

The process associated with this review has provided clear evidence of the benefit of taking environmental concerns into consideration at every stage of the negotiating process. Frequent and substantive contact between the Environmental Review Committee, environmentalists and the negotiators played an important role, not only in optimizing the environmental provisions of the NAFTA, but also in shaping other provisions that do not specifically address the environment. This process, used for the first time in the negotiation of a trade agreement, has established a precedent for the future.