

Improving the Effectiveness of Early Warning Systems for Drought

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS



Commission for Environmental Cooperation

2019

I. Overview

The Commission for Environmental Cooperation of North America (CEC) is requesting proposals from prospective consultants to conduct information collection and documentation activities related to indicators and best practices for drought preparedness, planning and mitigation in use in different climate regions of North America.

The CEC was established by the governments of Canada, Mexico and the United States through the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation, the environmental side agreement to NAFTA. An intergovernmental organization, the CEC brings together citizens and experts from governments, nongovernmental organizations, academia and the business sector to seek solutions to protect North America's shared environment while supporting sustainable economic development. Find out more at: <www.cec.org>.

The CEC's Council, its governing body, approved the project entitled *Improving the Effectiveness of Early Warning Systems for Drought* as part of the Operational Plan for the years 2019–2020, with the purpose of improving understanding and local capacities for monitoring and responding to drought impacts in specific climate regions across North America.

II. Terms of Reference

A. Overview and Scope

The project consists of a coordinated effort to improve the effectiveness of early warning systems for drought in North America, through a number of tasks addressing the following three related objectives:

1. Understanding which World Meteorological Organization (WMO) indicators and indices perform best for monitoring drought in North America, in order to improve the ability of regional and local decision-makers and communities to monitor and prepare for drought conditions. This objective will be addressed through the development of a set of guidelines on the use of locally relevant indicators in North American climate regions. See WMO indicators and indices in the *Handbook of Drought Indicators and Indices*, at: https://library.wmo.int/pmb_ged/wmo_1173_en.pdf;
2. Increasing local capacity to use best practices for preparedness, planning and risk management. This objective will be addressed by identifying and comparing available drought information and best practices in the three countries, and providing recommendations for local communities on how to access and use these drought products and tools, and how to incorporate drought into multi-hazard risk management;
3. Assessing the use of the North American Drought Monitor (NADM), as well as user needs, to inform improvements to the program, including user access and the development of new user-oriented tools, with an emphasis on transboundary regions across North America.

B. Description of Services

The Consultant shall coordinate with the CEC's designated contacts to accomplish the tasks and sub-tasks, described below, addressing the three project objectives.

1. Develop a North American Drought Indicator Guidelines document:

- a) Design and implement a targeted online data collection survey to assess the performance of commonly used drought indicators in each region. The target population of this survey includes state/provincial climatologists, national and subnational weather services, hydrological and agricultural offices, individual experts, and national and local organizations working on drought-related risk management (e.g., local planners, emergency managers, tribal leaders, private sector). The final sample frame, as well as the selection of climate regions, will be determined in collaboration with the CEC and the project Steering Committee. The survey, which will run from (August–December 2019), is intended to collect information on:
- the respondent's particular climate region (e.g., polar, temperate rainforest);
 - the indices and indicators from the WMO *Handbook* that are used to monitor drought in the respondent's climate region;
 - how well these indicators and indices perform in specific areas and during different periods of the year;
 - a working definition of drought for the respondent's region;
 - a description of significant drought impacts in the respondent's region.

The information collected should help to determine how these commonly used, widely available indicators perform across geographic areas (states/provinces) and regions (ecosystems/river basins/major crop/agricultural areas); and to assess how these indicators relate to specific drought impacts in the regions.

- b) Once the survey has closed, provide a draft written summary of the survey results.
- c) In coordination with the CEC Secretariat, conduct and facilitate a series of four consultations (webinars) with drought experts from government, academia and other relevant stakeholders, identified in coordination with the Steering Committee, to discuss and refine the survey results and to identify and develop consensus recommendations on the applicability and use of drought indicators in North America.
- d) Following the final consultation, provide a draft written summary of the results of the four consultations.
- e) Based on the information obtained from the survey and consultations, develop a North American drought indicator guidelines document that will provide guidance on the applicability and use of selected drought indicators for specific North American climate regions and/or local conditions. The intended audience for this document includes government agencies (e.g., disaster prevention agencies), risk insurance analysts, academia, international organizations, and other identified stakeholders. In collaboration with the CEC designated contacts, the Consultant shall develop a detailed outline for the document, including ideas for presentation, use of graphics, and level of detail; and identify additional sources of information to use.

