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New publications:

The United Nations Environment Programme and the International Institute for Sustainable Development are pleased to announce the publication of the 2nd edition of their popular Handbook on Environment and Trade. <http://www.unep.ch/etb/publications/index.php>

1. Fisheries

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Trade Ministers join forces on WTO Fishing Subsidies at the UNEP-WWF High-Level Press Event, Hong Kong, China, 14 December 2005

The declaration adopted by the WTO's Sixth Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong in December 2005, for the first time, called for identifying and prohibiting subsidies that contribute to over-capacity and overfishing.

UNEP and WWF International jointly organized a high-level press event on fisheries subsidies and a panel entitled "Fisheries Subsidies Disciplines in the WTO: Challenges and Opportunities" during the Hong Kong Ministerial.

During the UNEP-WWF High-Level Press Event, the Secretary of Fisheries and Aquaculture for Brazil, the Permanent Representative of the WTO for Chile, the Commissioner of DG-Agriculture for the European Commission, the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture for the Philippines, the Minister of Trade Negotiations for New Zealand, the Minister of Trade and Commerce for Senegal and the United States Trade Representative called for increased efforts towards strengthening WTO disciplines on fisheries subsidies. Pointing to the dire state of global fisheries, speakers urged WTO

Members to capitalize on the opportunity provided by the Doha negotiations to contribute to environmental and social objectives while promoting trade liberalization. Many called for a ban of subsidies that lead to overcapacity and overfishing.

The event was attended by approximately 175 members of the press, government delegations and non-governmental organizations and generated renewed attention to the issue of fisheries subsidies in the WTO. Many delegations and observers commented on the value of the high-level event as some of the most powerful fishing nations in the world came together to push for intensified negotiations on this issue. A number of important newswires reported on it.

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Panel Discussion on “Fisheries Subsidies Disciplines in the WTO: Challenges and Opportunities” Hong Kong, China, 15 December 2005

The panel discussion focused on the state of play of the negotiations from an environment and development perspective. Approximately 120 delegates and representatives from IGOs and NGOs discussed ways and challenges for developing effective and meaningful WTO fisheries subsidies rules that take into consideration environment and development considerations. Participants emphasised the urgency of fisheries subsidies reform within the WTO and expressed their commitment to advocate for sound, enforceable and transparent disciplines. The panel discussion included a presentation on the “state of play” of the fisheries subsidies negotiations by the Ambassador to the WTO for Uruguay, Chair of the Rules Negotiating Group. The event was co-chaired by the Director, UNEP Division on Technology, Industry and Economics and the Director, International Policy, WWF International.

For more information on both events: http://www.unep.ch/etb/events/UNEPWWFside_eventHK.php
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2. Environmental and Integrated Assessment

Workshop on "Promoting production and trading opportunities for organic agriculture in India", Pune, India, 4-6 January 2006

UNEP, in collaboration with University of Turin, Italy and Madhyam an India based NGO, organized this workshop to bring key stakeholders on a common platform to review the socio-economic and environmental impacts of the present agricultural practices as well as current status of organic agriculture (OA), identify the barriers to production and trade in organic products and find ways to move forward.

The workshop was attended by more than 100 participants representing public, private, farming, banking, academia, NGOs and media sectors and was well covered by the media. A tangible outcome of the workshop was an MOU which was signed between 3 Indian universities and the University of Turin (UoT) under which UoT will support three students from India for one year Post Doctoral Programme in organic agriculture at the UoT. UNEP and Madhyam will help select the students for this programme. In addition, Mahatma Phule Krishi Vidyapeeth University of India expressed interest in hosting a follow up workshop in 2007/08 to review the progress and carry forward the agenda for promoting OA.

The workshop stressed the need to work at the policy level to have appropriate policies in place to promote organic agriculture. It also highlighted the importance of involving financial institutions and insurance companies who can play a major role in increasing the incentive and reducing the risks for organic farmers especially during the transition phase from mainstream to organic farming.

