Ned Brooks State Government Minnesota Pollution Control Agency USA

Email address: ned.brooks@state.mn.us

Comments: Congratulations to the CEC for 20 years of important work. Since 1998, I have been fortunate to be involved with the CEC as technical expert at several CEC workshops, a contractor to CEC housed within INE/SEMARNAT for a small project in Mexico, an advisory member to a CEC Task Force and as Secretariat staff until earlier this year. During these 15 years I have participated in a variety of activities to help identify and reduce pollutants in North America, and to build this capacity in Mexico. The CEC has been effective in many areas and its joint work has undoubtedly contributed to protection and enhancement of the overall well-being of the environment, ecosystems and human health in North America. While there is certainly benefit to CEC work on these issues in the region, applying increasing limited resources to a broad range of issues may jeopardize the CEC's ability to be effective. The CEC has of course recognized this in the past through its periodic strategic planning; I offer that in the future, resources could be applied even more strategically. Building on the experience of the past 20 years in implementing the NAAEC, one way to do this could be to focus more on aspects of the NAAEC that deal with the intersection of trade and the environment. Central to this is ensuring consistency of laws and requirements and compliance with these requirements. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.