of goals have been underway for the past 16 months in the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (OWG). During this stage of the process, UN member states decided to use a constituency-based system of representation, meaning a number of countries share seats and sit in five regional groups. The meetings were co-chaired by Kenyan Permanent Representative Macharia Kamau and Hungarian Permanent Representative Csaba Körösi.

Although some working group participants at times questioned the co-chairs' approach to the discussion – including whether they had a mandate to produce a text after each round and when the time would come for line-by-line negotiations – they nevertheless received a standing ovation as the final OWG meeting was gavelled to a close on Saturday.

Trade-related considerations have featured throughout the OWG discussions and are present in Saturday's outcome document, with many trade areas now including more explicit references to relevant negotiations underway in the WTO.

One area where trade has been removed, however, is under proposed goal 9 on infrastructure and sustainable industrialisation. This goal in the revised zero draft had listed a target on improving trans-border infrastructure, connectivity, integration, and trade facilitation.

Means of implementation

Means of implementation proved a contentious topic throughout the talks, and the co-chairs tried various formats to reconcile opposing views among OWG participants over how to treat the subject.

The outcome document retains the structure of the co-chairs' revised zero draft, whereby targets and a few specific Mol are differentiated using a system of numbers and letters under each goal. More cross-cutting Mol are positioned in the final goal. (See BioRes, [3 July 2014](#))

In the original zero draft released by the co-chairs in early June, Mol were grouped together in the final goal, but divided into categories to reflect each of the previous goals. Under this format, a number of the trade issues were positioned as Mol under goal 8 on sustainable economic growth and decent work. (See BioRes, [9 June 2014](#))

The revised zero draft structure shuffled these trade issues around. Increasing aid for trade support remains the only trade-specific Mol directly under goal 8 in the outcome document.

Trade section, final goal

Proposed goal 17 – “Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development” – features seven cross-cutting Mol subsections. These include finance, technology, capacity building, trade, policy and institutional coherence, multi-stakeholder partnerships, and data, monitoring and accountability.

While the subsection on trade in this final goal 17 has been moved further down compared to the revised zero draft, it still includes three targets. The areas addressed by each target remain unchanged, though some language modifications have been made.

The first trade target under goal 17 now calls for the promotion of a “universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system under the WTO,” including a reference to the conclusion of the Doha Development Agenda (DDA) negotiations.

Mention of the global trade body's Doha Round talks – now in their thirteenth year – was omitted from the co-chairs' revised zero draft, after having been included in previous versions alongside a mention of the implementation of decisions taken last December at the WTO's ministerial conference in Bali, Indonesia. (See Bridges Daily Update, [7 December 2013](#)).

While the DDA is logically an important element of progress under the multilateral trading system, experts have questioned whether it should be a key element of a 15-year target.

The second trade target in this subsection refers to increasing developing countries' exports and, in particular, doubling by 2020 the poorest countries' share of the world export total. This goal has been slightly shortened, but retains the general language covering all developing country exports.

Duty-free, quota-free (DFQF) market access for all least developed countries (LDCs) consistent with past WTO decisions is called for in the third target. In Bali last December, developed country WTO members were urged to continue efforts towards granting DFQF

access for at least 97 percent of products originating in poor countries, with those developing countries in the position to do so also augmenting such market access.

New language has been added to the third trade target in proposed goal 17, referring to the need to ensure transparency and simplicity in rules of origin (RoO) applied to imports from poor countries.

RoO define how much processing must take place before a given product may be considered to originate from a country. Overly stringent RoO requirements – those a country must adhere to in order to take advantage of the intended trade preference – mean poor economies are unable to take advantage of the intended preference. A decision was also taken in Bali to address this concern in the form of non-binding guidelines for WTO members developing RoO arrangements for LDCs. (See Bridges Weekly, [28 November 2013](#)).

Some changes have also been made to the technology subsection targets under goal 17. The revised zero draft had kept previous language that encouraged the development and transfer of environmentally sound technologies through the use of the WTO's Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) flexibilities.

This reference has now been dropped in Saturday's outcome document. WTO TRIPS flexibilities continue to be mentioned elsewhere, however, as an Mol under the final health goal for providing affordable access to medicines in developing countries.

An Mol on enhancing international cooperation to facilitate access to clean energy research and technologies is maintained elsewhere as an Mol under the sustainable energy goal, complementing the renewable energy and energy efficiency targets in that section.

