



**Joint Public Advisory Committee (JPAC) Activity Report
to the Council of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC)
since July 2012**

This table is intended to provide Council with an overview of JPAC activities since the July 2012 Regular Session of Council to assist discussions during the annual joint Council/JPAC sessions in July 2013.

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
Joint Public Advisory Committee Regular Session 12-02 “Resilient Communities in North America,” 9-11 July 2012, New Orleans, Louisiana	In North America, there are more and more people whose communities are subject to extreme meteorological phenomena. The intensity of these events and the severity of their social and economic impacts are due in part to the climate anomalies caused by global warming, but also to the growth of human settlements, infrastructure and productive activities in vulnerable areas. The objectives of the JPAC workshop included creating a dialog between citizens and organizations with initiatives to increase the resilience of communities in the region; sharing information on initiatives to address the issue and cases of success achieved in the three countries; and defining recommendations for policies and strategies that governments in the region might enact in order to increase the long-term resilience and sustainability of our communities.	The output of the workshop was a publicly available guide aimed at supporting government and local leaders in taking action on critical issues affecting the communities of North America and beyond: “Resilient Future, Voices of North Americans on Policy and Action” As a result of the meeting, the members also agreed to provide the Council with an Advice: Advice 13-01: Re: Outputs from JPAC workshops in New Orleans (July 2012) and Mérida (December 2012) on “Fostering Resilient Communities and Reducing Ecosystem Vulnerability in North America”
Letter to Council Re: Possible review of the NAAEC and the CEC in light of the 20th anniversary of the implementation of NAFTA and the NAAEC <i>(Distributed on 6 September 2012)</i>	Following the discussion at the Council Session in New Orleans regarding a possible review of the NAAEC and the CEC, in light of the 20th anniversary of the implementation of NAFTA and the NAAEC in January 2014, the JPAC Chair sent a letter to the Council, expressing support for conducting a 20-year review.	<i>No response to date</i>

	<p>JPAC recommended that the 2013 CEC budget include funds for such a review, in order to allow for a final report to be issued well in advance of the June 2014 Council Session—also a prime opportunity for incorporating the report's findings in the 2015–2020 CEC Strategic Plan.</p> <p>JPAC welcomed the opportunity of participating in planning and implementing the 20-year review, by providing input on the terms of reference and the selection of independent experts to lead the review, as was done with the TRAC.</p> <p>JPAC also offered to convene a 20-year Review Working Group within JPAC to coordinate JPAC's efforts and collaborate with the Council, as was done with the SEM Guidelines review process. In addition, JPAC would also consider ways to engage the North American public in the review process through its work program and schedule for public meetings for 2013.</p>	
<p>JPAC participation in the CEC's SLABs Workshop, 3 October 2012, Mexico City, Mexico</p>	<p>Pauline Browes, representing JPAC, attended the CEC workshop on the Secretariat's ongoing examination of the environmental hazards of the transboundary movement and recycling of spent lead-acid batteries.</p> <p>The main focus for the workshop was to exchange views and ideas among a select group of experts, industry delegates, citizens, and regulatory officials from Mexico, the United States and Canada.</p>	<i>Ongoing</i>
<p>JPAC participation in the Society of Environmental Journalists' 22nd Annual Conference, 17-21 October 2012, Lubbock, Texas</p>	<p>Irasema Coronado, representing JPAC, participated as a panelist in the Society of Environmental Journalists' 22nd Annual Conference.</p>	<i>Ongoing</i>
<p>NAC & GAC meeting, 26 October 2012, Washington, DC</p>	<p>Jonathan Waterhouse, representing the JPAC Chair, provided a report on JPAC activities since the last US NAC & GAC meeting, including:</p>	<i>Ongoing</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The JPAC meeting in New Orleans, which centered on the theme of community and ecosystem resilience. • The JPAC meeting in Mérida, which centered on ecosystem resiliency and communities. The main objective for the session was to explore how to protect vulnerable communities from climate change, flooding and environmental contaminants, among other issues that were broadly addressed in New Orleans. • The status on the election of the JPAC Chair for 2013. 	
JPAC participation in the General Standing Committee (GSC) Session 12-03, 29-30 October 2012, Cuernavaca, Mexico	<p>Geoffrey Garver and David Angus participated in representation of the JPAC, in the GSC face-to-face session held in Cuernavaca, Mexico.</p> <p>The main objective for the meeting was to brainstorm on issues related to the development of the 2013-2014 Operational Plan, including the 2011-2012 Operational Plan implementation status, critical path for 2013-2014 Operational Plan, priority areas, among others, as well as on discussing options for the 20th anniversary of the CEC.</p>	<p>JPAC members suggested a specific discussion on Council-directed grants, acknowledging that such grants may have merit or fall within the scope of the Strategic Plan, but recommended more transparency in the future concerning the selection of and rationale for Council-directed grants. They also suggested that the decisions be carried out in a more open manner and with the participation of the entire CEC community, including the possible participation of a JPAC representative to be invited to discussions leading to such decisions.</p> <p>Regarding the 20th anniversary of the CEC, JPAC explained that their intention was forward-looking, in that they propose to highlight accomplishments but also invite a critique on lessons learned to inform future actions. They noted there may be some expectations of the NAAEC that have not been fulfilled and such a review would provide an opportunity to revitalize them. They further explained that much has happened since 1992 and that better tools now exist to identify the environmental performance of a region. They</p>

