

JOINT COMMUNIQUE
OF THE U.S.-KOREA ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COUNCIL AND
ENVIRONMENTAL COOPERATION COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, DC
FEBRUARY 14, 2013

On February 14, 2013, the United States and the Republic of Korea held the first meeting of the Environmental Affairs Council (EAC) under the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and the first meeting of the Environmental Cooperation Commission (ECC) under the U.S.-Korea Environmental Cooperation Agreement (ECA).

The EAC was co-chaired by Jennifer Prescott, Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Environment and Natural Resources, Office of the United States Trade Representative, and Judith G. Garber, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, U.S. Department of State, for the United States and Yoo Yeon-Chul, Director-General of the International Cooperation Office, Ministry of Environment for Korea. The ECC was co-chaired by Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Garber and Director General Yoo.

The U.S. delegation included officials from the Department of State, Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, the Environmental Protection Agency, Department of the Interior, Department of Energy, Department of Justice, Department of Treasury and the Department of Commerce, the United States Coast Guard and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. For Korea, officials participated from the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and the Korean Embassy in Washington, D.C.

The EAC reviewed implementation of the Environment Chapter of the FTA. The United States and Korea outlined actions they have taken to increase levels of environmental protection, ensure effective enforcement of environmental laws, and provide opportunities for public participation in environmental governance and the trade policy-setting processes.

The ECC reviewed recent and ongoing environmental cooperation activities and approved the first environmental cooperation Work Program for 2013-2015. The Work Program identifies priorities for cooperative activities that the two countries intend to pursue, including strengthening environmental protection; promoting public awareness of environmental and resource conservation issues; protecting wildlife and sustainably managing ecosystems and natural resources; promoting environmentally sustainable cities, cleaner energy sources and climate protection; sustainably managing ports and maritime vessels; and establishing cooperation mechanisms. The Governments intend to establish a detailed list of cooperation activities within three months of the approval of the Work Program.

A public session took place in the afternoon, pursuant to the FTA Environment Chapter and ECA, which included participation from civil society, business and members of the press. Both countries committed to maintain an open and participatory process, and members of their delegations informed the public and press about existing environmental cooperation and plans for further cooperation, and actions they have taken in the implementation of the FTA Environment Chapter. The public and press made comments and asked questions.

Finally, the United States and Korea approved the 2013-2015 Work Program for Environmental Cooperation. They reaffirmed their commitment to continue working together in a spirit of friendship and mutual respect through the FTA Environment Chapter and to preserve and protect the environment through the Environmental Cooperation Agreement.

* Originally, the Director-General for International Economic Affairs Bureau of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade was scheduled to co-Chair the EAC and Chair the ECC for Korea. However, due to unexpected circumstances, he was unable to participate in this EAC and ECC.