Food markets

Saturday's outcome document includes a revised target on addressing trade restrictions and distortions in world food markets as a goal-specific Mol under the ending hunger goal. The target mentions the "parallel" elimination of all agricultural export subsidies and export measures with equivalent effect in the context of the Doha Round.

Experts reviewing the document suggest that – despite differences in the language used when compared with relevant WTO decisions – the references to the mandate from the global trade body's 2005 ministerial conference in Hong Kong suggests negotiators intend the scope of this element of the target to be similar to that under the WTO.

By expanding the target's scope, experts say, the latest formulation strengthens the goal-specific Mol put forward in the revised zero draft that had concentrated solely on agricultural export subsidies.

Sustainable consumption and production

Action to address harmful fossil fuel subsidies has been repositioned in the outcome document, now included as an Mol under goal 12 on ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns. Previously they had been positioned as a target under the sustainable energy goal.

The language has also been changed, moving from a call to "phase out" wasteful fossil fuel production and consumption subsidies to "rationalise inefficient fossil fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption" in the context of removing market distortions, restructuring taxation, recognising national circumstances and specific needs, as well as adverse effects on the poor.

The reference to “phase out” in the revised zero draft was aligned to language used in both G-20 and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) country groupings, according to Damon Vis-Dunbar, a fossil fuel subsidy expert at the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD).

“The earlier reference to a ‘phase out’ was certainly preferable; to ‘rationalise’ is a much vaguer term,” said Vis-Dunbar in an interview on Tuesday. “That kind of clarity is so important if we are to measure progress against these goals,” he added.

Oceans and ecosystems

Proposed goals 14 and 15 focus on the conservation and sustainable use of oceanic and terrestrial ecosystems respectively, which were among the more complex issues for the working group to outline.

Fisheries subsidies – another type of subsidy that has been criticised as both trade-distorting and environmentally damaging – are addressed in the proposed oceans goal as a target, despite resistance from some countries, though language changes have been made. A reference to the WTO fisheries subsidies negotiations has now been added, together with a footnote mentioning the DDA and the 2005 Hong Kong mandate in this area.

Experts suggest that the new formulation scales back the target's ambition, given that the revised zero draft seemed to reflect a broader mandate for eliminating fisheries subsidies that contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, beyond the WTO's work. The new language limits the “elimination” of subsidies – “prohibit” and “refrain” are used in conjunction with other actions within the target – to those that contribute to illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing.

According to Earth Negotiations Bulletin, various delegates called for the insertion of the reference to “forests” in the title of the ecosystems goal.

Tackling illegal wildlife trade, an increasingly high-profile topic given the reported scale of the poaching crisis, is included as a target under the ecosystems goal. However, the outcome document replaces a previous 2030 deadline reference with language calling for “urgent action.”

Climate change included

Proposed goal 13 calls for urgent action on combatting climate change and its impacts, with an asterisk acknowledging the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) negotiations as the primary channel in this area.

Whether to include a climate change goal had been controversial during the working group's discussions, with some participants concerned that such a goal could overlap with or prejudge the outcome of the UNFCCC process, which is focusing on reaching a new global climate deal in time for a meeting in Paris, France next year. (See BioRes, [17 June 2014](#))

The first climate goal-specific Mol also refers to UNFCCC commitments, calling for the implementation of a 2009 pledge made in Copenhagen to set aside US\$100 billion annually by 2020 from public and private resources to help address developing country climate-related needs.

The Mol also calls for the capitalisation, as soon as possible, of the Green Climate Fund (GCF) – a mechanism set up in 2010 to help developed countries achieve their climate finance commitments. Although recently operationalised, the GCF is lagging in capital, a factor some countries have said could colour the tone of the climate negotiations. (See BioRes, [18 July 2014](#))

Next steps

During the closing plenary on Saturday morning, the working group co-chairs said that while they were happy with their efforts in steering participants towards an outcome document, they recognised the final product was not flawless. Another year of discussion is likely as the UN General Assembly reflects upon the proposed goals.

The document does not yet contain indicators for measuring progress towards each goal and target, which was part of the working group's original mandate. The eventual addition of indicators at a later stage may prove a useful opportunity to clarify some of the proposed targets and further work will likely be undertaken in this area.