		assured that the JPAC suggestion is not at cross-purposes with the intent of the Council and that the retrospective evaluation will inform recommendations that are inherently forward-looking.
JPAC participation in the CEC Public Meeting of the North American PRTR Project, 30-31 October 2012, Toronto, Ontario	<p>Pauline Browes, representing JPAC, participated in the annual stakeholder consultations on the North American PRTR project and the <i>Taking Stock</i> report.</p> <p>The focus of public meeting was to develop recommendations for an updated Action Plan to Enhance the Comparability of Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs) in North America.</p> <p>Activities included presentations showcasing the use of PRTR data and small working group discussions of key components of the Action Plan. Participants also had the opportunity to share information and experiences about industrial pollution and access to PRTR information, and provide feedback on the CEC's NAPRTR Project and annual <i>Taking Stock</i> report.</p>	<i>Ongoing</i>
Joint Public Advisory Committee Regular Session 12-03 “Reducing Ecosystem Vulnerability, Responding to Community Needs: Tools and Information for North American Action,” 13-14 December 2012, Mérida, Yucatán	<p>The JPAC workshop took a close look at what makes ecosystems and our communities vulnerable to a changing environment, and where in North America the threats to them are most extreme.</p> <p>Participants gained hands-on experience with a range of new tools for assessing vulnerability, mapping environmental changes and stressors, and improving the health of vulnerable human communities.</p> <p>Working with North American experts and members of the CEC's Joint Public Advisory Committee, participants helped identify actions for individuals, communities and governments to improve these tools and their dissemination, especially for the rural</p>	<p>Participants developed proposals for actions, to strengthen the ability of North Americans to identify vulnerable ecosystems and human communities, including an assessment of access to current information and needs to improve access. Proposals included actions for individuals and for local and federal governments.</p> <p>As a result of the meeting, the members agreed to provide the Council with an Advice:</p> <p>Advice 13-01: Re: Outputs from JPAC Workshops in New Orleans (July 2012) and Mérida (December 2012) on Fostering Resilient Communities and Reducing Ecosystem Vulnerability in North</p>

	<p>and indigenous communities most affected by environmental change.</p> <p>Workshop objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze factors that make ecosystems and communities vulnerable. Become familiar with tools for evaluating vulnerability, mapping changes and stressors, and improving environmental health. Identify actions for improving and disseminating tools. Propose actions for reducing communities' vulnerability to environmental phenomena 	America
<p>JPAC SEM Working Group Meeting with the SEM Task Force Representatives, 14 December 2012, Mérida, Yucatán</p>	<p>The JPAC SEM working group met with the SEM Task Force Representatives, to discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Task Force Activities since 2012 Council Session. Deliverables for the 2013 Council Session. Compliance under the new Guidelines Council Resolution No. 12-04 <p>The SEM Task Force Representatives also requested JPAC input on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Guidelines Booklet Monitoring and Assessment Tools SEM Online Portal Outreach 	<i>Ongoing</i>
<p>Joint Public Advisory Committee Private Working Session, 26-27 January 2013, Montreal, Quebec</p>	<p>The JPAC members met with the CEC Executive Director, Secretariat program staff, SEM Unit Director/Legal Officers and CEC communications.</p>	<p>The JPAC members defined their priorities for 2013 and established their working groups and plans for the year, including outlining their schedule/topics for their public meetings.</p>
<p>JPAC SEM Working Group Meeting with the SEM Task Force Representatives, 6 March 2013, Conference Call</p>	<p>The JPAC SEM Working Group participated in a brainstorming session to discuss ideas for long-term monitoring and assessment of the Submission on Enforcement Matter Process, presenting options for consideration by the Council of the Commission of Environmental</p>	<i>Ongoing</i>

