



Level 3, Suite 3B, 110 Kippax St
Surry Hills, NSW, 2010
Phone: 02 9212 7242
Fax: 02 9211 1407
Email: campaign@aftinet.org.au
ACN 097 603 131
ABN 83 659 681 462
www.aftinet.org.au

AFTINET Bulletin No. 172
December 2010/January 2011

1. Invite to AFTINET Planning Meeting 2011.
2. Trade Minister Emerson calls for Trade Policy Review.
3. Productivity Commission Report on Bilateral and Regional Trade Agreements.
4. Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA) – Update.
5. WTO Update.
6. PACER-Plus update.
7. FTAs Update.
8. Upcoming Events: Survival Day on Sydney Harbour – fundraising for the South Sydney Herald.
9. New Resources available on the web or on our website: www.aftinet.org.au.

AFTINET wishes our members and supporters all the best for the holiday season.

Please note that this issue of our bulletin is a double issue due to a late flurry of activity on the trade front and to give you some holiday reading.

1 Invitation to AFTINET Planning Day 2011

AFTINET would like to invite you to our 2011 strategy meeting:

When: 9th of February
Where: PSA House, Level 10, 160 Clarence Street, Sydney
Time: 5:30pm

Details will be emailed to members in late January 2011.

2 Trade Minister Emerson announces trade policy review January-April 2011

By Dr Patrica Ranald

On December 10, Trade Minister Craig Emerson made a speech to the Lowy Institute in which he recalled his record as a dedicated economic rationalist and adherent to the principles of free trade, and announced a review of the government's trade policy.

The main issues which made the headlines were the Minister's claim that he favoured unilateral trade liberalization, and that he was interested only in trade deals that would bring "real results for the Australian economy and the global trading system".

The issue of most concern in the Minister's speech is his proposal that Australia should unilaterally reduce all remaining tariffs to zero. As Australian Manufacturing Workers Union National Secretary Dave Oliver said, 'this would devastate manufacturing jobs and would cost the government \$10 billion in revenue over three years.'

The Minister rejected the prospect of being “mired in interminable processes that simply enable us to say that negotiations are proceeding” and “collecting trophies for the national mantelpiece, empty vessels engraved with the words *free trade agreement* if they are nothing of the sort and of token value to our country.” This appears to be aimed at the US-Australia Free Trade Agreement (AUSFTA), reinforced by his criticism that the Howard Government’s attitude to this agreement was so entwined with the US defence alliance that “any Labor criticism of the likely or actual content of the Australia-US Free Trade Agreement was branded anti-American and un-Australian”.

The Minister admitted that the current multilateral, regional and bilateral negotiations scheduled for 2011, including WTO, the Trans–Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA), and bilaterals with Japan, China, South Korea, the Gulf States, Indonesia, Malaysia and India would constitute “a hugely ambitious trade agenda” and that “actual progress on some may be disappointing.” He asserted that “Australia will pursue negotiations with those partners who are genuine about liberalization”.

The Minister announced that he would conduct a review of Australia’s trade policy in the first three months of 2011, against what he identified as five Labor principles from the Hawke-Keating era: unilateralism; non-discrimination; separation from strategic and foreign policy; transparency; and trade policy as part of overall economic reform. The review will be guided by the Report of the Productivity Commission on Bilateral and Regional Trade Agreements, released on December 13. In fact many issues raised in the speech are taken from that report (see article below). This review would also have an impact on the ALP policy platform debate leading to the ALP Conference which is scheduled for December 2011.

The application of the principle of separating defence, strategic and trade issues, and rejecting deals with no trade benefits for Australia could be applied to the TPPA, with interesting results. Australian negotiators are already saying there will be no likely market access gains for Australia with the US. Australia already has FTAs with seven of the other eight TPPA countries, and so is unlikely to gain any further market access with them. Logically, this should mean that the TPPA deal should be rejected. The same principles could apply to the PACER negotiations, which previous Ministers asserted several times, are about development issues for the Pacific Islands, and would not result in trade benefits for Australia.

