



EU-NEW ZEALAND TRADE AGREEMENT



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GREAT NEWS

EU ratification of the European Union-New Zealand Free trade Agreement is now complete. The European Parliament overwhelmingly voted in favour, allowing the Council of the European Union to conclude it. With 90% of the policy initiatives outlined at the start of the mandate complete, the focus of the European Commission in the final months before European Elections in June 2024 has been to finish the remaining legislative files and put an emphasis on cutting red tape and boosting EU competitiveness.

Key milestones in the EU-NZ relationship

New Zealand free trade agreement gets green light from European Parliament and Council

27 November 2023 – The EU-New Zealand free trade agreement (FTA) has officially passed the plenary vote in the European Parliament with a resounding 83% vote in favour. Following the European Parliament vote on 22 November, the Council (the 27 Trade Ministers of the EU Member States) formally concluded the agreement on 27 November.

The agreement will provide new economic, trade and investment benefits including by opening up new opportunities in terms of market access, investment and public procurement, as well as a modern framework to facilitate digital trade, SME exports, and protect intellectual property for instance.

The agreement also includes the most ambitious sustainability commitments in a trade agreement ever. The agreement incorporates the European Union's new trade and sustainability approach, which includes enforceable commitments based on the Paris Agreement and core International Labour Organization (ILO) standards.

Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) said that the free trade agreement sets a benchmark in the area of sustainable trade and should be considered a gold standard in current and future FTAs negotiations. The next steps are for the agreement to be ratified by New Zealand. It can then enter into force, possibly by mid-2024.

More Information: [Press Release](#)

EU signs Samoa Agreement on future relations with African, Caribbean and Pacific countries

16 November 2023 – The Commissioner for International Partnerships, **Jutta Urpilainen**, recently travelled to Samoa to represent the EU at the signing of a new agreement between the EU and the 79 members of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS).

The ceremony took place in Apia on **14-15 November 2023**. This new agreement establishes a fresh legal framework governing relations between the EU, its Member States, and the 79 countries comprising the African, Caribbean and Pacific regions for the next twenty years. The **Samoa Agreement** will succeed the previous **Cotonou Agreement**.

The signing of the agreement enshrines the commitment and dedication of the EU and African, Caribbean & Pacific countries to create a comprehensive, mutually advantageous relationship. All parties seek to address current challenges while seizing opportunities for growth and development. While the agreement includes a common foundation, it is combined with **three regional protocols** for Africa, the Caribbean and the **Pacific** with a focus on the specific needs of each region. The Pacific protocol will deepen the relationship between the EU and Pacific Island Countries.



The provisional application of the Agreement will start on 1 January 2024. The Agreement will enter into force upon consent by the European Parliament and ratification by the Parties.

More Information: [The European Union and Samoa, press release](#), [Samoa Agreement](#), [Text of the Agreement](#)

Director General of Agriculture visits New Zealand for the EU-New Zealand International Strategic Agriculture Dialogue

21 October 2023 – In October, European Commission Director General for Agriculture and Rural Development, **Wolfgang Burtscher** met his New Zealand counterparts, including **Ray Smith**, Director General of the Ministry of Primary Industries, to exchange on shared agricultural and sustainability goals.



As part of the closer relationship that the EU and New Zealand are building, the **International Strategic Agricultural Dialogue (ISAD)** updates the long-standing bilateral annual agri-trade talks and provides a strengthened and modernised platform for cooperation on agricultural trade and sustainability. Mr Burtscher and Mr Smith exchanged experiences of their agricultural policies, discussed the geopolitical challenges affecting agriculture and food security, EU-NZ common interests in sustainable agriculture and sustainable food systems, rural development and farmers retention as well as opportunities for collaboration including in international fora.

Mr Burtscher also took the opportunity of his visit to discuss how to provide food security while ensuring that farming is done in a sustainable way. One of the key tools to enable this is research and development. New Zealand researchers have already begun collaboration with European researchers through Horizon Europe which New Zealand recently acceded to.

Mr Hamish Marr, New Zealand's Special Agricultural Trade Envoy, guided Mr Burtscher in field visits covering lamb and dairy farming. Mr Burtscher and Mr Smith concluded the visit with a debrief on ISAD talks where they also engaged with stakeholders.

Comment

Aotearoa New Zealand has one of the most productive agricultural sectors in the world. The EU and New Zealand have common interests in the area of agriculture and sustainability, and programs like Horizon Europe will enable cross-fertilisation of NZ and EU farming excellence.