The international community will also need to work out how the SDGs fit in with various other inputs feeding into the post-2015 development agenda in time for a high-level meeting next year. To help delegates' efforts in this area, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon is due to produce a synthesis report on the various streams of work this upcoming autumn.

While the work of the OWG is now over, observers following the process suggest that this milestone actually reflects the end of the beginning, rather than the beginning of the end of the SDG process.

ICTSD reporting; "Summary of the Thirteenth Session of the UN General Assembly Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals: 14-19 July 2014," ENB, IISD REPORTING SERVICES, 22 July 2014.

SERVICES

WTO's Least Developed Countries Submit Collective Request on Services Waiver

Earlier this week, the WTO's poorest members, known as the Least Developed Country (LDC) Group, submitted a collective request regarding the preferential treatment they would like to see for their services and service suppliers. The move comes seven months after the global trade body's ministerial conference in Bali, Indonesia, where members agreed to take steps for bringing this "services waiver" into operation.

The LDC services waiver, as it is referred to in trade circles, was initially an outcome of the 2011 WTO Ministerial Conference, held in Geneva, Switzerland. However, in the two years that followed, no preferences had been requested by LDCs or granted to them, prompting WTO members to reconsider ways to use the services waiver.

As a result, at the WTO's subsequent ministerial conference in Bali, Indonesia last December, members agreed to initiate a process aimed at promoting the "expeditious and effective operationalisation" of the LDC services waiver.

This decision was one of the major outcomes of the "[Bali Package](#)" together with the WTO's Trade Facilitation Agreement, and select decisions on other provisions relating either to development or agriculture. (For more on trade facilitation, see related story, this edition)

High-level meeting

Under the terms of the 2013 [Bali Decision](#), the submission of the LDC collective request now triggers a six-month period for the Council for Trade in Services (CTS) to convene a "high-level meeting."

At this event, those developed and developing countries in a position to do so, shall indicate sectors and modes of supply where they intend to provide preferential treatment to LDC services and service suppliers.

The waiver, as outlined in the 2011 Geneva ministerial decision, releases WTO members from their legal obligation to provide non-discriminatory treatment to all trading partners – as outlined in Article II of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) – when granting trade preferences to LDCs.

It effectively operates as a new LDC-specific "Enabling Clause" for trade in services and follows a two-track approach. In trade jargon, an enabling clause allows developed members to give differential and more favourable treatment to developing countries.

Under the first track, quota-type measures falling within the six categories of market access listed in GATS Article XVI are automatically authorised. For the second track, non-market access measures falling under other GATS obligations – such as preferential national treatment or regulatory arrangements – are not automatic but can be authorised by the CTS.

The waiver is initially set to last 15 years from the date of adoption, 17 December 2011.

Collective request

According to sources familiar with the 21 July document, the request calls for the fulfilment of WTO members' past commitments toward giving LDCs special priority in services sectors and modes of supply.

The commitments referred to include those provided under GATS Article IV.3, as well as the modalities for special treatment for LDCs in the negotiations (TN/S/13), Annex C of the 2005 Hong Kong Ministerial Declaration, and the 2011 waiver decision itself.

The LDC collective request also urges members to take initiative in their individual capacity to fulfil the Bali decision on the services waiver, referring to paragraph 1.3, which encourages members to extend preferences at any time to LDCs' services and service suppliers – independent of the request process.

The document is based on country studies, interviews, experiences, and intensive research undertaken by the LDC Group in order to identify sectors and modes of supply of key interest to their countries, as well as barriers their services providers face when exporting to third markets.

The scope of the individual requests in the collective document is manifold, ranging from horizontal measures to very specific sectoral ones. These include, among others, measures in the area of tourism, banking, transport, education, information and communication technology (ICT), business process outsourcing (BPO), and creative industry services.

Preferences selected from offers tabled previously under the WTO's Doha Round negotiations have also been requested, as have preferences related to work permits and allowing recognition of LDC professionals' qualifications.

Next steps

Over the next six months, WTO members will engage in consultations with the LDC Group in order to respond to the collective request at the high-level meeting. The LDCs have reserved the right to modify the request's terms ahead of the event.

"In my view, your aim should be high, but grounded in the fact that we are indeed dealing with new territory," said WTO Director-General Roberto Azevêdo in a [speech](#) in June 2014 in Bangladesh, referring to the LDC Group.

