

USTR NEWS

UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE

www.ustr.gov

Washington, D.C. 20508

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For Immediate Release:

April 21 2008

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U.S.-Chilean Officials Plan Meeting to Discuss Environmental Provisions of the U.S.-Chile Free Trade Agreement

Countries' Trade and Environment Advisory Committees to Hold Unprecedented Exchange

Washington, D.C. – On April 23-24, 2008, United States and Chilean officials will meet in Santiago, Chile to discuss the Environment Chapter of the U.S.-Chile FTA and the work plan associated with the Environmental Cooperation Agreement. This is the fourth meeting of the Environmental Affairs Council of the U.S.-Chile FTA.

The meetings will include delegates representing agencies involved with environmental affairs in each of the two nations. Chile will be represented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Environment Directorate for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (DIMA), General Directorate for International Economic Affairs (DIRECON), and the National Commission for the Environment (CONAMA). The United States will be represented by the Department of State, U.S. Trade Representative (USTR), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

The Chilean government has also invited the U.S. Trade and Environment Policy Advisory Committee (TEPAC) Members and the Liaisons to the Environmental Affairs Council Meeting to have an exchange with its advisors on trade and environment. This will be the first such meeting between trade and environment advisory committees established pursuant to the provisions of a U.S. free trade agreement.

To demonstrate the mutual supportiveness of trade and environment, the Chilean government is organizing a tour of the Cono Sur Vineyard in Chimbarongo, Chile. The Cono Sur Vineyard is an organic vineyard, the first in Chile to receive ISO certifications 9001 and 14001, and is a carbon neutral company. In addition to its environmental record, the value of Cono Sur wines exported to the United States has increased significantly since the U.S.-Chile FTA entered into force on January 1, 2004. Between 2006-2007 alone, the exportation value increased by 112%. Cono Sur is expecting this percentage to continue to grow.

Both the TEPAC advisors and the government representatives will hold meetings with the public during their visit to Chile. The first public meeting will take place on April 24 as part of the

public session of the Environmental Affairs Council Meeting. Another public outreach event will take place on April 25.

In preparation for this meeting, Chile met with its Environment Policy Advisory Committee and publicized the meeting. The United States met with TEPAC in Washington in March 2008 and published a notice of the meeting in the Federal Register for public input and comment.

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