COMMISSION WORK PROGRAMME

European Commission presents 2024 programme

17 October 2023 – The Commission has presented its final work program for the current mandate ahead of European Elections in June 2024. The program puts a strong focus on simplifying rules for citizens and businesses across the European Union.

Nearly 90% of the promises set by the new Commission in 2019 have been fulfilled, and as we approach the 2024 European elections, the new initiatives detailed in the Work Programme are focused on fulfilling the Commission's obligations and addressing new, arising challenges.

Among the proposed initiatives are a new **Space Law** and **Communication on the space data economy** slated for Q1 2024. The European space law will aim to set rules on space traffic management and keep critical space infrastructure safe. The Communication on the space data economy will focus on ways to increase the use of space data across different economic sectors in the EU.

The Commission remains steadfast on its commitment to the environment by seeking to establish a **2040 climate target**. The goal will keep the EU on track to reach its 2050 climate neutrality targets. One leg is that the Commission is proposing a new **European wind power package** (see below). Another aspect is an initiative on **industrial carbon management** to enable environmentally sustainable carbon capture in the EU. A major concern in recent years has been the effects of extreme weather events caused by climate change. For this reason, the Commission will adopt an initiative on water resilience to ensure access to water for citizens, nature and the economy, while also tackling catastrophic flooding and water shortages.

Comment

Space policy and climate are two areas of policy that New Zealand has given much attention to in the last years. In May 2023, New Zealand published a new strategy on space. Like the EU, New Zealand has also set a climate target of reaching net zero by 2050.

More Information: [Commission 2024 Work Programme](#), [State of the Union](#), [Letter of Intent](#)

Foreign Policy Developments

Statement of the Members of the European Council on the situation in the Middle East

15 October 2023 – The members of the **European Council** have adopted a statement that sets the EU's common position on the unfolding situation in the Middle East.

The European Union condemns in the strongest possible terms Hamas and its brutal and indiscriminate terrorist attacks across Israel and deeply deplores the loss of lives. There is no justification for terror. The EU strongly emphasises Israel's right to defend itself in line with humanitarian and international law in the face of such violent and indiscriminate attacks. The EU reiterates the importance to ensure the protection of all civilians at all times in line with International Humanitarian Law.

The EU calls on Hamas to immediately release all hostages without any precondition. The EU reiterates the importance of the provision of urgent humanitarian aid and stand ready to continue supporting those civilians most in need in Gaza in coordination with partners, ensuring that such assistance is not abused by terrorist organisations. It is crucial to prevent regional escalation.

The EU remains committed to a lasting and sustainable peace based on the two-state solution through reinvigorated efforts in the Middle East Peace Process. The EU underlines the need to engage broadly with the legitimate Palestinian authorities as well as regional and international partners who could have a positive role to play in preventing further escalation.

More Information: [Press Release](#)



European Union prepares the ground for enlargement

8 November 2023 – The European Commission presented a new package for possible enlargement of the EU. Harkening back to her State of the Union speech, European Commission President, Ursula von der Leyen [said](#) that **“Completing our Union is the call of history”**.

The announcement followed a visit to the western Balkans by President Ursula von der Leyen, who vowed to bring the economies of the Western Balkans and the European Union closer together. During a four-day visit to North Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Commission President outlined plans to bring the region’s economies together to lay the foundations for the whole group to join the EU Single Market.

EU enlargement would also encompass a pathway for both Ukraine and Moldova to join the EU. President von der Leyen paid a visit to Kyiv where she said that Ukraine had “already completed way over 90 per cent” of its required steps to open EU accession negotiations.

As for next steps, in December the Council will deliver its opinion on the opening of accession negotiations with Ukraine. The Commission will also present in Q2 2024 a Communication on pre-enlargement reforms and policy reviews (see above 2024 Commission Programme).

More Information: [Press Release](#), [Communication on EU Enlargement](#), [EU Enlargement Process](#), [Euronews](#), [FT](#), [FT](#)

Trade Developments

Investigation opened into subsidised electric vehicles from China

4 October 2023 – The European Commission has launched an anti-subsidy investigation into the **imports of battery electric vehicles (BEV)** from China. The Commission will look into whether illegal subsidies in China are unfairly harming European BEV manufacturers, and if so, how to remedy the situation.

The investigation comes of the Commission's own initiative. The European Union is committed to follow the relevant WTO rules and the investigation follows pre-initiation consultations with the Chinese government prior to the publication of the Notice of Initiation.

