

Queens Rep. Crowley's Free Trade Votes Endanger Animals and Ecosystems

On October 12, Representative Joseph Crowley voted for free trade agreements with South Korea, Colombia, and Panama with disastrous implications for animals.



Factory farmed hogs.

Suffering for Farmed Animals

These agreements will dramatically increase factory farming and meat consumption. The Korea-US Free Trade Agreement will allow subsidized US industrial farm exports to flood the South Korean market tariff-free at prices lower than Korea's domestically produced animal products and imports from other nations. According to the Center for Agriculture and Rural Development, this will result in increased consumption of pork by 9%, chicken by 6.1%, cheese by 13.1, and butter by 14.1%. This will doom tens of millions of additional animals every year to hellish lives on factory farms and painful and terrifying slaughterhouse deaths as a direct result. According to Patrick Boyle, president and CEO of the American Meat Institute, "The U.S. Korean Free Trade Agreement (KORUS), if ratified, would be the biggest shot in the arm to the meat and poultry industry since the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1994." To stay competitive with foreign exports, South Korea has increasingly shifted away from traditional family farm agriculture towards corporate agribusiness using high concentration, intensive confinement factory farms. This shift to factory farming has resulted in outbreaks of dangerous livestock diseases like swine flu and hoof and mouth disease and annual mass culls of farmed animals. Between December 2010 and March 2011, close to 10 million animals - pigs, chickens, cattle, goats, and deer - were culled, with 8 million buried alive.

The increased pressure placed on Korea's domestic agriculture from tariff-free free US imports will wipe out Korea's family farms and guarantee that the trend towards factory farming in South Korea will continue, making more culls inevitable. Similarly, the Panama Free Trade Agreement will allow factory farms to wipe out Panama's domestic, family farm agriculture as US factory farm exports are allowed to dominate the Panamanian market.



Pigs buried alive.



Taipei dolphin hunt.

Ocean Life Endangered

These trade agreements also put ocean life at risk. South Korea announced in March 2011 that it will allow 200 wild dolphins to be captured in the Sea of Japan and is also importing dolphins from the notorious Taiji dolphin hunt in Japan exposed in the film "The Cove." Whereas the US supports CITES listing for threatened bluefin tuna, South Korea's bluefin catch and exports to Japan are surging. Flouting the international whaling moratorium, South Korea allows fishermen who "accidentally" catch whales to sell them at state-designated facilities. South Korea's environmental organizations are calling on international pressure to influence their government to implement legislation to curb these practices. By signing the Korea FTA without first demanding Korea address these issues, the US squandered critical leverage to encourage the Korean government to match a broad international consensus against these practices.

The Panama Free Trade Agreement permits the tariff-free export of dolphins from Panama to marine mammal parks, where dolphins live short, miserable lives. The agreement also empowers dolphin capture operations to challenge any effort to restrict the capture and export live dolphins and whales.



Blue fin tuna: threatened by commercial fishing.

Rainforest Wildlife at Risk

As with the Korea Agreement, the Colombia Free Trade Agreement will eliminate tariffs on US agribusiness exports, allowing subsidized, industrially produced rice and factory farmed poultry from the US to flood the Colombian market. Dropping poultry prices will mean a net increase in poultry consumption. A study by OxFam International suggests that 400,000 farmers will lose between 48 and 70% of their income, while 1.8 million will lose at least 16% of their income. Peasants and indigenous people no longer able to farm are likely enter the lucrative trade in illegal animal trafficking. According to ProAves, “Illegal trafficking is like a pyramid, starting with the peasants or indigenous people who are responsible for removing species from their natural habitat, and forwarding them to an intermediary who carries them away and negotiates either within our country or makes contact with international traffickers who are ultimately responsible for making the sale abroad.” Colombia’s Environmental Ministry reports that an estimated 7 million exotic animals are smuggled out of Colombia every year, 80% of whom die in transport.



Amazon rainforest logging

The Colombia FTA itself is intended to stimulate an increase in logging, oil drilling, and mining projects in the Colombian Amazon. Increased Amazon deforestation will hasten the pace of species extinction while contributing to climate change. According to the Associated Press even without the free trade agreement, “capitalist-friendly investment rules are spurring an unprecedented mining and oil boom in Colombia.” Unfortunately, mining and oil projects in Colombia by companies including Occidental Petroleum and Drummond Coal are strongly associated with worker exploitation, violations of the rights of indigenous communities, and widespread environmental destruction. According to the AP, a gold mining project, La Colosa, “would require the removal of 600,000 tons of earth daily to extract the gold fragments dispersed underneath the surface — meaning 90,000 tons of cyanide and 250,000 liters (66,000 gallons) of water per hour to distill the precious metal.” According to the State Environmental Resource Center, “Cyanide is highly toxic...One teaspoon of a 2% solution can kill a person. In general, fish and other aquatic life are killed by cyanide concentrations in

the microgram per liter (part per billion) range, whereas bird and mammal deaths result from cyanide concentrations in the milligram per liter (part per million) range... The hard rock mining industry has a history of cyanide spills, with billions of gallons of cyanide contamination released into the environment, ever since cyanide-leaching began in the 1970s.” In Colombia, extraction projects are also a flash point in the nation’s decades-long civil war. Rebel groups like the ELN have blown up oil pipelines with disastrous ecological consequences.

Foreign corporations will gain even more advantages under the the Colombia FTA, which contains NAFTA-style state-investor rules that allow corporations to sue the Colombian government when enforcement of environmental laws results in lost corporate profits, offering special rights to corporations involved in the “exploitation, extraction, refinement, transport, distribution, or sale” of natural resources. Thus, the FTA will prevent future governments from canceling environmentally destructive projects begun under the auspices of a series of regimes that have prioritized foreign investment over the protection of wildlife, the environment, or human rights

Other Impacts

These trade agreements also outsource jobs to sweatshops, prevent Wall Street regulation, undermine auto emissions standards, help corporations avoid paying taxes by hiding money in overseas accounts, violate the rights of indigenous communities, expand toxic factory farms, violate Korea's ban on genetically modified food, and endanger Panamanian forests with new mining and logging projects!

What You Can Do

- Learn more about how these free trade agreements will harm animals and ecosystems at <http://gjae.org/animal3vote>.
- Please Write, call, fax, and email Representative Crowley and let him know that you are outraged that he voted for three job-killing free trade agreements while our country faces 8.3% unemployment: Representative Joseph Crowley, 2404 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515 Phone: (202) 225-3965 Fax: 202-225-1909 Webform for email: <https://crowley.house.gov/contact-me/email-me>
- If you live outside Crowley's Congressional district, find out how your Congressman and Senators voted on the Korea-US at tradejustice.net/koreavote. Call them to thank them if they voted against the Korea-US FTA and to express your disappointment if they voted for it.

Global Justice for Animals and the Environment

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