



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

JAN 12 2017

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

FEB 13 2017

Office of
International and
Tribal Affairs

Dear Mr. Wennberg:

On behalf of CEC Council member, Administrator Gina McCarthy, I thank you for the Governmental Advisory Committee's (GAC) letter of advice of December 12, 2016, reporting on our forty-seventh meeting held in Washington, D.C. on November 16-17, 2016. Our discussion at the meeting on current and potential environmental matters under the CEC was very valuable. We appreciate the GAC's comprehensive advice to the Council on marine litter and food waste issues as potential topics for the CEC operational plan.

GAC Recommendations:

- A. Research and analysis on marine litter and food waste
 1. On existing programs/efforts by federal, state, non-governmental, and global organizations, and conducting gap analyses to avoid potential duplication and maximize results;
 2. On potential need to harmonize measurement and monitoring methods across North America to assess food waste and marine litter issues and measure progress from actions;
 3. On evaluating societal costs of food waste and marine litter;
 4. On NAPECA opportunity to consider piloting reductions in use of disposable containers in communities in arid regions of North America; and
 5. On evaluation of food logistics and identifying and documenting best practices to optimize logistics to minimize food waste in North America.

We agree that a strategic assessment of the issues, needs and gaps, opportunities and current efforts on marine litter and food waste is essential to inform any potential engagement of the CEC on these topics. EPA experts are currently assessing activities and progress related to food waste and marine litter to inform the Parties of opportunities on these topics as we initiate development of the next operational plan. Your advice and thorough list of references is timely for our experts' consideration and we have shared it with them. We agree that as the CEC moves forward with trilateral initiatives, potential harmonization of measurement and monitoring methods for marine litter and food waste would facilitate sharing information in comparable terminology and metrics. The societal costs of mismanagement of waste has been researched, but we believe there may be a need for similar research on marine litter to inform policy and initiatives. Evaluating food logistics and regulations at federal, state, local level may provide

valuable statistics and highlight opportunities for developing or sharing best practices. We appreciate the suggestion on a potential NAPECA project addressing disposable containers.

B. Industry Leadership

1. On incentivizing industry to reduce marine litter and food waste through recognition; and
2. On creating a network of industry partners.

These are valuable recommendations in line with successfully executed efforts that EPA has undertaken to engage industry as partners. Recognition is a key element of EPA's Food Recovery Challenge which includes awards for source reduction, leadership, innovation and education and outreach. EPA has also met with industry leaders to explore innovative strategies for the effective prevention of trash entering waterways in the U.S. Targeted research may also help us identify the value added for industry and communities and how industry engagement would advance desired environmental results.

C. Public Education and Awareness

1. On partnering with other actors to coordinate education campaigns on food waste and marine litter;
2. On soliciting corporate and philanthropic support;
3. On LEO and marine litter; and
4. On identifying and promoting youth-centered projects.

We agree that it is important to understand who is working in this space, what education campaigns are in place and their target audiences and objectives. EPA has been partnering with other organizations and local communities to increase public awareness of both the food waste and marine litter issues. Our CEC work may present an opportunity to amplify or supplement those education and outreach campaigns and expand it to a North American campaign in line with priorities of the Parties. Looking for opportunities to link food waste and marine litter in current projects (such as the LEO project), as well as future initiatives (such as youth-centered initiatives), would also help inform our public education and awareness efforts.

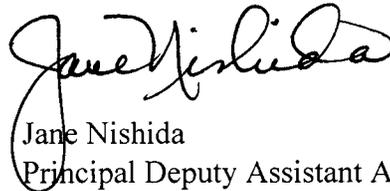
D. Youth Engagement

1. On creation of a Youth Working Group.

We agree that using existing partnerships with universities and colleges, including tribal colleges and universities, is important way to increase youth engagement. The Parties are currently considering how to engage youth strategically and effectively in the work of the CEC and we will share your recommendations.

Thank you for the GAC's strategic and comprehensive advice in response to the charge on marine litter and food waste as potential areas for future work. We appreciate the additional advice regarding the Dakota Access Pipeline Issue, but it is not within the CEC mandate. We look forward to continuing to work together to strengthen the cooperation among the United States, Canada, and Mexico on trade and environment matters through our trilateral CEC.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jane Nishida". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

Jane Nishida
Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of
International and Tribal Affairs
U.S. Alternative Representative