

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ OF THE UNITED STATES-CHILE  
ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COUNCIL AND  
JOINT COMMISSION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL COOPERATION

WASHINGTON, D.C.

August 22-23, 2022

On August 22-23, 2022, the United States and Chile held the ninth meeting of the Environmental Affairs Council (EAC) under the United States-Chile Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and the seventh meeting of the Joint Commission for Environmental Cooperation (JCEC) under the United States-Chile Environmental Cooperation Agreement (ECA).

The meetings were chaired by Kelly Milton, Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Environment and Natural Resources, Office of the United States Trade Representative, and Monica Medina, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, U.S. Department of State. Marcela Otero, Director General of Multilateral Economic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Julio Cordano, Director of Environment and Ocean Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, co-chaired the meetings for Chile.

The EAC reviewed progress made by Chile and the United States in ensuring effective implementation of, and compliance with, the obligations in the Environment Chapter of the FTA. Chile presented its work to improve levels of environmental protection, including the recent approval of the Framework Law for Climate Change, the implementation of the Framework Law for Waste Management, Extended Producer Responsibility, and measures on biodiversity, among others. Chile also reported advances in compliance control and enforcement implementation by the Superintendence of Environment. Additionally, Chile reported the approval of the Escazu Agreement on access to information, public participation, and justice in environmental matters, deepening the continuing work towards enhanced public participation.

The United States provided updates on recent actions to improve U.S. levels of environmental protection, including implementation of the Marine Mammal Protection Act Import Provisions and the recent passage of the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022. The Inflation Reduction Act will advance U.S. leadership in the development of cutting-edge clean energy technology and will provide financial incentives to make clean energy options more accessible to consumers, all to help with combating the climate crisis. The United States also reported on environmental law enforcement actions, on opportunities to increase public participation in our trade and environment policy development, and on the recent release of the Draft National Strategy to develop a U.S. System of Natural Capital Accounts and Associated Environmental-Economic Statistics.

Both Parties exchanged information and views regarding efforts to tackle the climate crisis; strengthen ocean conservation, including through combating illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, support for the WTO Fisheries Subsidies Agreement and enhancing management of marine and coastal protected areas; advance circular economy, including waste management and plastic pollution; and combat wildlife trafficking and support implementation of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

The JCEC considered environmental cooperation projects completed under the sixth Work Program for 2018-2020 and the status of ongoing and upcoming environmental cooperation projects. Chilean and U.S. agencies participating in the meeting reported on some of the activities carried out since 2018, such as: workshops related to the protection and implementation of protected areas and the development of a platform for cooperation with Indigenous communities; the design of a fire prevention, mitigation, and investigation program; exchanges related to combating wildlife trafficking; work to improve fisheries management and conservation of coastal marine resources by promoting collaboration between fishing communities and fisheries authorities; strengthening public participation in the protection of urban wetlands; and training environmental enforcement officials.

The JCEC also discussed future cooperation under the Seventh Work Program for Environmental Cooperation for 2021-2024, which establishes the following priorities for cooperative activities: strengthening effective implementation and enforcement of environmental laws and regulations; promoting conservation and the sustainable and inclusive management of natural resources, including biodiversity and ecosystem services, protected wilderness areas, and other ecologically important ecosystems for increased resilience; promoting environmental education, transparency, and civil society participation in environmental decision-making and enforcement; and promoting improved air and water quality toward increased climate resilience, through the adoption of effective policies, best practices, and innovative technologies for sound natural resource management. The United States and Chile intend to build upon previous environmental cooperation work and to intensify their focus on certain priorities, such as combating wildlife trafficking and IUU fishing; addressing pollution; improving water management and drought resilience; tackling the climate crisis; and advancing environmental justice through their respective domestic laws, regulations, and policies.

A public session took place on August 23, in accordance with the FTA Environment Chapter and the ECA, which included wide participation from diverse sectors of civil society and industry. The public session reflects both countries' commitment to maintaining an open dialogue and participatory process. Both delegations informed the public about the implementation of the Environment Chapter and ongoing and future environmental cooperation under the ECA. The session provided an opportunity for members of the public to offer comments and ask questions, both in person and online.

Chile's delegation included officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (the Directorate for Environment and Maritime Affairs and the Undersecretariat for International Economic Relations), the Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Energy, Undersecretariat of Fisheries, National Service of Fisheries, the Environment Superintendence and the National Customs Service. For the United States, the delegation included representatives from the Department of State, the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of the Interior, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the U.S. Forest Service.