"I will support you in the best way I can to advance this issue in the WTO," the trade chief said.

ICTSD reporting.

GLOBAL ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Australian PM Warns G-20 Members Against Missing Growth Target

Members of the Group of 20 major developed and emerging economies need to improve their draft "national growth strategies" if they hope to reach their collective economic growth target, Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott urged last week. Leaders are set to present these national plans when they meet in Brisbane later this year.

Back in February, G-20 finance chiefs set a joint goal of achieving two percent GDP growth above current trajectories – amounting to an estimated US\$2 trillion – over the next five years. Members of the group would, however, develop national-level plans for doing so, which will then be reviewed during the leaders' summit planned for this November. (See Bridges Weekly, [27 February 2014](#))

So far, the Australian premier [said](#) last Thursday, initial signs from his G-20 partners have been promising, with countries working to elaborate their national growth strategies ahead of the Brisbane meet.

However, despite these draft plans containing "several hundred" potential measures, "quantity does not always equal quality," he told business leaders from the B-20 forum, which provides policy recommendations to the G-20 on the business community's behalf.

"Current estimates suggest that the proposed growth strategies will deliver about half of the extra growth required to meet the two percent target and to create the wealth and the jobs that we all seek," Abbott said.

Trade measures are expected to feature heavily in the packages, particularly given the Australian leader's pledge to put trade foremost in his G-20 agenda. This past weekend in Sydney, trade ministers from the G-20 group met to evaluate the trade packages that have been put forward so far by the coalition's individual members, along with the B-20's recommendations in this area.

While welcoming the draft country contributions so far, a chairman's summary released following the meeting urged G-20 members "to make further contributions to support trade as part of the Brisbane Action Plan," noting that the practical outcomes in such contributions must respond to the need to bring trade flows back to their pre-crisis levels.

Australian Trade Minister Andrew Robb, who hosted the trade ministers' meet, told reporters on Saturday that "there's no doubt we agreed today... that some countries had fallen short," without naming any specifically.

Joe Hockey, Australia's Finance Minister, already warned earlier this year that he would "name and shame" fellow G-20 members if necessary, should their national strategies not prove sufficiently ambitious.

Economic focus

With the economic recovery still fragile, the stakes for this year's summit are particularly high for the Australian leader, who holds the rotating chairmanship for the group. The G-20 economies together make up over 85 percent of global GDP and over 75 percent of global trade.

During the early years of the global financial crisis, the G-20 dubbed itself the "premier forum" for economic cooperation, a pledge that has since sparked question over what the group's agenda should tackle and whether the non-binding commitments its members take on do indeed lead to tangible results.

"The early impact of the G-20, still in its infancy, was world-changing," said Heather Smith, Australia's Sherpa for the G-20, in a [speech in Ottawa](#) earlier this month. "But its early success has raised the rather unrealistic expectation that the G-20 will deliver something big every year...So the test of G20 effectiveness going forward is in its adaptiveness."

Abbott, who took office in September, had pledged in Davos earlier this year that this November's G-20 would be "more than a talkfest," and promised that the group would hold a "frank leaders-only discussion" that would keep a tight focus on issues such as trade, combatting tax avoidance, and improving infrastructure. (See Bridges Weekly, [30 January 2014](#))

The end result of these discussions, he said, would be a three-page communiqué in "plain language" that would focus less on good intentions and more on how to put these intentions into practice.

"Australia's task is to keep the G-20 tightly focused on higher economic growth and to resist the temptation to deal with every ill that the world may face," Abbott stressed to business leaders last week. "Sure, many of those ills desperately do need addressing, but in other forums, not the G-20 which is primarily an economic one."

Climate change show-down?

Canberra's repeal last week of its controversial carbon tax, the Australian premier said in Sydney, is one way his country is trying to make it easier for businesses to invest and work in his country and thus increase growth. ([17 July 2014](#))

That same decision, however, is expected to pit Australia against some of its G-20 partners, such as the US, given that President Barack Obama has said that he prefers carbon pricing as a strategy to combat climate change. (See Bridges Weekly, [12 June 2014](#))

Obama is expected to insist that climate change be part of the G-20 agenda, with his country's ambassador to Australia saying last month that the US' sherpas are already pushing the issue.

