

**EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES – MEASURES AFFECTING THE APPROVAL
AND MARKETING OF BIOTECH PRODUCTS**

Communication from the European Communities

The following communication, dated 11 June 2003, from the Permanent Delegation of the European Commission to the Permanent Mission of Colombia and to the Chairman of the Dispute Settlement Body is circulated at the request of the European Communities.

Thank you for your letter of 26 May 2003 in which you request to be joined in the consultations in the disputes WT/DS291, *European Communities – Measures Affecting the Approval and Marketing of Biotech Products*.

Article 4.11 of the Understanding on Rules and Procedures Governing the Settlement of Disputes provides that "[w]henever a Member other than the consulting Members consider that it has a substantial trade interest in consultations being held pursuant to [the relevant provisions of the WTO Agreement], such Member may notify the consulting Members and the DSB [...] of its desire to be joined in the consultations. Such Member shall be joined in the consultations, provided that the Member to which the request for consultations was addressed agrees that the claim of substantial interest is well-founded [...]".

The European Communities is not aware of any Colombian agricultural imports or exports being affected by any measures adopted by the European Communities with regard to genetically-modified organisms. Nevertheless, the European Communities can accept Colombia's interest in this dispute and do not object to its participation in the consultations. I will inform you as soon as possible of the date and venue of the meetings.

We hope that the consultations will contribute to a better understanding of the situation of genetically-modified products in the European Communities and other WTO Members.

A copy of this letter is being sent to the Chairman of the Dispute Settlement Body for circulation to Members.
