



**Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) of North America  
31st Regular Session of the CEC Council  
and  
Session 24-01 of the Joint Public Advisory Committee (JPAC)**

**24–26 June 2024**

Wilmington Convention Center  
10 Convention Center Drive  
Wilmington, North Carolina, United States  
28401  
(Hybrid Event)

**Program of Public Events**

**Monday, 24 June 2024**

**JPAC Public Forum on Advancing Environmental Justice in North America**

Societies and governments worldwide are increasingly struggling with the devastating impacts caused by the current triple planetary crisis, which have unfortunately exacerbated environmental injustices, disproportionately affecting the most at-risk, impoverished, marginalized, and excluded individuals and communities, jeopardizing the protection of human and collective rights. The escalating, unequal burden of environmental deterioration calls for urgent action in North America and beyond, not only to address the impacts that climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss have had on their populations, but also to build a fair, just, equitable, and sustainable future for everyone.

As part of its 30th anniversary celebration, the Commission for Environmental Cooperation will reflect upon its decades of work to broaden its approach to environmental protection, by embracing an Environmental Justice (EJ) perspective to address this challenge. This year, the JPAC Public Forum will offer a platform to analyze and discuss the different dimensions of EJ and the way they are addressed in Canada, Mexico and the United States.

The Forum will draw from JPAC's network of partners, highlighting stories and examples of at-risk and historically marginalized communities where, through EJ action, key actors, including local community-led organizations, individuals, NGOs and Indigenous community representatives, have worked to raise awareness of environmental justice issues and address them.

**Time Zone: Eastern Time**

*Location: Convention Center, Ballroom ABC*

**7:30–9:00      Registration of Public Participants**

**9:00–9:05      JPAC Public Forum Welcoming Ceremony**

- 9:05–9:20 Welcoming Remarks by Jorge Daniel Taillant, CEC Executive Director**
- 9:20–9:30 Opening Remarks by Esteban Escamilla Prado, JPAC Chair**
- 9:30–10:00 Keynote Presentation by Diandra Marizet Esparza, Executive Director, Intersectional Environmentalist**
- Over the next decade, North America will confront a multitude of pressing environmental and social challenges, ranging from climate change and biodiversity loss to disparities in resource access and social inequities. These critical issues demand our urgent attention and concerted efforts to tackle environmental degradation, while simultaneously addressing systemic inequalities and injustices entrenched within our societies.
- Through the lens of environmental justice, this keynote will delve into the interconnected complexities that shape our journey to 2030. It will examine how environmental degradation disproportionately impacts at-risk, impoverished, marginalized, and excluded populations, threatening their health, livelihoods, and human and collective rights. Furthermore, it will explore how environmental justice is understood and addressed in North America, shedding light on the most relevant environmental justice topics and challenges in Canada, Mexico, and the US today.
- 10:00–10:15 Break**
- 10:15–12:00 Panel 1. Legal and Policy Instruments to Access and Implement Environmental Justice in North America**
- Historically, the environmental burdens resulting from the use and misuse of the land and its resources have been distributed unequally, with the poor, marginalized and minority communities bearing much of the load. Environmental law and policy need to prevent this from occurring by addressing the gap with clear legislative requirements, accountability mechanisms, and public policies.
- This panel session will present various examples from Canada, Mexico and the United States of legal and policy mechanisms and instruments used to access and implement environmental justice.
- **Paolo Solano**, Director, Submissions on Enforcement Matters and Legal Unit, CEC
  - **Aliénor Rougeot**, Program Manager, Climate and Energy, Environmental Defence Canada
  - **Erika Hernández Mariaca**, Co-founder, Collective Cuatepec Tosepan
  - **Amanda M. Hauff**, Senior Advisor on Environmental Justice, Office of International and Tribal Affairs, US Environmental Protection Agency
- Moderator:** Robert Varney, JPAC member
- 12:00–13:15 Lunch [Provided]**
- 13:15–13:30 Report from the U.S. National and Governmental Advisory Committee Representatives**
- 13:30–15:00 Panel 2. Community Mobilization and Environmental Justice Challenges**

Environmental justice acknowledges the overlapping nature of injustices affecting marginalized communities and the Earth, and identifies how they are interconnected. As a grassroots movement, EJ is redefining the sustainability agenda: bringing injustices done to the most marginalized communities, and to the Earth, to the forefront and integrating a strong social justice dimension.

This panel session will present the principles of environmental justice by showcasing community examples that reflect each of them. Additionally, it will provide a platform to discuss current EJ challenges in Canada, Mexico, and the United States and to share reflections on the future trajectory of EJ in North America.

