CEC Secretariat Report
2015 activities

cec.org

Commission for Environmental Cooperation

Table of Contents

Cooperative Achievements

1. Introduction

The Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) was created in 1994 by the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation (NAAEC), concluded by Canada, Mexico and the United States (the "Parties") as a side-agreement to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The CEC's mission is to facilitate collaboration and public participation to foster conservation, protection and enhancement of the North American environment.

A trinational Council, the Secretariat, and the Joint Public Advisory Committee (JPAC) comprise the CEC. The Council is composed of cabinet-level environmental officials from each of the NAAEC Parties and governs the CEC, approving the overall program and budget and implementing the NAAEC. The CEC Secretariat is headquartered in Montreal and has a liaison office in Mexico City. It is headed by an executive director, who oversees a cooperative work program on various North American environmental matters, the development of independent Secretariat reports on North American environmental issues, and the processing of public submissions on enforcement matters (SEM). A fifteen-member JPAC acts as an advisory body to the Council on any matter within the scope of the NAAEC. In December, the Council appointed the new executive director, Mr. César Rafael Chávez, for a term of three years, starting in January 2016. More information about the CEC can be found at http://www.cec.org/.

In July 2015, the Council held its twenty-second regular session in Boston, Massachusetts, focusing on the theme of Climate Adaptation and Resilience and endorsing the CEC's Strategic Plan for 2015–2020, which builds on its efforts from the prior five years, and adopting a two-year Operational Plan.

The Council also announced the creation of a Roster of Experts on Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) from Canada, Mexico and the United States. The 15 distinguished members of the roster—five from each country—will advise the Council through JPAC on opportunities to apply TEK to the CEC's operations and policy recommendations. This is the first traditional ecological knowledge panel to be named to an international organization such as the CEC.

The Council also launched the third cycle of a two-year grant program that supports environmental action at the community level, allocating C$1.3 million of the CEC budget to support the North American Partnership for Environmental Community Action (NAPECA).

2. Cooperative Work Program

The CEC's cooperative work program carries out trilateral projects and initiatives responding to the CEC Council's priorities described in the strategic and operational plans adopted by the Council. The year 2015 marked the end of the 2010–2015 Strategic Plan and of the 2013–2014 Operational Plan, as well as the beginning of the upcoming 2015–2020 Strategic Plan—and its operational plan—approved by the Council in July 2015.

The 2010–2015 Strategic Plan included three broad priorities: Healthy Communities and Ecosystems, Climate Change–Low-Carbon Economy, and Greening the Economy in North America. Within those three strategic priorities, the Council focused the 2013–2014 Operational Plan on three key environmental areas: Tackling Climate Change and Improving Air Quality, Greening Transportation in North America, and Addressing Waste in Trade in North America. All publications stemming from the close-out of both operational and strategic plans are available on the CEC Virtual Library (www.cec.org/islandora) and described in the sections below.

For the period of 2015–2020, the CEC Council has endorsed three new strategic priorities: Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation, Green Growth, and Sustainable Communities and Ecosystems. The Council also adopted a two-year Operational Plan which identifies 16 projects that will produce tangible outcomes to deliver the strategic vision, bringing together experts on work such as exploring the benefits of blue carbon in the environment, supporting chemicals management, developing a North American approach to marine protected area management, reducing maritime shipping emissions, improving the conservation status of migratory birds that breed in the Arctic, and strengthening monarch butterfly conservation.

