

DEPARTMENT OF STATE**[Public Notice 4554]****United States Climate Change Science Program**

ACTION: Request U.S. nomination of experts for consideration as coordinating lead authors, lead authors, contributing authors, expert reviewers, and review editors for the Fourth Assessment Report (AR4) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

SUMMARY: The role of the IPCC is to assess on a comprehensive, objective, open and transparent basis, the scientific, technical, and socio-economic information relevant to understanding the scientific basis of risk of human-induced climate change, its potential impacts, and options for adaptation and mitigation. The IPCC has three working groups: Working Group I assesses the scientific aspects of the climate system and climate change; Working Group II assesses the vulnerability of socio-economic and natural systems to climate change, negative and positive consequences of climate change, and options for adapting to it; and Working Group III assesses options for limiting greenhouse gas emissions and otherwise mitigating climate change. The IPCC provides scientific, technical, and socio-economic advice to the world community, and in particular to the parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) through its periodic assessment reports and special reports. The IPCC has decided to continue to prepare comprehensive assessment reports and agreed to complete its Fourth Assessment Report in 2007.

The U.S. Government has received a request from the IPCC to nominate experts for consideration as coordinating lead authors, lead authors, contributing authors, expert reviewers, and review editors for the different chapters and volumes of the Fourth Assessment Report. Further information on this request—such as the IPCC request for nominations, the approved outlines of the three IPCC working groups for the AR4, a description of the roles responsibilities associated with them, and a nomination form that must be completed for each nominee—may be found at either the IPCC Secretariat (<http://www.ipcc.ch/ar4/nominations/nominations.htm>) or CCSP (<http://www.climatechange.gov/Library/ipcc/default.htm>) Web sites.

DATES: Completed nomination forms for each nominee should be returned to the

Climate Change Science Program Office (ipcc_nominations@usgcrp.gov) by noon Monday, January 5, 2004.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: David Allen, U.S. Climate Change Science Program, Suite 250, 1717 Pennsylvania Ave, NW., Washington, DC 20006. (Phone: 202-419-3468, Fax: 202-223-3065, Email: dallen@usgcrp.gov); or visit the CCSP Web site at <http://www.climatechange.gov>.

Dated: December 8, 2003.

Roberta L. Chew,

Office Director, Acting, Office of Global Change, Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, U.S. Department of State.

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OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE**Harmonization of Most Favored Nation Tariff Rates for the United States, Canada, and Mexico; Liberalization of the Rules of Origin Applicable Under Provisions of the North American Free Trade Agreement**

AGENCY: Office of the United States Trade Representative.

ACTION: Notification of an opportunity to submit proposals to consider tariff harmonization and/or liberalization of the rules of origin under the North American Free Trade Agreement.

SUMMARY: Section 202(q)(2) of the North American Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act ("the Act") (19 USC 3331(b)) authorizes the President to proclaim modifications to the NAFTA rules of origin set forth in the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (HTS), subject to the consultation and layover provisions of section 103 of the Act. This notice is intended to inform the public of the opportunity to submit proposals to request the liberalization of the rules of origin under the NAFTA. In addition, this notice seeks proposals to request the harmonization of the most-favored-nation (MFN) tariff rates of the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

DATES: Public comments are due at USTR by noon, Friday, February 6, 2004.

ADDRESSES: Submission by electronic mail: nafta2004@ustr.gov. Submissions by facsimile: Kent Shigetomi, Director, Mexico and NAFTA Affairs, at (202) 395-9675. The public is strongly encouraged to submit documents electronically rather than by facsimile.

See requirements for submissions below.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kent Shigetomi, Director, Mexico and NAFTA Affairs, Office of Western Hemisphere Affairs, Office of the United States Trade Representative, Room 523, 600 17th Street, NW., Washington, DC 20508; telephone: (202) 395-3412; fax: (202) 395-9675. E-mail to nafta2004@ustr.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On October 7, 2003, the Free Trade Commission ("FTC" or "the Commission"), the body responsible for the implementation of the NAFTA, agreed to pursue further liberalization of the NAFTA rules of origin. The Commission also agreed to commence a study of the MFN tariffs of each of the Parties. (In the case of the United States these are the general or normal trade relations (NTR) rates referenced in general note 3(a)(ii) of the HTS.) The study is to determine whether harmonizing these tariffs could further promote North American trade by reducing export-related transaction costs. Each of the Parties to the NAFTA agreed to initiate consultations with its respective domestic industries to determine which products could be covered by this exercise.

Rules of Origin

The NAFTA and the Act provide for preferential tariff and trade treatment of goods of U.S., Canadian, and Mexican origin. Goods qualify for preferential treatment when imported into the United States if they meet the requirements of the general NAFTA rules of origin set out in section 202 of the Act (19 U.S.C. 3332) and the specific rules incorporated into the HTS. The NAFTA provides that the NAFTA Parties can agree to amend the NAFTA's origin rules. Section 202(q)(2) of the Act authorizes the President to proclaim modifications to the NAFTA rules of origin set forth in the HTS, subject to the consultation and layover provisions of section 103 of the Act.

Since the NAFTA entered into force, the Parties have modified many of the rules of origin. Modifications were made in order to conform the rule of origin to tariff classification changes, to make them less restrictive, and to make them less burdensome to administer.

Tariff Harmonization

Beginning in 1994, the Parties have undertaken four separate tariff acceleration exercises, speeding the elimination of tariffs on several hundred line items, covering billions of dollars in trade. With virtually all tariffs between