



**Joint Public Advisory Committee (JPAC) Activity Report  
to the Council of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC)  
since June 2019**

This table is intended to provide Council with an overview of JPAC activities since the June 2019 Regular Session of Council to assist discussions during the annual joint Council/JPAC sessions in 2020.

*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
<b>JUNE 2019</b>		
<b>Joint Public Advisory Committee Regular Session 19-01</b> “Building Disaster-Resilient Communities in North America” 24 June 2019 Mexico City, Mexico	<p>The public forum provided a platform for exchanging diverse public perspectives on extreme weather events, including examples of community resilience throughout North America.</p> <p>Participants, including a First Nation Chief, had the opportunity to exchange views on the role of sustainability innovations in reducing communities’ vulnerability to extreme weather events and on emerging agricultural practices to strengthen the resilience of food systems.</p>	<p>As a result of the meeting, the JPAC members agreed to provide the Council with an Advice:</p> <p><b>Advice to Council No: 19-01</b>            Re: JPAC Expert Forum on Building Disaster-Resilient Communities in North America  <i>(Distributed on 18 September 2019)</i></p>
<b>SEPTEMBER 2019</b>		
<b>Advice to Council No: 19-01</b> Re: JPAC Expert Forum on Building Disaster-Resilient Communities in North America <i>(Distributed on 18 September 2019)</i>	<p>Following the JPAC public forum in Mexico City (24 June 2019) and recalling the Parties commitments toward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the JPAC Advice to Council 19-01 outlined a series of recommendations to the Council, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By early 2021, the Council, in coordination with JPAC, the TEK Expert Group, and the CEC Secretariat, should complete an Extreme Weather and Climate-Related Disaster Action Plan.</li> <li>• By the end of 2020, Council should provide sufficient resources to the Secretariat to create an interactive, online climate change education portal that builds climate and environmental literacy across society.</li> <li>• By the end of 2020, Council should complete a Disaster Resilience Governance Report Card that assesses and compares the strengths and weaknesses of Canadian, Mexican and US legal, regulatory, and</li> </ul>	<p><b>Response from Council to JPAC Advice 19-01</b>            Re: JPAC Expert Forum on Building Disaster-Resilient Communities in North America  <i>(Received on 8 January 2020)</i></p> <p>The Council expressed appreciation for the recommendations included in the JPAC Advice, and highlighted the launch of the “North American Extreme Events Advisory Group” at the 25th annual CEC Council Session. The Council also highlighted their intent to work with JPAC, the TEKEG and the CEC Secretariat to develop a 2021-2025 Strategic Plan that supports the inclusion of community adaptation and resilience in CEC activities, and assesses how educational portals can be</p>

	policy frameworks in order to define and apply the highest standard possible to disaster response and community resilience.	used to facilitate information sharing with the public.
<p><b>In response to:</b> Advice to Council No: 18-02 Re: JPAC Strategic Communications Meeting on “Enhancing the CEC’s Communications and Outreach Efforts in North America and Beyond” (Distributed on 29 November 2018)</p>	<p>Noting that the USMCA draft text mentioned the CEC repeatedly, the JPAC Advice to Council 18-02 outlined a series of recommendations to the Council, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council should take immediate steps to establish a strategic communications workgroup, composed of representatives of the CEC’s three bodies (Council, Secretariat and JPAC) and any other relevant experts, with the mandate to relaunch and modernize the CEC’s overarching stakeholder engagement and communications strategy.</li> <li>• In developing the strategic plan, the workgroup should ensure that this new strategy addresses specific aspects, including improving the effectiveness of CEC communications and messaging to the public and other targeted audiences.</li> <li>• It is important to ensure that the Traditional Ecological Knowledge Expert Group (TEKEG) be involved in the development of the strategic communications planning process.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Response from Council to JPAC Advice 18-02</b> Re: JPAC Strategic Communications Meeting on “Enhancing the CEC’s Communications and Outreach Efforts in North America and Beyond” (Received on 12 September 2019)</p> <p>The Council responded by highlighting the timely nature of the advice in light of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the CEC and the current process of ratification of a renewed North American trade agreement and its parallel environmental cooperation agreement (ECA). The Council also indicated the support of the TEK Expert Group in the development of the CEC’s 2019-2020 Communications Plan as well as the importance of expanding partnerships with international institutions and identifying linkages between CEC activities and global frameworks in future communication efforts.</p>
<b>OCTOBER 2019</b>		
<p><b>Council Request for Input to the Joint Public Advisory Committee: 2021-2025 CEC Strategic Plan</b> 11 October 2019</p>	<p>Regarding the development of the 2021-2025 CEC Strategic Plan, the Council requested input from JPAC on the following questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are the environmental issues and challenges facing North America in the next five years?</li> <li>2. What are the opportunities for the CEC, considering the strengths, mission, and mandate of the organization, to address these issues/challenges in the next five years?</li> <li>3. Where do you see opportunities for an enhanced role for JPAC under the next strategic plan?</li> </ol>	<p>As a result of Council’s request, the JPAC members agreed to provide the Council with an Advice:</p> <p><b>Advice to Council No: 19-02</b> Re: Council Request for Input to the Joint Public Advisory Committee: 2021–2025 CEC Strategic Plan (Distributed on 4 November 2019)</p>
<p><b>Joint Public Advisory Committee Session 19-02</b> “Community-based Approaches to Disaster Resilience” 24 October 2019 San Juan, Puerto Rico, United States</p>	<p>For the first time in its history, JPAC held a public forum in Puerto Rico to feature the lived experiences of people from cities, remote coastal communities, and Indigenous nations that have faced climate emergencies, showcasing their efforts toward building disaster resilience.</p> <p>Community representatives from urban, rural, and remote areas in North America shared their experiences and knowledge with the attendees, and also explored opportunities for trilateral cooperation on disaster resilience through the Commission for Environmental Cooperation and its activities.</p>	<p>As a result of the meeting, the JPAC members agreed to provide the Council with an Advice:</p> <p><b>Advice to Council No: 19-03</b> Re: JPAC Expert Forum on Community-based Approaches to Disaster Resilience (Distributed on 20 December 2019)</p>