The Minister also made some interesting remarks about Intellectual Property, which suggests that he may not want to include the AUSFTA provisions, which adopted US monopoly copyrights and patent laws, in other agreements like the TPPA:

“Provisions that are in Australia's national interest obviously should be extended to other countries willing to settle high-quality, trade-creating agreements but those that are not in the national interest should not be extended to others for the sake of reaching a low-quality agreement. For example, an intellectual property clause which extends the duration of foreign copyright in one agreement and doesn't offer obvious economic benefits to Australia should not be part of a later agreement just because we had already used it.”

Logically, this argument should be applied to the TPPA to exclude both US Intellectual Property rights demands and the US Investor–State disputes process, which even the Howard government was forced to exclude from the AUSFTA because community campaigning showed it was not in the public interest.

AFTINET will monitor and report to members on the progress of the trade policy review, and how submissions can be made to it. AFTINET will also be conducting a lobbying visit to Canberra in the New Year.

The full speech is available at:

http://trademinister.gov.au/speeches/2010/ce_sp_101210.html

3 Productivity Commission Report: the bad and the good

By Dr Patricia Ranald

The bad news: unilateral tariff reductions, no labour rights or environmental standards, weak on culture

Consistent with its overall approach to free trade, the Productivity Commission Report on Bilateral and Regional Trade Agreements released on December 13 supports unilateral liberalisation by the Australian government as the preferred way for Australia to reduce trade barriers (p. xxxvi and Ch 11). This is the source of Minister Emerson’s approach to unilateral tariff reductions, which could be devastating for manufacturing industry, as outlined in the article above.

The Report recommends against the inclusion of labour rights and environmental standards in trade agreements, despite submissions from unions and other community groups on these issues (p. 280).

The report also rejects submissions from unions and cultural organizations which argued that media and cultural services should be completely excluded from trade agreements to ensure the survival of local cultures, opting instead for a more equivocal exception on cultural measures “provided that the measures are not unjustifiably discriminatory or a disguised restriction on trade” (p. 284)

The good news: no deal if no economic benefits, no extension of intellectual property rights and no rights of corporations to sue governments

The Report confirms some of the criticisms of the Australia-US Free Trade Agreement (AUSFTA) and other bilateral agreements raised by AFTINET members.

A major criticism that the report confirms is that the claimed economic benefits of many of the agreements have been oversold, and are in fact not significant (p. xxxv). The Report also recommends against the use of optimistic econometric feasibility studies based on unrealistic assumptions to justify entering into negotiations (p. xxxvi).

The Report supports non-discriminatory multilateral trade negotiations, which potentially include all countries, and recommends that trade negotiations be

separated from strategic or other policies. Bilateral and regional agreements should only be pursued if there are clear economic benefits for Australia (p. xxxvii). These points were also reflected in Minister Emerson's speech.

The report also confirms that some provisions in the AUSFTA were in fact against the national interest and should not be included in future trade agreements. These include intellectual property provisions which increase monopoly rights for corporations for copyright and patents at the expense of consumers. (p. xxxviii). For example, extending monopoly patent rights allows drug companies longer periods to charge very high prices for medicines, which is clearly against the interests of consumers

The report also recommends against investor-state dispute processes, which give additional rights to foreign investors to sue governments for damages outside the Australian legal system (p. xxxviii).

Public campaigning kept these extra corporate rights to sue governments out of the AUSFTA, but US companies like Philip Morris are demanding them in the current Trans Pacific Partnership (TPPA) negotiations between the US, Australia and seven other countries. Philip Morris is currently suing the Uruguayan government for legislation restricting tobacco advertising. If these extra corporate rights were included in the TPPA, they would give tobacco companies like Philip Morris the right to sue the government for damages if it introduces its proposed cigarette plain packaging legislation.

