

recent developments

INTERNATIONAL

International law center finds the environment is left behind in Doha

The Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL) presented a paper on trade and the environment to a recent expert meeting in Paris, which concluded as follows:

'History shows that the WTO has focused primarily on the impacts of environmental policy and regulation on trade. Only after the Tuna-Dolphin cases were trade negotiators forced to consider that the trade regime can have negative impacts on the environment and environmental policy, both at the international and national levels. The creation of the CTE and the Doha Ministerial Declaration reflect this development. However, the ineffectiveness of the CTE and the current negotiations show that the WTO has a hard time looking at the trade-environment linkage from more than one angle.'

See: http://www.ciel.org/Tae/Doha_IDDRI_26Oct05.html

Pathway forward at Montreal Conference of the Parties on Climate Change

A media release by Australia's Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Senator Ian Campbell, on 11 December 2005 (C384/05) said that 'After marathon all night negotiations, there was unanimous agreement among all nations on a positive new pathway forward to create an effective international response in the post-Kyoto period. The agreement of 189 countries at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Montreal heralded a new chapter in action on global climate change.' Senator Campbell said Australia had played a key role in the negotiations and had worked closely with the Canada President of the Conference and many other nations to get agreement to start a dialogue on post-Kyoto approaches for long-term cooperative action on climate. The first Ministerial meeting of the AP6 will be held in Sydney in mid January.

On the other hand, ACF Executive Director Don Henry said from Montreal, that "It's great that the world's first strong agreement to tackle climate change is up and running but the Australian Government's lack of action to cut spiralling domestic greenhouse pollution and international spoiling role is damaging our reputation and future."

Australia's emissions projections

A Federal Government report released in November 2005 has published the latest projections of Australia's greenhouse emissions performance against the Kyoto Target. See: 'Tracking to the Kyoto Target 2005; Australia's Greenhouse Emissions Trends - 1990 to 2008-2012 and 2020' and related press release: 'Australia remains on track to Kyoto target - Media release, 30 November 2005. \

NATIONAL AND COMMONWEALTH

Editor: Elizabeth Marsden

Marine initiatives to sustain environment and industry

On 14 November 2005, the Australian Government released detailed proposals for the creation of an extensive network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in the oceans off south-eastern Australia that again confirms Australia as a world leader in marine environment conservation.

The 14 candidate MPAs cover more than 170,000 square kilometres of Commonwealth waters off Tasmania, Victoria, southern New South Wales and eastern South Australia. The boundaries and zoning of these MPAs announced today will now be subject to consultations in January and February, then finalised in March 2006.