Project 12

Conserving Marine Species and Spaces of Common Concern

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planned Allocation</th>
<th>Responsible Project Manager at the CEC Secretariat</th>
<th>Working Group(s) associated with this work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C$205,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>Biodiversity Conservation Working Group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Objective of Project

The purpose of this project is to assist the Parties in fulfilling their commitment to better conserve, protect and enhance the North American environment, specifically by completing the CEC’s support for pilot projects that effectively demonstrate the benefits of trinational collaboration, and that can be replicated in other regions.¹

Specifically this project is aimed at:

- Supporting the North American Marine Protected Areas Network (NAMPAN) initiative in assessing the adaptive capacity of Priority Conservation Areas (PCAs) on the Atlantic coast of Canada, the United States, and Mexico;
- Completion of CEC activities in support of the Pink-footed Shearwater (PFSW) North American Conservation Action Plan (NACAP).

Background

Project History and Foundation

The Plan for North American Cooperation for the Conservation of Biodiversity (the Biodiversity Strategy) was endorsed by the CEC Council in 2003². Holistic in design, the Biodiversity Strategy was intended to steward trinational efforts to conserve species and spaces and deal with common threats by strengthening local capacity, and using economic and market instruments in regions of ecological significance and conservation sites, like the Baja California to Bering (B2B) marine region.

The B2B initiative and the related marine North American Conservation Action Plans (NACAPs) have demonstrated pilot implementation of the Biodiversity Strategy and a framework for cooperation.

Important milestones:

- June 1997—Ecological Regions of North America: Toward a Common Perspective was published;
- October 1999—17 terrestrial species were chosen as species of common conservation concern;
- July 2002—16 marine species of common conservation concern were agreed upon by the three countries;
- April 2003—priority conservation areas (PCAs) for the Baja California to Bering Sea (B2B) region were identified;
- June 2003—Council adopted the Strategic Plan for North American Cooperation in the Conservation of Biodiversity;
- June 2004—6 marine and terrestrial species were selected for NACAP implementation;
- April 2005—implementation of a network of monitoring sister sites in the B2B region began;
- 2005–2007—establishment of the B2B scorecards, a common framework to assess the ecological conditions of and understand

¹ Resolution 08-05: The CEC Council will: “Consider expanding the strategic approach of the NAMPAN to embrace the Atlantic, the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean, and the Arctic coasts of North America.”
the underlying pressures on biodiversity in selected marine protected areas (MPAs) throughout the B2B region;

- 2007–2008—the CEC implemented several training workshops for fishermen in support of Mexico’s decentralization initiative;
- May 2008—the Biodiversity Conservation Working Group (BCWG) endorsed the current project and recommended that the continuation of work on NAMPAN and the NACAPs in 2009;
- June 2008—CEC Council decided to consider expanding the NAMPAN strategic approach into other shared ocean ecosystems (e.g., North Atlantic, Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean); and
- May 2009—based on Council directives, the BCWG proposes the Atlantic Coast of North America as a new focal region for the CEC.

**Key Stakeholders, Resource Leveraging, Partnerships**

Implementation of this project will continue to be in partnership with government agencies:

Task 1: NOAA (National Marine Sanctuaries, Estuarine Reserves, Fisheries), Interior (National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service) Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), Environment Canada (EC), Parks Canada, the Comisión Nacional de Áreas Naturales Protegidas (Conanp), Instituto Nacional de Pesca (Inapesca), including region’s NGOs, research centers, universities and local environmental agencies

Task 2: Oikonos for in-kind services (salaries and website), NOAA (contributing 50 percent of needed resources), in-kind services from Canada’s PFSW recovery team.

**Advisory Groups Related to this Project**

Biodiversity Conservation Working Group (BCWG); NAMPAN steering committee; and the PFSW NACAP ad hoc technical and scientific team.

**Rationale**

This project has assisted the Parties in strengthening their continental capacities and knowledge baseline to conserve priority species and habitats in a region of high ecological significance in North America.

This has been accomplished by:

- assisting the Parties in identifying, assessing and addressing the underlying causes of decline of three marine species of common conservation concern;
- helping fill capacity gaps in the monitoring of species and habitats of common interest;
- supporting the establishment of a functional network of MPAs, to assess and monitor the ecological integrity of key marine spaces; and
- promoting the project experience as a replicable model valid for application to other ecological significant regions in North America (monarch sister sites network, grasslands, etc.).