A. Tackling Climate Change and Improving Air Quality

a) North America's Blue Carbon: Assessing the Role of Coastal Habitats in the Continent's Carbon Budget

This project advanced the conservation and restoration of coastal ecosystems including salt marshes, mangroves and seagrass that sequester and store carbon (known as blue carbon) by improving data, mapping and other approaches for developing and applying the appropriate carbon budgets. The project developed a joint dataset on blue carbon habitats including maps, carbon accounts, and sequestration and emissions potential; established a North American blue carbon community of practice to increase collaboration and knowledge between blue carbon experts in the three countries; and supported the first step in developing an internationally recognized methodology for including blue carbon conservation projects in voluntary carbon markets. A workshop was held from 14-16 April 2015 in Playa del Carmen, Quintana Roo, Mexico, that brought together forest carbon, blue carbon, and land cover mapping experts to identify models, tools, and information for blue carbon science.

b) North American Black Carbon Emissions Estimation Guidelines

This project developed guidelines to improve the accuracy of emission estimates for black carbon (soot emitted from diverse sources such as industrial combustion, diesel engines, wood burning and forest fires) and its co-pollutants, providing the basis for reliable inventories to establish baselines and determine reduction priorities. These guidelines provide comparable methodologies and best practices for use across North America, at both the national and subnational levels, and include recommendations for further research.

c) North American Forest Carbon Dynamics and Climate Change Mitigation Options

This project contributed to the development of science-based decision-support models that quantify the impacts of alternative forest and land management options on the carbon balance of North American forests. It also supported the development of land cover and land-cover change products at the continental scale. A summary report and its accompanying technical report were produced which synthesized experts' collaboration to improve and harmonize methods for assessing changes in carbon stocks and causes of change in the three countries.

d) Improving Conditions for Green Building Construction in North America

With a view to strengthening the environmental performance of North America's built environment, this project will engage the private sector and governmental agencies to advance green workforce training and resource use efficiency. It also explored opportunities to increase green building construction in isolated communities. Work included the publication of a guide and outreach video on integrated design and delivery for improving green building construction in North America.

e) Online, Interactive Informational Platform on Climate Change

This project established the North American Portal on Climate Pollutants, an online, interactive platform designed to make data and methodologies from air pollutant emissions inventories for Canada, the United

States and Mexico more comparable and easier for researchers and policy experts to use. It includes inventory data for greenhouse gases (GHG), black carbon, and other short-lived climate pollutant emissions, published with the cooperation of the three governments.

f) Improving Indoor Air Quality in Indigenous Communities

This project demonstrated that education, along with no-cost or low-cost home modifications, such as replacing inefficient wood-burning stoves and improving home ventilation, can reduce the need for respiratory medical care in Alaskan Native populations by reducing exposure to airborne contaminants in homes. The project was implemented in cooperation with the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC) and reached 211 children in 63 households, in eight communities. On 10-11 June 2015, the CEC held a meeting with Canadian researchers, government and aboriginal representatives to present results and lessons learned from this pilot project, and exchange information on best practices.

g) North American AirNow-International

As part of the trilateral effort to promote healthy communities, this work supported and improved the management and sharing of ambient air quality data, and public access to it, through AirNow-International. In particular, it supported Mexico's efforts to connect its diverse air quality monitoring systems with the AirNow system used by Canada and the United States. Data can now be accessed on air quality conditions for locations across the three countries.

B. Greening Transportation in North America

a) Greening Transportation at North American Land Ports of Entry (POEs)

Building on recent work of the CEC on ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from freight transportation and along transportation corridors, this project analyzed vehicle emissions associated with border wait times and related health impacts, and proposed viable options and practices to reduce vehicle emissions from traffic congestion at terrestrial border crossings between Canada and the United States, and the United States and Mexico. The results of the studies were presented to government stakeholders and experts at two selected crossings in May and June 2015.

b) Reducing Emissions from Maritime Goods Movements

With a view to establishing a common North American approach to controlling emissions from ships, this project supported Mexico's effort to create an Emission Control Area (ECA) under the International Maritime Organization. The work involved technical analyses of marine source air pollutants, assessments of fuel quality and costs, and health and economic impacts that would result from implementing a Mexican ECA. The project included the development of technical guidance for updating Mexico's national marine vessel emissions inventory and the update of the emissions inventory for Mexico's ports.

c) Improving the Performance of the Truck and Bus Manufacturing Supply Chain

Building on previous CEC work with the Suppliers Partnership for the Environment and Alianza Verde Automotriz for the North American automotive manufacturing sector, this project laid the groundwork for the establishment of a public-private partnership in the bus and heavy-duty truck manufacturing sectors. It provided a forum for sharing continued improvement, innovation, and successes of environmental management practices that reduce environmental impacts of these sectors. It also examined the economic profile and trends of the bus and heavy-duty truck manufacturing sectors in the past ten years, along with reviewing environmental management benchmarks and certification in the areas of waste management, water use, chemicals management, air quality, and energy efficiency.

