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NZ concludes digital economy trade talks with Singapore and Chile

A new trade agreement concluded today helps New Zealand exporters and consumers take advantage of opportunities from digital trade.

Minister for Trade and Export Growth David Parker together with Chile's Vice Minister of Trade Rodrigo Yañez and Singapore's Minister of Trade and Industry Chan Chun Sing, have announced conclusion of talks on a Digital Economy Partnership Agreement (DEPA).

"New Zealand has played a key role in this new initiative to support digital trade. It's an important step in making sure trade rules better reflect this digital era," David Parker said.

"We've moved quickly since launching negotiations in May last year to bring this agreement together because we recognise international trade rules have not kept up with the unprecedented growth of digital trade. We believe small countries – not just large ones – should help shape the new rules.

"DEPA will help make it easier for our businesses and consumers to take advantage of digital trade opportunities, while protecting public and private interests.

"We think that this will be a pathfinder agreement that will apply initially to those countries but will expand over time.

"We've ensured issues of importance to New Zealanders such as the Treaty of Waitangi, personal privacy, consumer protection, data management, transparency and openness are appropriately protected.

"Digital technologies can help small and medium sized enterprises overcome the challenges of scale and distance, support greater participation by women, Māori and rural communities, to help spread the benefits of trade widely – a key aim of our Trade for All policy.

"Digital trade is constantly evolving. We may not know what new technologies will emerge, but we know it is valuable to have open channels of communication with close partners to discuss issues this change can bring," David Parker said.

DEPA complements and supports the ongoing WTO-based negotiations on e-commerce, as well as work within APEC and the OECD.

Consistent with our support for multilateral rules, the DEPA is an 'open plurilateral' agreement, meaning it is open to other WTO members who can meet its high quality standards.