The investigation will be concluded within maximum 13 months of initiation. If legally warranted, any provisional anti-subsidy duties may be imposed by 9 months after initiation, with any definitive measures to be imposed up to 4 months later or within 13 months of the initiation of the investigation.

Comment

Distortions in international markets can have global impacts, even for Aotearoa New Zealand. In this instance the Commission is taking action to ensure that there is a level-playing field for international competition fully in line with its commitment to the international rules-based system of trade.

More Information: [Press Release](#)

Council and Parliament pass regulation on economic coercion by third countries

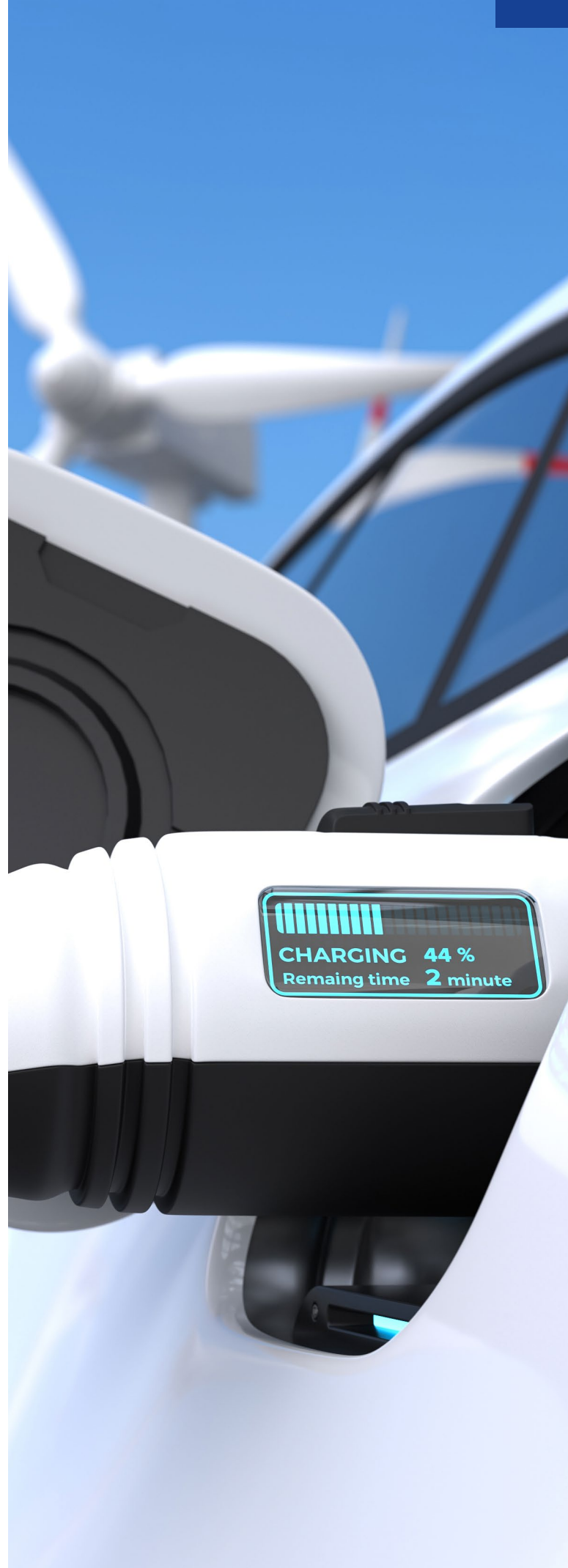
22 November 2023 – The Council and Parliament have adopted the new **Anti-Coercion Instrument (ACI)**, which is meant to serve as a deterrent for third countries targeting the EU or its member states through economic coercive means.

Where coercive measures in trade and investment cannot be resolved through dialogue, the ACI gives the Commission means to adopt counter-measures.

The ACI and any actions which can be taken under the instrument are consistent with the EU's international obligations and fully grounded in international law.

The regulation will enter into force 20 days after its publication in the Official Journal of the EU.

More Information: [Press Release](#), [Regulation](#)





COP28 UAE



EU Climate Commissioner Wopke Hoekstra met New Zealand Climate Minister Simon Watts at COP28

Green Deal Developments

European Union sets out priorities for COP28

17 October 2023 – The 28th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28) taking place in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, from 30 November to 12 December 2023. Wopke Hoekstra, the new Commissioner for Climate Action, has voiced the strong ambitions of the European Union. The EU is committed to substantially scaling up global climate ambition to keep the 1.5°C objective within reach, in line with the Paris Agreement. The EU is determined to reduce its net GHG emissions by at least 55% by 2030 compared to 1990 levels and achieve climate neutrality by 2050 at the latest.