C. Addressing Waste in Trade in North America

a) Enhancing Environmental Law Enforcement in North America

This project improved the NAAEC Parties' capacities to target illegal trade in regulated materials, including e-waste, hazardous waste, ozone-depleting substances, non-compliant engines in motorcycles, and wildlife in North America. An important element of this project was to increase understanding of regulatory gaps, and to improve intelligence-led information-sharing.

b) Environmentally Sound Management of Selected End-of-Life Vehicle Batteries

This project developed technical guidelines on environmentally sound management practices for secondary lead smelters and other facilities that process these batteries, including best practices and technologies for collecting and recycling in a manner that protects the environment, and the health and safety of workers and the public. The project also included the compilation of practices to improve the end-of-life management of batteries from electric-drive vehicles, as well as a study to determine emission factors from a selected secondary lead smelting facility to support the development of new regulations in Mexico.

D. Cross-cutting Initiatives

a) Catalyzing North American Grasslands Conservation and Sustainable Use through Partnerships

Building on the success of cooperative work on native grasslands in 2011–2012, this project improved native grasslands and ranch livelihoods through the implementation of beneficial management projects on 20 ranches and ejidos on native grasslands. It also disseminated a social marketing package that included training material on the value of grasslands and ranching to society, an online tool with over a hundred innovative practices for grassland management, and a set of infographics on North America's beef cattle industries, beef cattle trade and grasslands. In May 2015, the CEC conducted a tour of ranches in Kansas that received support from the CEC to implement beneficial management practices. During the tour, over 70 ranchers from the three countries shared their experiences on implementing the beneficial management practices to support sustainable ranching.

b) Conservation of Transboundary Protected Areas

The transboundary protected areas in the Big Bend-Río Bravo region have been the focus of four years of CEC support to increase the ecosystem health and resiliency of the region to climate change. Project work focused on identifying priority areas for conservation within these habitats, implementing joint strategies for adaptive management, and assisting communities with the development of sustainable livelihoods.

c) Enhancing Trilateral Understanding of Chemicals in Products

This project advanced a North American approach to identify the sources, uses and risks of emerging flame retardants in products, in order to assist in developing strategies for managing those chemicals. The project evaluated the availability of information on emerging flame retardants of interest and provided an in-depth summary of information on the use of flame retardants in the North American polyurethane foam industry, particularly the use of such foam in upholstered furniture.

E. Other Initiatives

a) North American Pollutant Release and Transfer Register

The North American Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (NAPRTR) project involves the compilation and dissemination of information on the sources, amounts and handling of toxic substances released or transferred by industrial facilities in North America, based on data reported to the pollutant release and transfer register (PRTR) of each country. Updates to Taking Stock Online included customized features; the

inclusion of data from all three countries for the years 2005 through 2012; and new tools to download data and display them in the Google Earth mapping application. Integrated data for the 2012 reporting year was published in March 2015.

b) North American Environmental Atlas

The North American Environmental Atlas continued to host seamless, accurate cartographic data, including maps, documentation, and interactive map layers at a scale of 1:10,000,000 for different base and thematic maps of North America. Recent additions in 2015 included maps of mangroves, salt marshes and seagrass meadows.