Climate change, Ambassador John Berry said at the time, is an issue "the United States will raise in every international forum," noting that the Obama Administration believes that climate change can be addressed in a way that minimises damage to the economy.

Australian Sherpa Heather Smith has said that, while the G-20 will push to give global climate talks more momentum, as in past years, there is no consensus among the group's members to do anything beyond climate financing or green infrastructure investment.

"You have to find consensus where there is consensus, and there is no consensus in the G-20 to do anything beyond those areas I've mentioned," she said earlier this month, in comments reported by Reuters.

ICTSD reporting; "Australian PM Abbott says falling short on G20 growth target," REUTERS, 17 July 2014; "US will push for climate change at G20," HERALD SUN, 30 June 2014; "CORRECTED-Australia seeks limited G20 appetite on new climate change steps," REUTERS, 2 July 2014; "Australia dragging chain on G20's global tax crackdown," SYDNEY MORNING HERALD, 23 June 2014.

BILATERAL TIES

EU, Russia Trade Disputes Advance to Panel Stages as Relations Worsen

WTO dispute panels are now set to hear two complaints between the EU and Russia, officials confirmed this week, in a move likely to further strain tensions between the trading partners. While Brussels has challenged the legality of Moscow's ban on imported pigs and pork products, Russia is seeking a ruling on the EU's anti-dumping duties on various goods, including steel.

Diplomatic and economic ties between the two sides have significantly soured in the months since the start of the Ukrainian crisis. Russia is the EU's third largest trading partner, while the EU is Russia's largest source of trade flows.

However, bilateral trade is now on a decline, with EU imports from Russia having decreased by 9 percent and exports by 10.5 percent in the first quarter of 2014, compared with the same period last year.

Russia import ban on pigs, pork products

Back in April, the EU had filed a request for consultations – the first stage in WTO dispute settlement proceedings – regarding certain measures undertaken by Russia to restrict imports of pigs, pig products, and derivative items originating in the 28-nation bloc. ([DS475](#)) Pork exports from the EU accounted for €1.4 billion euros last year, with Russia serving as the largest export destination for these products.

Russia has said the measure was necessary following cases of African Swine Fever (ASF) in pigs and pork from Lithuania and Poland. While the ASF virus is harmless to humans, it is highly contagious and lethal for pigs. Russia announced the ban on pig and pork products from Lithuania and later Poland in notifications to the WTO early this year.

However, the EU alleges that Russia has expanded this ban to include the entire 28-country group, as demonstrated by the rejection of pork products of Austrian and German origin, as well as those from Poland prior to its formal inclusion in the ban.

In their panel request, the EU claims Russia is not meeting its obligations under the WTO's Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards (SPS) and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT 1994). The EU argues that Russia is rejecting pig and pork products from areas unaffected by the ASF virus, and therefore the measures taken are beyond the extent necessary to protect human and animal health.

Furthermore, the EU points to Russia's acceptance of pig and pork products from Ukraine and Belarus – where ASF was also detected – as evidence of arbitrary and unjustifiable discrimination, though Belarus is not a WTO member. The EU also suggests their pig and pork products are accorded less favourable treatment than like domestic products, given that cases of ASF have been found in Russia as well.

In response, Russia contends that its decision to impose the ban is based on sound scientific principles and conforms with relevant international standards. Furthermore, they say, the ban applies only to imports from Poland and Lithuania rather than the EU as a whole.

The EU had submitted its first panel request late last month, asking for a special session of the WTO's Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) to be convened to hear the request on 10 July. Russia rejected this first request, which is permitted under WTO rules; the EU immediately refiled a second request, which was automatically granted at this week's DSB meeting.

Panel to hear Russia's first-ever WTO complaint

In a separate case, a panel has now been established to hear Russia's first complaint as a WTO member. At issue in the dispute ([DS474](#)), first filed last December, are the EU's "cost adjustment" administrative procedures, methodologies, or practices, and the application of these calculations when imposing anti-dumping measures on various imports from Russia. The imports affected, Moscow says, include ammonium nitrate, certain welded tubes and pipes of iron or non-alloy steel, and certain seamless steel pipes.

Russia claims the cost methodologies in place "severely hamper trade" and raise "very important systemic concerns."

