

United States Announces Enhanced Engagement with the Pacific Islands

September 29, 2022

WASHINGTON – On September 28, 2022, Deputy United States Trade Representative Sarah Bianchi met with leaders from the Pacific Islands to discuss ways to enhance trade and economic engagement with the region.

Ambassador Bianchi shared that the United States will establish a Trade and Investment Dialogue with Pacific Islands to promote trade and address market barriers. This dialogue will pursue solutions to increase trade flows between the U.S. and the Pacific Islands and, target economic, investment, and market access needs in 2023. Ambassador Bianchi shared that the United States will work with Pacific partners to establish this dialogue by the end of 2022.

She also shared that the Office of the United States Trade Representative has directed the United States International Trade Commission (USITC) to conduct a detailed analysis of Pacific Island trade with the United States to identify impediments to increased trade flows. This expert analysis will include identifying potential challenges and opportunities for facilitating investment in the Pacific Islands and will identify which sectors of Pacific Island economies may have the greatest potential for increased U.S. trade and investment. The United States will use this research to inform policy-making to strengthen our trade relationship with the Pacific Islands.

Ambassador Bianchi also announced that the United States will work with Pacific Island states to explore ways to maximize utilization U.S. Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) program, subject to Congressional reauthorization. One such action would include considering designating eligible members of the Pacific Islands Forum as a regional association for the GSP program. A GSP regional designation has the potential to further integrate regional supply chains and promote enhanced access to the U.S. market for the developing Pacific Islands states.

The Office of the United States Trade Representative supports reauthorization of the GSP program and is committed to using the program to support the economic development of the Pacific Island countries.

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