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U.S. Governmental Advisory Committee
*Independent Federal Advisors
on the North American
Agreement on Environmental Cooperation*

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Committee Members

- Jeffrey Wennberg
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- Laurie Berman
California
- John Bernal
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- Kirk Cook
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- Roger Vintze
California
- Gerald Wagner
Blackfeet Tribe

The Honorable Gina McCarthy
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Administrator McCarthy:

The Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) to the U.S. Representative to the North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) held its forty-sixth meeting in Washington, D.C. on April 20-21 2016. This letter represents our full advice resulting from that meeting.

During our meeting Donna Vizian, EPA Acting Assistant Administrator for the Office of Administration and Resources Management, brought welcoming remarks and thanked the members for their advice and the OARM staff for their support of our efforts.

Office of International and Tribal Affairs Acting Assistant Administrator Jane Nishida briefed the committees on the results of the 21st session of the Conference of the Parties (COP21) held last November in Paris, and the signed Memorandum of Understanding Among the Department of Energy of the United States, the Department of Natural Resources of Canada, and the Ministry of Energy of the United Mexican States Concerning Climate Change and Energy Collaboration. Acting Assistant Administrator Nishida also gave the committees a briefing on the recent progress regarding the joint statement on Climate, Energy, and Arctic Leadership between the United States and Canada, and plans to engage Mexico in similar discussions during the Council meeting in June and the North American Leaders' Summit shortly afterward.

JoAnn Chase, Director, American Indian Environmental Office (AIEO), provided the committees with an update on tribal issues within the CEC and within EPA, and she reported that on both fronts strong U.S. Leadership was resulting in great progress. Director Chase made special mention of Administrator McCarthy's direction that EPA staff will follow AIEO's recently issued Tribal Treaty Rights Guidance. Director Chase also described recent progress on TEK within the CEC.

Ms. Mausami Desai from the Climate Change Division of the Office of Atmospheric Programs, within the Office of Air and Radiation provided an excellent summary of the COP21 conference and the 2015 Paris Agreement.

The GAC appreciated the opportunity to meet and receive the report from César Rafael Chávez, the new Executive Director of the CEC Secretariat. Director Chávez provided an update of programmatic progress under the Operation Plan and the current round of NAPECA grants. Director Chávez also actively participated in our joint session discussions and his input was deeply appreciated by the committee.

An update on the status of SEM submissions was offered by Robert Moyer, SEM Director at the CEC. Committee members expressed appreciation for the significant improvement in the handling of SEM submissions over recent years.

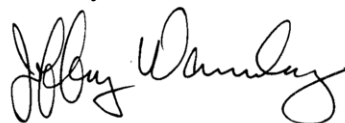
JPAC was represented by their new Chair, Lindsay Brumwell, who reported on the 2015 JPAC session in Boston, engagement with the TEK Roster of Experts, and the forthcoming session focusing on pollinators and climate change to be held in conjunction with the Council Session in Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Chiapas, Mexico next month.

At the request of the Chairs EPA arranged for a Department of Energy briefing on the MOU on climate change and energy among Canada, Mexico and the United States referenced in Ms. Nishida's report. Kathleen Deutsch, Senior Advisor for Canada and Mexico in DOE's Office of International Affairs provided the briefing. The committee members observed that the CEC could play a valuable role in some of the planned initiatives and encouraged Ms. Deutsch and EPA to explore those opportunities further.

As always, the GAC wishes to acknowledge the excellent support provided by the Office of Diversity, Advisory Committee Management & Outreach (ODACMO) and thank Associate Director Mark Joyce and NAC/GAC Designated Federal Officer Oscar Carrillo and all of the ODACMO staff for their support, before, during and after the meeting.

The GAC deeply appreciates EPA's continued support of our role in advising the United States Government on the enhancement of environmental conditions throughout North America. We look forward to your response, and hope you find the following advice helpful.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey Wennberg, Chair
Governmental Advisory Committee

cc: Jane Nishida, Assistant Administrator for the Office of International and Tribal Affairs
Mark Joyce, Associate Director, Office of Federal Advisory Committee Management & Outreach
Oscar Carrillo, Designated Federal Officer
Sylvia Correa, Senior Advisor for North American Affairs
Lindsay Brumwell, Chair, Joint Public Advisory Committee
César Rafael Chávez, Executive Director, CEC
Members of the U.S. National and Governmental Advisory Committees

Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC)
to the U.S. Representative to the
Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC)

Advice 2016-1 (May 20, 2016):

Charge Question: Engaging youth in the CEC process

Question: How can the U.S. encourage and inspire youth to greater involvement in the CEC process to protect North America's shared environment?

The GAC struggled with the question during our preliminary discussion as different members interpreted the goal of youth engagement differently. The GAC therefore initially sought to reach agreement on whether the purpose of increasing youth engagement was to bring youthful perspectives into the CEC's deliberations and activities or to increase the awareness of the CEC's existence and mission among North American youth. The GAC concluded that both objectives have value and should be pursued.

