



**Joint Public Advisory Committee (JPAC) Activity Report
to the Council of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC)
since June 2017**

This table is intended to provide Council with an overview of JPAC activities since the June 2017 Regular Session of Council to assist discussions during the annual joint Council/JPAC sessions in 2018.

Please note that JPAC activities have been undertaken in accordance with Article 16(4) of the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation (NAAEC), which states that JPAC “may provide advice to Council on any matter within the scope of this agreement [...] and on the implementation and further elaboration of this agreement, and may perform such other functions as the Council may direct”; and with Article 16(5), which provides that JPAC “may provide relevant technical, scientific or other information to the Secretariat, including for purposes of developing a factual record under Article 15. The Secretariat shall forward to the Council copies of any such information.”

Please note the internal Council policy for producing responses to JPAC advice states that a response should be sent out **“within eight weeks of receiving the advice.”**

JPAC Activity and Context	Description	Status or Result
JUNE 2017		
Joint Public Advisory Committee Regular Session 17-02 “Increasing Resilience through Cooperation: Empowering Coastal, Shoreline, and Riverbank Communities in North America” 27 June 2017 Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada	<p>The public forum brought together regional leaders, nongovernmental organizations, academic experts, and members of the public to discuss water-related challenges and opportunities for littoral and riparian communities, as well as the resilience of those communities when challenged by environmental issues related to water and extreme weather events.</p> <p>In particular, participants addressed how sustainable and innovative water-related businesses can benefit local economies while protecting the environment; how local solutions can be replicated to solve environmental security challenges; and how water-based conservation can help protect water-based jobs and communities.</p>	<p>As a result of the meeting, the JPAC members agreed to provide the Council with an Advice:</p> <p>Advice to Council No: 17-04 Re: Outputs from JPAC Public Forum, “Increasing Resilience through Cooperation: Empowering Coastal, Shoreline, and Riverbank Communities in North America,” in Charlottetown (June 2017) <i>(Distributed on 10 August 2017)</i></p>

JULY 2017		
<p>Advice to Council No: 17-03 Re: Environmental Considerations in the Further Elaboration of the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation (NAAEC) in the event of a Further Elaboration of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) <i>(Distributed on 26 July 2017)</i></p>	<p>Noting the published initiative by the White House regarding the commitment by the President of the United State to renegotiate NAFTA, the JPAC Advice to Council 17-03 outlined a series of recommendations to the Council which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The critical importance of addressing, improving and strengthening environmental concerns as part of any elaboration or renegotiation of NAFTA; • Ensure diligent action so that government officials involved in the NAFTA renegotiations acknowledge the linkage between progressive regional trade and environmental sustainability in the region; • Take steps to promote and assure that transparency and meaningful public participation are respected throughout the NAFTA renegotiation process; • Take into account the value added of the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation (NAAEC) and its institutional body (the CEC) in addressing environmental concerns and addressing transparency, dialogue and public participation throughout the history of NAFTA; • Supporting the integration of NAAEC and its elements into a renewed NAFTA. 	<p>Response from Council to JPAC Advice 17-03 Re: Environmental Considerations in the Further Elaboration of the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation (NAAEC) in the event of a Further Elaboration of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) <i>(Received on 18 September 2017)</i></p> <p>The Council responded to the advice by indicating that JPAC’s Advice 17-03 was transmitted to the lead negotiators and relevant agencies involved in the NAFTA renegotiation and modernization process.</p>
AUGUST 2017		
<p>Advice to Council No: 17-04 Re: Outputs from JPAC Public Forum, “Increasing Resilience through Cooperation: Empowering Coastal, Shoreline, and Riverbank Communities in North America,” in Charlottetown (June 2017) <i>(Distributed on 10 August 2017)</i></p>	<p>Based on input provided by invited experts and participants who attended the meeting in Charlottetown, JPAC Advice to Council 17-04 outlined a series of observations and recommendations, which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to support North American coastal, shoreline, and riverbank communities in developing a sustainable tourism industry in harmony with other economic activities and resource protection and management. • The importance of facilitating capacity building of small island communities through collaboration with national and international initiatives. • The need to share knowledge of best practices for sustainability in the aquaculture industry across North America. 	<p>Response from Council to JPAC Advice 17-04 Re: Outputs from JPAC Public Forum, “Increasing Resilience through Cooperation: Empowering Coastal, Shoreline, and Riverbank Communities in North America,” in Charlottetown <i>(Received on 20 June 2018)</i></p> <p>The Council thanked the JPAC for the advice and highlighted the activities of the CEC related to marine and coastal areas in line with the Advice’s recommendations.</p>

