



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

Office of
International and
Tribal Affairs

Teresa A. Pardo, PhD., Chair
National Advisory Committee
University at Albany, State University of New York
187 Wolf Road, Suite 301
Albany, NY 12205

Dear Dr. Pardo,

Thank you for the National Advisory Committee's (NAC) letter of advice of June 4, 2018, reporting on its 50th meeting held in Washington, D.C. on April 26-27, 2018.

We appreciate the NAC's comprehensive advice to the U.S. Representative of the North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) on marine litter, including the previous NAC Advice 2016-1 (Meeting-November 2016), which provided robust and very relevant recommendations that informed the U.S. approach to the design of the current trilateral CEC project Building Community Solutions to Marine Litter. NAC's additional advice helps inform EPA as we work with the Secretariat and CEC Council counterparts in Mexico and Canada in implementing the current project.

We appreciate the NAC's recommendation of a portfolio approach. It takes legislation, education, technology, infrastructure, private sector collaboration and best practices to address an issue that is multifaceted and contextual. While the scope of the CEC is limited and cannot address several of the facets that comprise a portfolio solution (i.e., legislation, infrastructure funding and development), the capacity building, information, education, and contextual elements are being incorporated into the Building Community Solutions to Marine Litter project. This project is capitalizing on EPA's trash-free waters program, which is context-based, and developing tools and capacities that are replicable in various contexts. It is also targeting and capitalizing on U.S.-Mexico and U.S. -Canada border relations and priorities as it focuses on priority watersheds in the northern and southern borders (Tijuana and Salish Sea).

We agree that leveraging existing investments in best practices and disseminating information broadly can improve efficiency and results. In future projects, the CEC could potentially capitalize on the North American Environmental Atlas to identify and share actors, locations and practices addressing land-based sources of marine litter. Under such an initiative, it might be possible to highlight context, best practice transferability, and access to impact data on litter-related public policies. The key remaining challenge in the current CEC project is to identify and engage private sector actors that are leading the way in plastic mitigation and management.

As you point out, marine debris is a global issue requiring action at the local, national, regional and international levels. The CEC is helping build capacity in the North American context in building upon EPA's domestic trash-free waters program and adapting it to communities on two border watersheds. This capacity, as well as EPA's Trash-Free Waters are valuable models as the U.S. engages with international partners through multilateral fora and international agreements to address marine litter.

Thank you for the NAC's valuable advice on CEC trilateral matters as well as the additional advice provided in attachment 2 regarding tribal perspectives in marine litter prevention. This advice may add value to the current CEC project and help in form U.S. engagement on this global issue.

We look forward to continuing to work together to strengthen the cooperation among the United States, Canada, and Mexico through the trilateral CEC.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jane Nishida". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jane" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Nishida".

Jane Nishida
U.S. CEC Alternate Representative