



Mr. Louie Porta
Chair, Joint Public Advisory Committee
Commission for Environmental Cooperation
700 Rue de la Gauchetière O Suite 1620
Montreal QC H3B 5M2

Dear Mr. Porta,

On behalf of the Council of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC), I would like to thank the Joint Public Advisory Committee (JPAC) for the advice to Council No: 18-02 (November 2018) on “Enhancing the CEC’s Communications and Outreach Efforts in North America and Beyond”. We recognize that this advice is the result of consultations and interactions with communications specialists, culminating in the JPAC meeting on strategic communications hosted in Guadalajara, Mexico in October 2018.

Increasing the visibility of the CEC through enhanced and renewed communication strategies has been a priority for the Council in the last few years, and we appreciate the JPAC’s commitment to this endeavor. In light of the 25th anniversary of the CEC, and the current processes of ratification of a renewed North American trade agreement and its parallel Environmental Cooperation Agreement (ECA), the Council acknowledges the timely nature of this advice and the potential for innovative communications strategies to support the CEC’s renewed role in North America and beyond.

The Council would like to convey its recognition and appreciation for the strong commitment of the JPAC, the Secretariat and the Parties in improving CEC’s communications. As such, we are pleased to see that coordinated steps have been taken to implement this advice in the period leading up to the most recent Council Session in Mexico City, June 24-25, 2019. Examples include the 25th anniversary video, highlighting accomplishments of the institution throughout its history; the recently released fact sheets, informing on CEC’s activities, projects and programs; and the development of the 2019-2020 Communications Plan to frame our efforts in this area for the next 18 months.

In response to the JPAC’s first recommendation to establish a working group that would modernize the CEC’s overarching stakeholder engagement and communications strategy, the Council is pleased to note that the three constituent bodies of the CEC, with the support of the Traditional Ecological Knowledge Expert Group (TEKEG), worked together in the development of the 2019-2020 Communications Plan. This plan is an important step in modernizing the CEC’s stakeholder engagement and communications strategy in the immediate future, while offering the opportunity to develop a more comprehensive communications strategy for the post-2020 timeframe. We look forward to working with the JPAC to ensure that the steps taken under the Plan are factored into the development of the post-2020 strategy.

Further, as it relates to the second recommendation, 2019-2020 Communications Plan identifies a strategic approach to guide CEC communications efforts over the next two years. The plan presents three overarching goals: 1) communicate the CEC’s role value, and purpose; 2) raise awareness of the CEC; and 3) build engagement in the CEC’s work, and is intended to ensure

CEC communications reach key audiences in North America. The plan also contains primary and project-specific messaging, identifies target audiences, expands on social media platforms and tactics for success, and provides quantitative and qualitative measurement parameters for assessing the efficacy of the strategy.

In addition, the recently developed promotional fact sheets, which are distributed during CEC events and available on the CEC website, educate readers on CEC activities, projects and programs, in a straightforward, plain language and visually appealing way while the redesign and simplification of the CEC webpage makes information more accessible to visitors.

Furthermore, the Council is pleased with recent efforts by the CEC to promote not only the ongoing activities of the organization, but also the organization's potential to serve as a model for regional cooperation around the world. The inclusion of the CEC's ongoing initiatives related to developing resilience to extreme weather events in the G20's 2019 *Action Agenda on Adaptation and Resilient Infrastructure* was an important opportunity to highlight the ongoing CEC initiatives in this area. Expanding these partnerships with international institutions, and identifying linkages between CEC activities and global frameworks, will be an important pillar of future communications efforts.

In response to the third recommendation, the Council recognizes that the efficacy of any renewed communications strategies or initiatives will depend on the consistent involvement of the JPAC and the TEKEG. The Council looks forward to working with both advisory groups to ensure the development of an innovative and modern communications approach, within the context of the anticipated implementation of a modernized North American trade agreement and its corresponding ECA.

Once again, thank you for the thoughtful advice. We appreciate the active participation of the JPAC in the CEC.

Sincerely,



Isabelle Bérard
Alternate Representative for Canada

cc. Mr. Chad McIntosh, Alternate Representative for the United States
Dr. Rodolfo Godínez Rosales, Alternate Representative for Mexico
Mr. Richard Morgan, CEC Executive Director
Ms. Marcela Orozco, JPAC Liaison Officer