At COP, the European Union is advocating for stepping up global efforts towards climate neutrality, phasing out fossil fuels and increasing renewable energy capacity and energy efficiency, taking greater steps towards climate mitigation and adaptation, and increasing climate finance to address and loss and damage from catastrophic climate change.

More Information: [Press Release](#), [Council Conclusions](#), [Politico](#), [Reuters](#)

EU deforestation law comes into effect

29 June 2023 – A new law to tackle deforestation has formally come into force and will apply from 29 December 2024 (29 June 2025 for SME operators). The **EU Deforestation Regulation** aims to create deforestation-free supply chains in and to the EU. The regulation will help to reduce the EU's consumption and production linked to deforestation, focusing on 7 commodities through which the EU has the bigger impact in terms of global deforestation (beef, cocoa, coffee, palm oil, rubber, soya and wood).

Operators placing relevant commodities or products for the first time on the EU market, or export from it, will have to exercise due diligence and be able to prove that their products were produced in compliance with the laws of the relevant country of origin and that they were not the result of deforestation.

The European Commission is developing a system to classify countries as either low, standard or high risks for deforestation. Simplified rules are foreseen for companies sourcing from countries or regions classified as 'low risk'. The full list should be published in early 2024. It is expected that New Zealand will be classified as low-risk, which carries it with it lower compliance and reporting costs.

The European Commission issued a 'frequently asked questions' document for operators and traders in June which will be updated based on feedback received. The European Commission continues engaging with partners in different format about the regulation and its implementation.

Comment

New Zealand is primarily exposed to the regulation through its beef exports. Wood products derived from harvesting of planted forests which are then replanted are not within the scope of the regulation.

More Information: [Deforestation-free products](#), [FAQs](#), [Text of the Regulation](#)



Commission sets out immediate plans to boost wind power industry

23 October 2023 – As outlined in President von der Leyen’s [State of Union](#) speech in September, the European Commission has presented a [European Wind Power Action Plan](#) and [Communication on offshore renewables](#) to ensure that the clean energy transition goes hand-in-hand with industrial competitiveness and continues to be a European success story.

The EU has set itself a target of generating at least 42.5% renewable energy by 2030. This will require a massive increase in wind installed capacity with an expected growth from **204 GW in 2022** to more than **500 GW in 2030**.

The Commission commits to creating a fair and competitive international environment for wind power. The Commission will achieve this by closely monitoring **unfair trade practices** and will continue to use **trade agreements** to facilitate access to foreign markets, while promoting the adoption of EU and international standards for the sector.

More Information: [Press Release](#), [Factsheet](#), [Communication on offshore renewable energy](#), [European Wind Power Action Plan](#)



EU-NZ Policy Futures seminar on circular economy

30 November – In collaboration with the University of Auckland Business School, the EU-NZ Policy Futures seminar ***Shaping a Path to Circular Economies in the EU and New Zealand*** was a dialogue on policy innovation for a sustainable future, specifically exploring the shift towards circular economies. The panel discussed the global momentum towards the circular economy. The event delved into the critical roles of policy making, industry engagement, and consumer behaviour to bring about the circular economy transition.

The panellists included:

- Louise Nash, Circularity.
- Katrien Verleye, Ghent University.
- Ken Webster. Cranfield University.
- Julia Fehrer, University of Auckland Business School.
- Kenneth Husted, University of Auckland Business School.

Comment

*This conversation comes as the EU progresses with its **Circular Economy Action Plan** aiming to decouple economic growth from resource use while fostering long-term competitiveness. In New Zealand, the **Plastic Packaging Declaration and Waste Minimisation Act** lays the groundwork for comprehensive legislation.*

More Information: [Event information](#), [Link to the event recording](#)





Economic Security

Launch of collective risk assessments in four technology areas critical for EU economic security

3 October 2023 – In June 2023, a strategy was proposed to enhance EU’s economic security. As part of this approach, the Commission has issued a recommendation for risk assessments to be carried out on **four critical technologies**. The EU focus on economic security focuses on minimising risks arising from certain economic flows in the context of increased geopolitical tensions and accelerated technological shifts, while preserving maximum levels of economic openness and dynamism. The sectors covered in the assessments include:

- Advanced semiconductors.
- Artificial Intelligence.
- Quantum Computing.
- Biotechnologies.

The Commission recommends that Member States, together with the Commission, initially conduct collective risk assessments of these four areas by the end of this year. Based on the extensive feedback and consultation procedures foreseen, the Commission may propose further initiatives in this respect in Q2 2024.