- **Naolo Charles**, Founder, Black Environmental Initiative, and Co-founder, Canadian Coalition for Environmental and Climate Justice
- **Josefa Sánchez Contreras**, hails from the Zoque Indigenous community of Chimalapa, Oaxaca, and is a researcher at the University of Granada.
- **Don Hardy**, Mayor of Kinston, North Carolina, Chairman of North Carolina Mayors Association Board of Directors, Vice Chairman, National League of Cities, and Member of the African American Mayors Association
- **Chris Hawn**, Co-Director of Research and Education, North Carolina Environmental Justice Network

**Moderator:** Cessia Chuc, JPAC member

**15:00–15:15** Break

**15:15–16:50** **Open Dialogue on Opportunities for Environmental Trilateral Cooperation: Can We Think about Environmental Justice From a Regional North American Perspective?**

**16:50–17:00** Closing Remarks by Esteban Escamilla, JPAC Chair

<b>Tuesday, 25 June 2024</b>
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**Time Zone:** Eastern Time

*Location:* Convention Center, Ballroom ABC

**9:00–10:00** Registration of Public Participants

**9:00–11:00** Visit to the CEC Exhibition

**11:00–11:30** CEC Presentation on the Air Quality Improvement for Environmental Justice project by Elizabeth Campos Sanchez, Project Lead, Environmental Quality

This session will feature an overview of the CEC [Air Quality \(AQ\) Improvement for Environmental Justice Initiative](#), which has the objective of creating collaborative partnerships with community-based organizations interested in managing their own community AQ monitoring projects to understand, measure, and mitigate exposure and emissions of PM2.5 and black carbon.

**Moderator:** Orlando Cabrera-Rivera, Head of Environmental Quality Program

**11:30–12:00 CEC Presentation on the North American PRTR Initiative and demonstration of the Taking Stock Online website and database by Danielle Vallée, Project Lead, North American PRTR Initiative**

This session will offer a presentation of the North American Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (PRTR) Initiative, a foundational Community Right-to-Know initiative of the CEC that promotes enhanced public access to and understanding of the amounts, sources, and management of industrial pollutants to support pollution prevention and sustainability. A demonstration of the [Taking Stock Online website](#) and North American PRTR database will follow.

**Moderator:** Orlando Cabrera-Rivera, Head of Environmental Quality Program

**14:00–15:30 Youth Panel: Bridging the Gap: A Conversation on the Generational Fight for Environmental Justice**, touching on the importance of youth engagement in communities across North America to address environmental justice.

- **Dr. Benjamin Chavis**, Executive Director and Host, The Chavis Chronicles
- **Iman A Berry**, Co-Founder, Green Ummah and Migration and Climate Change Contact Point, Youth Constituency, UFCCC
- **Katia Forgues**, Co-Director, Sustainable Youth Canada and member, ECCC's Youth Council
- **Cameron E Oglesby**, Environmental Justice Advocate and Storyteller
- **Colton Buckley**, Chief Executive Officer, National Association of Resource Conservation and Development Councils and Administrator, EPA National Environmental Youth Advisory Council
- **Fátima Zúñiga**, student, Renewable Natural Resources Engineering, *Universidad Autónoma Chapingo*
- **Sacnité Acosta**, Co-Founder and Co-Leader, LEGAIA

**Moderator:** Prof. La'Meshia Whittington, Co-Founder/President, Democracy Green

**15:30–16:00 Break**

**16:00–17:15 Expert Roundtable with the CEC Executive Director: Environmental Justice: Origins, Evolution and Emerging Policy in North America**

This roundtable will focus on past, present and emerging efforts to promote environmental justice (EJ) in North America particularly in the context of the triple planetary crisis of climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss. The invited experts will be asked to share their views on similarities and divergence in the understanding of EJ across the United States, Mexico and Canada, on the context of EJ's evolution and how communities and public agencies have engaged on EJ. The panel will reflect on how EJ actions (such as improving access to information, promoting meaningful participation and the passage of specific EJ laws, policies and programs) can help tackle environmental inequities suffered by historically disadvantaged and marginalized communities facing polluted air, contaminated water, extreme heat, drought, severe weather events, flooding, food scarcity, and other intersectional vulnerabilities.

