

## FIELD'S BBC APPEAL



'We need to give international laws a greener aspect right now'  
David Attenborough

We were delighted when Sir David Attenborough agreed to present our BBC appeal, broadcast on Radio 4 at the end of February. The appeal has surpassed our expectations and we are extremely grateful to all of our supporters, old and new, who have responded so generously. Most of the listeners of course had not previously heard about our work and we have been inundated with messages of approval of the unique way in which FIELD operates. If you would like to add your name to the fast-growing list of FIELD's friends and supporters, please turn to the back page to see how you can get in touch. Many thanks.

Thankfully, we're all a great deal more aware of the factors threatening our planet than we were when I started broadcasting, but still many people are unfamiliar with the complex international agreements that shape those factors, for better or worse. Which is what drew me to the work of FIELD.

FIELD is a small, unique, and – in my view – vital organisation. They're working to improve the environmental outlook by using their expertise in international laws. If you've been waiting for an appeal to come along that offers you a real chance to contribute to the well-being of the planet, then FIELD might just be the organisation for you.

Imagine spending the rest of your days on a small island in the South Pacific. Sound idyllic? Well, now try and imagine what runaway climate change and rising sea levels might mean to you over the next ten to twenty years. There'll be the gradual decay of your coral reef system caused by warmer coastal waters, reducing your defences against extreme weather events. Not to mention the threat these new temperatures pose

to the fish stocks that provide you with your living. That's if your island is still surviving above sea level at all.

You might see these developments as being inevitable, but the people of small island countries don't see it that way and neither do their governments. However, these developing countries are drastically under-represented at international climate negotiations and are greatly assisted by the advice and support of FIELD's environmental lawyers.

And of course it's not just the climate that lies at the mercy of these negotiations. FIELD's lawyers are defending developing countries' rights of ownership over their biodiversity and they help developing country governments voice their environmental concerns while negotiating at international trade talks.

The benefits of FIELD's work may be very long-term but that doesn't mean the work isn't urgent. We need to give international laws a greener aspect right now. A contribution from you will help FIELD to do just that. Thank you for sharing our long-term view for the world.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'David Attenborough'.

## Influencing European trade policy with environmental impacts

European trade policy across many industry sectors can have significant impacts on the environment. This has implications for a range of different – and often competing – interest groups. The ways and means by which diverse interest groups shape European trade policy was the subject of a two-day workshop hosted by FIELD in partnership with SUSTRA (The Trade, Societies and Sustainable Development Network) in January this year.

Titled '*Vested interests and the political economy of trade reforms*', the workshop opened with a presentation

by Caroline Lucas (European Parliament, Green Party) on the role of industry lobby groups in general decision-making processes of the European Union institutions. Discussions then proceeded around the influence of vested interests in four industry sectors with trade and environment implications: forestry, energy, biotechnology and agriculture. Participants considered how trade policy in these areas is made and how industry groups shape the outcomes.

Issues and questions raised at the workshop will be examined in a SUSTRA Policy Brief that FIELD is

currently preparing. The Policy Brief will identify some of the information gaps surrounding the development of trade policy, and the role of vested interest groups. It will consider how best to balance the influence of 'vested' and 'public' interest stakeholders in the design and implementation of European trade policy, with the ultimate objective of achieving sustainable development.

For further information go to  
[http://www.field.org.uk/tisd\\_16.php](http://www.field.org.uk/tisd_16.php)  
or contact [jona.razzaque@field.org.uk](mailto:jona.razzaque@field.org.uk)



# Conclusion to FIELD's biodiversity project in Chile

Chile's *Fundación Sociedades Sustentables* (FSS) and FIELD hosted a 3-day seminar on 'Access to Genetic Resources' in Santiago in November 2003. The seminar was the concluding meeting of FIELD's project on 'Access to genetic resources, benefit-sharing and traditional knowledge in Chile' funded by DEFRA's Darwin Initiative. The seminar attracted over 90 participants, drawn from national and local authorities, research and academic institutions, Chile's botanic gardens, NGOs, lawyers, 'seed guardian' groups, and the private sector.

Following discussions of the main concepts and issues on access and benefit-sharing, experts from other countries outlined their experiences under existing regulations on this issue in the Andean Community and in Costa Rica. The preliminary results of the University of California's comparative analysis of regulations in over 40 Pacific-Rim countries was also presented and discussed.



