

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

[Public Notice: 12071]

United States Ocean Acidification Action Plan Call for Public Comment**ACTION:** Notice and request for comment.

SUMMARY: The Department of State and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) will be accepting public comments on the proposed scope for the upcoming United States Ocean Acidification Action Plan (OA-AP). Drafting a national OA-AP is a commitment made by all members of the International Alliance to Combat Ocean Acidification (OA Alliance). The document will highlight our leadership in reducing carbon emissions, strengthening monitoring, research and coordination research efforts, and investing in adaptive measures.

DATES: The comment period will be open for 30 days from the publication of this notice. Guidance on how to submit comments and the proposed content for the OA-AP are below.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: If you have questions about the United States OA-AP, contact Meaghan Cuddy at CuddyMR@state.gov or at (202) 340-3272.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The United States joined the OA Alliance at the UN Ocean Conference in June 2022. The OA Alliance is a voluntary coalition that works to build international momentum for actions that address the causes of ocean acidification (OA), increase research and monitoring efforts, and advance the resilience of coastal communities. The Department of State and NOAA co-lead for U.S. national membership in the OA Alliance and have been working with the OA Alliance secretariat to develop a plan for drafting the U.S. OA-AP.

Recently, the United States released its first-event Ocean Climate Action Plan (OCAP), which details ongoing and planned Federal ocean-based climate mitigation and adaptation activities and recommends new or enhanced ocean science and policy actions to tackle climate change. The OA-AP is designed to be a complementary component of the OCAP, addressing one of the key impacts on the ocean from anthropogenic carbon emissions.

In advance of drafting the OA-AP, the Department of State and NOAA are seeking public comment on the scope of the plan. The U.S. OA-AP will be drafted with input and feedback from the U.S. Federal Interagency Working

Group on Ocean Acidification, which includes 14 U.S. Federal agencies.

The proposed scope of the document includes the following areas: (1) A brief overview of the cause of OA and its impacts; (2) A brief overview of the national-level framework of policies, programs, and actions implemented by federal agencies to reduce carbon emissions, coordinate research and monitoring efforts, and adapt to OA, along with remaining challenges; (3) a brief overview of subnational efforts to address OA, particularly by subnational U.S. members for the OA Alliance; (4) Proposed and/or planned future federal actions and goals to address ocean acidification and its root causes; and (5) New ideas for engagement at the international level to support global research, monitoring, adaptation, and carbon reduction efforts to address the impacts of OA, giving recognition to what can't be solved without international engagement.

The OA-AP is intended to be a short, high-level document that highlights the overall general direction for U.S. response to OA. It will, by design, not include all potential U.S. actions, but serve as a general roadmap to the United States' strategy to address OA through comprehensive policy across the interagency and at multiple levels of management. We are requesting input on what new directions the US should consider, within reason, in how we are addressing ocean acidification both nationally and internationally. Public comments should address: (1) The general proposed scope of the OA-AP, and/or (2) Suggestions for ambitious national-level policy, technical, scientific, or management actions to be included in the OA-AP. It is recommended that comments are limited to 500 words. Please note that public suggestions for action are not guaranteed to be included in the final OA-AP. Comments can be submitted in writing to CuddyMR@state.gov.

The OA Alliance was launched at the 2016 Our Ocean Conference by the Pacific Coast Consortium, a consortium of governments including British Columbia, Washington, Oregon and California, with the consulting firms Cascadia Policy Solutions and Ross Strategic serving as facilitators. It now includes country members as well, including Chile, Norway, France, Canada, Sweden, and the United States. The United States, as a global leader in OA research, vulnerability assessments, modeling, technology development, scientific capacity building, and adaptation, joined the OA Alliance for the purpose of supporting international collaboration to understand and combat

OA. Drafting and releasing the U.S. national action plan will provide a model for other OA Alliance members seeking to integrate OA research, monitoring, and adaptation efforts across their governments. Additional information about the OA Alliance can be found at <https://www.oaalliance.org/>.

Authority: 22 U.S.C. 2656.

Elizabeth Kim,

Director, Office of Ocean and Polar Affairs, Department of State.

[FR Doc. 2023-10456 Filed 5-16-23; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4710-09-P

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

[Public Notice: 12075]

Notice of Determinations; Culturally Significant Objects Being Imported for Exhibition—Determinations: “Brilliant Bohemian Garnets” Exhibition

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given of the following determinations: I hereby determine that certain objects being imported from abroad pursuant to an agreement with their foreign owner or custodian for temporary display in the exhibition “Brilliant Bohemian Garnets” at the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and at possible additional exhibitions or venues yet to be determined, are of cultural significance, and, further, that their temporary exhibition or display within the United States as aforementioned is in the national interest. I have ordered that Public Notice of these determinations be published in the **Federal Register**.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Elliot Chiu, Attorney-Adviser, Office of the Legal Adviser, U.S. Department of State (telephone: 202-632-6471; email: section2459@state.gov). The mailing address is U.S. Department of State, L/PD, 2200 C Street NW (SA-5), Suite 5H03, Washington, DC 20522-0505.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The foregoing determinations were made pursuant to the authority vested in me by the Act of October 19, 1965 (79 Stat. 985; 22 U.S.C. 2459), E.O. 12047 of March 27, 1978, the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998 (112 Stat. 2681, *et seq.*; 22 U.S.C. 6501 note, *et seq.*), Delegation of Authority No. 234 of October 1, 1999, Delegation of Authority No. 236-3 of August 28,

2000, and Delegation of Authority No. 523 of December 22, 2021.