	Cooperation in its upcoming Session.	
Session 13-01 of the Alternate Representatives, 12 March 2013, Conference call	The JPAC Chair, David Angus, participated in a conference call with the Alternate Representatives that centered on discussing the 2013 Council Session, the critical path for the development of the 2013-2014 Operational Plan, SEM factual records and the Article 13 SLABs report.	<p>Regarding the Council session, the JPAC Chair indicated that JPAC members would be happy to assist in bringing together the different voices for the 2013 session in Los Cabos.</p> <p>With regard to the development of the 2013-2014 Operational Plan, the Chair once again expressed appreciation for JPAC's early involvement in the review of the proposed projects.</p> <p>Concerning the 20th anniversary, he assured the Alternate Representatives of the JPAC's support in working with the Parties. He mentioned that JPAC has been developing a plan for the 20th anniversary that would be shared with the Parties in the coming weeks.</p> <p>In closing, the JPAC Chair noted that three JPAC seats were currently vacant: two for Canada and one for the US. He indicated he looked forward to a full membership and encouraged the US and Canada to fill these positions.</p>
Letter to the Alternate Representatives Re: Executive Summaries of the proposed projects for the 2013-2014 Operational Plan <i>(Distributed on 22 March)</i>	JPAC members expressed their appreciation for involving them in the early stage of the development of the 2013–2014 Operational Plan. After careful review of the summaries, JPAC divided its comments into two sections; the first addressing the process for the development of the Operational Plan, aiming at improving future iterations, and the second providing specific recommendations for a number of projects that JPAC felt merited particular attention.	<i>No response to date</i>
Advice to Council 13-01 Re: Outputs from JPAC Workshops in New Orleans (July 2012) and	JPAC Advice to Council 13-01, included feedback and recommendations from participants at	Council responded by commending JPAC for the use of innovative technologies to engage citizens in

<p>Mérida (December 2012) on Fostering Resilient Communities and Reducing Ecosystem Vulnerability in North America (Distributed on 26 March 2013)</p>	<p>the JPAC workshops in New Orleans, Louisiana and Mérida, Yucatán. JPAC submitted the following comments for Council's consideration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making use of the information in the North American Environmental Atlas, as well as other strengths, the CEC can play a key role in: a. the identification and protection of areas that are key in providing the ecosystem service of disturbance control. • The identification of communities that have higher vulnerability to the impacts of global climate change, as well as the promotion of public policies for urban development that is based on ecological planning that recognizes and respects risk areas. • The CEC should favor opportunities to encourage place-specific efforts to reduce community and ecosystem vulnerability and increase resilience, for example, by highlighting case studies that demonstrate approaches of broad applicability, and by developing and disseminating generally applicable information and approaches relevant in North America. • The CEC should give emphasis to refining and clarifying the meaning of community and ecosystem vulnerability and resilience within North America's diverse context. • The Council should consider the document, "Resilient Future," that was the product of JPAC's public meeting in New Orleans, as a valuable resource for identifying the drivers of and possible responses to threats to community and ecosystem health and resilience. 	<p>North America, for both their New Orleans and Merida sessions.</p> <p>In response to the recommendations included in the Advice, Council pointed to the NAPECA projects, as the ideal mechanism to work with communities, to increase resilience and address threats to community and ecosystem health. They also noted that projects under the CEC 2013-2014 Operational Plan will also foster healthy communities and ecosystems through biodiversity and chemical management initiatives.</p> <p>Council also acknowledged the "Resilient Future" document that resulted from the New Orleans Meeting, noting that it had made an important contribution in shaping forthcoming work under the cooperative work program.</p> <p>(Response received on 27 June 2013)</p>
<p>Letter to the SEM Task Force Representatives Re: The SEM Online Submission Portal (Distributed 2 April 2013)</p>	<p>Recognizing that the portal could change the way the public interfaces with the submission process, the SEM Task Force representatives invited JPAC members to comment on the proposed SEM Online Submission Portal.</p>	<p>JPAC members navigated through the portal and their overall impression was that it is user friendly and well designed. They felt it has the potential to help ensure that submissions address the required information to meet the criteria in Article 14(1) and to allow</p>