**Fulfillment of Strategic Objectives**

This project is linked to the fulfillment of the 2005–2010 Strategic Plan through the following:

- Strengthening capacity, establishing a framework, and filling information gaps, in order for decision-makers to understand the underlying pressures on key habitats and priority species, and ways to promote sustainable development activities for a region of shared interest, as it has been achieved by the B2B scorecard framework;
- The sharing of scientific information and expertise to support and increase knowledge of key habitats and priority species, sustainable activities, and the prevention and reduction of destructive practices;
- One of the most comprehensive projects of NAMPAN to-date has been the establishment of the NAMPAN Condition Assessment Scorecard, which distills large amounts of complex technical and traditional/local ecological knowledge about MPA conditions for the west coast (B2B region) of North America. This year, 2010, represents the culmination of this initiative with the extension of this approach to the Atlantic/Caribbean region.

---


4 Refer to CEC’s Strategic Plan objectives.
North American Scope of the Project and its Relevance to the Three Parties

This project is aimed at supporting pilot projects to conserve species and spaces of common concern that effectively demonstrate the benefits of trinational collaboration, and that can be replicated in other regions of ecological significance to North America.

In order to maintain ecological integrity, protect migratory species and transboundary habitat, and deal with common threats to marine ecoregions—particularly in the context of rapidly changing environmental conditions, a continental approach to marine conservation has been developed under the stewardship of the CEC. The North American Marine Protected Areas Network (NAMPAN) represents a trinational network of resource agencies, MPA managers, and other relevant experts, and is intended to enhance and strengthen the conservation of biodiversity in critical marine habitats and help foster a comprehensive network of MPAs in North America by the appropriate agencies in the three countries.

In previous years, this project included work to support collaboration for the conservation of the leatherback turtle and the humpback whale, which, like the pink-footed shearwater, are among the 33 North American Species of Common Conservation Concern (SCCC). The pink-footed shearwater task and activities outlined here are drawn from the CEC’s North American Conservation Action Plan for this species.

Linkages with Other CEC Projects

- Protecting priority conservation areas from alien invasive species
- Mapping North American Environmental Issues

Activities and Outputs

Key Activities

- Assessing the adaptive capacity of PCAs on the Atlantic coast of Canada, the United States, and Mexico; and

Target Groups

Marine resource agencies, MPA managers, fishing communities, local fishery authorities.

Partners, Stakeholders

Implementation of this project will continue to be lead by NAMPAN and its associated government agencies, i.e., NOAA (MPA Center, Marine Sanctuaries, Estuarine Reserves, Fisheries), US Department of the Interior (National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service) Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), Environment Canada (EC), Parks Canada, Conanp, Inapesca and various NGOs.

Leveraging

Potential leveraging from NOAA’s Marine Spatial Planning initiative is to be used in the Atlantic region.

Outputs and Associated Timelines

Associated outputs/products include the following:

- A new set of MPAs\(^5\) implementing the B2B scorecard reporting;
- Report on the incorporation of ecosystem adaptive capacity criteria in MPA network design in the newly selected marine region (Atlantic to the Caribbean);
- Incorporation of NAMPAN’s clearinghouse and online database into CEC and partner websites (Parks Canada, NOAA, and Conanp). The clearinghouse is a distributed system that allows visualization and analysis of North American monitoring data collected at sister sites, including, whenever possible, NACAP species; and

\(^5\) The NAMPAN ad hoc group in 2008 identified a trinational set of remaining (and willing) MPAs in the B2B, which will have their staff trained on the scorecard methodology.
Anticipated Outcomes and Performance Indicators

**Direct Outcomes**
- A new marine region (Atlantic to the Caribbean—A2C) and PCAs in which to foster the design and establishment of a network of MPAs;
- Support for the recovery strategies for the PFSW that call for the identification of marine habitats of importance; to promote, support and augment international initiatives contributing to the recovery throughout their range; and to develop and implement educational activities; and address knowledge gaps concerning threats to the pink-footed shearwater.

**Intermediate Outcomes**
- Increased awareness and understanding of the underlying pressures, condition of marine biodiversity and its resiliency in the A2C region; and
- Implementation and adoption of strategies to address pressures to NACAP species (in particular the negative effects of bycatch).

