

U.S. PRESS RELEASE

January 9, 2009

U.S. and China hold Second Meeting of the Bilateral Forum on Combating Illegal Logging and Associated Trade

U.S. and Chinese government officials held the second meeting of the Bilateral Forum of the U.S.-China Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Combating Illegal Logging and Associated Trade on January 9 in Beijing, China. During the meeting participants reviewed the progress made by the countries on implementing the MOU over the last six months. They also discussed and set priorities for cooperative work under the MOU during the first half of 2009.

Key accomplishments over the past six months included the adoption of a mechanism under which the United States and China will regularly exchange bilateral trade data on timber and timber products. This exchange of data will help the countries understand the nature of the trade between them and plan how to combat illegal logging and create transparent markets for legal trade in timber. The United States and China also co-hosted a two-day international workshop in Beijing in December 2008 where 180 participants discussed the challenges of combating illegal logging and associated trade and promoting sustainable forest management. Attendees included representatives of timber-related industry associations, non-governmental organizations, the European Union, and the governments of Australia, Great Britain, Indonesia, and Malaysia.

The participants in the Bilateral Forum also discussed future work, including implementation of the data exchange mechanism and opportunities to make it more useful, including by possibly broadening the scope of the data exchanged. The two sides also agreed to open discussions on a common understanding of the term "illegal logging" with a view toward facilitating trade in legally harvested timber and timber products. Finally, the U.S. and China agreed to seek ways to use public-private collaboration to combat illegal logging and associated trade and to support the creation of transparent markets for legally-sourced timber.

The third meeting of the Bilateral Forum is scheduled for the summer of 2009 in Washington, D.C.

Mr. ZHU Lieke, Vice Administrator of the State Forestry Administration, led the Chinese delegation, which included representatives from the State Forestry Administration, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the General Customs Administration, and the Ministry of Foreign Commerce. Claudia McMurray, Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans, Environment, and Science, and Mark Linscott, Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for the Environment and Natural Resources co-led the U.S. delegation, which included representatives from the

Department of State, the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, the U.S. Forest Service, and the U.S. Embassy in Beijing.