



Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) Ministerial Statement *Seventeenth Regular Session of the CEC Council*

Guanajuato, Mexico, 17 August 2010—We, the environment ministers of Canada, Mexico and the United States, as the Council of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC), met for our annual Regular Session and consulted with our Joint Public Advisory Committee (JPAC) and the public.

Today, in Guanajuato, we presented the proposed *Strategic Plan for 2010–2015* to guide the CEC’s work over the next five years. This strategy, which we see as the next milestone in delivering on our collective commitment to renew, revitalize and refocus the CEC, provides clear objectives for results-focused collaboration between our countries on three trilateral environmental priorities.

Healthy Communities and Ecosystems

To achieve this priority, the CEC plans to focus its efforts on improving the environmental health of children and other vulnerable communities, increasing the resilience of North America’s shared ecosystems, and enhancing environmental and wildlife enforcement and the continental management of chemicals of concern.

Climate Change – Low-Carbon Economy

Here, we intend to collaborate on improving the comparability of our greenhouse gas emissions data gathering, methodologies, and inventories, and to build stronger networks of experts and systems to share climate change information. This would ultimately support greenhouse gas reductions in North America by supplying information and tools that can be used in selecting and carrying out focused mitigation and adaptation projects.

Greening the Economy in North America

To deliver on this priority, we intend to work with partners in the private sector to improve the environmental performance of small- and medium-sized enterprises in areas such as state-of-the-art green building design, and the movement of used electronics and other e-wastes within our borders and beyond.

We are ready to start delivering results. In fact, work has already begun under our trilateral environmental priorities in three new CEC projects: first, to support a network of Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Units (PEHSU) to help address harmful environmental exposures for children and other vulnerable communities; second, to improve the comparability of greenhouse gas data between our three countries; and third, to curb illegal imports and exports of electronic waste through intelligence sharing among our enforcement officials.

Recognizing that environmental challenges are often best addressed by partnering and engaging with North America’s communities, the Council has directed that a new grant program be established—the North American Partnership for Environmental Community Action (NAPECA)—to build partnerships to improve environmental conditions at the community, local and regional levels. This 5-year grant program will fund innovative community projects that directly support the objectives under our new priorities and lead to results that can improve environmental outcomes throughout North America.

We have tasked our officials to finalize expeditiously a set of criteria to guide us in selecting CEC-funded activities which will be incorporated by reference, as appropriate, in the Strategic Plan.

We have asked the JPAC to consult North Americans on the Strategic Plan and report back to us later this summer on comments from the public. We have every confidence that once officially finalized, the Strategic Plan, together with our commitment to focusing and streamlining the CEC's work, will ensure clear and tangible results to address North America's environmental priorities and the environmental concerns of our citizens.

We look forward to continued progress from our collaborative work through the CEC and our annual meeting in Canada next summer.

The CEC was established by Canada, Mexico and the United States to build cooperation among the NAFTA partners in implementing the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation (NAAEC), the environmental side accord to the NAFTA. The CEC addresses environmental issues of continental concern, with particular attention to the environmental challenges and opportunities presented by continent-wide free trade.

The Council, the CEC's governing body, is composed of the federal environment ministers (or equivalent) of the three countries, and meets at least once a year. The Council members are Canadian Environment Minister Jim Prentice, Mexican Secretary for Environment and Natural Resources, Juan Elvira Quesada, and US Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa P. Jackson. The Joint Public Advisory Committee (JPAC) is a 15-member, volunteer body that provides independent advice and public input to Council on any matter within the scope of NAAEC.

For more information on any of the topics reviewed by Council, visit <http://www.cec.org>.