Scott Weinhold,

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Department of State.

[FR Doc. 2023–10519 Filed 5–16–23; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4710–05–P

**OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES
TRADE REPRESENTATIVE**

[Docket Number USTR–2023–0003]

**Annual Review of Country Eligibility
for Benefits Under the African Growth
and Opportunity Act for Calendar Year
2024**

AGENCY: Office of the United States Trade Representative.

ACTION: Notice of virtual public hearing and request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) is announcing the initiation of the annual review of the eligibility of sub-Saharan African countries to receive the benefits of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). The AGOA Implementation Subcommittee of the Trade Policy Staff Committee (AGOA Subcommittee) is requesting written public comments for this review and will conduct a virtual public hearing on this matter. In developing its recommendations for the President on AGOA country eligibility for calendar year 2024, the AGOA Subcommittee will consider the written comments, written testimony, and oral testimony.

DATES:

July 7, 2023 at 11:59 p.m. EDT: Deadline for submission of written comments, requests to testify, and written testimony, regarding the eligibility of countries to be designated as beneficiary sub-Saharan African countries.

July 24, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. EDT: The AGOA Subcommittee will convene a virtual public hearing to receive oral testimony related to sub-Saharan African countries' eligibility for AGOA benefits via WebEx.

ADDRESSES: The AGOA Subcommittee strongly prefers electronic submissions made through the Federal eRulemaking Portal: <https://www.regulations.gov> (*Regulations.gov*). Follow the instructions for submitting written comments and testimony and requests to testify in sections III and IV below, using Docket Number USTR–2023–0003. For alternatives to on-line submissions, please contact Jeremy

Streatfeild, Director of African Affairs, Office of African Affairs, in advance of the relevant deadline at Jeremy.E.Streatfeild@ustr.eop.gov or (202) 395–8642.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Jeremy Streatfeild, Director of African Affairs, Office of African Affairs, at Jeremy.E.Streatfeild@ustr.eop.gov or (202) 395–8642.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

AGOA (Title I of the Trade and Development Act of 2000, Pub. L. 106–200) (19 U.S.C. 2466a *et seq.*), as amended, authorizes the President to designate sub-Saharan African countries as beneficiaries eligible for duty-free treatment for certain additional products not included for duty-free treatment under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) (title V of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2461 *et seq.*) (1974 Act), as well as for the preferential treatment for certain textile and apparel articles. The President may designate a country as a beneficiary sub-Saharan African country eligible for AGOA benefits if he determines that the country meets the eligibility criteria set forth in section 104 of AGOA (19 U.S.C. 3703) and section 502 of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2462).

Section 104 of AGOA includes requirements that the country has established or is making continual progress toward establishing, among other things:

- a market-based economy;
- the rule of law;
- political pluralism;
- the right to due process;
- the elimination of barriers to U.S. trade and investment;
- economic policies to reduce poverty;
- a system to combat corruption and bribery, and;
- protection of internationally recognized worker rights.

In addition, the country may not engage in activities that undermine U.S. national security or foreign policy interests or engage in gross violations of internationally recognized human rights. Section 502 of the 1974 Act provides for country eligibility criteria under GSP. For a complete list of the AGOA eligibility criteria and more information on the GSP criteria, see section 104 of the AGOA and section 502 of the 1974 Act.

Section 506A of the 1974 Act requires the President to monitor and annually review the progress of each sub-Saharan African country in meeting the foregoing eligibility criteria in order to

determine if a beneficiary sub-Saharan African country should continue to be eligible, and if a sub-Saharan African country that currently is not a beneficiary, should be designated as a beneficiary. If the President determines that a beneficiary sub-Saharan African country is not making continual progress in meeting the eligibility requirements, the President must terminate the designation of the country as a beneficiary sub-Saharan African country. The President also may withdraw, suspend or limit the application of duty-free treatment with respect to specific articles from a country if he determines that it would be more effective in promoting compliance with AGOA eligibility requirements than terminating the designation of the country as a beneficiary sub-Saharan African country.

For 2023 the President designated the following 35 countries as beneficiary sub-Saharan African countries:

1. Angola
2. Benin
3. Botswana
4. Cabo Verde
5. Central African Republic
6. Chad
7. Comoros
8. Democratic Republic of Congo
9. Republic of Congo
10. Cote d'Ivoire
11. Djibouti
12. Eswatini
13. Gabon
14. The Gambia
15. Ghana
16. Guinea-Bissau
17. Kenya
18. Lesotho
19. Liberia
20. Madagascar
21. Malawi
22. Mauritius
23. Mozambique
24. Namibia
25. Niger
26. Nigeria
27. Rwanda (AGOA apparel benefits suspended effective July 31, 2018)
28. Sao Tome & Principe
29. Senegal
30. Sierra Leone
31. South Africa
32. Tanzania
33. Togo
34. Uganda
35. Zambia

The President did not designate the following sub-Saharan African countries as beneficiary sub-Saharan African countries for 2023:

1. Burkina Faso
2. Burundi
3. Cameroon
4. Equatorial Guinea (graduated from GSP; ineligible for consideration for AGOA benefits)