

Signed Minutes of the 1st EU-New Zealand FTA Committee on Trade in Goods Meeting

9 April 2025, virtual meeting

The first meeting of the European Union-New Zealand FTA Committee on Trade in Goods was hosted by the European Union on 9 April 2025, in online format. The Committee on Trade in Goods was established under the provisions of the European Union-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (Chapter 24 Article 24.4 (1)(a)).

The meeting was co-chaired by David Allen from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade for New Zealand and Marianna Molnar from the Directorate General of Trade and Economic Security of the European Commission from the European Union. The list of both delegations can be found in Annex 1.

Agenda Item 1: Welcome and Opening Remarks

Both sides welcomed each other and their delegations to the inaugural EU-NZ FTA Committee on Trade in Goods meeting. The view was shared that this forum is important for discussing and progressing matters related to trade in goods. Both sides stressed that a strong bilateral trading relationship between New Zealand and the European Union is valued for creating opportunities for our people and maintaining resilient supply chains in a broad range of areas including food and other primary products.

Agenda Item 2: Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was adopted and can be found in Annex 2.

Agenda Item 3: Issues for Discussion

Discussions covered various issues of mutual interest, as follows.

3.1. Rules of procedure

Each committee under the FTA requires a set of rules of procedure (RoP). It was confirmed that the RoP in Annex 24 of the EU-NZ FTA apply also to the Trade in Goods Committee, as foreseen in Annex 24, Rule 13, paragraph 4 of the EU-NZ FTA.

3.2. TRQs – paperless certification

New Zealand and the EU have committed under the EU-NZ FTA to create a paperless border environment for trade in goods. New Zealand proposed realising this commitment with immediate effect through the use of electronically signed certificates in.pdf format for the first come, first served quotas, for goat and sheep meat. The EU underlined that introduction of such a system would require legislative changes in a lengthy and cumbersome procedure, the EU has stressed that its ELAN system (Electronic system for Agricultural Non-customs formalities) covers the documents mentioned and will be available in the production environment from the beginning of 2026 for the countries that completed the ongoing testing of the system. New Zealand has access to the testing environment of the ELAN system it is therefore expected that paperless certification will be reached more efficiently in that way. The discussions addressed specific configuration requirements and the submission processes via xml files. The EU offered assistance and contacts in this regard started immediately after the meeting.

3.3. TRQs – administration

The administration of TRQs was also addressed. New Zealand sought clarity on the return and reissuance of licenses in cases of unused licences, and on how the EU intended to

implement Annex 2-A, Section B (16) of the EU-NZ FTA: “the importing Party shall provide a mechanism for the return and reissue, until the end of the quota year, of unused import licences in a timely and transparent manner”. The EU explained the underlying system, the role of Member States’ licensing authorities and the support and training provided by the European Commission in this regard to the EU Member States.

New Zealand indicated that they encounter cases for which they would have the need to return unused licences. It was agreed that the European Commission would seek information from Member States licensing authorities on past cases where import licences have been neither used nor returned, while New Zealand would inform the European Commission of the reasons for those cases where import licences have not been used, recalling that unused licences should be exceptional cases.

3.4. EU Deforestation Regulation

New Zealand recalled that Annex 2-A Section B (15) of the EU-NZ FTA specifies that imports under this FTA should not be subject to any additional conditions beyond those of the annex, unless mutually agreed. New Zealand considers that the EU’s Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) does impose such requirements, entailing increased costs, which would make the use of the quotas provided under the FTA uneconomical. In response, the EU explained that the objectives of the EUDR are to address global deforestation and forest degradation, in response to internationally recognised public policy concerns, the regulation was developed in compliance with the EU’s international commitments, including WTO and FTAs. It is in line with the non-discrimination principle, applying in an equal manner to products inside and outside the EU. The 12-months postponement is a demonstration that the EU takes its partners’ concerns seriously. The EU is committed to facilitating the implementation of the regulation and is actively preparing its application, e.g. through an IT system already open for testing, issuing FAQs and updates to clarify further components, committed to simplify and clarify the implementation. Both EU and New Zealand recognised the opportunity for further discussion in the context and preparation of the FTA’s Trade and Sustainable Development (TSD) Committee and at future meetings of the Committee on Trade in Goods, as necessary.

3.5. Building materials

The EU noted the interest of companies from several EU Member States in exporting to New Zealand products used in the construction sector. The EU is following closely the ongoing legislative procedure in New Zealand which may facilitate such exports in the future, e.g. by recognising certain international standards. New Zealand confirmed that the Amendment Act had just passed into law and there were three initiatives that would be implemented on a rolling basis. They provided useful updates on their ongoing process, specifically the current targeted industry consultation on the forthcoming regulations and noted that they will submit the appropriate WTO notification after the regulations are adopted later this year and offered to answer any further questions from the EU Delegation in Wellington.