As noted in the previous article, the application of these principles would mean that the Australian government should question the basis of the TPPA, and should certainly reject both increased intellectual property provisions and an investor state-dispute process in the TPPA and other trade agreements.

The report did not accept submissions from AFTINET and others that Parliament rather than Cabinet should make the final decision to ratify trade agreements, but it does support some transparency and accountability measures. The main one is that, after completion of negotiations, but before the signing of any trade agreement, the government should commission and publish an independent assessment, which would be debated publicly and in parliament before the decision about signing was made. This would be a step forward for transparency and accountability.

There was a major division of opinion on these and other issues between Andrew Stoler, an Associate Commissioner, and former advocate of the AUSFTA, and the other authors of the Report. Stoler, who is Executive Director of the Institute for International Trade at the University of Adelaide, disagreed with the criticisms of the AUSFTA, and with the transparency recommendations. His dissenting views are attached in Appendix A of the report.

The full report is available from: <http://www.pc.gov.au/projects/study/trade-agreements>

4 Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA) - UPDATE

Location and Timing of 2011 Negotiations:

The following are the dates and locations of negotiating rounds for 2011.

Location and Timing of 5th Round: The 5th round from 14th-18th February, Santiago, Chile;

Location and Timing of 6th Round: The 6th round from 28 March – 2 April, Singapore;

Location and Timing of 7th Round: The 7th round from 20 – 24 June, Viet Nam;

Location and Timing of 8th Round: The 8th round from 6 – 11 September, San Francisco, US:

Location and Timing of 9th Round: The 9th round from 24 – 28 October, Lima, Peru.

Location and Timing of 10th Round: The 10th round in November, Honolulu, Hawaii USA (unofficial).

Whilst the preferred option for the Obama administration is to have the deal completed by APEC in Honolulu in November 2011 it is now emerging that sights are starting to be lowered. Kurt Tong, senior US official for APEC at the US State Department recently said:

"The 'triple crown' in 2011 is the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement passed and implemented, **significant progress on the Trans Pacific Partnership** and a very strong APEC year with a lot of concrete outcomes on trade and investment issues," said Kurt Tong, senior U.S. official for APEC at the State Department.¹

In late breaking news it has emerged that the US has invited South Korea to join the TPPA in the wake of signing the Korea-US FTA (KORUS FTA). A pattern seems to be emerging that the US can invite who it wants to join the TPPA, it will be interesting to see if other countries had been consulted in advance.

Report on 4th Round of Negotiations:

The AFTINET Trade Justice campaigner, Harvey Purse, attended the Auckland negotiations on Monday 6th and Tuesday 7th December, 2011 and a meeting of civil society groups on Sunday 5th. Much thanks needs to be extended to the SPSF, AMWU and ANF for their financial assistance, which ensured that AFTINET was present in Auckland to lend support to our New Zealand allies and take a look on the inside. AMWU Representative, Don Sutherland and NTEU Representative, Ted Murphy, also attended the meeting.

AFTINET attended stakeholder events during both days. In addition there was a meeting each day of civil society stakeholders who were present from Australia, New Zealand and Malaysia. It was a valuable experience meeting key players in NZ, planning our approach for the day and coordinating.

To start civil society actions for the week a joint cross-Tasman letter, signed by more than 60 Australian and New Zealand civil society groups, was sent to New Zealand Prime Minister John Key and Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard calling on both governments to resist the United States Investment agenda and reject outright the

inclusion of investor-state disputes processes. (see the letter on the AFTINET website: <http://aftinet.org.au/cms/tpa-resources-page>.)

As the negotiations started a great protest got underway near the entrance to the venue – the Conference centre of the Sky Casino – with the theme “Gambling with our Future”. The protest featured speakers from several unions, academics and Auckland City Council and some great street theatre. This received good media coverage in New Zealand, which is on our website: <http://aftinet.org.au/cms/tpa-media-reports-our-campaign>.