**Final Outcomes**
- A network of MPAs in the Atlantic to the Caribbean region that incorporated adaptive management considerations in its design;
- MPA-based scorecarding system for the B2B and A2C regions;
- Adoption by fishermen and local and state governments, of effective strategies and programs to eliminate bycatch;
- Effective incentives for local fishermen in Mexico to reduce the use of unsustainable fishing gears;
- Increased capacity for local Mexican fishery stakeholders to implement actions to reduce bycatch;
- Greater policy coherence in and increased effectiveness of bycatch programs;
- Improved understanding of each of the NACAP species’ migratory patterns and use of habitat, and the impact of human activities on these, including recommendations on conservation and management policies; and
- Increased trinational collaboration and outreach to protect NACAP species in the B2B region.

**Performance Indicators**
- Established the basis for a network of MPAs in the A2C region;
- A self-sustaining NAMPAN organization;
- Number of trainees from local NGOs and resource agencies implementing monitoring and at-sea survey methods to assess trend and condition of threats and habitat use of PFSW populations; and
- Number of days of seabird surveys conducted in focal region.

**Timetable, Project Completion and Sustainability**

**Culminating Steps in Achievement of Program Objectives**
- In 2010, NAMPAN starts its transition from the B2B region to the A2C region, as directed by Council.
- Staff from participating B2B MPAs have been identified and will champion the continuation and periodic reporting on the environmental conditions of the B2B region. A training course on the scorecard methodology will engage the remaining clusters of MPAs. Arrangements for its maintenance and sustained financing will be made with partner agencies in 2009.
- A self-sustaining NAMPAN organization.

**Target End Date for CEC Involvement**
- All activities described in this project description are intended to be completed in 2010.

**Sustainability Beyond 2010**
- In November 2009, at the Washington, DC meeting, the NAMPAN ad hoc group developed a SWOT\(^6\) process, with the objective of having a self-sustained NAMPAN, not dependent upon CEC resources or support, by 2011. A strategy and action plan to accomplish this transition will be developed in 2010.

\(^6\) Analysis of internal strengths and weaknesses; and external opportunities and threats.
As required, the NAMPAN website and associated databases can be transferred to the new NAMPAN organization by 2011.

It is to be noted that a decision not to support these activities under the CEC post-2010 would require the cancellation of Council Resolution 03-07 mandating integrated continental cooperative efforts in biodiversity conservation.

Communications
The main target audiences of this project are: government agencies (Conanp, DFO and Environment Canada, Parks Canada, and the NOAA-MPA Center), fishery authorities and other state/provincial and local wildlife authorities, local fishing communities, scientists, NGOs. In keeping with the overall goal of improving information for decision makers and stakeholders at all levels, the products generated in this project will be made publicly available through electronic and print means—once these products have been approved by the quality assurance process where required.

Information Management
The B2B website will provide a knowledge base for species and spaces of common concern in the B2B and A2C regions: This site will include application that will collect, visualize, and analyze monitoring data from species (NACAPs) and spaces (MPAs) in the regions.

7 Participating NGOs will depend upon the region(s) selected for NAMPAN future implementation.
## Implementation Plan

### PROJECT 12 – Conserving Marine Species and Spaces of Common Concern

**Strategic Objectives:**
- Strengthen capacities to conserve species and habitat of common concern by building stakeholder capacity for planning, monitoring and management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2010 Tasks</th>
<th>Key Outputs</th>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Expected Outcomes</th>
<th>Beneficiaries (Reach)</th>
<th>Budget (C$)</th>
<th>Future Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NAMPAN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Develop condition scorecards for three to five new MPAs in the B2B region (completion of 2009 activity)</td>
<td>Workshop to develop condition scorecards (as described in 2009 Operational Plan)</td>
<td>First quarter 2010</td>
<td>A comprehensive assessment of the current environmental conditions and trends in the majority of the Mexican MPAs in the B2B region</td>
<td>MPA staff, state governments (Sinaloa, Baja California Sur), resource agencies, general public, Conanp and Inapesca, UABCS, research centers</td>
<td>NA (2009 activity)</td>
<td>Capacity has been built and a functional network is in place to continue scorecarding activities in the B2B region, which could be implemented by government agencies and NAMPAN without financial assistance from the CEC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2. Build upon the B2B process in the Atlantic to the Caribbean (A2C) region to support the design and establishment of a network of MPAs there | Development of a working paper, “Network design options for the Atlantic to the Caribbean region” Workshop to review and validate network planning criteria and adaptive management considerations Workshop to incorporate adaptive capacity | Winter-spring 2010 | Implement a methodology that applies current, science-driven network planning criteria as developed in Convention on Biological Diversity processes and elsewhere (such as connectivity and replication), to help North American MPA agencies collectively and individually consider how to plan an Atlantic to Caribbean network that builds on nationally- | Regional MPAs, Park and Fisheries agencies, universities, research centers, and federal and state/provincial agencies and conservation NGOs of the Atlantic to the Caribbean (A2C) region | 1. $30,000  
2. & 5. $55,000  
3. $65,000  
4. $20,000 |                  |
### PROJECT 12 – Conserving Marine Species and Spaces of Common Concern

