



# **Report from the 15<sup>th</sup> round of negotiations for an Environmental Goods Agreement (EGA)**

***August 2016***

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Trade

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### Outcome of the 15<sup>th</sup> round

The 15<sup>th</sup> round of the Environmental Goods Agreement negotiations took place from **25<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> July 2016 in Geneva**.

The round represented an important milestone in the negotiation process, building on the commitment expressed by G20 Trade Ministers on 10 July 2016 in Shanghai: *"G20 EGA participants recognize the substantial progress made to date in the negotiations on an Environmental Goods Agreement, and aim to conclude, using best efforts, an ambitious, future-oriented EGA that seeks to eliminate tariffs on a broad range of environmental goods by an EGA Ministerial meeting to be held by the end of 2016, having achieved a landing zone by the G-20 Summit in September in Hangzhou, after finding effective ways to address the core concerns of participants."*

During the round, the Chair of EGA talks tabled a proposal for such 'landing zones' in line with the G20 instructions. The proposal lists 303 products (identified by Customs Codes) further narrowing down the previous Chair's list of December 2015.

The proposal also covers the following areas for further discussion:

- possible ways to ensure that the agreement covers a critical mass of trade in the covered products, now and in the future,
- a work programme on non-tariff barriers and on services,
- possible phasing-out ('staging') of tariffs.

The 'landing zones' will serve as a working basis for further negotiations and are expected to be confirmed at the end of August at the level of Ambassadors to the WTO, ahead of the endorsement by G20 Leaders on 4-5<sup>th</sup> September in Hangzhou.

EGA members agreed to enhance outreach to encourage other WTO Members to join the EGA.

### Next steps

The indicative roadmap for the conclusion of EGA talks by the end of 2016 includes:

- **week of 19th September 2016** – 16<sup>th</sup> EGA round
- **week of 17th October 2016** – 17<sup>th</sup> EGA round
- **21-22<sup>nd</sup> October 2016** – EGA Ministerial in the margins of the WTO Mini-Ministerial in Oslo
- **end of November 2016** – 18<sup>th</sup> EGA round
- **early December 2016** – EGA Ministerial level meeting to conclude the EGA negotiations.

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### Background

The Environmental Goods Agreement is a trade agreement currently being negotiated by 17 members<sup>1</sup> of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), including the EU. Together, they account for a large proportion of world trade in environmental goods. Australia currently chairs the negotiations. The negotiations were launched in July 2014.

The objective of the negotiations is to eliminate tariffs on a broad range of environmental goods, building on a list of 54 environmental goods agreed by APEC. The intention is to create a “living agreement”, which should allow the addition of new products in the future and to address non-tariff barriers and services linked to environmental goods. The agreement will be extended on a Most Favoured Nation basis to all WTO Member, subject to the condition that WTO Members in the EGA represent a critical mass of global trade in environmental goods. This means that the eliminated tariffs agreed by the participants in the negotiations would be applied to all WTO members and not just to those in the EGA group. This initiative is an important way to increase the uptake of environmental technologies, including for climate change mitigation, by eliminating custom duties on environmental goods. It is thus expected to bring economic and environmental benefits worldwide. [More information on the EU interests and the environmental goods negotiations.](#)

The European Commission has conducted **a Sustainability Impact Assessment** on the Environmental Goods Agreement to assess its economic, environmental and social impact. [More information](#)

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<sup>1</sup> Australia, Canada, China, Chinese Taipei, Costa Rica, the EU, Hong Kong China, Iceland, Israel, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, Norway, Singapore, Switzerland, Turkey, and the United States.