The document shall include the following information and/or sections:

- Executive summary
- Introduction;

- Methodology and sources of information
- Summary of survey results by climate region
- Drought indices and indicators used, by region
- Index/indicator of performance, by region
- Definition of drought in each region
- Drought impacts, by region
- References.

The document can follow an outline similar to that of the WMO *Handbook*, but prospective consultants are encouraged to propose alternative sections and/or an alternative organization for the document.

- f) Participate in the NADM Forum (Spring 2020) and incorporate pertinent feedback on the survey and consultation findings into the draft and final North American Guidelines document.
- g) The Consultant will provide all supporting data. The final document and files will be developed for printing and for access through a web-based interface. The interface will be developed and hosted by the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) or National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS) portals, allowing access to the guidelines and drought indicators by region, drought index, and/or drought impact type. The files will be in csv or json format and will include information that crosslinks the drought indices/indicators, index performance, definitions, and impacts by region. The final document and files will be provided in English. Translation of content into French and Spanish will be conducted by the CEC. The NCEI or NIDIS web interface will be accessible to all users.

2. Develop recommendations for local communities to improve their access and use of products and tools for drought and multi-hazard planning:

- a) Design and conduct a targeted, online survey of local drought decision-makers in the three countries (e.g., city/regional planners, emergency planners, transportation planners), identified in collaboration with the CEC designated contacts, to assess the drought planning products they access (if any), their frequency of access, and their use of the products; and to identify gaps in available products for decision-making. The survey, which will run from (August–December 2019), is intended to collect information on:
 - Type of user
 - Type and frequency of use
 - Sources of drought information
 - Benefits to and uses in decision-making
 - Recommendations for improvement to drought products and access.
- b) Once the survey has closed, provide a draft written summary of the survey results.
- c) Conduct consultations (remote and/or in-person) with targeted focus groups representing local drought decision-makers (see 2a) in six different North American climate regions (two per country—to be selected in collaboration with the project Steering Committee), to further evaluate access to and use of drought information products, as well as gaps. The targeted focus group discussions will complement the

survey with additional details regarding challenges in using and applying drought information products. The Consultant will ensure the complementarity of the methodology, content, and reporting for the survey and the focus group discussions. For this particular task, the prospective Consultant is encouraged to provide cost options on remote/in-person approaches to focus group consultations.

- d) Following the final consultation, provide a draft written summary of the results of the six consultations.
- e) In coordination with the CEC, facilitate a one-day Drought Summit with key decision-makers from the three countries (e.g., state and local water/drought planners; community planners; drought information users from the transportation, forestry, and agricultural sectors). This will enable discussions about their capacity to access and use drought information for planning and risk management in a multi-hazard context, building on the information obtained through the online survey and the focus group discussions. **The venue and logistical support costs for this activity will be covered by the CEC.**
- f) Develop a summary report of the Drought Summit synthesizing the discussions and key recommendations to improve access and use of products and tools for drought and multi-hazard planning.

3. Assess areas for improving North American Drought Monitor (NADM) information and user access:

- a) In collaboration with the CEC Secretariat, design and conduct an online user survey to assess awareness of, access to, and use and utility of the NADM products. The target audience for this survey will be determined in collaboration with the CEC and the project Steering Committee. The survey, which will run from August 2019 to March 2020, is intended to collect information on:
 - Type of user
 - Type and frequency of use
 - How long the user has been using the NADM product
 - Benefits to and uses in decision-making
 - Recommendations for improvement to the NADM products and access.
- b) In coordination with the CEC Secretariat, conduct and facilitate a series of three webinar consultations with NADM users to supplement survey information. Each successive webinar will build upon the last and seek feedback during different times of the growing season and economic activity. The **tentative** time periods selected for these consultations are August 2019, November 2019, and February 2020. These time periods will be adjusted according to the start date of the project.
- c) Develop a report summarizing the survey and webinar consultation results, including recommendations, for presentation by the CEC designated contacts at the NADM Forum to be held in Mexico (Spring 2020).