The systemic concerns involve differing interpretations on how to calculate costs accurately, which could affect dumping margin calculations. Russia claims the EU rejects actual cost data of foreign producers or exporters that "reasonably reflect the costs associated with the production and sale of the product" in favour of purported market cost data.

In particular, Russia takes issue with the characterisation of its actual cost data as artificially low, "out of line with world-market prices or prices in other representative markets," or distorted from government price regulation or the application of export duties.

To support their claims, Russia cites provisions of the Anti-Dumping (AD) Agreement, the GATT 1994, and the Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization. A previous panel request had been discussed at the DSB's June meeting, and was rejected at the time by the EU.

Chilling relations

The bilateral EU-Russia relationship has taken a nose-dive in recent months, marking a stark shift from when Brussels backed Moscow's entry into the global trade body, which took effect less than two years ago.

Part of the frostiness between them stems from the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, and Russia's own involvement in the situation. The fighting in the Eastern European country began after officials in Kiev chose against signing a trade deal with Brussels last November following significant pressure from Moscow, sparking widespread protests.

The pact was eventually signed last month under the new Ukrainian government, as were separate EU deals with Moldova and Georgia, despite warnings from Russia that these could lead to protective trade measures. (See Bridges Weekly, [3 July 2014](#))

Relations have also suffered as a result of competing claims over whether Russia is indeed adhering to its new commitments as a WTO member. Various countries have urged Russia to take additional steps to comply with international trade rules, while Moscow has said that it is doing its utmost to do so. Russia, in turn, has questioned whether some of the sanctions the US and others have taken – which may escalate – in the wake of the Ukrainian crisis are indeed compatible with WTO law.

ICTSD reporting; "EU-Russia trade drops sharply, as bilateral relations sour," EURACTIV, 15 May 2014; "Ukraine signs historic EU trade pact sparking Russia ire," THE TELEGRAPH, 27 June 2014.

PREFERENTIAL AGREEMENTS

EU, Ecuador Finalise Trade Pact

EU and Ecuadorian negotiators have agreed upon terms that will allow Quito to join an existing trade agreement that Brussels has with Colombia and Peru, officials confirmed last week, bringing to a close a prolonged – and sometimes acrimonious – process dating back several years.

The trade pact will provide Ecuador with improved access to the EU market for its main exports, namely fish, bananas, cut flowers, coffee, cocoa, fruits, and nuts, according to a summary provided by the European Commission. The EU, for its part, is set to receive improved market access for its automotive sector and alcoholic beverages.

"After almost four years of work, finally we have closed a balanced agreement with the European Union, which maximises opportunities, reduces costs to a minimum, respects our country's development model, and permits the protection of our sensitive sectors," [said](#) Ecuadorian trade minister Francisco Rivadeneira in a statement.

Intellectual property, strategic sectors, and public sector purchases were reportedly among the more difficult issues in the final negotiations. The completed pact, together with its provisions on goods trade, also features "ambitious" provisions on services market access and government procurement.

The European Union is the main market for Ecuador's non-oil exports, and the third largest market for manufacturing exports. EU trade with Ecuador amounted to €4.9 billion in 2013, according to European Commission data.

The deal must next undergo a legal scrubbing on both sides before being submitted to their respective legislatures for ratification.

Years in the making

Trade talks between the EU and the Andean Community (CAN, by its Spanish acronym), which is comprised of Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru, date back to 2007, with the two sides originally hoping to establish a region-to-region pact.

However, Bolivia dropped out of the negotiations shortly thereafter, concerned that the proposed trade deal would violate Andean regulations on intellectual property, among other reasons. A year later, Ecuador followed suit, though EU officials made clear at the time that the possibility for either country to re-join the talks would be left open. (See Bridges Weekly, [3 March 2010](#) and [5 August 2009](#))

The EU's talks with the remaining Andean Community members switched to bilateral discussions. After nine rounds of negotiations, the EU then signed a free trade agreement with Colombia and Peru in April 2011, with EU trade ministers formally approving the deal the following year. (See Bridges Weekly, [20 April 2011](#) and [6 June 2012](#), respectively)

The agreements with both Colombia and Peru have been provisionally in force as of mid-2013.

