

ANNEX 9

U.S. GOVERNMENT REVIEW OF U.S.-MEXICO ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY⁶⁹

In the "Response of the Administration to Issues Raised in Connection with the Negotiation of a North American Free Trade Agreement," provided to Congress on May 1, 1991, the Administration undertook to provide a review of U.S.-Mexico environmental issues with particular emphasis on the possible environmental effects of a NAFTA. This Review was conducted by an interagency task force coordinated by the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative in parallel with negotiations of the NAFTA. A draft was issued for public comment in October 1991. Key conclusions of the review are summarized below.

AN INTENSIFIED COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIP FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

- The U.S. and Mexico have worked together for many years on environmental problems, particularly as they affect the border region.
- As momentum has built behind a North American Free Trade Agreement, the nature and extent of such cooperative activities has expanded.
- U.S.-Mexican environmental activities are high priorities for each country and are built upon:
 - formal bilateral agreements covering the border area environment, boundary and water issues, and cooperation on the conservation of natural resources and in addressing Mexico City air pollution;
 - international agreements such as the Montreal Protocol on Ozone Depleting Substances, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species and the Basel Convention on the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal;
 - the environmental statutes and enforcement authorities of each country (Mexico's 1988 Environmental Law is in many respects comparable to U.S. law, in the context of Mexico's civil law system which places greater emphasis on administrative action.).
- In November 1990, Presidents Bush and Salinas directed the preparation of an Integrated Environmental Plan for the Mexican-U.S. Border Area (Border Plan). A draft Border Plan was prepared by a bilateral working group and released in August for public comment. The final Border Plan is being released by U.S. Environmental

69. Office of the United States Trade Representative, Review of U.S.-Mexico Environmental Issues.