

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
BETWEEN  
THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
AND  
THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
OF THE UNITED MEXICAN STATES  
CONCERNING ENVIRONMENTAL COOPERATION  
IN COASTAL AND AQUATIC ECOSYSTEMS**

The Environmental Protection Agency of the United States of America and the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources of the United Mexican States (SEMARNAT), hereafter referred to as the “Participants”;

**RECOGNIZING** that coastal and aquatic ecosystems are national treasures for Mexico and the United States, and they provide natural resources that are an important economic engine for both countries and are diverse and vibrant;

**ACKNOWLEDGING** that there are many complex and long-standing environmental challenges in our coastal and aquatic ecosystems;

**EMPHASIZING** the importance of bilateral cooperation on solutions to these complex environmental challenges that transcend international boundaries in our coastal and aquatic ecosystems;

Have reached the following understanding:

**Paragraph 1: Objective**

The objective of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to facilitate effective collaboration and communication to more fully understand the coastal and aquatic ecosystems, and the challenges that transcend international boundaries and to work together on joint priorities to protect the environment and human health.

**Paragraph 2: Areas of Cooperation**

Cooperation under this MOU may include:

1. Pursuing areas of shared environmental concern, such as through ecosystem and habitat assessments, cooperation regarding environmental goods and services and green infrastructure, integrated ecosystem management, and scientific collaboration;
2. Encouraging and enhancing environmental awareness, social involvement, resilience and capacity building to carry out local community and regional plans for sustainable activities, development, protection and management of environmental resources;
3. The provision of analytical support tools to enhance community planning, risk assessment and smart growth implementation;

4. Strengthening the control and sustainable management of land- and sea-based sources of pollution and coastal environmental impacts;
5. Collaboration to assess emissions from oceangoing vessels and to determine the benefits from their reduction;
6. Actions to strengthen sustainable management of sewage and other sources of pollution to marine areas;
7. Reduction of pollutants from storm water flows and other sources;
8. Enhancement of environmental data integration and retrieval systems, as well as the processing, exchange and dissemination of information and results, working toward coordinated monitoring systems;
9. Other activities as mutually decided upon by the Participants.

### **Paragraph 3: Forms of Cooperation**

Cooperation under this MOU may take the following forms:

1. Promotion of scientific and technical cooperation;
2. Exchange of knowledge, data and experiences;
3. Joint projects to address the environment and human health;
4. Other forms of cooperation jointly determined by the Participants.

### **Paragraph 4: Specific projects and programs**

For the implementation of the activities of cooperation under this MOU, the Participants intend to decide upon specific arrangements for projects or programs, which should include the following aspects: objectives and activities; deadlines for activities; assigned personnel and financial resources for activities; role of each Participant; and any other appropriate information.

Both Participants should endeavor to assess and pursue the advancement of the activities of this MOU through annual meetings.

### **Paragraph 5: Confidentiality and Laws**

Information received under this MOU should not be disclosed to third parties outside the Participants' government without prior written authorization from the providing Participant, except as may be required by law.

Cooperation under this MOU should be in accordance with the respective laws and regulations of the Participants. Nothing in this MOU is intended to give rise to rights or obligations under international law.

### **Paragraph 6: Implementing Offices**

The implementing offices for the coordination and implementation of this MOU are as follows: the Office of International Affairs, the General Direction of Air Quality Management, Emissions Register and Contaminant Transference, the General Direction of Environmental Policy, Regional and Sectorial Integration of SEMARNAT and the Office of International and Tribal Affairs of the Environmental Protection Agency of the United States of America.

**Paragraph 7: Funding**

The ability of each Participant to carry out the activities under this MOU is subject to the availability of funds, personnel, and other resources. Nothing in this MOU obligates the Participants to expend appropriations or enter into any contract, assistance agreement, interagency agreement, or incur other financial obligations that would be inconsistent with the Participants' budget priorities. Each Participant is not to submit a claim for compensation from the other Participant for services rendered in connection with any activities carried out in furtherance of this MOU. Any transaction involving reimbursement or contribution of funds between the Participants is to be handled in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and procedures under separate written arrangements.

**Paragraph 8: Modification**

This MOU may be extended or modified by a mutual decision of the Participants in writing. Any revision or modification decided upon in writing by the two Participants is to constitute part of this MOU.

**Paragraph 9: Duration**

Activities under this MOU may commence upon signature and continue for five (5) years. The Participants may extend the period of cooperation by mutual consent in writing. Either Participant may discontinue cooperation under the MOU at any time and should endeavor to provide at least six (6) months' written notice to the other Participant.

Signed at Washington, D.C., in duplicate, this 24<sup>th</sup> day of September, in the Spanish and English languages.

FOR THE UNITED STATES  
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
AGENCY



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Lisa P. Jackson  
Administrator

FOR THE MINISTRY OF  
ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL  
RESOURCES OF THE UNITED  
MEXICAN STATES



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Juan Rafael Elvira Quesada  
Secretary