In 2010, Ecuador indicated an interest in re-launching the talks following the resolution of a long-running dispute over the now 28-nation bloc's high tariffs on Latin American banana exports. (See Bridges Weekly, [17 February 2010](#))

However, the process to restart the bilateral discussions was not so simple, with Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa insisting that the deal his country wanted could not mirror the ones that the EU had reached with Peru and Colombia. Rather than a free trade pact, the Ecuadorian leader said, the two sides needed to clinch an agreement of “mutual benefit” for both sides.

Negotiations finally restarted earlier this year, with the first round of the new discussions being held in January.

Bringing Quito on board did require some limited changes to the existing agreement text that Brussels has with Lima and Bogotá, the European Commission noted, without going into further detail. However, it said, these revisions will not make any significant difference to the scope of the deal already in place.

GSP+ deadline looming

Ecuador, like other countries in the Andean Community, had benefited from preferential access to the European market under the EU Generalised System of Preferences (GSP), specifically under a special incentive arrangement geared toward promoting good governance and sustainable development known as GSP+.

However, Quito was set to lose those preferences after 31 December 2014, having [been classified](#) as “upper middle income” for the past three years by the World Bank, which under EU rules means that it is no longer eligible for such trade benefits.

The potential loss of preferential access for several key products, observers say, likely spurred the negotiations to their final conclusion, given the heavy hit many Ecuadorian exporters would have suffered from such a shift.

Reaching this agreement with Brussels will thus give Ecuadorian exporters “legal certainty,” namely by removing “the fluctuations of tariff preference programmes,” the country’s trade ministry said, in comments reported by Europe Online Magazine.

Meanwhile, the prospect of potentially renewing GSP+ for Quito – at least until the new trade deal enters into force – is reportedly under discussion among negotiators. Officials say that the earliest the EU-Ecuador agreement will take effect could be 2016, while GSP+ benefits will no longer apply as of 1 January 2015.

The EU pact has been welcomed in the Andean country, with Daniel Legarda, executive vice president of the Ecuadorian Federation of Exporters, calling the move “excellent news for the country, for exporters, and for the economy.”

The federation estimates that 85 percent of exports – not including bananas – benefited from GSP+ access to the European market last year, and had thus urged negotiators to act quickly to finalise the EU-Ecuador deal.

ICTSD reporting; “Ecuador to Join Peru, Colombia in Trade Deal with EU,” EUROPE ONLINE MAGAZINE, 17 July 2014; “Ecuador Seals EU Trade Deal,” THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, 18 July 2014; “UE-Ecuador sellan el acuerdo comercial,” DEUTSCHE WELLE ESPAÑOL, 17 July 2014; “Preferencias arancelarias, en manos de entes europeos,” EL UNIVERSAL, 19 July 2014.

EVENTS & RESOURCES

Events

Coming Soon

24 July, London, UK. THE 2014 G20 AGENDA: WHY BUSINESS AS USUAL IS NOT ENOUGH. At this Chatham House research event, participants will discuss the commitment made by G-20 finance ministers and central bank governors to boost global GDP by at least 2 percent over the next five years, above current growth trajectories. Martin Parkinson, Secretary to the Australian Treasury, will argue that while accommodative monetary policy remains necessary due to ongoing economic weakness. Given deflationary pressures in some countries, prolonged low interest rates could pose risks for financial stability. The speaker will recommend structural reform and quality infrastructure investment to boost output. This event is by invitation only. To learn more, visit the event [website](#).

25 July, Washington, US. INDIA'S NEW GROWTH STORY: REVITALIZING U.S.-INDIA RELATIONS. This event, hosted by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, will feature a panel discussion among top Indian business leaders. Panellists will discuss domestic industry expectations, in light of the recent change in government in India, and outline their perspective on the current growth agenda. Other topics for review include the potential future direction of India-US ties. For more information, or to register, please click [here](#).

29 July, Geneva, Switzerland. ROUNDTABLE ON MEGA-REGIONALS AND THE WTO: AN RTA EXCHANGE INITIATIVE. At this event, the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD) will launch a new initiative known as the RTA Exchange, together with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI). The Exchange will serve as a clearinghouse for information on regional trade agreements, exploring how these relate to the multilateral trading system. The launch will be followed by a roundtable discussion on the subject; more information is available at this [link](#).

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.