The timetable presented below is approximate, and may change. **The CEC invites prospective consultants to modify the schedule suggested, based on their evaluation of this proposal.**

Activity (Task Number)	Deliverable(s)	Approximate Dates
Initial contract start-up (planning) teleconference	Meeting summary and final project work plan	Late July–Aug. 2019
Task 1: Develop a NA Drought Indicator Guidelines document		
1 a) Design a targeted data collection survey to assess use and applicability of WMO indicators/indices in NA climate regions	Draft survey	Aug. 2019
1 a) Finalize survey design based on feedback from CEC and project SC	Final survey	Aug.–Dec. 2019
1b) Send invitations; conduct the survey	Summary of survey results	Aug.–Dec. 2019
1 (c, d) Conduct and facilitate (webinar-based) consultations with drought experts	Summary of consultation results	Oct.–Dec. 2019
1 e) Develop a draft NA Guidelines document based on results of the survey and consultations	Draft NA Guidelines document	Jan.–March 2020
1 (f, g) Incorporate feedback from Spring 2020 NADM Forum into NA Guidelines document; deliver final document and supporting files	Final NA Guidelines document and files	May–Sept. 2020
Task 2: Develop recommendations for local communities to improve their access and use of products/ tools for drought and multi-hazard planning		
2 a) Design a targeted data collection survey of local drought decision-makers to assess use of drought products, frequency of access, etc.	Draft survey	Aug. 2019
2 a) Finalize survey design based on feedback from CEC and project SC	Final survey	Aug.–Nov. 2019
2 b) Send invitations; conduct the survey	Summary of survey results	Aug.–Dec. 2019
2 (c, d) Conduct and facilitate consultations with 6 regional focus groups (2 per country)	Summary of consultation results	Oct.–Dec. 2019
2 e) Facilitate a Drought Summit with experts from the three countries	Summit agenda	June 2020
2 f) Produce a summary report of the Summit, with recommendations to improve access and use of products and tools for drought and multi-hazard planning	Summit report	July 2020
Task 3: Assess areas for improving North American Drought Monitor (NADM) information and user access		
3 a) Design a targeted data collection survey of NADM users to assess their awareness and use of it, frequency of access, etc.	Draft survey	Aug. 2019
3 a) Finalize survey design based on feedback from CEC and project SC; send invitations and conduct the survey	Final survey	Aug. 2019–March 2020
3 b) Facilitate 3 webinar consultations with NADM users to supplement the survey		Aug. 2019; Nov. 2019; Feb. 2020
3 c) Develop a report summarizing survey and consultation results, with recommendations	Final report	Ongoing: Oct. 2019–March 2020

C. Periodic Reporting Requirements

In order to complete the project, the Consultant will deliver the tasks described under the description of services. At the onset of the project, the Consultant will participate in a kick-off meeting (conference call) with the CEC designated staff and members of the project Steering Committee. The purpose of this meeting is to confirm planned project activities, deliverables, and timeline.

Throughout the project, the Consultant will work in close collaboration with the CEC, the project Steering Committee, program officials, and experts, to gather information to support delivery of the work. The Consultant may consult directly with government officials and other experts as needed; however, the Consultant shall report only to, and receive direction only from, the CEC designated staff.

The Consultant will work in his or her own offices.

The CEC Secretariat will forward draft deliverables to the project Steering Committee and other experts for their review and comment. The CEC Secretariat will arrange teleconferences with the Consultant, the CEC staff, and other experts on an as-needed basis at mutually agreeable times. The goal of these meetings will be to present the products, and assess progress on the project.

All communications, including teleconferences, and expert consultation meetings will be supported by the CEC. **The Consultant should not include the costs of these in the budget submitted in the Proposal.**

The Consultant will prepare monthly status reports that summarize the following:

- Progress in previous month;
- Current status;
- Anticipated progress in upcoming month;
- Potential problems, with description of, and reasons for, any delays; and
- Actions that should be taken by the CEC Secretariat to facilitate the project.

These reports are to be sent via e-mail to the CEC Secretariat by the 10th of each month.

D. Quality of Deliverables

The consultant is responsible for providing deliverables of publishable quality (i.e., copy-edited prior to submission) in English and, when applicable, for the technical editing of the materials. The consultant will submit to the CEC Secretariat all written material (including complete drafts and final reports) in Microsoft Word, following the format of the [CEC's Report Template](#) and adhering to the precepts of the [Guidelines for CEC Documents and Information Products](#), as supplemented by the CEC's English Style Guide. Supporting documents for tables, figures and maps must be submitted with the report in their original file format (e.g., Excel or ArcGIS). Note that all amounts shall be presented in metric units. The CEC Secretariat will be responsible, when applicable, for translation, printing, publication and distribution of products from this activity.

