

NAFTA/CEC/8th Session

Council Communiqué*

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Environmental Information

Timely and accurate environmental information is essential for rational decision making and the development of sound environmental policies. Strengthening our capacity to acquire and share knowledge among all sectors of society is fundamental to the ability of citizens to take informed action.

In this context, we will undertake the following new initiatives:

- incorporate the core set of environmental indicators of the Organization for

Economic Cooperation and Development in the CEC's periodic reports on the state of the North American environment, to assess environmental outcomes and track progress in relation to environmental goals,

- address the information gaps existing in the region and the effective use of information technologies, especially in the priority areas established by the Council,
- regarding Mexico's decision to seek legislation to establish a mandatory reporting system for pollutant releases and transfers, support Mexico through capacity building,
- develop a North American inventory of air emissions, as elaborated in Council Resolution 01-05, and
- continuously improve the quality, usefulness and accessibility of environmental

information made available to the public, and recommend that JPAC participate in this effort.

Market-based Approaches

The Commission recognizes that long-term success in protecting and conserving the environment will depend on our ability to foster innovation and develop creative solutions that address our shared environmental objectives in parallel with our economic and social objectives.

In this light, we will undertake the following initiatives:

- analyze issues relating to local water pricing and watershed management, and promote accessible, affordable technologies for improving water management,
- assess how the market-based ap-

* Adopted at Guadalajara, Mexico, 29 June 2001. See also page 250.

proaches identified in the OECD Sustainable Development report are currently used in the North American context and could be further developed;

- building on the experience with shade-grown coffee, develop options for certification and labeling regimes,
- while the CEC is not the forum for negotiating climate change, the Council asks the Secretariat to explore further opportunities for market-based approaches for carbon sequestration, energy efficiency and renewable energy in North America.

Regional Cooperation for the Implementation of Global Agreements

Building on the Commission's progress in addressing issues of global concern, we agree to:

from multilateral agencies and other sources, and

- requested more information on the Plan Puebla-Panama, and direct the Secretariat to assess the role the CEC might play in this program, including possible collaboration with the IDB and other institutions.

Building Partnerships and Strategic Linkages

Advancing environmental goals demands collaboration across sectors and building relationships with key partners. In this regard, we have identified the following initiatives:

- Consistent with NAAEC Article 10(6), we will explore with our trade counterparts the possibility of convening a joint meet-

America will focus on the reduction of vehicle emissions through improved management practices, technologies and infrastructure.

- We acknowledge the Secretariat's continuing effort to examine the opportunities and challenges of the evolving North American electricity market, and look forward to the upcoming symposium and final report.
- We have created the Biodiversity Conservation Working Group as described in Council Resolution 01-03, and look forward to the completion and implementation of the CEC Conservation of Biodiversity program's Strategic Plan for North America.
- We support the work that is being done within the North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI) and are looking forward to a progress report next year.
- We will promote the use of the CEC guidance document on environmental management systems by small and medium-size enterprises and explore mutual recognition of programs to improve industry performance. In addition, we will promote closer collaboration with the private sector to facilitate the development and diffusion of environmental management principles and best practices among industry in North America. We also encourage industry to promote capacity building regarding pollutant release and transfer registers (PRTs) through joint training among reporting companies.
- With respect to transboundary environmental impact assessment, an informal, productive process is continuing.
- We encourage the CEC to strengthen its relationship with the private sector.
- We encourage the Secretariat to explore mechanisms, within the NAAEC framework, for long-term financing in order to undertake projects approved by Council.



- continue work through the Sound Management of Chemicals (SMOC) program in support of our implementation of the recently signed Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, which we wish to bring into force rapidly, and
- initiate the development of a North American approach to the environmentally sound management of hazardous wastes, recognizing the serious environmental and human health consequences of improper tracking and disposal.

Capacity Building

A crucial component of our ability to make progress together on a variety of environmental issues is the presence of relevant capacity in each of the three countries. We:

- agree to place greater emphasis on capacity building in all aspects of the CEC's work, and have asked the Secretariat to explore opportunities for leveraging funds

ing between the CEC and the North American Free Trade Commission, aiming for 2003. As a first step, we instruct our senior officials to work with their counterparts on an agenda and outcomes for our consideration.

- With regard to our continuing work on Children's Health and the Environment, we have established terms of reference for the expert advisory group, as described in Council Resolution 01-04. We welcome Mexico's initiative to adopt a national policy on health and environment. In addition, we have agreed to ask the Secretariat to explore expansion of this work to include other vulnerable segments of the population and to explore how it can assist the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO)/ United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) hemispheric initiative on this issue.

- Our continuing studies of the environmental dimensions of freight traffic in North

Public Participation

We recognize the valuable contribution the public makes to the CEC's activities and are committed to strengthening public participation in all aspects of the CEC's work.

We appreciate the valuable role that the JPAC has played since the last Council Session in reviewing the Articles 14 and 15 submission process and engaging the public with respect to the development of its recommendations on the submission process. We are pleased with JPAC's 'lessons learned' report. As outlined in Council Resolution 01-06 on this report, we have agreed to take action on many of JPAC's recommendations. Other recommendations will require further consideration.

Mexico announced its decision to withdraw its confidentiality claim with respect to its reply to the citizen submission regarding Metales y Derivados. The Council agreed to request the Secretariat to provide a summary of confidentiality regulations in Canada, the United States and other countries, with a view to providing Mexico with examples in this area.

CEC Budget and Next Meeting of Council

The Parties will continue to support the CEC at the level of US\$9 million for the year 2002. We will meet in Mont Tremblant, Canada, for the next Regular Session of Council in June 2002.