<p>In response to: Advice to Council No: 16-02 Re: Outputs from the JPAC Workshop in Mérida (September 2016) on “Biodiversity and Climate Change” (Distributed on 13 December 2016)</p>	<p>JPAC Advice to Council 16-02 outlined a series of observations and recommendations based on input provided by invited experts and participants attending the meeting in Mérida. These included, among others:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JPAC believes that the Parties should strengthen their mutual efforts to research and understand the reciprocal relationship of climate and biodiversity, and to communicate these inter-related risks and concerns, with an emphasis on the human health and economic benefits from addressing climate change and biodiversity loss. • JPAC urges the Council to assure the continued vitality of CEC programs by directing the Secretariat to continue and expand its work on biodiversity and climate change. • JPAC recognizes that collaborative governance takes time, trust, and interdependence. However, the work of addressing trade and environmental issues in the North American context has never been undertaken because it is easy, but rather because it is vital to the health and wellbeing of our peoples and the security of our North American economy. 	<p>Response from Council to JPAC Advice 16-02 Re: Outputs from the JPAC Workshop in Mérida (September 2016) on “Biodiversity and Climate Change” (Received on 10 August 2017)</p> <p>The Council welcomed the recommendations of the Advice and highlighted that the current strategic priorities of the CEC are in line with these recommendations and cited the projects of Blue Carbon and Marine Protected Area as active examples.</p> <p>The Council also highlighted the CEC’s work on sustainable trade and CITES, migratory birds, and monarch butterflies as other examples showcasing biodiversity conservation as an important topic for the Commission. Finally, the Council indicated that the three countries are also involved in biodiversity conservation outside of the Commission’s activities.</p>
<p>Session 17-02 of the Alternate Representatives Conference call 21 August 2017</p>	<p>The JPAC Chair, Robert Varney, participated in the conference call meeting of the Alternate Representatives, which discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2018 Council Session • TEK project “North American TEK Atlas” • Launch of the NAPECA 2017-2018 grants program 	<p>The JPAC Chair indicated JPAC's intention to focus their fall meeting on the work of the CEC in light of the current NAFTA renegotiations.</p>
<p>SEPTEMBER 2017</p>		
<p>US NAC & GAC Meeting 14 September 2017 Washington, DC, United States</p>	<p>CEC Executive Director participated in the meeting and reported on JPAC activities, representing JPAC Chair Robert Varney. Items included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advices to Council 17-01, 17-02, 17-03, and 17-04 • Evaluation of the Youth Innovation Challenge proposals by JPAC members • Appointment of a new Canadian JPAC member • JPAC Public Forum in Charlottetown, Canada (June 2017) • Response from Council to JPAC Advice 16-02 • JPAC Public Forum in United States (November 2017) 	<p><i>Ongoing</i></p>