Upon delivery by the consultant of a final version of the report or other written materials under the project, the CEC reserves the right to a 15-business day period to review the document(s), notify the consultant of any potential issues or errors, and return the document(s) to the consultant for appropriate corrections, at no extra cost. In all cases, contract payments will be withheld if products submitted to the CEC fail to fulfill the quality and formatting requirements specified above. In the event that the consultant neglects to make the required corrections or if, following corrections, a deliverable remains unsatisfactory, the document shall be edited or revised by a third party designated by the Secretariat, the cost of which shall be deducted from the consultant's fees at a rate of C\$60 per hour.

E. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of conveying someone else's original expression or creative ideas as one's own and can be a violation of copyright law. Neither intentional nor unintentional plagiarism is acceptable to the CEC. The consultant must follow good scholarly methodology in preparing reports and deliverables under the contract, including systematic referencing in footnotes or in-sentence references, for any secondary sources, quotations, data, etc., that do not originate with the author. Sources for tables and figures reproduced from other literature must be given in a "Source" attribution immediately below the table or figure. Failure to properly reference the source of such borrowed material constitutes plagiarism and will be considered a breach of contract. For further information, see [Guidelines for CEC Documents and Information Products](#). In addition, for every written deliverable submitted, the Consultant must use iThenticate software, or an equivalent software approved by the Commission, to validate the written product in question and must forward the plagiarism review results to the CEC at the time of document submission. Contract payments will be retained if products do not fulfill these requirements.

III. Requirements and Proposal Evaluation

A. Mandatory Requirements

To be eligible for further consideration, all consultants must fulfill the following basic requirements.

1. In-country Ability

The Consultant, as well as all their personnel and subconsultants, must be domiciled and able to legally work in at least one of the three North American countries. If travel is required, the Consultant must possess valid documentation to travel within these countries.

2. Key Personnel

For the purposes of this RFP, the term "consultant" may refer to either a group or company or a single individual.

If a proposal is submitted by a consortium of individuals or institutions, a "lead" consultant should be designated to take responsibility for ensuring overall coordination, the coherence of activity outputs, and the integration of information and ideas.

3. Qualifications Required

Key support personnel must be qualified, competent and experienced in the subject area. The Consultant must provide evidence of previously completed successful assignments of a similar nature. Prospective consultants must be able to compare and contrast materials generated in multiple countries as appropriate. Project proposals must clearly demonstrate that the project consultant possesses knowledge, skills and expertise in the following areas:

1. Expertise and competence in survey research and information collection methods, including focus group methodologies and data analysis
2. Proven ability to organize, lead and facilitate multi-sectoral stakeholder engagement/consultation events
3. Excellent report writing skills
4. Capacity within its team to work fluently in written and spoken English and Spanish. Working knowledge of French is considered an asset.

Knowledge of drought, drought planning and mitigation, and drought indicators, monitoring and impacts is desirable, but not necessary.

4. Proposal Submission

It is the intention of the CEC Secretariat to include the **Terms of Reference (Section II)** of this document) in the contract negotiated with the successful applicant. Therefore, prospective consultants should refer to these for more detailed information on the project and the services to be provided. **Prospective consultants are requested not to reiterate the Terms of Reference in their submissions, but are invited to suggest modifications to enhance the proposal.**

Proposals must be organized as indicated below and include the following information:

1. Knowledge and Understanding of Work

- Provide background information relevant to this project that will serve to demonstrate the consultant's experience and subject knowledge. The statement should address desired results; guidelines (parameters within which results are to be accomplished); resources (human, financial, technical, or organizational support available to help accomplish the results); and other aspects deemed applicable by the consultant. The purpose of this statement is to demonstrate not only the consultant's general and specific familiarity with the subject area, but also to highlight writing skills.

2. Workplan and Methodology

- Provide a detailed and comprehensive work plan and methodology that clearly demonstrates how key activities under Section B (Description of Services) will be undertaken, including how assessments will be undertaken;
- Identify suggested modifications to the Terms of Reference, and the reasons for such modifications, if applicable.

