



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

JUN 20 2016

Jeffrey Wennberg, Chair
U.S. Governmental Advisory Committee
VT Department of Environment Conservation
103 South Main St, Building 1 South
Waterbury, VT 05641-0401

Office of
International and
Tribal Affairs

Dear Mr. Wennberg:

On behalf of Administrator Gina McCarthy, I would like to thank you for the Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) letter of advice of May 20, 2016, reporting on our forty-sixth meeting held in Washington, D.C. On April 20-21, 2016. As always, it was a pleasure to carry-out a rich discussion on how to continue moving forward on the various environmental matters under the CEC. We value GAC's support and appreciate the comments made by the members on these important matters.

In particular, we appreciate your advice on Youth engagement and your thoughts on how to insert TEK principles into the decision-making process of the CEC. As you know, TEK is an important issue for the Administrator and we are very pleased by the support we have received from our advisory committees.

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.

Thank you for your all-encompassing advice and suggestions on diverse strategies to involve youth within the work of the CEC and as part of the working structure of the CEC. The US shared these strategies with our counterparts during our April AltRep meeting in Cuernavaca, and there was general agreement to take all your proposals into consideration as we assess which strategies will be the most effective, engaging and valuable. We agree with you that all age groups should be considered for inclusion, but it appears that all three Parties define youth differently (i.e., Mexico: 12-29; Canada: 15-24; USA: younger than 25), which means we will have to find a range that is acceptable to all three

countries. We also agree that the CEC should partner with universities to seek advice on how to engage youth and we will work with the GAC and the NAC as we move forward with these suggestions.

1. Please provide continuing briefings on the status of the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP).

We are happy to identify appropriate officials in the USG that can provide up-to-date information and the on-going process related to a US accession to the TPP.

2. Please provide a briefing on the status of the Monarch Butterfly, possibly in the October teleconference meeting.

Again, we will be happy to identify an appropriate contact at the Department of Interior that can speak to the status of the Monarch butterfly and any next steps planned.

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.

In its May 24, 2016 Advice to Council#16-01, the JPAC, working collaboratively with and the full participation of the TEK Roster members, proposed changes that accomplishes TEK incorporation in a more meaningful manner. The resulting advice proposed three key documents considered crucial to guide the CEC's relationship with and engagement of the Roster of Experts:

- A TEK Statement of Principles;
- a TEK Guidelines document outlining the principles under which the Roster would work to integrate TEK in CEC activities; and,
- an Atlas that would identify the issues related to TEK, such as the location of experts in North America with a specific expertise related to possible environmental issues that could arise.

These documents are being prepared for review at the Council Session. The US is ready to also propose a recommendation to adequately provide a budget to facilitate the TEK work trilaterally when the Council meets.

Thank you, again, for the valuable advice you have provided on the CEC. We look forward to continuing to work together to strengthen the CEC as a catalyst for trilateral cooperative action.

Sincerely,



Jane Nishida
Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator
Office of International & Tribal Affairs