

Toronto, August 2, 1996

COUNCIL RESOLUTION No. 96-03

**Council recommendations concerning regional follow-up actions and commitments regarding waterfowl mortality at the Silva Reservoir during 1994-1995**

THE COUNCIL:

WHEREAS a report was prepared in August 1995, by the National Technical Scientific Committee, which was established by the *Secretaría de Medio Ambiente, Recursos Naturales y Pesca* of Mexico (Mexican Secretariat for Environment, Natural Resources and Fisheries) to inquire into the causes of waterfowl mortality at the Silva Reservoir, and that this report was submitted to the Council at its Second Regular Session, held on October 13, 1995, in Oaxaca, Mexico;

WHEREAS in accordance with Article 13 of the North American Agreement for Environmental Cooperation, the Secretariat of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) submitted to the Council at its Second Regular Session another report entitled *CEC Secretariat Report on the Death of Migratory Birds at the Silva Reservoir (1994-1995)* (Secretariat Report) based on contributions from the International Silva Reservoir Scientific Panel;

WHEREAS the Joint Public Advisory Committee (JPAC) provided its advice to the Council regarding the above-mentioned Secretariat Report;

RECOGNIZING that both of the above-mentioned reports state that the waterfowl mortality in the Silva Reservoir was primarily caused by an epizootic disease brought about by environmental conditions, the physio-chemical quality of the water, and the presence of heavy metals in the water, as well as botulin bacteria;

RECOGNIZING that the occurrence of waterfowl mortality due to avian botulism has been relatively frequent in North America since 1970, the last such occurrence having taken place during the Summer of 1995 in the province of Alberta, Canada;

REASSERTING that one of the objectives of the CEC is to increase cooperation among the Parties for the conservation, protection, and improvement of the environment and the conservation and protection of regional wildlife;

CONVINCED that the Silva Reservoir incident provides a powerful incentive for strengthening the efforts of Mexico, the United States and Canada to prevent this kind of waterfowl mortality;

ALSO CONVINCED of the importance of community participation with respect to the recommendations of the Council addressed by this Resolution;

RECOGNIZING, as well, the efforts that the Mexican government is making for the protection of wildlife within the framework of its 1995-2000 National Program for the Environment and also through the implementation of measures to deal with the contingency that occurred at the Silva Reservoir on the Turbio River, including:

The establishment of a Response Plan designed to prevent waterfowl mortality in the Turbio River Basin through such activities as:

- a) controlling discharges of wastewater;
- b) controlling the use of agro-chemicals;
- c) establishing an ongoing monitoring program for assessing health risks;
- d) promoting compliance by industries in the region with Mexican environmental regulations;
- e) continuing physical, chemical and biological tests of water, soil and organic matter in the Silva Reservoir area; and
- f) promoting community participation through the Natural Resources State Emergency Response Committee.

HEREBY RECOMMENDS that:

1. The Parties create, within the framework of the Trilateral Committee (Canada-Mexico-United States) for Conservation and Management of Wildlife and Ecosystems, a group of experts on migratory waterfowl and aquatic habitats in order to:
  - a) collaborate with Mexico in research, the design of responses, and information sharing on epidemic symptoms in wildlife species;
  - b) develop a monitoring research-and-response system based on the existing programs, if appropriate, to address epidemic outbreaks among North American wildlife; and
  - c) strengthen international scientific cooperation in emergency situations related to natural resources.

2. The Government of Canada and the Government of the United States provide active support to the Government of Mexico in seeking funding through various international organizations and foundations for the following purposes, in Mexico:
- a) to complete the Turbio River Basin Initiative begun by the Government of Mexico on February 9, 1995;
  - b) to develop a national network of laboratories to protect wildlife, in particular waterfowl, and to build the capacity necessary to address the regulatory aspects of sanitation, and respond to contingencies that affect natural resources;
  - c) to continue building the infrastructure to treat industrial and municipal wastewater;
  - d) to carry out programs for the ecological management and administration of regional natural resources;
  - e) to improve the production processes of existing industry in the region in order to enhance its environmental practices; and
  - f) to promote and support the development of new testing technology to solve environmental problems.

APPROVED BY THE COUNCIL:

(S) Carol M. Browner

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Carol M. Browner  
Government of the United States of America

(S) Julia Carabias

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Julia Carabias  
Government of the United Mexican States

(S) Sergio Marchi

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Sergio Marchi  
Government of Canada