

JPAC Intervention
Joint Council and JPAC In-camera Session
Boston, Massachusetts, United States
15 July 2015

(Annex B)

Yesterday we had the chance to learn about Massachusetts' water management. This success story reflects a comprehensive, systemic approach.

With examples such as the Alewife Reservation Stormwater Wetland, we found that Massachusetts has been a leader in the use of green infrastructure to move towards sustainable development.

Climate change exacerbates water-related problems, including both shortages and excesses. This reinforces the need for transversal and comprehensive management to adapt to the effects of climate change.

As we all know, transversality poses a challenge in terms of legal frameworks and governance, as the mandates and responsibilities of each authority, through clearly defined, are necessarily limited. This makes it necessary to undertake additional efforts in communication and harmonization that ultimately contribute the achieving the lasting well-being of communities.

During the presentations throughout the day, it became evident that valuable citizen initiatives are ongoing and, without a doubt, could benefit from a more appropriate legal framework.

Having analyzed all the discussions at our public meeting, and in light of the JPAC members' own experiences, we have identified the following challenges:

- Lack of economic valorization of the benefits offered by green infrastructure (although progress has been seen, such as in the case of the Catskills Watershed in New York State, there is still much to be done);
- Strong momentum towards an anarchic urbanization.

We believe that the CEC can:

- Identify, using the *North American Environment Atlas*, particularly vulnerable zones and as well as those that could benefit from the use of green infrastructure;
- Help identify the "what, where and how" to contribute to adequate planning for sustainable development;
- Contribute to building resilience;

- Encourage the three North American countries, as a single region, to share experiences and knowledge (for example, with projects and success cases such as EPA's green infrastructure efforts, which are still lacking in many parts of the world).

In conclusion, the topic at issue is not limited to the environment alone, but rather touches on security aspects and communities' lasting well-being. Depending on how we manage it, we can receive torrential rainwater as a resource, or as a disaster.