



Colombia FTA Facts

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U.S. – Colombia Free Trade Agreement Benefits The Environment

As a result of the bipartisan trade deal, the environment chapter of the U.S. –Colombia Free Trade Agreement, like the agreements with Peru, Panama and Korea, goes further in incorporating environmental obligations into a trade agreement than any previous trade agreement, by the United States or any other country. It includes obligations to implement key multilateral environmental agreements in areas such as endangered species protection and marine pollution prevention.

Highlights of Environmental Accomplishments of the CFTA

First Ever Obligations to Implement Key Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs):

The CFTA includes obligations to implement and enforce several important MEAs, such as those covering trade in endangered species, production of ozone depleting substances, and conservation of wetlands. The implementation and enforcement of the international environmental standards in these MEAs are subject to the CFTA's dispute settlement procedures, which include the possibility of trade sanctions for violations.

Obligations to Maintain Robust Domestic Environmental Protections: The CFTA requires the Parties to pursue high levels of environmental protection, effectively enforce their laws, and not derogate from these laws to encourage increased trade or investment.

Specific Provision for Protection of Biodiversity: Colombia is one of the few mega-diverse countries in the world and the CFTA specifically recognizes the priority placed on protecting and conserving that diversity.

Innovative Public Submissions Mechanism to Empower Civil Society: The CFTA establishes an independent secretariat to receive complaints that a Party is not effectively enforcing its environmental laws and provides for the possibility of "factual records" to respond to credible complaints.

A Comprehensive Approach to Environmental Protection: Parties are to ensure that procedural guarantees exist to provide for fair, equitable and transparent proceedings for the administration and enforcement of environmental laws and to complement such guarantees with voluntary, market-based mechanisms to protect the environment.

Capacity Building through Cooperation: A parallel Environmental Cooperation Agreement provides a framework for identifying specific capacity-building needs in Colombia and establishing relevant projects, with civil society input, to address those needs.