OCTOBER 2017		
<p>Session 17-03 of the Alternate Representatives 13 October 2017 Washington, DC, United States</p>	<p>JPAC Chair Robert Varney participated in the meeting of the Alternate Representatives, which centered on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion on the paper “CEC: Looking to the Future” • Budget scenarios for 2018 • Discussion on CEC’s Future Moving Forward • CEC Updates • 2018 Council Session 	<p>The JPAC Chair invited the GSC to present the paper, “CEC: Looking to the Future,” during the private portion of their upcoming JPAC meeting in Chicago.</p>
<p>In response to: Advice to Council No: 17-02 Re: Outputs from JPAC Public Forum, “Reducing and Managing Food and Organic Waste Streams: Challenges and Opportunities in North America,” in Tuxtla Gutiérrez (<i>Distributed on 29 May 2017</i>)</p>	<p>Input provided by invited experts and participants at the Tuxtla Gutierrez meeting informed JPAC Advice to Council 17-02, which outlined a series of observations and recommendations, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and facilitate innovations in food waste reduction and organic waste diversion in North America. • In order to properly address food loss and waste, consider the importance of assessing the whole food-value chain of producers, distributors, retailers, consumers, and waste processors. • Develop a North American standard terminology regarding food products labeling. • Continue work on assessing the interconnections between food production and biodiversity in North America. • Promote North American leadership and coordination to address food loss and waste. 	<p>Response from Council to JPAC Advice 17-02 Re: Outputs from JPAC Public Forum “Reducing and Managing Food and Organic Waste Streams: Challenges and Opportunities in North America” in Tuxtla Gutiérrez (<i>Received on 12 October 2017</i>)</p> <p>The Council welcomed the recommendations of the Advice and highlighted the trinational CEC food waste project and current national activities to reduce food loss and waste. The Council also highlighted the work of governments related to developing standard terminology regarding food products labeling.</p>
NOVEMBER 2017		
<p>GSC meeting with JPAC 9 November 2017 Chicago, Illinois, United States</p>	<p>The GSC met with the JPAC members during their private meeting and presented the discussion paper, “CEC: Looking to the Future”.</p>	<p>The GSC members indicated their desire to receive comments from JPAC on this paper and requested the opportunity for the two groups to work together, combining their knowledge for the benefit of the CEC. JPAC members thanked the GSC for their attendance and the opportunity to provide feedback on the discussion paper.</p>
<p>Joint Public Advisory Committee Regular Session 17-03 “NAFTA’s Environmental Side Agreement: Assessing the Past, Looking Towards the Future” 9 November 2017</p>	<p>The public forum brought together a select group of trade and environment experts who have experience not only with the NAAEC, but also with other international trade/environment institutions, and with the environmental impacts of trade, more generally. They presented their analyses of the NAAEC and the CEC, with emphasis on the impact these instruments have had in advancing the North American environmental agenda.</p>	<p>As a result of the meeting, JPAC agreed to provide the Council with an Advice:</p> <p>Advice to Council No: 17-05 JPAC Expert Forum on the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation (NAAEC): Assessing the Past, Looking Towards the Future (November 2017)</p>