3. Organization, Qualifications and Experience of Project Team

- Identify organization of Project Team, including project manager and country team leads for Canada, Mexico and the United States where relevant;
- Provide a summary of qualifications and experience for each team member (including alternates) and any other relevant information (e.g. language proficiencies).

4. Allocation of Time (Hours) and Costs By Task and Team Member

- For each member of the project team, provide a detailed breakdown of assigned tasks, hours worked, and labor costs;

- Identify any other direct and indirect costs, including travel costs (include estimate for in person meetings taking place at any of the three countries) and applicable taxes;
- Clearly identify total hours worked under and the total cost (including taxes) of this project.

5. Added Value Within Identified Budget

- Identify any additional tasks or activities not specified within the terms of reference but will be undertaken by the contractor at no additional cost.

Annex A: Corporate Information

- Identify relevant corporate information pertaining to this work.

Annex B: Letters of Recommendation and References

- Two letters of recommendation from previous assignments;
- Details and contact information for three or more references.

Annex C: Resumes for Each Team Member

- Resumes for all project team members;
- Resumes for identified alternates for the project manager and country team leaders where relevant.

Annex D: Declaration of Acceptance and Impartiality and Independence for Contract

- Provide a completed copy of the CEC form identified in the Annex to this Request for Proposals.

Annex E: Examples of Previous Work

- Provide two samples of previous work.

B. Other Information to be Provided

Potential consultants are encouraged to submit any additional information that they believe will assist the CEC Secretariat in the evaluation of their proposal. However, the proposal should not exceed ten (10) pages, exclusive of applicant resumes or corporate brochures.

C. Type of Contract to be Used for These Services

The CEC Secretariat intends to use its standard milestone-based contract for these services. A sample is available upon request. If the contract is negotiated with a consortium, the CEC will offer the consultants the option to have separate contracts between each consultant and the CEC.

Unless otherwise specified, all draft written deliverables associated with this contract must be submitted to the CEC no later than 1 September 2020, to allow adequate time for the CEC's review, editing and translation processes. All work under this contract must be completed by 30 October 2020.

D. Selection Procedure

The Consultant will be selected in accordance with the [CEC Consultant Services Procurement Manual](#).

Proposals that the CEC Secretariat determines to be complete will be evaluated according to the procedure described below. Prospective consultants who submit proposals determined by the CEC Secretariat to be incomplete will be so notified in writing.

Each complete proposal that is submitted will be evaluated by the CEC Secretariat according to the following criteria, with a point rating assigned for each:

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Point Rating
Understanding of project requirements, adequacy of work plan	20
Suitability of the proposed approach	20
Consultant's experience and qualifications and competency of key personnel	40
Consultant's ability to analytically approach the subject, and writing ability	10
Adequacy of budget	10
<i>Total</i>	100

A minimum score of 80 will be required for a prospective consultant's proposal to be eligible for further consideration. Cost efficiency will be taken into account in the evaluation.

Proposals in response to this request will be evaluated by the CEC Secretariat designated staff and technical reviewers, who will form an Evaluation Committee. Each member of the Evaluation Committee will receive a copy of the proposals and will be asked to rate each proposal using the evaluation criteria and its maximum point ratings given above.

The CEC designated staff will arrange for a conference call/meeting among the members of the Evaluation Committee to discuss the ratings, arrive at final scores, and, subsequently, a ranking of all proposals. The strengths and weaknesses of each proposal, in terms of the evaluation criteria, will be noted and summarized. Once the selection has been made, each prospective consultant will be provided with his/her score—if requested—along with their comparative ranking. However, neither the evaluations nor the scores of other bidders will be provided.

E. Estimated Level of Resources Required

The consulting services budget for this activity is expected to range between C\$200,000 and C\$250,000 (Canadian Dollars), including professional fees and expenses.

Reimbursable expenses are detailed in the CEC standard contract, available upon request; in addition, the cost of using iThenticate or other approved software to detect plagiarism (US\$100) should also be considered.

For universities and nongovernmental organizations, note that the CEC accepts that overhead be charged for administration and other indirect costs up to 15% of the total value of the contract.

If the proposal were presented by a consultant established in Mexico, the applicable value-added tax will be 0%, in accordance with Article 29, section IV, paragraph a) of Mexico's VAT Act, as these are technical services that were engaged from abroad.