Main Issues – Auckland Summary:

Market Access Provisions: By the 5th round of negotiations in Chile, from 14th-18th February 2011, initial offers on goods market access, including agriculture will be made. It should then be clear whether any existing FTA market access schedules will be re-opened.

Transparency/Access to negotiations: The lack of transparency and two levels of access continued in New Zealand. However a “release the text” campaign has commenced out of the negotiations and the leaked New Zealand text on Intellectual Property Rights. (see the letter and leaked text on the AFTINET website: <http://aftinet.org.au/cms/tpa-resources-page>.)

The stakeholders attending were a mixture of groups - about 66% corporate and 33% unions, critics and activists. There were some critical business people, especially from the IP sector. The formal stakeholders activities were self-initiated and the pro-TPP lobby complained to MFAT (New Zealand’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade) about lack of ‘balance’.

However, corporations were invited to address the formal negotiating meetings. The APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC), US Chamber of Commerce and Fedex addressed the negotiators on the first morning session on regulatory coherence. Later, Toll Holdings (PPP roads etc), the Medical Technology industry and NZ Winegrowers spoke to a Thursday session. In contrast non-business stakeholders, such as AFTINET, had no access to these sessions and were only able to attend stakeholder sessions run outside the negotiating timetable.

Regulatory coherence: “Regulatory coherence” is driven by a desire from business interests for common rules of entry and activity in markets. It was repeatedly stated by both negotiators and business representatives that this will lead **“deep behind the border into domestic regulatory space”**. For example they would like to have safety approval for a product in one country to apply to all countries. This could severely limit the ability of each country to set its own safety, health, environmental, qualification and other quality standards. As noted, it is being driven by business interests from a supply chain point of view. It was conceded that this process left out other stakeholders.

It is clearly an area with potential to limit the space of government’s to legislate and regulate in the public interest and has the potential to be a race to the bottom.

Investment: It would appear that the text is well advanced and is based on the original text that was carried over from the P4 plus US talks, where an investor-state dispute process was part of the US agenda and placed on the table. Investor-state is currently 'in play', but they are not yet at the point of needing to resolve issues.

It would appear that the standard US agenda of liberalisation of investment provisions is the basis for the talks.

Trade in Services: Cross border trade in services text is somewhat advanced as it is based on pre-existing text. Most countries had now presented their contributions and disagreements. It appears that the approach will be based on the "negative list" approach rather than our preferred campaigns "positive list" approach.

It is clear from the Australian Services Roundtable event that Financial Services, Education, IT and Health Services are the main areas of offensive interest to Australia on Trade in Services.

Labour Rights Chapter: The US position is not entirely clear due to the midterm congressional election outcome – the US team emphasised the need for them to go back to congress to determine the position and whether the US-Peru Labour Chapter was still the negotiating position.

Reports from a meeting with Australian Labour Chapter negotiators and unions indicate that the Australians were not particularly enthusiastic. It was stated that the Australia-US FTA has a labour chapter which was there because the US insisted, and that it goes further than New Zealand's labour agreements but not as far as the US-Peru chapter.

It appeared that the Australian negotiators are not keen on such provisions (and there are mixed messages from Australian Labor Government Trade Ministers), but are prepared to consider the US-Peru FTA chapter as a model. There is acceptance of including a reference committing to the ILO Declaration on Core Labour Standards, but it would be "more difficult" to obtain commitments making direct reference to the conventions themselves. Text on Labour is likely to happen "soon" – there is pressure to get some text for next round.

Environment: The focus appears to be on environmental goods and services rather than protection of the environment. This potentially could cover highly controversial areas such as water supply and services, waste water, and many other areas affecting local government.

Intellectual Property Rights: We heard nothing about the negotiations as such, but outside them there was a leak of the New Zealand position paper. The paper did not support any extensions of corporate intellectual property rights beyond current WTO agreements and is clearly in conflict with the US standard position, which is to have "WTO-plus" provisions.