29 August: Dispute Settlement Body

16 + 18 – September: Trade Policy Review body – Chinese Taipei

17 September: Committee on Budget, Finance, and Administration

26 September: Dispute Settlement Body

Other Upcoming Events

12-13 September, Changsha City, China. CHINA-LAC BUSINESS SUMMIT. This event, hosted by the Inter-American Development Bank in conjunction with the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT), the People's Bank of China, and the Government of the Hunan Province, will bring together top executives, policy makers, and high public officials from both China and Latin America in order to exchange ideas and experiences that will help identify cross-regional trade and business opportunities. For more information, visit event [website](#).

20-22 October, New Delhi, India. INDIA IN THE INTERNATIONAL TRADING SYSTEM. This conference, hosted by CUTS-CITEE, will examine how India can play a more strategic role in the collective global leadership of the international trading system. Participants will consider how India can help advance the broad agenda of this system by generating knowledge on specific issues, and in turn achieve the economic convergences required to foster an effective global partnership for development. For more information, click [here](#).

3-4 November, London, UK. CLIMATE CHANGE: RAISING AMBITION, DELIVERING RESULTS. The 18th Annual Chatham House Conference on Climate Change will take stock of recent climate change developments. These include a review of the latest science and related implications for business, society, and politics; the findings of high-level commissions; and initiatives from the business community and the upcoming UN Secretary-General's Climate Summit. It will also examine the benefits of a low carbon economy, evaluate the costs of climate action, and review concrete measures to decarbonise key sectors and potential barriers to action. For more information, visit the event [website](#).

4-6 November, New Delhi, India. INDIA ECONOMIC SUMMIT: REDEFINING PUBLIC PRIVATE COOPERATION FOR A NEW BEGINNING. This meeting, hosted by the World Economic Forum and the Confederation of Indian Industry, aims to provide an opportunity for the Forum's global multi-stakeholder community to meet the new Indian government and help to collectively define and shape policies for inclusive growth. For more information, visit the event [website](#).

Resources

EXPORT POLICIES AND THE GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TRADE IN SERVICES. By Rudolf Adlung for the World Trade Organization (July 2014). In this working paper, the author discusses the WTO's General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), in comparison to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), noting some of the conceptual innovations seen in the former. These include, for instance, the accommodation in the GATS of various measures, such as quantitative restrictions, that are constrained under the GATT. More specifically, the author notes, the GATS offers a broad scope of export-related interventions, whose social and economic relevance are immediately evident. The working paper uses relevant GATS provisions and WTO dispute rulings in its analysis, and can be accessed [here](#).

FINANCING DISASTER RISK REDUCTION: TOWARDS A COHERENT AND COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH. By Jan Kellett, Alice Caravani, and Florence Pichon for the Overseas Development Institute (July 2014). This report examines five countries that have had some success in generating coordinated and national financing of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) – India, the Philippines, Costa Rica, Mexico, and South Africa. The authors then make recommendations for national governments, the international community, the academic and research community, and the expected successor of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), respectively. The HFA is a 10-year plan established in 2005 that focuses on building resilience and minimising losses from natural hazard. The full report can be found at the ODI [website](#).

POLITICAL ECONOMY OF CLIMATE COMPATIBLE DEVELOPMENT: ARTISANAL FISHERIES AND CLIMATE CHANGE IN GHANA. By T. Tanner, A. Mensah, E.T. Lawson, C. Gordon, R. Godfrey-Wood, and T. Cannon for the Institute of Development Studies. This paper examines the complex political economy of climate compatible development in Ghana's marine fisheries. It focuses on two areas where there is potential for climate compatible development, namely the subsidised premix fuel provided to artisanal fisherman and mangrove protection. The paper argues that there is the potential to achieve a "triple win" outcome by removing subsidies that support unsustainable fishing and instead backing other policies. This, however, is strongly opposed by artisanal fishermen, thus posing the question of how to balance potentially short-term concerns versus long-term gains. For more information on this publication, visit the IDS [website](#).

GETTING INDIA BACK ON TRACK. By Bibek Debroy, Ashley J. Tellis, and Reece Trevor for the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. (June 2014). This book, whose release date came shortly after the 2014 Indian elections, aims to spur a public debate about the programme that the next government should pursue in order to generate inclusive growth in the country. The publication includes contributions from a number of analysts who recommend specific policies in every major sector of the Indian system with this goal in mind. For more information on the book, click [here](#).

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