

CLIENT ALERT

USMCA Contains First-Ever Provisions to Take on the Challenge of Marine Litter

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As part of the United States, Mexico and Canada's agreement to modernize the 25-year-old NAFTA, the new United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) which passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 385 – 41 on December 19 will include a number of first-ever provisions in the environment chapter. These provisions include efforts to address the estimated 8 million tons of litter entering our oceans each year by promoting waste management infrastructure and advancing efforts related to abandoned, lost, or otherwise discarded fishing gear. Importantly, the implementing bill lays out several funding requests to ensure strong enforcement of the environment chapter.

The marine litter provisions in the USMCA are likely to serve as a model for future trade agreements. The issue is seen as a priority for both the administration and the Congress which passed the Save Our Seas Act in 2018 and is currently working on a Save Our Seas Act 2.0 which are directly aimed at improving efforts to combat marine debris.

Crowell & Moring International is working with a variety of stakeholders across multilateral institutions such as APEC and the United Nations Environment Programme to help countries address the marine litter problem.

For more information, please contact the professional(s) listed below, or your regular Crowell & Moring contact.

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