The flower of *lycopersicon chilense* - a Chilean native variety of the wild tomato, threatened with extinction

The seminar's second day focused on the legal and policy situation in Chile and the need to regulate access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits derived from that access. These discussions touched on legislative plans by Chile's Ministry of Agriculture to regulate access to native terrestrial genetic resources. Other topics presented and discussed at the seminar were: Chile's experience of bioprospecting activities; the implications of the recently signed free trade agreements with the US and the EU; access for scientific purposes; intellectual property rights; the conservation of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture by 'seed guardians'; and the issue of traditional knowledge.

A workshop was held on the last day of the seminar. Participants were informed about the conclusions of the regional project seminar held in Yumbel in May 2003 and were asked to produce recommendations on the regulation of access to genetic resources in Chile.

Participants discussed the need to clarify important concepts such as biological resources, genetic resources, derivatives, and their ownership, as well options regarding intellectual property rights. Other issues raised included the need to apply the Convention on Biological Diversity on this issue, although not necessarily through legislation, and the lack of information at all levels, as a priority for action. Participants agreed on the need to create communication networks to inform on this issue, including the possibility of an electronic forum to connect those interested in moving this issue forward.

The central conclusions of the project's seminars and research papers were presented by the project partners at a side-event during the second meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Access to Genetic Resources and Benefit Sharing, held in Montreal from 1 to 5 December 2003. Draft project reports were posted on FIELD's website for consultation in late 2003. The comments received are being incorporated and the final and updated version of the project reports, as well as the project recommendations, will be available in April / May 2004. Following this FSS will present the project's recommendations to the relevant authorities in Chile.

For further information go to  
[http://www.field.org.uk/biodiversity\\_pg4.php](http://www.field.org.uk/biodiversity_pg4.php)  
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## FIELD activities at the CBD and Biosafety meetings in Kuala Lumpur



Discussions with NGO representatives in Kuala Lumpur

Carolina Lasén Diaz, Director of FIELD's Biodiversity and Marine Resources Programme, attended the 7th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the 1st Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety held in February 2004 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. FIELD co-hosted a side-event where

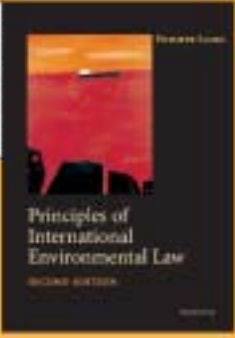
representatives of academia, government and NGOs debated recent developments on the regulation of biosafety and biotechnology in Chile. In addition, FIELD took part in the official launch of the IUCN/FIELD/WRI 'Explanatory Guide to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety', where free copies of the Guide in four languages (English, French, Russian and Spanish) were made available to delegates.

The last week of meetings in Kuala Lumpur also included the launch of a new publication from the CBD Secretariat: 'The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety: A Record of the Negotiations', prepared by FIELD. The paper describes the evolution and development of each provision of the Cartagena Protocol throughout the negotiations.

The three weeks were packed with biodiversity- and biosafety- related negotiations and side events, which resulted in important decisions that will shape the

future implementation, and eventual effectiveness, of these regimes. Highlights of the outcomes of the CBD COP-7 include the adoption of terms of reference for negotiating an international regime on access to genetic resources and benefit sharing; the need to assess progress towards the 2010 biodiversity target; an elaborated programme of work on marine and coastal biodiversity; and the adoption of the multi-year programme of work of the COP until 2010, which has added 'island biodiversity' as an issue for in-depth consideration at COP-8, to be held in Brazil in 2006. The biosafety COP-MOP 1 meetings resulted in agreement on the process to regulate liability and redress, and the setting up of a Compliance Committee under the Biosafety Protocol, among other issues. The next COP-MOP meeting will take place in 2005.


FIELD is working with a coalition of public interest organisations in the United Kingdom and abroad to submit an *amicus curiae* brief to the World Trade Organisation in the dispute between the major exporters of genetically modified products (the United States, Canada and Argentina) and the European Union. More information will be provided in the next issue of 'FIELD in brief'.



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For details of our recent BBC appeal, please turn to the front page. And it's not too late to contribute if you haven't already! You can make a secure online donation at [www.field.org.uk/giving.php](http://www.field.org.uk/giving.php) Alternatively, you can download a regular giving form – regular standing orders are an extremely valuable form of support for us as they allow us to build up a constant income base and to plan ahead accordingly.

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*If you would welcome information on how to include FIELD in a legacy, please write to Richard Leggatt or email him at [richard.leggatt@field.org.uk](mailto:richard.leggatt@field.org.uk)*

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*FIELD's vision is of a fair, effective and accessible system of international law that protects the global environment and promotes sustainable development*

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