Chicago, Illinois, United States	In particular, participants addressed the roles of the NAAEC and the CEC, from the standpoints of their original intent and evolution over the last 23 years, an assessment of their impacts to date, and the road forward for them.	<i>(Distributed on 21 November 2017)</i>
Advice to Council No: 17-05 JPAC Expert Forum on the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation (NAAEC): Assessing the Past, Looking Towards the Future (November 2017) <i>(Distributed on 21 November 2017)</i>	Observations and recommendations in JPAC Advice to Council 17-05, which were based on input provided by invited experts and participants at the meeting in Chicago, included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Parties should recognize and enhance the successful convening role of the CEC as it relates to environmental cooperation in North America. • The Parties should reaffirm their commitment to the existing trilateral Secretariat. • The CEC should continue efforts to expand stakeholder engagement and public participation, outreach and education through CEC activities, especially with the private sector and with indigenous peoples. • The Council should recognize, maintain and promote the strategic importance of key contributions of the CEC Secretariat related to research on trade and the environment. • The CEC should continue to provide opportunities for the public to raise concerns about enforcement of environmental laws while providing a mechanism to ensure that issues and concerns are addressed by federal, state or provincial governments, as appropriate. 	Response from Council to JPAC Advice 17-05 Advice to Council No: 17-05 JPAC Expert Forum on the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation (NAAEC): Assessing the Past, Looking Towards the Future (November 2017) <i>(Received on 28 March 2018)</i> The Council responded to the advice by indicating that the current NAFTA renegotiation efforts and the accumulated experience of the NAAEC and the CEC present an opportunity to evaluate successes and challenges and to explore modernizing trilateral environmental cooperation. In its Response, the Council also recognized the strategic importance of the CEC and its three institutional bodies.
JANUARY 2018		
JPAC Chair visit to CEC Secretariat 17-18 January 2018 Montreal, Quebec, Canada	Visit of the newly elected 2018 JPAC Chair to the CEC Secretariat in Montreal, to meet with staff and discuss CEC's upcoming activities.	As the new JPAC Chair for 2018, Gustavo Alanís-Ortega visited the CEC Secretariat to share his vision for his tenure, and to discuss how the JPAC can participate more actively in the Secretariat's activities, as well as increase public engagement in the Commission.
Session 18-01 of the Alternate Representatives Conference call 31 January 2018	The JPAC Chair, Gustavo Alanís-Ortega, participated in the conference call meeting with the Alternate Representatives, to discuss: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2018 CEC Budget • CEC Core mission and budget Scenarios • TEK Atlas project • 2018 Youth Innovation Challenge • 2018 Council Session 	The JPAC Chair suggested that if the CEC continues struggling with the budget in the future, partnerships with foundations and the private sector should be envisaged. Regarding the in-camera session of the next Council Session, the JPAC Chair requested the opportunity for the JPAC Chair and the Executive Director to provide updates to the Ministers as it has been done in the past.

APRIL 2018		
CEC Youth Innovation Challenge, evaluation by JPAC Members 6-16 April 2018	A JPAC member from each country participated in the evaluation process for the CEC Youth Innovation Challenge.	A number of semi-finalists were selected for the next evaluation phase.
Session 18-02 of the Alternate Representatives 25 April 2018 Washington, DC, United States	The JPAC Chair, Gustavo Alanís-Ortega, participated in the meeting of the Alternate Representatives, which centered on the following topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2018 Council Session • 2018 Budget and Transition planning from 2018 to 2019 • Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) 	The JPAC Chair provided an update on JPAC activities, including on the planning efforts for the upcoming JPAC session in Oklahoma City.
US NAC & GAC Meeting 26 April 2018 Washington, DC, United States	The JPAC Chair, Gustavo Alanís-Ortega, participated in the meeting and reported on JPAC activities, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JPAC Public Forum in Chicago (November 2017) • Advice to Council 17-05 • Evaluation of the Youth Innovation Challenge proposals by JPAC Members • Appointment of a new Mexican JPAC Member • JPAC Planning for 2018 	<i>Ongoing</i>
JUNE 2018		
In response to: Advice to Council No: 17-01 Re: Outputs from JPAC Public Forum in Ottawa (November 2016) on “Advancing Sustainable Clean Energy Cooperation in North America” (Distributed on 27 April 2017)	JPAC Advice to Council 17-01 outlined the following observations and recommendations based on input provided by invited experts and participants who attended the meeting in Ottawa, Ontario: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to promote energy independence for North America • Develop a common methodology to track progress in achieving energy goals across multiple jurisdictions • Consider the importance of hydropower and nuclear generation in providing relatively clean baseload energy and achieving energy and climate change goals • Promoting energy efficiency and renewables in vulnerable, rural, remote communities • Extend the CEC’s North American Energy Management Project 	Response from Council to JPAC Advice 17-01 Advice to Council No: 17-01 Re: Outputs from JPAC Public Forum in Ottawa (November 2016) on “Advancing Sustainable Clean Energy Cooperation in North America” (Received on 20 June 2018) The Council welcomed the recommendations of the Advice and highlighted the importance of trilateral energy cooperation in North America as demonstrated through the North American Cooperation on Energy Information (NACEI) website. The Council also highlighted the use of nuclear power and of energy efficiency in supporting country’s commitments to reduce GHG emissions. Finally, the Council highlighted the importance of CEC’s ISO 50001 project, extended through 2017-2019.