

EU stakeholders outreach on the TTC Working Group on promoting and protecting labour rights and decent work, and on trade and environment issues

**2 December 2021, 16h-17h30 - Virtual Event via WebEx
(connection details will be shared with confirmed participants)**

CONTEXT:

The EU-U.S. [Pittsburgh Statement](#), Annex V, provides the following on the TTC Working Group on Global Trade Challenges, work strand on promoting and protecting labour rights and decent work, and on trade and environment issues:

Cooperation on Trade and Labour

The European Union and the United States intend to promote together and in an inclusive way the protection of fundamental labour rights, including by combatting the scourge of forced and child labour, with each side using relevant trade policies and tools, including FTAs and unilateral measures, such as preference and other programs, and cooperating in the ILO, WTO, and other appropriate multilateral fora. Both sides intend to promote responsible business conduct, with the aim of enhancing the sustainability of global value chains. In pursuit of these objectives, we intend to:

1. Share information and best practices on trade measures related to the respect for fundamental labour rights and prevention of forced and child labour, including implementation and enforcement; new initiatives of each side, with a view to developing additional and joint ways to prevent forced labour; and the effectiveness of labour enforcement tools, with a view to improving them.
2. Cooperate and jointly support work in multilateral fora to promote fundamental labour rights, including to combat child and forced labour, and including in the WTO fisheries subsidies negotiations.
3. Discuss the impact of technology on labour markets, working conditions, and worker rights, including policy issues related to the “gig” economy, worker surveillance, and labour conditions throughout supply chains.
4. Exchange information on the implementation of labour provisions in our respective trade agreements.

Cooperation on Trade-Related Environmental and Climate Policies and Measures

The European Union and the United States underline the positive role that trade can play in addressing environmental challenges such as climate change, achieving climate neutrality, and supporting the transition to a more circular economy. The European Union and the United States intend to consult on the inclusion of trade-related climate and environment issues in the work plan of the Global Trade Challenges Working Group.

AGENDA

I. Introductory remarks (5 minutes)

EU Commission DG TRADE Acting Deputy Director General and Director for The Americas, Rupert Schlegelmilch

II. Comments and Questions by Stakeholders and Discussion on the work strand on trade and labour (40 minutes)

Two rounds of comments and questions by Stakeholders (15 minutes each), each time followed by 5 minutes observations by the EU Commission.

Stakeholders are invited to share their views on concrete priorities to be pursued for each of the 4 actions identified in the Pittsburgh Declaration relating to EU-U.S. cooperation on trade and labour as highlighted in the box above. We welcome in particular input on the following questions:

1. For each of the 4 identified actions, what do you think should be the top priorities and why?
2. What concrete actions/co-operation would be needed from the EU and the U.S. side to take these priorities forward?
3. Any additional priorities the EU and the U.S. should pursue in this TTC work strand on trade and labour?
4. Other suggestions/concerns/questions relating to EU-U.S. cooperation on trade and labour issues?

As indicated in the invitation to this event, you are strongly encouraged to also submit inputs, questions and comments in advance of the event by using the [Futurium online platform](#) (EU-US Trade and Technology Council / Working Group 10 Global Trade Challenges).

III. Comments and Questions by Stakeholders and Discussion on the work strand on trade and environment (40 minutes)

Two rounds of comments and questions by Stakeholders (15 minutes each), each time followed by 5 minutes observations by the EU Commission

The EU Commission attaches great importance to adding an ambitious work strand on trade-related climate and environment issues in the work plan of the Global Trade Challenges Working Group. Subject to U.S. agreement, this could include the following:

- a) Dialogue on environment/climate measures with potential trade or investment implications
- b) Exchange of information/best practices and identification of risks/opportunities in the transition to a more circular and low carbon economy, including for example on green/sustainability/labour criteria in government procurement
- c) Cooperation in international fora, including the WTO, to promote stronger alignment
- d) Exchange of information on the implementation of environment-related provisions in our respective trade agreements

Stakeholders are invited to share their views, in particular on the following questions:

1. Do you agree that each of items a)-d) should be proposed as priorities for EU-U.S. cooperation on trade and environment/climate issues? What should be the order of priority (if any) among those items?
2. What should be the concrete actions/exchanges under each of the cooperation items a)-d) that the EU and the U.S. should prioritize and why?
3. Which additional priorities, actions, exchanges do you suggest for this work strand on trade and environment in the Working Group on Global Trade challenges?
4. Other suggestions/concerns/questions relating to EU-U.S. cooperation on trade and environment issues?

As indicated in the invitation to this event, you are strongly encouraged to also submit inputs, questions and comments in advance of the event by using the [Futurium online platform](#) (EU-US Trade and Technology Council / Working Group 10 Global Trade Challenges).

IV. Concluding remarks (5 minutes)

EU Commission DG TRADE Acting Deputy Director General and Director for The Americas,
Rupert Schlegelmilch