

**Joint Public Advisory Committee (JPAC) Activity Report  
to the Council of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC)  
since July 2022**

This document is intended to provide Council with an overview of JPAC activities since the July 2022 Regular Session of Council, to assist discussions during the 2023 annual joint Council/JPAC sessions.

*Please note that JPAC activities have been undertaken in accordance with Article 6(4) of the Agreement on Environmental Cooperation (ECA), which states that JPAC “may provide advice to the Council on matters within the scope of this agreement, and may perform such other functions as the Council may direct.”*

**JPAC Activities**

Since July 2022, JPAC accomplished the following:

- **JPAC submitted two Letters of Advice to Council:**
  - *Advice to Council 23-01: Public Consultation on new CEC Project to Create a Network of Communities for Environmental Justice*
    - Having reviewed the draft project description and associated budget for the project *Communities for Environmental Justice Network* and conducted an online public consultation on the project description, JPAC submitted an Advice to Council highlighting:
      1. Common challenges faced by communities in considering environmental justice frameworks to address climate change adaptation and mitigation such as:
        - the lack of knowledge, technical capacity and resources of some communities;
        - the limited representation of EJ communities at the policy and decision-making table;
        - the lack of diversity of approaches when addressing climate adaptation and mitigation; and
        - the need for relationship-building when working with local communities.
      2. The importance of empowering Indigenous, local, vulnerable, disadvantaged, and/or underserved communities that have environmental justice concerns to lead the process of network building, as well as for the CEC to act as facilitator for part of this project.
      3. The importance of creating a governance structure and the need to include different perspectives that would include youth, women, and elders.
  - *Advice to Council 23-02: JPAC Public Forum on Ports and Climate Change*
    - Following the 2022 JPAC Public Forum held in Halifax, Canada, JPAC submitted an Advice to Council that included the following three recommendations:
      - Create a Permanent CEC Initiative on Ports and Climate Change;
      - Create a North American Ocean-Climate Action Plan; and
      - Sign a North American Agreement on the Use of Low and Zero-Emission Fuels.

- **JPAC conducted the following activities:**
  - Organization of a public forum on environmental education in the margins of the 2022 Regular Session of the Council in Mérida, Mexico
    - The public forum served as a platform to amplify the creative ways in which North American communities' approach environmental education as they address common environmental challenges. Community leaders and youth representatives joined the forum to share lessons learned, demonstrate unique approaches to environmental issues, participate in an intergenerational dialogue and further exemplify the important work of community action and empowerment.
    - Approximately 480 participants attended the public forum in-person or virtually.
  - Organization of a public forum on the role of ports in fighting climate change in Halifax, Canada
    - The public forum served as a platform to bring together stakeholders from all sectors to discuss the role of ports, as well as to identify the building blocks that could support accelerated decarbonization of the North American economy. Industry representatives, NGOs, government representatives, and academia joined the forum to discuss green ports and green shipping corridors, as well as the social and environmental justice dimensions of port activities and their transition toward industry decarbonization.
    - Over 500 participants attended the event in-person and online.
  - Organization of a public consultation on a new CEC project to create a “*Communities for Environmental Justice Network*” (CEJN)
    - The public consultation took place from 3 November to 23 November 2022.
    - 28 comments were received as part of this public consultation.
- **JPAC held seven closed working sessions**
  - JPAC held six closed virtual working sessions.
  - In a seventh closed session, JPAC participated in a joint hybrid meeting with members of the CEC Traditional Ecological Knowledge Expert Group (TEKEG) in Montreal, Canada, in line with JPAC's 2023 Annual Plan of Activities, identifying *Increased collaboration with the other CEC constituent bodies and the TEKEG* as part of its priorities for the year. JPAC and TEKEG members also met with representatives from the Haudenosaunee Confederacy in Kahnawà:ke as part of this meeting.
- **JPAC developed and submitted a concept note and a project description to the Parties for their consideration as potential JPAC-led initiative**
  - *Advancing Responsible Purchasing of Wood Products*: This project will seek to increase public awareness of the importance of responsible purchasing of wood products and for Sustainable Forest Management (SFM), and will develop awareness campaigns tailored to the three countries and their relevant contexts.