<b>NOVEMBER 2019</b>		
<p><b>Advice to Council No: 19-02</b>  Re: Council Request for Input to the Joint Public Advisory Committee: 2021–2025 CEC Strategic Plan  <i>(Distributed on 4 November 2019)</i></p>	<p>As requested by the Council, JPAC provided input on questions related to the 2021-2025 CEC Strategic Plan, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental issues of importance for North America: climate change, water security, biodiversity and marine &amp; terrestrial habitat, waste and the circular economy.</li> <li>• Opportunities for CEC action in relation to these environmental issues.</li> <li>• The potential role for JPAC to build bridges as the only trilateral public-representative body with the mandate to promote cooperation on continental environmental issues.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Response from Council to JPAC Advice 19-02</b>  Re: Council Request for Input to the Joint Public Advisory Committee: 2021–2025 CEC Strategic Plan  <i>(Received on 28 January 2020)</i></p> <p>The Council responded to the advice by indicating their appreciation of the JPAC recommendations, which align with the four initial priorities under consideration for the Strategic Plan.</p>
<p><b>Session 19-03 of the Alternate Representatives</b>  Videoconference  7 November 2019</p>	<p>JPAC Chair Louie Porta participated in the videoconference with the Alternate Representatives, which centered on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2020 Budget</li> <li>• Council Session 2020 Proposal from Canada</li> <li>• Development of the Strategic Plan 2021-2025</li> <li>• NAPECA</li> </ul>	<p>The JPAC Chair provided an update on the very successful JPAC public forum in Puerto Rico and on the JPAC Advice stemming from the Council’s request regarding the development of the 2021-2025 Strategic Plan (SP).</p>
<b>DECEMBER 2019</b>		
<p><b>Advice to Council No: 19-03</b>  Re: JPAC Expert Forum on Community-based Approaches to Disaster Resilience  <i>(Distributed on 20 December 2019)</i></p>	<p>Noting that the JPAC expert forum in Puerto Rico highlighted examples of community resilience throughout North America, JPAC Advice to Council 19-03 outlined a series of recommendations to the Council, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council should endorse the JPAC’s public meeting formula and apply it to Council sessions.</li> <li>• By June 2020, the Council should identify, fund and announce three community-based renewable energy generation projects, one in each jurisdiction—Canada, Mexico and the United States.</li> <li>• By June 2020, the Council should establish a working group to assess the feasibility of government-sponsored and private insurance programs to support communities recovering from natural disasters.</li> <li>• By December 2020, the Council should initiate a special investigation to understand the relationship between cultural resilience and community-based disaster preparedness.</li> </ul>	<p><i>No response to date</i></p>
<b>JANUARY 2020</b>		
<p><b>Planning Retreat for the CEC’s 2021-2025 Strategic Plan</b></p>	<p>A JPAC member from each country participated in the planning retreat, which centered on seeking input from participants in the development of the CEC’s 2021-2025 Strategic Plan. Other participants included relevant</p>	<p>The consultation was guided by the following questions, as they relate to each of the four proposed strategic priorities:</p>