3. North American Partnership for Environmental Community Action

In order to promote shared responsibility and stewardship for the environment, the Council established the North American Partnership for Environmental Community Action (NAPECA). NAPECA supports communities in their efforts to address environmental problems locally. In 2015, the CEC solicited proposals to fund C$1.325 million for hands-on projects focused on Sustainable Communities/Urban Initiatives to empower and build the capacity of local peoples and organizations to improve their health and environmental quality. The CEC received more than 500 proposals from nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), environmental groups, community-based associations, academic institutions, Tribal nations, and indigenous peoples and communities. The selected projects will meet the Council's strategic objectives to support model environmental initiatives that help build long-term partnerships at the community, local and regional levels. They will include active community involvement and a plan to achieve measurable results within the time frame of NAPECA support, which is two years. The CEC will announce the new recipients in early 2016.

To find out more about the NAPECA grants program, including descriptions and maps of the awarded projects from 2011 to present, visit www.cec.org/napeca.

4. Submissions on Enforcement Matters

Articles 14 and 15 of the NAAEC provide for a mechanism whereby any North American resident, or nongovernmental organization established in North America, can file a submission asserting that a Party to the Agreement is failing to effectively enforce its environmental law. The process may lead to the development and publication of a factual record containing information relevant to the alleged failure(s). The process is informed by the Guidelines for Submissions on Enforcement Matters under Articles 14 and 15 of the NAAEC (the SEM Guidelines).

From the 1994 entry into force of the NAAEC until the end of 2015, 86 submissions have been filed with the Secretariat: 30 concerning Canada, 43 concerning Mexico, 12 concerning the United States, and one concerning both Canada and the United States. During that time, 29 submissions did not warrant further consideration based on Article 14(1) or (2), 19 were dismissed following the concerned Party's response, and five others have been withdrawn. Thirty-two factual records have been recommended to the Council. In six cases, the Council has voted against the Secretariat's recommendation to develop a factual record. The Secretariat has published 21 factual records.

In 2015, the CEC received three new submissions and concluded action on three other submissions, including the publication of a factual record on limestone quarrying operations in Sumidero Canyon (Council Resolution 15-05). The three new submissions are: La Primavera Forest (SEM-15-001), filed by two individuals in Mexico, asserting that the Santa Anita Hills housing development project is causing the destruction of a netleaf oak forest, and questioning the legality of the change in land use from forest to urban area and the construction of houses in the buffer zone of La Primavera Forest; Management of Analog TV Waste (SEM-15-002), filed by several individuals and NGOs in Mexico, asserting that while millions of TV sets are being discarded as a result of the so-called "analog blackout" (the conversion from analog to digital TV broadcasting), a management plan required by Mexican law is not being implemented; and Municipal Wastewater Drop Shafts (SEM-15-003), in which the Submitter asserts that the United States is failing to effectively enforce the Safe Drinking Water Act regarding the failure of regulatory agencies to issue underground injection well permits for sewer drop shafts used to convey municipal wastewater. The Council also voted against the preparation of two factual records in Council Resolution 15-01 (Alberta Tailings Ponds, Canada) and Council Resolution 15-02 (Tourism Development in the Gulf of

California, Mexico). The Secretariat continued to work on the preparation of the factual record for the Wetlands in Manzanillo (SEM 09-002, Mexico) submission. In addition, the Secretariat conducted SEM outreach activities in Canada, Mexico, and the United States.