For example, there was pressure from a lobbyist Croplife International (represented by Agcarm, New Zealand) for data protection for 10 years for test data from licensing processes on the grounds that it "encourages innovation". The same claim is being

made for medicines by pharmaceutical firms. The aim and the effect is to prevent competition from generic competitors. It therefore drives up prices.

There are reports out of the US which indicate that the US is only interested in an agreement which “raises the norms on IP”. (see <http://www.keionline.org/node/1035>)

Other Areas of Discussion: It is clear that the following areas are also under discussion and having varying levels of advancement including:

- Government Procurement (an interesting report is that the Australian Government does not see PPP's as part of government procurement).
- Food and Quarantine Standards and customs cooperation
- New Members – accession – appears to be by request but lacking any details
- Competition Policy
- Capacity building and cooperation
- E-commerce
- Rules of Origin (ROO)
- Business Mobility
- Telecommunications

Leaflet: Copies are still available of the AFTINET leaflet “**Resurrecting the US Free Trade Agreement: What US business wants from the Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement**”. The community education leaflet is aimed at explaining the issues and asking the government to ensure that public interest policies are not traded away. Copies of the leaflet are available for free. We do however request a donation towards postage costs – please see the AFTINET website www.aftinet.org.au to download an electronic copy of the leaflet or an order form, or you can call the office on 02 9212 7242.

Media Coverage: Coverage of the fourth round of negotiations is now available from our website. As media coverage occurs the items are placed on our website on the TPPA Campaign media page: <http://aftinet.org.au/cms/tppa-media-reports-our-campaign>.

Organisations: We continue to ask our member organisations to sign on to 9 principles for the TPPA negotiations. If your organisation has not signed up it isn't too late – this campaign will run for at least the next 18 months. The principles and joint statement are available from the AFTINET TPPA Campaign page: <http://aftinet.org.au/cms/trans-pacific-partnership-agreement/trans-pacific-partnership-agreement>.

We also ask that organisations ensure that their link to our email/letter campaign is up-to-date so that this part of the campaign is available to their membership to participate in. Our campaign has been updated to send emails and letters to the Trade Minister, Dr Craig Emerson. We encourage you to put the following updated link to the e-mail campaign on your website: <http://aftinet.org.au/cms/tppa-campaign-email-craig-emerson-don%E2%80%99t-trade-away-vital-social-policies>

For those who do not want to use email a letter is available:

<http://aftinet.org.au/cms/sites/default/files/Craig%20Emerson%20Individual%20Letter.doc>

Individual Actions: Individuals are encouraged to join the TPPA campaign through our email/letter campaign to Dr Craig Emerson, the Trade Minister. Please go to our TPPA Campaign website page: <http://aftinet.org.au/cms/trans-pacific-partnership-agreement/trans-pacific-partnership-agreement>.

(**Sources:** 1 - Reuters – 6th December 2010, Australian Trade Minister Media Releases, Yomiuri Shimbun, Nikkei.com, Public Citizen)

5 WTO Update:

Ministerial small group meetings are being scheduled for early 2011 with the claim this is to clear roadblocks. Tactics appear to be to “divide and conquer”, however there is still little likelihood of movement at any speed.

Combined with this the WTO working groups will also be scheduling intensive rounds of meetings in 2011, with all groups meeting in the 2nd and 3rd weeks of January in Geneva. For example there is again a stated goal of having texts around market access for Non-Agricultural Markets (NAMA), this time by Easter 2011. The discussions are to be based around the stalled 2008 texts. The stated aim for all work groups is to have some text by April. It is claimed that this is to build upon the very clear political decision at the G20 to move Doha forward to conclusion in 2011.

Bolivia has raised objections about “*an arbitrary and artificial timetable*” which could cause more damage than progress. Developing nations pointed out that to be concluded in 2011 there should be no new demands in NAMA negotiations and that the US needed to scale down its existing demands.