		<p>the Secretariat to consider the factors in Article 14(2).</p> <p>They recognized the Parties' continued efforts to improve the way concerned citizens file submissions and expressed their appreciation for their continued engagement with JPAC throughout the process.</p>
<p>Joint Public Advisory Committee Regular Session 13-01 “Greening North America’s Energy Economy,” Calgary, Alberta, 24-25 April 2013</p>	<p>Given the growing threats of climate change, loss of biodiversity and other adverse ecological change, we face the challenge of launching a major strategic effort to leverage our current economy and trading system to support approaches that pave the way for a low-carbon economy. The main objective of the JPAC session was to discuss these challenges and identify priority areas, best practices and opportunities for policy action.</p>	<p>As a result of the meeting, the members agreed to provide the Council with an Advice:</p> <p>Advice 13-02: Re: The urgent need to shift to a sustainable energy economy in North America</p>
<p>JPAC public review of the first 20 years of NAFTA and the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation - Call for Information and Comments, 25 April 2013</p>	<p>January 2014 will mark 20 years since NAFTA and its environmental side agreement, the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation (NAAEC), went into effect. To mark this important milestone, and with a view to providing constructive input for future CEC plans, JPAC is conducting a public review of the first 20 years of NAFTA and the NAAEC.</p> <p>JPAC is seeking feedback from the North American public about experiences, insights, opinions and perspectives on the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the environmental successes of the NAAEC and NAFTA? Where have the provisions of those agreements fallen short? And where they have, is the problem in the agreements themselves or in their implementation? • Is the CEC achieving the goals for which it was created? Are those goals adequate in face of ongoing environmental challenges in North 	<p><i>Ongoing</i></p> <p>The due date for contributions is 31 July 2013. After reviewing the information and comments received, JPAC will hold an open public meeting on the first 20 years of the NAAEC and NAFTA in Washington, DC, on 17–18 October 2013. The meeting will feature presentations and facilitated discussions among experts and members of the public who contributed information and comments, as well as open discussions involving all participants.</p>

	<p>America?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the NAAEC and the environmental provisions of NAFTA adequately addressed environmental concerns related to free trade in North America? • How could implementation of the NAAEC and the environmental provisions of the NAFTA be improved? • Are there important topics the CEC has failed to tackle over the past 20 years? • In light of the past 20 years, on what priorities should the CEC focus in the next 10 years and beyond? 	
<p>NAC & GAC meeting, 25 April 2013, Washington, DC</p>	<p>The JPAC Chair, David Angus, participated via conference call, and provided a report on JPAC activities since the last US NAC & GAC meeting, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JPAC's workshop in Merida: "Reducing Ecosystem Vulnerability, Responding to Community Needs: Tools and Information for North American Action" • JPAC Advice 13-01 • JPAC Comments on the Executive Summaries of Proposed Projects under the 2013-2014 Operational Plan • JPAC Comments on the SEM Online Portal • JPAC Regular Session 13-01 "Greening North America's Energy Economy" Calgary, 24-25 April 2013 • Launch of the 20th Anniversary Review of NAFTA and the NAAEC – Call for Information and Comments • JPAC Regular Session 13-02 on Sustainable Transportation, in Los Cabos, Mexico, on 10-11 July 2013 	<p><i>Ongoing</i></p>
<p>JPAC SEM Working Group Meeting with the SEM Task Force Representatives,</p>	<p>The JPAC SEM working group met privately with the SEM Task Force Representatives, to discuss:</p>	<p><i>Ongoing</i></p>

25 April 2013, Calgary, Alberta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEM Online Portal. • Factual Record Quality. • Long-term Monitoring and Assessment Options 	
Advice to Council No: 13-02 Re: The urgent need to shift to a sustainable energy economy in North America <i>(Distributed on 2 May 2013)</i>	<p>JPAC Advice to Council 13-02, included comments and recommendations from invited experts and workshop participants in the JPAC meeting: "Greening the North America's Energy Economy."</p> <p>The Advice has three major components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General comments –These included key policy-related observations and proposals offered by workshop participants, as well as several proposals and observations emphasizing the importance of process issues for different jurisdictions to cooperate successfully on energy and climate issues; • Recommendations for the 2013–2014 Operational Plan; and • Recommendations related to long-term strategic objectives of the CEC. 	<p>Council expressed appreciation for the comprehensive overview on the Calgary session, provided in the Advice.</p> <p>They welcomed the recommendation to include projects in the 2013-2014 Operational Plan that support North American emissions reductions, and reinforce the Parties' climate change objectives, as well as discussing JPAC recommendations during the development of the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan. Council also referred to the 20th Anniversary, as an opportunity to work closely with the JPAC to set the future course of the CEC.</p> <p><i>(Response received on 27 June 2013)</i></p>
JPAC Public Consultation on the Draft Project Descriptions for the 2013–2014 CEC Operational Plan, 16 May 2013	<p>JPAC members launched a 30-day public consultation on the CEC website on the proposed draft project descriptions for the CEC's 2013-2014 Operational Plan.</p>	<p>JPAC members reviewed the Draft Project Descriptions and the commentary received during the 30-day JPAC-led consultation, and agreed to provide the Council with an Advice:</p> <p>JPAC Advice 13-03: JPAC-led Public Consultation on the 2013-2014 Operational Plan</p> <p><i>(Distributed on 28 June 2013)</i></p>