If a currency other than Canadian dollars is used, the Consultant should indicate the total cost of the professional services in Canadian dollars as well as the currency of choice, for comparison purposes.

F. Basis of Payment Required

The consultant will be paid according to the table on deliverables and milestones in the Description of Services section above.

Payment shall be made only for *bona fide* consultant fees and legitimate expenses incurred in accordance with the contract for professional services, and only upon receipt and documented acceptance by the Secretariat of statement(s) of account/invoice(s), and relevant project deliverables from the Consultant. Settlement of invoices that are acceptable for payment will normally be made 30 days from the date of receipt by the Commission.

G. Financial and Other Confidential Information

For this proposal, the CEC Secretariat will not require the submission of any confidential information, nor will the CEC Secretariat require information regarding insurance, bonding financial status, or company ownership. For purposes of the contract, insurance information will be required.

H. Conflict of Interest

“Conflict of interest” means, but is not limited to, a situation where a consultant’s personal interest is sufficiently connected with professional duties under the contract, such that it results in a reasonable apprehension that said personal interest may influence the exercise of professional responsibilities under the contract. For example, a direct conflict of interest exists when the consultant is also a CEC government official, or is related to or closely affiliated with a CEC government official, CEC staff member or third party involved with the performance of the services.

The Consultant will inform the CEC Secretariat of any circumstance that existed prior to the execution of this contract, or that could manifest during the performance of this contract which could constitute a conflict of interest. The Consultant will complete and sign the attached *Declaration of Acceptance and Impartiality and Independence* (see Annex 1). The Consultant will also take note of the [CEC Consultant Services Procurement Manual](#).

I. Deadlines for Proposal Submission and Decision

The proposal, including all relevant attachments, must be received by the CEC Secretariat offices by **17:00 EST on 1 August 2019**. Proposals submitted after this deadline will not be considered.

Proposals must be submitted via electronic mail to ocabrera@cec.org, with copy to ehercules@cec.org. Proposal format may be in Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF format. Once the proposal has been submitted electronically, the CEC will confirm receipt within three business days. If receipt is not confirmed by e-mail within this time, **applicants must contact the CEC.** The contact person is:

Orlando Cabrera-Rivera
Head of Unit, Environmental Quality
Commission for Environmental Cooperation
700, rue de la Gauchetière Ouest, bureau 1620

Montreal, QC, Canada H3B 5M2
Tel: 514-350-4300; Fax: 514-350-4314

The CEC Secretariat intends to select the consultant and notify the applicants within 10 working days following the proposal submission deadline.

ANNEX

CONSULTANT'S DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE AND IMPARTIALITY AND INDEPENDENCE FOR CONTRACT

I, the undersigned,

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

hereby declare that I **accept** to serve as consultant in the subject contract.

IMPARTIALITY AND INDEPENDENCE

*(If you **accept to serve as a consultant**, please check one of the two following boxes. The choice of which box to check will be determined after you have taken into account, inter alia, whether there exists any past or present relationship, direct or indirect, with any of the Parties to the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation ("NAAEC") or their Commission for Environmental Cooperation ("CEC") representatives, Secretariat staff, and/or third parties involved in the performance of this contract, whether financial, professional, familial, or of another kind and whether the nature of any such relationship is such that disclosure is called for pursuant to the criteria set out below. Any doubt should be resolved in favor of disclosure.)*

☐ I am **impartial and independent** with respect to the NAAEC Parties and their CEC representatives, CEC Secretariat staff, and third parties involved in the performance of this contract, and intend to remain so; to the best of my knowledge, there are no facts or circumstances, past or present that need be disclosed because they are likely to give rise to justifiable doubts as to my impartiality or independence, and that may constitute a conflict of interest.

OR

☐ I am **impartial and independent** with respect to the NAAEC Parties and their CEC representatives, Secretariat staff, and/or third parties involved in the performance of this contract, and intend to remain so; **however**, I wish to call your attention to the following facts or circumstances which I hereafter disclose because they might be of such a nature as to give rise to justifiable doubts as to my impartiality or independence, and that may constitute a conflict of interest. Where facts or circumstances exist that might give rise to the latter such doubts, I may set out measures I intend to take to mitigate or eliminate any doubts regarding my impartiality and independence, and/or a possible conflict of interest. (Use separate sheet and attach.)

Date: _____

Signature: _____