The Philippines on behalf of the G33, reminded that there was a need to keep development at the centre of the negotiations and that special and differential treatment was essential. This was echoed by Zambia on behalf of the Least Developed Countries (LDC’s), Chinese Taipei agreed on behalf of recently acceded members (RAMs) and Barbados on behalf of the Small, Vulnerable Economies (SVEs). Several also expressed the need to move to all inclusive negotiations rather than the divisive small group meetings which had so far taken place, a call echoed by China.

There were also concerns expressed by Tanzania about the ability of LDC’s, SVEs and Developing Countries (DCs) to fund representation and maintain the pace of negotiations, particularly in light of budget austerity measures arising from the GFC.

Switzerland, on behalf of the G10, claimed that the existing agriculture package was ambitious and the sacrifices were not evenly shared. The EU was more realistic endorsing the chairs push to intensify the negotiations but qualifying its support by stating that there was a need for a reality check at the end of January to see if genuine progress was being made.

Brazil, on behalf of the G20, reminded the Trade Negotiation Committee that agriculture was still the driver of the Doha round. Australia claimed, on behalf of the Cairns group, that the Cairns group was ready to move to the end game. On its own behalf Australia supported the chair's call for texts by Easter and modalities on Agriculture and NAMA to be concluded by June/July.

The US has weighed in stating that 'substance trumps process' and that there was a need to move in a direction that allowed all members to deliver a deal that will be acceptable to their domestic audience. This is an interesting comment to note given that the US Farm Bill will not be revised until 2012, meaning that US negotiators could not move on agriculture. Given that 2012 is a Presidential election year the chances of any significant reform of the US agricultural subsidies and protections is remote.

Despite the intensive effort and statements outlined in the above the likelihood of any movement towards the completion of the round look to be minimal. Significant differences still remain between the developed and developing world particularly around the calls for liberalisation of trade in services and the US and EU support programs for their agricultural sectors.

(Sources: DFAT End of Year Doha Briefing paper, Third World Network, OWISNF network)

6 PACER Plus Update:

The next PACER—Plus Officials meeting is scheduled to take place in February 2011.

The United Nations Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNOHCHR) representative for the Pacific is highly supportive of a campaign to have a Human Rights Impact Assessment done on PACER-Plus prior to it moving any further forward. Please see the previous bulletin for details. It is hoped that tender will be opened in 2011.

Report on 'Pacific Trade Winds' Consultation:

PANG and the organisers of the Pacific Consultation "Navigating Pacific Trade Winds" 18th-20th November 2010 arranged AFTINET's attendance at the consultations. Much thanks goes to PANG, PCC and Monash University for organising the event and funding AFTINET's attendance.

On behalf of AFTINET the Trade Justice Campaigner, Harvey Purse, addressed two sessions. The first session was about the current state of play in the Australian political context and the second being on health/medicines. Harvey also attended a media conference at the request of the organisers, along with Nick Braxton from New Zealand, Maureen Penjueli (PANG) and John Salong from VANWOODS.

There was wide representation from the Pacific Island Countries, with Australia and New Zealand. Representatives were made up of Civil Society groups (including Churches, Unions, Umbrella organisations, Women's organisations, representatives of the Pacific Diaspora, Organic & other Farming groups, as well as Development groups), Academics and Community Based Business enterprises.

The first day of the consultations focused on the current politics and negotiations of PACER-Plus, in the Pacific Island Countries and in Australia and New Zealand. There was also a traditional Talanoa discussion on what a Pacific view of alternatives might be, and a further session about Ensuring Food Sovereignty outlining the threats from PACER Plus and citing examples of traditional approaches.

Day two focused on further key issues for the Pacific Island Countries. These included sessions on Land, Maintaining a Healthy Pacific, Pacific Livelihoods and finished with a power mapping session in preparation for the final day which was dedicated to strategic planning.