**Strategic Objectives:**
- Strengthen capacities to conserve species and habitat of common concern by, building stakeholder capacity for planning, monitoring and management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2010 Tasks</th>
<th>Key Outputs</th>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Expected Outcomes</th>
<th>Beneficiaries (Reach)</th>
<th>Budget (C$)</th>
<th>Future Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>considerations into the network planning process for the A2C marine region</td>
<td>Fall-winter 2010</td>
<td>identified, existing and candidate MPA sites, and in a manner that takes into account adaptive capacity and adaptive management</td>
<td>Strategy and action plan to institutionalize NAMPAN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identification of a cluster of MPAs in the A2C region to replicate the scorecard methodology</td>
<td>Late spring 2010</td>
<td>(A) Sites identified to replicate environmental scorecarding methodology in the A2C region</td>
<td></td>
<td>$35,000</td>
<td>Task ends in 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NAMPAN strategic plan for institutionalization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NACAPs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2010 Tasks</th>
<th>Key Outputs</th>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Expected Outcomes</th>
<th>Beneficiaries (Reach)</th>
<th>Budget (C$)</th>
<th>Future Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 Analysis of at-sea survey data training undertaken to enable at-sea seabird research in México</td>
<td>Identification of marine areas of importance to pink-footed shearwaters (PFSW) within North American waters. Training workshop on survey methodologies to estimate seabird abundance and distribution in PFSW migration season</td>
<td></td>
<td>Support the Canadian Recovery Strategy for the PFSW that calls to identify marine habitats of importance; promote, support and augment international initiatives contributing to the recovery throughout their range; and to develop and implement educational activities; and address knowledge gaps concerning threats to the</td>
<td>Wildlife and fisheries agencies of the three countries, as well as Chile; Members of the Canadian recovery team; fishing and local communities along the distribution ranges in North America of the species, local/regional decision makers, resource managers, MPAs, and general public</td>
<td>$35,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Reach)
## PROJECT 12 – Conserving Marine Species and Spaces of Common Concern

### Strategic Objectives:
- Strengthen capacities to conserve species and habitat of common concern by, building stakeholder capacity for planning, monitoring and management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2010 Tasks</th>
<th>Key Outputs</th>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Expected Outcomes</th>
<th>Beneficiaries (Reach)</th>
<th>Budget (C$)</th>
<th>Future Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mexico, including likely areas for pink-footed shearwaters</td>
<td>Pink-footed Shearwater. Local agencies and NGOs will gain capacity to conduct at-sea seabird surveys in Mexico. Invited participants will include members of the Canadian recovery team, and Mexico’s NABCI’s coordinator</td>
<td>Increased local participation in at-sea seabird surveys</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Cost: $205,000**

### Performance Measurement Indicators:
- Established the basis for a network of MPAs in the A2C region
- A self-sustaining NAMPAN organization
- The number of trainees from local NGOs and resource agencies implementing monitoring and at-sea survey methods to assess trends and conditions of threats and habitat use in PFSW populations
- Number of days of seabird surveys conducted in focal region
- Frequency with which the sister MPAs (beyond the existing 10) in the B2B report use the NAMPAN monitoring indicators and protocols

### Key Partners:
A2C MPAs, NOAA (Marine Sanctuaries, Estuarine Reserves, Fisheries), Dept. of Interior (National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service) Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), Environment Canada (EC), Parks Canada, Canada’s PFSW recovery team, Oikonos, Conanp, Inapesca and various NGOs