

March 16, 2015

President Barack Obama
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20006

Dear Mr. President,

Our organizations are focused on environmental protection, animal protection, and conservation issues, and have been working closely with the Administration throughout the negotiations of the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement. Among the many challenges facing the Pacific region, wildlife crime, fisheries depletion, and illegal harvest and timber trade loom particularly large, making it vital that the TPP include robust measures to safeguard oceans, forests, and wildlife. We commend US negotiators for setting ambitious goals for environmental standards within the agreement¹.

TPP is a historic opportunity to advance the environmental agenda in a region of critical importance; the Pacific nations are among the most biodiverse on Earth, but overexploitation threatens the long-term prospects for their flora and fauna. We think the TPP environment chapter is headed in the right direction, and if the Administration can deliver on its commitment to use TPP to spur greater international action to combat wildlife trafficking, illegal logging and fishing, and eliminate some of the most harmful fisheries subsidies—and hold countries accountable through a binding dispute settlement mechanism—it will be an important step forward on environmental protection.

Of course, success also depends on ensuring FTA partners can fulfill their obligations, which will require that adequate resources be dedicated to trade capacity building and technical assistance. We welcome the steps your Administration has already taken on several key issues, for example, efforts to build judicial, prosecutorial, and anti-poaching capacity overseas. Additional US funding and technical assistance for TPP partners will be necessary to ensure effective implementation of the environmental provisions.

As we approach the final stages of these negotiations, we request the Administration's continued commitment to ensuring the strongest possible environmental safeguards. We also request that the Administration ensure that implementation of these provisions be backed by sufficient funding and other necessary resources to assist TPP partner nations in meeting the critical obligations in the agreement.

We thank you for your efforts and remain committed to continuing our involvement in the TPP process on these issues, and we hope that the Administration continues to build upon these commitments in future agreements. We look forward to continuing our dialogue with you and your staff.

Sincerely,

Priscilla Ma
Executive Director
World Animal Protection

Azzedine T. Downes
President and CEO
International Fund for Animal Welfare

Mark Tercek
President and CEO
The Nature Conservancy

ⁱ The views reflected herein are limited to the environment chapter.