Day two also saw a media conference held which was attended by PANG, Oxfam New Zealand, AFTINET and VANWOODS. Media coverage was good with the conference receiving coverage in the Fiji press over three days and Fiji TV News on the day of the media conference. These stories are feed into other press throughout the Pacific and Fiji TV News goes out to most Pacific Island Countries. Links to the media coverage is available on our website (<http://aftinet.org.au/cms/pacer-resources/pacer-plus-media-coverage>).

The final day of strategic planning used group work to examine research gaps, how to inject the Pacific Island Countries' traditional economy into the debate, how to protect community economies and existing micro solutions along with potential alternatives coming out of the experience of communities in the Pacific Island Countries. Also examined was the identity of key players and how they might be moved to become involved or move away from their existing positions.

The final session of the day looked more closely at actions and activities that could be done over the next few months and longer term. This included ideas on how to activate the Pacific Diaspora in Australia and New Zealand, research that needed to be undertaken, papers that needed to be completed on the existing solutions such as micro-financing and community enterprises, further work on Pacific alternatives based on traditional economy, information on Australian and New Zealand companies with an interest, key dates in all countries and in the progress of the negotiations. The session also examined the capacity to undertake the work that was needed.

(Sources: PACTRADE, PANG, DFAT website)

7 FTA Updates:

The following FTAs have had some movement or negotiations since our last Bulletin. Those not mentioned have had no significant events or negotiations occur.

Korea-Australia FTA:

This needs to be watched closely as the US-Korea FTA (KORUS FTA) has now been completed – there appears to be no resolution of outstanding issues but an agreement to continue to talk about them. There is a need to examine the final text and letters of the KORUS FTA for any clues. The conclusion of the KORUS FTA may facilitate a fast tracking of the Kor-Aus FTA.

Indonesia-Australia CEPA

There has still been no official announcement in parliament by the Trade Minister. It would appear that the Prime Ministerial announcement in Jakarta in November is sufficient for the process of consultation to commence.

It will be interesting to see if the government makes the obligatory announcement by the Trade Minister in Parliament. The 2011 calendar of sitting days indicates the first opportunity will be in the week of the 8th of February 2011.

The agreement is being called “the Indonesia-Australia Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement”, (IACEPA). It is interesting to note that the last three agreements announced have all moved away from using the words free trade in their title. Instead alternate terms such as Closer Economic Agreement (PACER-Plus), Partnership Agreement (TPPA) and now Comprehensive Economic Partnership, are being used but the content is the same tired old free trade rhetoric.

DFAT has now called for submissions on their website. The closing date for submissions is 18th February 2011. For more information please see the DFAT website: <http://www.dfat.gov.au/fta/indonesia/index.html>

Japan-Australia FTA

There is now some increased impetus in Japan to move this FTA forward with significant pressure from Japanese business keen to put the pressure on the Kan government to follow through with its proposed trade related agricultural reforms.

Trade Minister Emerson has made a particular point of signalling that this FTA was a high priority for him to have completed in 2011. After a considerable hiatus a twelfth round of negotiations will be held in early 2011, venue and date to be advised.

Much will come down to the will of the Japanese government to move on agriculture, still a very tricky manoeuvre for them to undertake.

(Sources: DFAT website updates, DFAT Briefings)

8 Upcoming Events:

Survival Day on Sydney Harbour – Fundraising for the South Sydney Herald

Join the South Sydney Herald and the Tribal Warrior Association on January 26th 2011 for a harbour cruise with a difference.

Cost: \$70/\$60 (concession)

Book: Call Trevor Davies on 0400 008 338

Payment: Can be made by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) to BSB 062 231 Account No. 1021 9391 – put your name in the description when you pay.

9 New Resources available on the web or at our website:

New Report from UNCTAD - Denunciation of the ICSID convention and BITS: impact on investor-state claims [IIA Issues Note, No. 1]:

http://www.unctad.org/en/docs/webdiaeia20106_en.pdf

Presentations from the Pacific Trade Winds Consultation are now available from our website: <http://aftinet.org.au/cms/pacer-resources/pacer-resources>.