

# UNITED STATES–MEXICO–CANADA AGREEMENT

## Enhancing Intelligence, Targeting and Analysis, and Training

### BACKGROUND & MAIN OBJECTIVES

Through an interagency agreement with USTR, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is supporting the monitoring and enforcement of the U.S.–Mexico–Canada Agreement (USMCA) Chapter 24 environmental obligations. USTR and CBP share the objective of implementing the environmental obligations under the USMCA and the Environment Cooperation and Customs Verification Agreement (CVA) between the United States and Mexico. To do so, CBP will increase capabilities to produce and utilize intelligence and data to target high-risk shipments for inspection and entities for verification, and support USTR requests related to customs verifications under the CVA.<sup>1</sup> The work is divided into the following three goals:

**GOAL 1: Improve CBP's enforcement tools and enhance collaboration among CBP and partner agencies to produce and utilize intelligence and data to effectively target high-risk shipments for inspection and entities for verifications.**

- Throughout FY 2024, CBP provided enforcement-focused expertise in several interagency coordination meetings, including the DOJ-led Timber Working Group, Forest Service-led Lacey Act monthly call, the DOS-led nature crime quarterly meeting, and the Maritime SAFE Interagency Working Group (IWG). The IWG serves as a forum for sharing best practices, challenges, common USG priorities to countering Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, and the National Five-Year Strategy for combating IUU fishing.
- In December 2023, CBP issued three civil penalties totaling \$734,564 to U.S. importers violating the Marine Mammal protection act by illegally importing wild caught shrimp from the Upper Gulf of California.
- Throughout FY 2024, CBP collaborated with internal and external partners on targeting high-risk imports, which lead to civil enforcement actions such as refusal of entry, audits, and seizures.
- In FY 2024, CBP also significantly increased its outreach to environmental NGOs to educate them on USG capabilities to interdict illicit wildlife, illegal logging, and IUU fishing at the U.S. Border, and methods for NGOs to provide actionable leads to CBP.

**GOAL 2: Expand U.S. border enforcement capacity to implement environmental obligations of the USMCA, specifically concerning but not limited to Illegal Logging and Associated Trade (ILAT) and IUU fishing.**

- In May 2024, CBP Strategic Enforcement branch presented to CBP's Houston Field Office Trade Regulatory Audit team about natural resource crimes, e.g., wildlife trafficking, illegal logging, and IUU fishing, and emphasized the need for making a high priority of the illegal importations that stem from these crimes.
- CBP delivered two in-person trainings to personnel (including CBP Officers) at two ports of entry on the USMCA Chapter 24 obligations in relation to wildlife trafficking, IUU fishing, and ILAT.

**GOAL 3: Expand CBP's engagement with the trade community to ensure compliance with U.S. laws and regulations associated with the environmental obligations under USMCA, facilitate legitimate imports, and effectively manage risks and enforcement resources.**

- In May 2024, CBP delivered a day-long workshop on U.S. leather import compliance with environmental laws with 70 members of the Mexican leather industry that export to the United States. Discussion topics included compliance with CITES, especially illicit exotic leather trade threatening endangered reptiles caused by El Tren Maya and the New Interoceanic Railway project.
- In April 2024, CBP participated in the 2024 Trade and Cargo Security Summit in Philadelphia, where staff engaged with the trade community about natural resources enforcement and the USMCA.
- In March 2024, CBP delivered a presentation about IUU fishing and obligations under the USMCA environmental chapter at the Seafood Expo North America in Boston, a leading event for all sectors of the seafood industry

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1. The CVA is a separate agreement between the U.S. and Mexico regarding specific shipments of fish, timber, and wildlife (including live) products. It allows the parties to request information and verify whether an importer has provided accurate and adequate documentation demonstrating shipment legality.

