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Thailand–Chile Free Trade Agreement: Untapped Opportunities for Bilateral Growth

The Thailand–Chile Free Trade Agreement (FTA), in force since 2015, has tripled bilateral trade within a decade, with Chilean exports to Thailand reaching USD 682 million (THB 21.7 billion) in 2024, up 6.8% from 2023, led by salmon (USD 81 million) and cherries, while food exports exceeded USD 134 million and services grew by 51%. First-quarter 2025 figures confirm continued momentum, with salmon exports up 35.6%, cherries up 59.5%, and total food exports rising 46% to USD 91 million, alongside service growth of 6% to USD 235,000. Speaking at the 1st Chilean–ASEAN Business Summit in Bangkok, Ignacio Fernandez Ruiz, Director of ProChile, acknowledged these gains but stressed that the FTA's legal and regulatory framework remains underutilized. He called for deeper engagement through expanding imports and exports, encouraging local business establishments, and diversifying into new sectors such as film production, while highlighting Chile's role as a competitive gateway to Latin America's 600 million consumers. From a legal perspective, the FTA provides tariff reductions, rules of origin, and regulatory cooperation, yet its full benefits are constrained by non-tariff barriers, limited SME awareness, and incomplete use of cross-border investment mechanisms. As Ruiz noted, the FTA is "like a highway built for our countries," but its promise will only be realized through more proactive government and private-sector efforts to leverage its provisions and achieve sustainable long-term integration.

Should you have any question, please do not hesitate to contact us via info@bgloballaw.com