The aim of this collective exercise is to prepare the European Union for future economic shocks stemming from risks to the resilience of supply chains, risks to the physical and cyber security of critical infrastructures, risks related to technology security and technology leakage, and risks of weaponization of economic dependencies or economic coercion.

More Information: [Press Release](#)

Digital Developments

European Parliament passes Data Act

9 November 2023 – The European Parliament has voted to pass the Data Act, a new landmark piece of legislation that will help to complete the Single Market for data in the European Union.

Key provisions of the legislation include (i) rules on the **sharing of data** generated through connected products or related services, (ii) allows users to access the data they generate, (iii) contribute to the development of **new services**, particularly in artificial intelligence, where vast amounts of data are required for algorithm training, and (iv) rules to make after-sales services and repairs of connected devices cheaper.

The law also contains provisions to allow public sector bodies in exceptional circumstances or emergencies, such as floods and wildfires, to access and use data held by the private sector.

The legislation was adopted with 481 votes in favour to 31, with 71 abstentions. It will now need formal approval by Council to become law. Most of the law’s provisions will become applicable 20 months after its entry into force.

More information: [Press release](#), [Adopted Text \(09.11.2023\)](#)

Agriculture Developments

Commission renews glyphosate permit in the EU

16 November 2023 – The Commission has renewed the permission to use glyphosate for another ten years. Member States did not reach an agreement at the **Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed (SCOPAFF)** on 16 October, nor at the **Appeal Committee** on 16 November. Standing Committees deliver opinions that inform the Commission’s work on measures that it is planning. Such measures relate to the implementation of legislation that is already adopted.

The Commission has therefore moved to immediately renew the approval of glyphosate for a period of 10 years, subject to certain new conditions and restrictions. A final decision needs to be taken before 14 December as the current approval expires on 15 December 2023.

Comment

The use of glyphosate has been the subject of much debate both in the European Union and around the world. In New Zealand, while the use of glyphosate is permitted, its use is far more limited than elsewhere in the world.

More Information: [Press Release](#), [Press Release](#), [Questions & Answers](#), [Euronews](#)

“Enjoy it’s from Europe” at the New Zealand Agricultural Show

17 November 2023 – The Delegation of the European Union to New Zealand (EUD) was present at the **New Zealand Agricultural Show in Christchurch**. This was a great opportunity to meet with the New Zealand farming community and families to talk about the EU, the recent developments in EU-NZ relations - in particular the free trade agreement - and promote **geographical indications** as sign of authentic, high-quality food, wine or spirit whose qualities are specifically linked to the area of production.

More Information: [LinkedIn](#), [New Zealand Agricultural Show](#)



Horizon Europe Developments

University of Auckland and Auckland University of Technology host workshop on Horizon Europe proposal drafting

9 November 2023 – In partnership with the **University of Auckland** and **Auckland University of Technology**, the **New Zealand Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Employment** and the European Commission's [EURAXESS Australia & New Zealand](#) service held a workshop on drafting Horizon Europe proposals.

The event built upon the recent accession of New Zealand to Horizon Europe, a major opportunity for New Zealand researchers to collaborate with EU researchers and gain access to the largest research funding programme in the world. The workshop provided:

- Updates on New Zealand's involvement in Horizon Europe.
- A workshop session on Horizon Europe proposal writing.
- A chance to hear from New Zealand National Contact Points for each Pillar II cluster.
- An opportunity to network with others in the respective clusters.

More Information: [Horizon Europe](#), [EURAXESS Australia & New Zealand](#), [Workshop Information](#)

EU and Canada conclude negotiations for association to Horizon Europe

24 November 2023 – At the **Canada-EU Summit** European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced the conclusion of negotiations for Canada's association to **Pillar II of Horizon Europe**, the EU's key funding programme for research and innovation. It marks a significant milestone in our commitment to foster mutual collaboration in research and innovation.

President von der Leyen said "We warmly welcome Canada into the Horizon Europe family, and we eagerly anticipate the innovative breakthroughs and transformative discoveries that will emerge from our joint projects. Together, we will chart new frontiers, push the boundaries of knowledge, and build a more resilient and prosperous world for generations to come."

Comment

Canada's accession to Pillar II of Horizon Europe means that New Zealand researchers will be able to collaborate with EU and Canadian researchers on projects. This expands opportunities for all parties and opens the way for globe spanning research projects.

More information: [Press Release](#), [Joint Statement](#)

