



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

JUN 20 2018

Mr. Gustavo Alanis
Chair, Joint Public Advisory Committee
Commission for Environmental Cooperation
393, Rue St-Jaques Ouest, Bureau 200
Montreal QC H2Y 1N9

Office of
International and
Tribal Affairs

Dear Mr. Alanis:

On behalf of the Council of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC), I would like to thank the Joint Public Advisory Committee (JPAC) for your advice to Council No: 17-04: *Increasing Resilience through Cooperation: Empowering Coastal, Shoreline, and Riverbank Communities in North America*.

We agree that riverbank and coastal communities face both opportunities for sustainable social, cultural and economic growth, and challenges in terms of vulnerability to extreme weather, pollution and resilience. Sustainability, resilience, and growth for these communities require multifaceted analyses and integrated approaches addressing opportunities, impacts, risks, and proactive prevention and mitigation. These needs have been showcased as our communities face threats to health and well-being from extreme weather, floods, as well as loss of infrastructure, habitats, and revenue.

Several of our current CEC projects support North American coastal, shoreline, and riverbank communities in developing sustainable tourism industries in harmony with other economic activities. They support resource protection and management, as well as adaptation to changing sea levels and weather conditions. The marine protected areas project is developing tools and capabilities to help effectively manage marine and coastal resources in a changing ocean, so they can continue to sustainably support fisheries and ecotourism. The coastal migratory birds project is building capacity in communities on the migratory paths to support bird habitat conservation that will allow for sustainable ecotourism and economic growth.

Aquaculture is a growing priority within North America due to the projected global seafood supply gap and the possible economic growth and resiliency the burgeoning industry could provide for coastal communities. However, our priority is to implement our current CEC work on marine litter, marine protected areas, and shorebird habitat, as aquaculture is addressed through other international fora.

As evidenced by the ongoing devastation from hurricanes, our islands and coastal cities are extremely vulnerable to severe weather events, resulting in human hardship and financial losses to our citizens, businesses, governments, economies and trade. Through our CEC forum, we may be

able to facilitate sharing of lessons learned and best practices for prevention, adaptation, and recovery from these extreme events.

The Council sincerely appreciates JPAC's efforts to engage with the North American public and to bring their concerns and perspectives to our attention. We anticipate that our domestic work, the outputs and outcomes from the three North American projects described here, our efforts to network and engage with other international organizations and experts, and our vision to engage states and other stakeholders, will inform strategies and collaboration on these topics among relevant agencies and forums.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jane Nishida". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "N".

Jane Nishida
Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator
Alternate Representative for the United States

cc:

Isabelle Bérard, Alternate Representative for Canada
Enrique Lendo, Alternate Representative for Mexico
César Chavez, CEC Executive Director
Marcela Orozco, JPAC Liaison Officer