

At the Doha Ministerial Conference (held in November 2001), WTO Members reaffirmed their commitment to health and environmental protection and agreed to embark on new trade negotiations. In addition to launching these, the Doha Ministerial Declaration requested the Committee on Trade and Environment, in pursuing all items in its terms of reference, to focus on a number of those items (i.e. on market access, on the relevant provisions of the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, and on labelling requirements for environmental purposes) and to act as a forum in which the environmental and developmental aspects of the negotiations can be debated.

The new negotiations relevant to trade and environment, which may possibly also be of interest to your work, consist of the following:

- \* Clarification of WTO disciplines on fisheries subsidies: in the context of the negotiations concerning the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures, "participants shall also aim to clarify and improve WTO disciplines on fisheries subsidies, taking into account the importance of this sector to developing countries". Discussion of the issue is taking place in the Negotiating Group on Rules.
- \* Negotiations on the relationship between existing WTO rules and specific trade obligations set out in MEAs: "With a view to enhancing the mutual supportiveness of trade and environment, we agree to negotiations, without prejudging their outcome, on: (i) the relationship between existing WTO rules and specific trade obligations set out in multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). The negotiations shall be limited in scope to the applicability of such existing WTO rules as among parties to the MEA in question. The negotiations shall not prejudice the WTO rights of any Member that is not a party to the MEA in question".
- \* Negotiations on information exchange with MEAs and the granting of observer status in WTO bodies: "With a view to enhancing the mutual supportiveness of trade and environment, we agree to negotiations, without prejudging their outcome, on: (ii) procedures for regular information exchange between MEA Secretariats and the relevant WTO committees, and the criteria for the granting of observer status".
- \* Negotiations on trade liberalization in environmental goods and services: "With a view to enhancing the mutual supportiveness of trade and environment, we agree to negotiations, without prejudging their outcome, on: (iii) the reduction or, as appropriate, elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers to environmental goods and services".