

HSUS/HSI Statement on the Trans-Pacific Partnership

March 20, 2015

Over the last decade, global awareness of environmental and animal welfare issues has increased, prompting policy makers to include animal protection concerns in free trade agreements. The Humane Society of the United States and Humane Society International have been on the leading edge of this movement. Through our membership on the Trade and Environmental Policy Advisory Committee, we have advised the Office of the United States Trade Representative and Environmental Protection Agency on environmental issues arising during free trade agreement negotiations, including the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).

We believe the TPP environment chapter is a critical step forward for wildlife protection. These protections are much needed because wild animals in the Asia-Pacific region are subject to illegal and unsustainable commercial exploitation. Many TPP member countries, including the United States, are major consumers of illegally-traded wildlife, including elephant ivory, rhino horn, pangolin scales, and parts and products of other threatened species. We applaud the United States for its leadership in advocating for ambitious TPP provisions to bolster wildlife protection and support biodiversity without encouraging environmental deregulation in the interest of trade and investment.

But it is essential that free trade agreements address the impacts on all affected animals. The TPP appears poised to greatly increase trade in farm animals and animal products, primarily through the reduction or elimination of tariffs and other trade barriers currently imposed by TPP member countries. Thus, we are disappointed that the TPP does not consider farm animal welfare, given the inhumane practices that persist in the animal agriculture industries of TPP members.

We remain committed, however, to working with the USTR to ensure that the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership currently under negotiation with the European Union, includes robust animal welfare provisions for animals on farms, in labs, and in the wild.