

We Live in One World

The Trans-Pacific Partnership and the Environment

The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) is a massive trade deal being negotiated among twelve countries in the Pacific Rim: Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, Vietnam, and the United States.

What's At Risk With TPP

In an analysis of the TPP environmental chapter, the Sierra Club, Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) and World Wildlife Fund (WWF) found that TPP could lead to serious stress on natural resources including trees, fish, and wildlife. At risk are Clean Air and Clean Water regulations, the Endangered Species Act, and the right of communities to set standards to protect citizens and the environment.

The natural environment of the Pacific Rim, an area including Australia's Great Barrier Reef—the world's largest coral reef system and home to more than 11,000 species—and Peru's Amazon Rainforest—one of the most biologically diverse areas on Earth, are threatened, by unsustainable and/or illegal commercial exploitation.

The chapters in trade deals addressing the environment have a history of lacking meaningful enforcement. TPP is no different. Of the 29 chapters in TPP, just five have anything to do with traditional trade issues.

Over the past years, citizen advocacy groups have been successful in getting some minimum standards set for environment, labor, and other provisions in our trade agreements. But we've learned that these stan-



dards aren't enough. They take a back seat to the protections and guarantees provided to multinational corporations. That's why, at a minimum, the environment chapter of TPP must:

- Be binding and covered by the same dispute settlement provisions that multinational corporations use. Right now, these corporations can take their disputes immediately to a secret tribunal. Complaints and violations concerning environmental standards must wait for government action.
- Ensure that countries uphold and strengthen their domestic environmental laws and policies.
- Include binding provisions to address the core environment and conservation challenges of the Pacific Rim region, including a prohibition on trade in illegally taken timber, wildlife, and fish and a ban on shark finning and associated trade.

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TPP and Special Rights for Corporations

TPP, just like the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and other trade deals over the past 20 years, would allow foreign corporations to sue governments directly—for unlimited cash compensation—over almost any domestic environmental or other law that the corporation alleges will hurt its “expected future profits.” These so-called “investor-state dispute settlement” cases are heard in secret trade tribunals, where governments and citizens have no standing.



Corporations like Exxon Mobil and Chevron already have brought nearly 600 cases against nearly 100 governments, challenging environmental laws they don't like.

An Explosion of Fracking: One of the Dirtiest Secrets of TPP

Fracking is a dirty and violent process that dislodges gas deposits from shale rock formations. Many communities and activists are protesting the damage being done to their health, water supply, homes and living conditions as a result of current levels of fracking. But TPP would facilitate increased exports of this liquefied natural gas by requiring the U.S. Department of Energy to automatically approve all natural gas exports to TPP countries.

Fast-Track Authority

Fast Track authority for TPP means Congress would have to vote on the 1,200 page trade deal as written with almost no debate and no ability to amend it. Fast Track provides special rules and supersedes the normal congressional process by speeding everything up, requiring only a simple majority vote in the House and Senate, not the usual super majority required in the Senate for most legislation. Congress couldn't make important changes to TPP to enable citizens and nations to protect our environment. Congress should oppose Fast Track and represent the interests of U.S. communities and citizens in these negotiations.



Source: Sierra Club