3.6. Critical Raw Materials (CRM)

The EU presented its latest Critical Raw Materials (CRM) policy developments, aiming to strengthen and diversify supply chains. New Zealand expressed interest for more information

as the EU supports recognised strategic projects, including in third countries, under the European Critical Raw Materials Act and bilateral and multilateral cooperation via non-legally and legally binding instruments (e.g. FTAs, Strategic Partnerships on CRM, MSP Forum). New Zealand provided an overview of its Mineral Strategy, exploring CRM opportunities and potential cooperation with the EU as well as other partners. New Zealand noted that global supply chain connectivity is among their priorities.

3.7. Clean and green transition

New Zealand outlined in detail its climate, clean green transition framework and energy policy goals towards transitioning to net-zero by 2050, including renewable energy targets and emission reduction plans. Both sides discussed the opportunity for further cooperation, particularly in renewable energy research and development under programmes such as Horizon Europe. The EU expressed interest for continued future discussions on the related topics which are cross-cutting and touching on various chapters of the FTA (e.g. trade in goods, energy and raw materials, trade and sustainable development). It was agreed that further contacts and exchanges between the relevant services on both sides could take place, with the involvement of the EU Delegation in Wellington.

3.8. Preference utilisation, statistics

The discussion covered the exchange of statistics on the utilisation of FTA preferences and the related considerations (e.g. timing of the exchange, level of detail such as HS code, annual data, figures in value, etc). The EU explained its existing framework and practice with other FTA partners and suggested to follow the same model with New Zealand. Aspects of publicly available data and FTA preference utilisation were also raised, with agreement that protecting the sensitive information and identity of the economic operators is important. It was agreed that the experts will be in contact after the meeting to discuss data exchange. The EU offered to share the template it is using for the data collections. It was also agreed that in a few months' time the data of the first 12 months of the FTA could be exchanged. Discussions also covered the preparations for the Trade Committee meeting regarding reporting on preference utilisation. This aspect will be followed-up by the FTA coordinators.

Agenda Item 4: Confirmation of contact points

Both countries shared information on contact points. New Zealand noted the contact point is David Allen, and the European Union contact point Marianna Molnar. The list of contact points can be found in Annex 3.

Agenda Item 5: Other Business

N/A

Agenda Item 6: Meeting Report

The European Union as the host, would provide a first draft of the meeting report within 2 calendar weeks (not later than **23 April 2025**) and would send to the New Zealand contact point for their side's review. The report will be made publicly available once both sides have agreed to it.

Agenda Item 7: Closing Remarks and next meeting

Both sides agreed that the meeting was held in a smooth and constructive manner. Both Chairs acknowledged the positive exchange of views and information even on the more complicated and technical topics, such as TRQ management and appreciated the shared commitment to full implementation of the EU-NZ FTA and establishing a basis for an even stronger trade and economic relationship. As next year's host, New Zealand agreed to provide the EU with details for the next meeting through the Trade in Goods Committee contact point when possible.

Chairs:

Mr David Allen

Senior Adviser, Trade & Economic Group

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
New Zealand

Ms Marianna Molnar

Policy officer – Trade relations with New Zealand

European Commission, Directorate-General for Trade and Economic Security
European Union

Annex 2

Agenda for the 1st EU-New Zealand FTA**Committee on Trade in Goods***9 April 2025***Virtual meeting – Host: EU**

Time (EU)	Time (NZ)	Agenda Item
8.00-8.10 am	18.00-18.10 pm	1. Opening Remarks (EU to open)
8.10-8.15 am	18.10-18.15 pm	2. Adoption of Agenda
		3. Issues to be discussed
	18.15 – 18.20	3.1 Rules of Procedure - Adopt Annex 24
8.20-8.45 am	18.20-18.45 pm	3.2 NEW ZEALAND TRQs – paperless certification
	18.45 – 19.00	3.3 NEW ZEALAND TRQs – administration
9.00-9.15 am	19.00-19.15 pm	3.4 NEW ZEALAND EUDR elements related to TRQs
9.15-9.35 am	19.15-19.35 pm	3.5 EU New Zealand's reform of building materials related regulations
9.35-10.05 am	19.35-20.05 pm	3.6 EU Critical Raw Materials or Minerals: policy developments in the EU and NZ
10.05-10.35 am	20.05-20.35 pm	3.7 EU Clean and green transition
10.35-11.05 am	20.35-21.05 pm	3.8 NEW ZEALAND Preference utilisation rates
11.05-11.10 am	21.05-21.10 pm	4. Confirmation of contact points (NZ/EU)
11.10-11.30 am	21.10-21.30 pm	5. Other Business
		6. Meeting Report (process) (NZ/EU)
		7. Closing Remarks (incl. next meeting) (NZ/EU)