For more information please refer to <http://www.madhyamindia.com/html/Workshop%20Organic%20Farming.htm>
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NISD Update: Train the Trainers Workshop on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for Francophone Africa, Tunis, Tunisia, 19-23 December 2005

The ‘Train-the Trainers Workshop for Francophone Africa’ was organized by the Tunis International Centre for Environmental Technologies (CITET) with support and cooperation of UNEP’s Economic and Trade Branch and the International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA).

The workshop targeted representatives from the government and institutions who are familiar with EIA. Its aim was to increase trainers understanding on EIA system in the Africa region and develop their skills to train policy makers and other stakeholders in the topic.

The entire workshop was based on the French version of UNEP’s EIA Training Resource Manual (*upcoming*).

More information: <http://www.unep.ch/etb/events/TraEIAAfricaDec2005.php>

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Launch of 10 countries studies including Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Czech Republic, Indonesia, Kenya, Lebanon, Russia, Tanzania and Uganda, Geneva, April 2006

This round of country studies, which apply an integrated assessment and planning approach to a wide range of policies and policymaking processes are now near completion. While the ten country reports are being finalized, a synthesis report will be prepared in time for launching the results of these studies. The lead government agencies and the national institutions that have been implementing the projects in the ten countries will discuss their respective findings with an international audience, including representatives from governments and permanent missions. The results from these studies as well as the launch meeting will feed into UNEP's initiative on international framework on integrated assessment/sustainability appraisal.

More information: <http://www.unep.ch/etb/areas/IAPcountryProject.php>

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UNEP/IIED Side-event on Integrated Assessment/Sustainability Appraisal at the IAIA 06, Stavanger, Norway, 23-26 May 2006

In September 2005, UNEP launched an initiative to harmonize various assessment concepts into a common international framework. This initiative is based on UNEP's experience in the field of environmental impact assessment and integrated assessment over the last decade. UNEP, in association with IIED, is convening a side-event entitled **Tool Development Workshop: from project assessment to sustainability appraisal** at the Annual IAIA Conference: Power, poverty and sustainability – The role of impact assessment, to be held in Stavanger, Norway. Progress with this initiative will be reported and the key opportunities and challenges presented. UNEP will also report on the outcome and lessons that can inform the framework initiative derived from 10 recent country projects on integrated assessment.

More information please refer to: http://www.iaia.org/Non_Members/Conference/IAIA06/Prelimpro/PrelimproWeb.pdf ;

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Trade Sustainability Impact Assessment: Stocktaking Conference, Brussels, 21-22 March 2006

UNEP has been invited to this conference, which will review various experiences and lessons in the field of sustainability assessment of trade policies. UNEP will share with the participants its experience in trade-related policy assessment over the last decade and seek partnership in the new initiative to develop an international framework on integrated assessment/sustainability appraisal.

More information, please refer to: http://europa.eu.int/comm/trade/issues/global/sia/seminar0306_en.htm

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3. Environmental Valuation and Economic Instruments

Seminar on Environmental Valuation at the Macroeconomic Level for Integrated Policy: Chinese and International Experience, Beijing, China, 20-23 February 2006

In recent years, the Chinese Government has been actively promoting the reflection of natural resource depletion and environmental degradation in macroeconomic indicators. This seminar, which includes a back-to-back training programme for local Chinese officials, will share experience and lessons in this field. The objective is to encourage this effort and more importantly, use the results of new information for integrated policy making. The seminar is cosponsored by UNEP, the Chinese State Environmental Protection Administration, the Chinese National Statistical Bureau, and Statistics Norway.

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Meeting of the China Council's Task Team on Ecological Compensation, Beijing, China, 11-12 March 2006

UNEP has been invited to the task team to provide technical assistance in the use of market mechanisms and payment schemes to compensate for the efforts to ensure the sustained provision of ecological services. Over the last decade, China has experimented with various payment schemes with the support of the government budget. It is now trying to diversify the sources of funds to support ecological conservation. UNEP will support this effort by sharing international experience in this field with a focus on using market mechanisms, taking into account their social implications. UNEP will

participate in the work of the task force regularly.

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