

United States and Chile hold Fifth Meeting of the FTA Environmental Affairs Council

Washington, D.C. - On Wednesday, January 20, 2010, representatives of the United States and the Government of Chile convened the fifth meeting of the Environmental Affairs Council (EAC) of the U.S.-Chile Free Trade Agreement (FTA). Mark Linscott, Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Environment and Natural Resources, co-chaired with Daniel Reifsnyder, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Environment and Sustainable Development, the EAC meeting for the United States. The U.S. delegation included representatives from other agencies, including the Department of Interior and the Environmental Protection Agency.

At the EAC meeting, officials discussed implementation of the Environment Chapter and how to improve monitoring of implementation and compliance with Chapter obligations. Both governments acknowledged the progress and collaborative work that has taken place since the last meeting of the EAC in Santiago, Chile in April 2008.

Representatives of the Trade and Environment Policy Advisory Committee participated in the meeting to discuss the role and functioning of the committee and to exchange views on improving transparency and public participation in trade and environmental policy decisions.

Chile's National Commission for the Environment highlighted the recent law establishing the Chilean Ministry for the Environment and explained how this new government body will bolster its continued implementation of the FTA Environment Chapter.

The afternoon session of the EAC meeting was open to the public, demonstrating the Council's commitment to a transparent, open, and participatory process.