The second question that the GAC addressed was the definition of youth. While the three nations have slightly differing definitions, the GAC concluded that a broad definition was needed to achieve the two goals described above. The GAC concluded that age groups from the elementary level through post-graduate, up to 30 years of age, should be included.

The GAC deliberated on the question of how best to involve youth, and concluded that the best way to influence how the CEC involves youth is to bring young people into the CEC's work and activities. The GAC felt ill equipped to offer comprehensive recommendations because representatives of the target generation are not among our members. Therefore, our first recommendation is the CEC should seek guidance from members of the target generation directly.

One way to accomplish this would be to partner with a university with expertise in marketing and public policy in each nation. Each university would convene focus groups composed of diverse members of the target generation. Through these groups the study could evaluate generational understanding and attitudes of continental environmental issues and seek advice on how to reach and engage the participants' peers on those issues. This approach could also identify any national differences in perspectives among the participants that might indicate the need for variations in engagement approaches across North America.

Beyond seeking the direct advice of youth on the charge question the GAC brainstormed some outreach and engagement ideas that we feel merit consideration:

- In order to fully engage the youth of North America in environmental protection and conservation it is important to appreciate the fiscal, social, and cultural challenges faced by each nation. To that end, there is merit to developing three "counselor corps" comprised of youth representing a cross-section of a member nation's youth population that would then spend time visiting and interacting with their peers from the other two nations. The goal would be to foster understanding between the participants as to the

challenges and priorities faced by each country in hope of moving to a more North American approach to environmental concerns.

- EPA should create a means by which college students could participate in the GAC and NAC, at least one for each committee. Appointed membership could present a problem given the required qualifications, but perhaps some form of internship might be possible.
- Given the CEC's limited budget and resources the GAC believes the best way to effectively engage youth would be through partnerships with organizations that already have these connections and share some portion of the CEC's mission.
- The Local Environmental Observers and Eco Ambassadors programs are examples of existing CEC programs that rely on partner organizations and involve youth. The CEC might want to consider expanding both programs to more broadly target youth involvement.
- Today, social media is critical to connecting with a vast cross section of youth. The GAC cautions that other channels of outreach and communication must also be developed to avoid excluding significant demographic groups.
- One key to engaging a wide cross section of young people is to directly connect concerns for community and individual health with the environment.
- Youth focused activities, programs and projects should be incorporated into the next iterations of the Strategic and Operational Plans.

Recommendations:

- 1. The goals of youth engagement in the CEC should be to bring youthful perspectives into the CEC's deliberations and activities, and to increase the communication and awareness of the CEC's existence and mission among North American youth.***
- 2. Age groups from the elementary level through post-graduate, up to 30 years of age, should be included.***
- 3. The CEC should partner with universities with expertise in marketing and public policy in each nation to convene focus groups composed of diverse members of the target generation to evaluate generational understanding and attitudes of continental environmental issues and seek advice on how to reach and engage the participants' peers on those issues.***
- 4. The CEC could create three "counselor corps" comprised of youth representing a cross-section of each member nation's youth population that would then spend time visiting and interacting with their peers from the other two nations.***

5. *EPA should create a means by which college students could participate in the GAC and NAC.*
6. *The CEC should partner with organizations that already have youth engagement connections and share some portion of the CEC's mission.*
7. *The CEC should consider expanding the Local Environmental Observers and Eco Ambassadors programs to more broadly target youth involvement.*
8. *The use of social media is critical to connecting with a vast cross section of youth but other channels of outreach and communication must also be developed to avoid excluding significant demographic groups.*
9. *Youth directed communications should directly connect concerns for community and individual health with the environment.*
10. *Youth focused activities, programs and projects should be incorporated into the next iterations of the Strategic and Operational Plans.*

Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC)
to the U.S. Representative to the
Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC)

Advice 2016-2 (May 20, 2016):

Additional Advice

1. The GAC wishes to receive continuing briefings on the status of the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) as it relates to the NAAEC member nations. Of particular interest is whether the NAAEC could supplement the mechanisms of the TPP within North America where the TPP lacks similar mechanisms.
2. The GAC requests a briefing on the status of the Monarch Butterfly. Our recent meeting touched upon the issue and seemingly contradictory assessments were offered. The GAC suggests that EPA include a briefing on the Monarch Joint Venture from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in our October teleconference meeting.
3. The GAC had hoped that the JPAC recommendations regarding TEK would be available before our advice letter was completed so that the committee could comment on its content. Since that letter has not been released our only recommendation in this regard is that the next Operational Plan should include a line item in support of the activities of the TEK Roster of Experts.

Recommendations:

1. *Please provide continuing briefings on the status of the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP).*
2. *Please provide a briefing on the status of the Monarch Butterfly, possibly in the October teleconference meeting.*
3. *The CEC should include a line item in their next Operational Plan budget in support of the activities of the TEK Roster of Experts.*