<p>30-31 January 2020 Washington DC, United States</p>	<p>government subject-matter experts and officials, members of the Traditional Ecological Knowledge Expert Group and CEC Secretariat officials.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) What are the main environmental and sustainability issues related to each priority for the North American Region?</li> <li>2) What are the relevant areas of work that could be pursued in the region to address each priority? How may each priority align with, complement, or benefit from international or multilateral efforts common to the Parties?</li> <li>3) What are the opportunities and challenges associated with each priority and area of work?</li> <li>4) In consideration of the above, what should be the key goals to be pursued and measured under each priority?</li> </ol>
<b>FEBRUARY 2020</b>		
<p><b>Session 20-01 of the Alternate Representatives</b> 27 February 2020 Videoconference</p>	<p>JPAC Chair Robert Varney participated in the meeting of the Alternate Representatives, which centered on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic Plan 2021-2025</li> <li>• 2020 Budget</li> <li>• Transition to the ECA</li> <li>• Council Session 2020</li> </ul>	<p>The JPAC Chair provided an overview of the public forum to be held at McGill University, which included a presentation from the Secretariat on the SEM process as well as on the new USMCA/ECA, in terms of similarities and differences with the NAFTA and NAAEC. Also planned was to underline the achievements of the CEC under the NAAEC. <i>(Note: This event was cancelled due to the COVID-19 situation.)</i></p> <p>With regards to the presentation of the draft SP, the JPAC Chair noted that CEC Secretariat staff would present each priority, as well as lead the discussion with the public. He also reported on their participation in the Washington, DC, retreat, and provided an overview of the online public consultation on the SP that would take place in March.</p>
<b>APRIL 2020</b>		
<p><b>US NAC &amp; GAC Meeting</b> 10 April 2020 Videoconference</p>	<p>JPAC Chair Robert Varney provided both committees with a status update on JPAC activities, which included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JPAC Advice to Council 19-02 on Council Request for JPAC input on 2021-2025 Strategic Plan and the Response from Council</li> <li>• JPAC and TEKEG participation in the planning retreat for the CEC's 2021-2025 Strategic Plan</li> <li>• JPAC-led Online Consultation on the 2021-2025 Strategic Plan (launched on 16 March, deadline to receive public input 16 April)</li> </ul>	<p><i>Ongoing</i></p>
<p><b>CEC 2020 Youth Innovation Challenge, evaluation by JPAC Members</b> 20 April – 4 May 2020</p>	<p>A JPAC member from each country participated in the evaluation process for the CEC 2020 Youth Innovation Challenge.</p>	<p>A number of finalists were selected for the next evaluation phase by the Parties.</p>

<p><b>JPAC-led Online Public Consultation on the CEC Draft Strategic Plan 2021-2025</b> 16 March – 16 April</p>	<p>JPAC called on the public to provide comments on the draft CEC 2021-2025 Strategic Plan, with specific attention to each of the proposed strategic priorities and cross-cutting approaches. Members of the public were requested to provide feedback considering the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under this strategic priority, what are the environmental issues and challenges facing North America over the next five years?</li> <li>• What are the opportunities for the CEC, considering the mission and mandate of the organization, to address these issues/challenges in the next five years?</li> <li>• How can the CEC amplify its work through partnerships in North America? Where do you see opportunities for an enhanced role of stakeholders/citizens in this Strategic Plan?</li> </ul>	<p>As a result of this online public consultation, the JPAC members agreed to provide the Council with an Advice:</p> <p><b>Advice to Council No: 20-01</b> Re: Public Consultation on the draft CEC Strategic Plan 2021-2025 <i>(Distributed on 30 April 2020)</i></p>
<p><b>Advice to Council No: 20-01</b> Re: Public Consultation on the draft CEC Strategic Plan 2021-2025 <i>(Distributed on 30 April 2020)</i></p>	<p>Noting the initial recommendations in JPAC Advice 19-02, as well as JPAC's participation in the CEC brainstorming session of January 2020 and the more than 80 comments received during the online public consultation; JPAC's Advice to Council outlined a series of recommendations for each strategic priority and cross-cutting theme, and included all the public feedback that was received (Annex 2) .</p>	<p><i>No response to date</i></p>
<p><b>MAY 2020</b></p>		
<p><b>Session 20-03 of the Alternate Representatives</b> 22 May 2020 Videoconference</p>	<p>JPAC Chair Robert Varney participated in the meeting of the Alternate Representatives, which centered on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council Session 2020</li> <li>• ECA Transition</li> <li>• Draft Strategic Plan 2021-2025</li> </ul>	<p>The JPAC Chair briefed the Council on JPAC's plan to hold an educational webinar where a few speakers will be invited to provide an introduction to USMCA's Chapter 24, the ECA, and the development of the Strategic Plan 2021-2025</p>
<p><b>Session 20-04 of the Alternate Representatives</b> 12 June 2020 Videoconference</p>	<p>JPAC Chair Robert Varney participated in the meeting of the Alternate Representatives, which centered on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council Session 2020</li> <li>• ECA Transition</li> <li>• Draft Strategic Plan 2021-2025</li> <li>• CEC Funding for 2021</li> <li>• Metrobus Reforma (SEM)</li> </ul>	<p>The JPAC Chair provided a final update on the JPAC Public Forum, scheduled to take place in the morning of 26 June.</p>