



January 28, 2008

Ms. Jane Gardner
JPAC Chair
Commission for Environmental Cooperation
393, rue St-Jacques ouest, bureau 200
Montréal (Québec) H2Y 1N9

Re: “Engaging Indigenous Communities in the Work of the CEC”

Dear Ms. Gardner:

On behalf of the Council, the Alternate Representatives thank the Joint Public Advisory Committee (JPAC) of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) for its Advice to Council 07-02 on engaging indigenous communities in the work of the CEC. Your recommendations stemming from the September 2007 workshop in Winnipeg, Manitoba will be very helpful to the Council and the Alternate Representatives as we consider ways to enhance CEC engagement with indigenous peoples in North America.

We note that many of the short-, medium-, and long-term actions you are recommending are designed to support priority CEC activities identified in the 2008 Operational Plan and the 2005-2010 Strategic Plan. More broadly, we are currently working to ensure that indigenous involvement in CEC work is mainstreamed to achieve better representation of indigenous peoples in all aspects of the organization’s activities.

We would also like to draw your attention to the upcoming Convening of Indigenous Peoples to Heal Mother Earth in Palenque, Mexico from March 10-13th, 2008. We are pleased to note the CEC’s contribution to this event in terms of planning and logistical support. We hope that this high-profile event will be an opportunity to hear from indigenous peoples about the challenges facing their communities and the potential role of organizations such as the CEC in addressing key concerns.



Moving forward, we will continue to engage indigenous stakeholder groups in the work of the CEC and will consider future areas of work that specifically address the needs of indigenous peoples and communities. Your recommendations provide us with some possible areas of focus.

Once again, we thank you for your recommendations and look forward to continuing our dialogue and collaboration on this important matter.

Sincerely,



David McGovern
Alternate Representative for Canada

cc: Enrique Lendo, Alternate Representative for Mexico
Jerry Clifford, Alternate Representative for the United States of America
JPAC Members
Adrián Vázquez, CEC Executive Director
Marcela Orozco, JPAC Liaison Officer