- **Michael S. Regan**, Administrator, US Environmental Protection Agency
- **Dr. Benjamin Chavis**, Executive Director and Host, The Chavis Chronicles
- **Kenneth Martin**, Director, American Indian Environmental Office, EPA
- **Eriel Deranger**, Executive Director and Founder, Indigenous Climate Action
- **Amanda Monforton**, Director, ECCC Policy Development
- **Octavio Rosas Landa**, Professor, *Universidad Autónoma de México*
- **Marco Polo Huitrón Bernáldez**, Director, Federal Infractions Against the Environment, Profepa

**Moderator:** Jorge Daniel Taillant, CEC Executive Director

**17:30–18:00**    **Transportation to Official Opening** (*Thalian Hall, 310 Chestnut St, Wilmington*)

**18:15–18:45**    **Official Opening of the 31<sup>st</sup> Regular Session of the Council** (*Thalian Hall, 310 Chestnut St, Wilmington*)

- **Queen Quet**, Published author, computer scientist, lecturer, mathematician, historian, columnist, preservationist, environmental justice advocate, environmentalist, film consultant, and “The Art-ivist.” Founder, Gullah/Geechee Sea Island Coalition.

**18:45–20:00**    **Welcoming Reception**

**20:00–20:30**    **Transportation to the Hotel**

<b>Wednesday, 26 June 2024</b>
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**Time Zone:** Eastern Time

*Location: Convention Center, Ballroom ABC*

**8:00–9:00**        **Registration of Public Participants**

**9:00–10:00**     **Visit to the CEC Exhibition**

**10:00–11:30**    **CEC Presentation on EJ4Climate Grant Program and Communities for Environmental Justice Network**, in which EJ4Climate community grant projects in the three countries will be featured and presentation on CEC project Communities for Environmental Justice Network, which was recently created to engage communities and organizations to facilitate learning and knowledge exchange processes to strengthen climate adaptation and build capacity.

- **Jackie Medcalf**, Executive Director, Texas Health and Environment Alliance
- **Orion Kriegman**, Founding Executive Director, Boston Food Forest Coalition
- **Jeffrey Renfrow**, Director, Rio Bravo Restoration
- **Jose Torcal**, Project Lead, *Isla Urbana*
- **Marley Kozak**, National Program Manager, The Resilience Institute
- **Jaziel Soto Torres**, Cucapah *El Mayor* Indigenous Community

**Moderator:** Violaine Pronovost, Lead, Community Grant Programs

- 11:30–11:45**    **Break**  
**11:45–13:30**    **Lunch** [Provided]

**Council Public Meeting**  
**Strengthening Environmental Justice through Community Empowerment**

In accordance with the Agreement on Environmental Cooperation (ECA) Article 3(4), the CEC Council shall hold public meetings in the course of all regular sessions. These public meetings have been held since 1995 and represent a unique opportunity for members of civil society in North America to engage with senior environmental officials and learn about North American environmental collaboration in the context of free trade. This year’s public meeting will focus on “Strengthening Environmental Justice through Community Empowerment.”

*Location: Convention Center, Ballroom ABC*

**13:30–13:40**    **Welcoming Remarks by Jorge Daniel Taillant, CEC Executive Director**

**13:40–14:10**    **Generation of Environmental Leaders Program Youth Teams (GELP)**

The GELP invites teams of young leaders from North America to support communities and preserve our shared waters, lands and air. The program is aimed at youth who are 18–35 years old and are part of a team such as, but not exclusively, youth-led organizations, youth-led associations, nongovernmental organizations, not-for-profit youth-led businesses, and teams of youth innovators and entrepreneurs interested in building their businesses. The selected youth teams will be present their innovative solutions to the Council and the public.

**United States:**

- **Jacob Barnett**, Co-Founder, Elctrivive
- **McKenna Dunbar**, Co-Founder, Electrivative

**Canada:**

- **Alexandre Savard**, Co-Founder, *Encore! Biomatériaux*
- **Nicolas Jourdan-Gassin**, Co-Founder, *Encore! Biomatériaux*

**Mexico :**

- **Ana Cristina Posadas García**, Co-Founder, ORMA
- **Daniela Guadalupe De Regil Muñoz**, ORMA

**14:10–15:40**    **Dialogue with the Council on Environmental Justice**

During this session, Council members and invited experts will participate in a public dialogue on Environmental Justice.

**15:40-15:55**    **Break**

**15:55–16:25**    **CEC’s 30 Year Anniversary Celebration**

Interactive session celebrating the 30 years of the CEC and showcasing successful and reproducible projects from the last 30 years.

**16:25–16:45**    **Council Announcements**

**16:45–17:00 Council Session Closing**