More information can be found at www.cec.org/submissions

2015 Financial Report

Commission for Environmental Cooperation
2015 Financial Results

DESCRIPTION	2015 budget	Results	Variance	%
REVENUES				
Parties' Contributions (2015 exchange rate US$1.09/C$)	8,338,500	8,338,500	0	
Carry Over of Unspent Contributions from Previous Years	912,500	912,500	0	
Extension of deadline for use of 2014 funds	355,600	355,600	0	
Gain (loss) on foreign exchange	0	1,331,346	1,331,346	
Interest	0	48,443	48,443	
Other Income	0	5,358	5,358	
TOTAL REVENUES	**9,606,600**	**10,991,747**	**1,385,147**	**14.42%**
EXPENSES				
Cooperative work program				
Projects	2,520,000	2,462,945	57,055	2.26%
Work Program, Salaries, Benefits anf Professional Development	1,407,360	1,341,078	66,282	4.71%
Resolution 15-03 Extension of deadline for use of 2014 funds	355,600	340,917	14,683	4.13%
North American Partnership for Environmental Community Action (NAPECA)	725,000	725,000	0	0.00%
Tracking Pollutant Releases and Transfers in North America (North American PRTR Project)	150,000	84,958	65,042	43.36%
Support and Maintenance of the North American Environmental Atlas , Land Cover Monitoring system and Online Interactive Platform on Climate change	55,000	38,632	16,368	29.76%
Mexico Liaison Office	210,990	228,033	-17,043	-8.08%
Managing CEC Environmental Information	81,000	37,216	43,784	54.05%
Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting	80,000	69,664	10,336	12.92%
	5,584,950	**5,328,443**	**256,507**	**4.59%**
Secretariat report (Article 13)	0	0	0	0.00%
Submissions on Enforcement Matters (Articles 14 & 15)	691,100	532,536	158,564	22.94%
Council Support	321,000	285,558	35,442	11.04%
JPAC Support	503,200	445,788	57,412	11.41%
Communications	522,900	442,315	80,585	15.41%
Administration & Management				
Executive Director's Office	65,000	33,197	31,803	48.93%
External Administrative Support (Insurance, audit , fiscal expertise, banking , legal)	195,000	207,072	-12,072	-6.19%
Relocation/orientation, Recruitment	113,800	33,029	80,771	70.98%
Operating Expenses (Telecommunications, rent, operating equipment, office supplies)	742,000	774,797	-32,797	-4.42%
Administration & Management Salaries	867,650	838,327	29,323	3.38%
	1,983,450	**1,886,422**	**97,028**	**4.89%**
TOTAL EXPENSES	**9,606,600**	**8,921,062**	**685,538**	**7.14%**

Commission for Environmental Cooperation
Financial report - Cooperative Work program
2015 Projects

	DESCRIPTION	2015 Annual Budget	Total Expenses
	CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION		
1	Integrated Modeling and Assessment of Climate Change Mitigation Options in the North American Forest Sector	180,000	164,796
2	Helping North American Communities Adapt to Climate Change: A Pilot Syndromic Surveillance System for Extreme Heat	205,000	202,755
3	North American Initiative on Food Waste Reduction and Recovery	230,000	229,999
4	North American Initiative on Organic Waste Diversion and Processing	120,000	119,996
5	North American Blue Carbon: Next Steps in Science for Policy	305,000	325,780
	Total for Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation	**1,040,000**	**1,043,326**
	GREEN GROWTH		
6	Reducing Emissions from Goods Movement via Maritime Transportation in North America – Phase II	115,000	94,836
7	Enhancing North American Enforcement of IMO Maritime Fuel Sulfur Limits	125,000	93,913
8	Accelerating Adoption of ISO 50001 and Superior Energy Performance (SEP) Program Certifications in North America	80,000	78,508
9	Strengthening Conservation and Sustainable Production of Selected CITES' Appendix II Species in North America	65,000	64,298
10	Greening of Chemicals Management in North America	165,000	146,428
	Total for Green Growth	**550,000**	**477,983**
	SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES AND ECOSYSTEMS		
11	Arctic Migratory Birds Initiative - the Americas' Flyway Action Plan	230,000	244,808
12	Engaging Farmers and Other Landowners to Support Monarch Butterfly and Pollinator Conservation	150,000	149,985
13	Monarch Butterfly Flyway: Communication, Participatory Conservation, and Education Programs Throughout the Migratory Route	135,000	135,004
14	Local Environmental Observer Network	125,000	124,959
15	Using Ecosystem Function and Traditional Ecological Knowledge together to Build Resilience and Adapt to Climate Change in North America	150,000	149,833
16	Marine Protected Areas: Strengthening Management Effectiveness and Supporting Coastal Community Resilience	140,000	137,047
	Total for Sustainable Communities and Ecosystems	**930,000**	**941,636**
	TOTAL	**2,520,000**	**2,462,945**