Trip Report for Italy Mission – June 7-12, 2017

Submitted by: Jane Nishida, Acting Assistant Administrator
Office of International and Tribal Affairs (OITA)

EPA Participants:
Administrator Scott Pruitt
Ryan Jackson, Chief of Staff
Samantha Dravis, Associate Administrator for Policy
Mandy Gunasekara, Senior Advisor for Climate and Air
Sarah Greenwalt, Senior Advisor for Water and Cross-Cutting Issues
Lincoln Ferguson, Deputy Press Secretary
Mark Kasman, Office Director of Regional and Bilateral Affairs, OITA
Hodayah Finman, Senior Advisor, Office of Global Affairs & Policy, OITA

EPA Mission Objectives
(1) To represent the U.S. Government at the G7 Environment Ministers Meeting which was chaired by the Government of Italy; (2) to engage with G7 counterparts in bilateral meetings on climate and other environmental issues; (3) to engage with the Vatican in bilateral meetings on climate and other environmental issues; and (4) to participate in discussions with the private sector, universities, and judiciary on environmental innovation, resource efficiency and rule of law.

G7 Environmental Ministerial Meeting:
The Administrator led the U.S. delegation to the G7 Environment Ministers Meeting in Bologna, Italy on June 10-11. He represented the U.S. in the opening session on SDGs and Climate Change. During this session, the Administrator recognized the current and previous year's G7 leadership of Italy and Japan as well as Germany's current G20 leadership. On climate, he acknowledged that there were strong sentiments on this issue and thanked the UNFCCC for their work. He pointed out that the U.S. has played a leadership role on the environment for decades, including contributing to significant reductions in air pollution and CO2. He affirmed that the U.S. remains committed to continuing progress in CO2 reductions through innovative technology, resource efficiency, and sustainable infrastructure, and that the U.S. is committed to working with our international partners.

Acting Assistant Administrator Nishida represented the U.S. in the remaining sessions which focused on Green Growth, Africa, MDBs, Resource Efficiency, Marine Litter and Ecological Fiscal Reform. She intervened in each of these sessions, except Ecological Fiscal Reform, sharing EPA's international and domestic activities in these topics. During the closing session, the Italy Chair moved for the adoption of the joint communique and Bologna Roadmap on Resource Efficiency which was approved by all Members. However, the U.S. inserted a footnote to state that the U.S. does not join the climate and MDB sections of the communique, reflecting our recent announcement to withdraw from the Paris Agreement. Canada, who will be Chair in 2018, announced that climate change and green growth, and gender equality would be the G7 theme next year.

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G7 Bilateral Meetings:

Canada: Minister McKenna met with the Administrator where climate change and other environmental issues were discussed. The Administrator conveyed that the U.S. will continue to comply with the reporting requirement and engage under the UNFCCC and that the U.S. is still committed to action to reduce CO2, but had concerns with the Paris targets. He also conveyed the desire to cooperate with Canada on water, air and CO2 emissions outside of Paris.

Japan: Minister Yamamoto emphasized the importance of the U.S.-Japan relationship and the desire to cooperate with the U.S. in three areas – air quality, mercury, and environmental education, including through regular high level dialogue, which was supported by the Administrator. With respect to climate change, the Administrator highlighted that the U.S. will remain committed to work on innovative technology to reduce CO2 emissions.

Germany: Minister Hendricks and the Administrator discussed areas of cooperation such as oceans and cleaner technology and the U.S. continued cooperation on climate through the UNFCCC and domestic action to reduce CO2 emissions. The Administrator expressed appreciation for the relationship with Germany on trade and environment, and to continue engagement with Germany on environmental issues.

Italy: Minister Galletti and the Administrator discussed areas of cooperation on climate and other environmental issues– food waste and marine litter were specifically identified. The Administrator emphasized the importance of continued engagement and U.S. leadership in reducing CO2 emissions through action and noted that he was at the G7 meeting to demonstrate that the U.S. was committed to engage with other nations.

UK: Undersecretary Theresa Callie met with the Administrator where both emphasized the importance of continued dialogue. Issues discussed include climate, clean growth, resource efficiency, natural capital, and increasing awareness on food waste.

Vatican Bilateral Meeting:

The Administrator engaged the Holy See Foreign Minister Paul Gallagher on the issue of climate change in a meeting at the Vatican. The Administrator explained the reasons for U.S. withdrawal from the Paris Agreement and emphasized that the U.S. remained committed to addressing climate change and other environmental problems through innovation and free enterprise. The Administrator cited as evidence of the U.S.'s commitment to reduce carbon emissions the reductions which have already occurred.

Non-Governmental Meetings:

Environmental Innovation – The Administrator attended a roundtable discussion with representatives from Whirlpool, Ecopneus, Dupont, Chemours, First Solar, MWH Global, Dow and 3M to discuss environmental innovations in the private sector and the role of government.

Rule of Law and Environment – The Administrator attended a roundtable discussion with the President of the Rome Court of Appeals, Luciano Panzani, and other members of the Rome Court of Appeals and the Public Prosecutor to discuss the rule of law and the environment.

Food Waste and Loss – The Administrator attended an event on food waste and loss organized by the Minister of the Environment, Land and Sea, which included U.S. private sector representatives from Sodexo and Yum! Brands, and U.S. university representatives from Rochester Institute of Technology and Oklahoma State University.

G7 Side Events – The Administrator met with the U.S. private sector representatives -US Chamber, CitiCorp, Sealed Air, and UPS- and university representatives - Oklahoma State University and Rochester Institute of Technology – who participated in the G7 Side Events on Sustainable Development.

UNFCCC – The Acting Assistant Administrator and Senior Advisor for Water and Cross Cutting Issues met with the UNFCCC Executive Director, who expressed a strong interest in engaging with the U.S. on climate. We noted that the U.S. is still a party to the UNFCCC and is committed to working with the international community on CO2 reductions.

Amerigo Event – The Acting Assistant Administrator and representative from the Italian Ministry participated in U.S. Embassy sponsored event with former Italian visitors to the U.S. to discuss the G7 Environmental Minister Meeting.

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