

Addendum to OITA-OIA Climate Adaptation Implementation Plan

Priority Adaptation Actions The following 5 priority adaptation actions are being provisionally implemented by the Office of International Affairs (OIA) predicated upon sufficient resources being made available to continue this suite of actions. OIA's overarching priority activity is to provide technical and policy training on a range of environmental governance issues and capacity enhancing tools to international partners and national and sub-national governments, primarily in developing countries, for the purposes of assisting them in establishing and implementing effective and equitable environmental governance practices that result in effective policies that in turn, result in desirable environmental and societal outcomes.

- 1) **Climate Environmental Governance: Deployment and Implementation of the EPIC (Educational Partnerships for Innovation in Communities) Capacity Building Tool.** OIA's commitment to the provision of trainings on various aspects of environmental governance presents opportunities to offer training and capacity building related to climate literacy, climate risk, resilience, and climate adaptation, especially to sub-national partners in developing countries. More specifically, OIA is part of an international consortium that seeks to educate and train international partners on the use of EPIC, a tool for creating local government-university partnerships that bring the full range of university knowledge and expertise to the service of local governments and communities. EPIC partnerships are locally led, demand-driven, action-oriented partnerships that enhance the capacity of local governments and communities to adapt, build resilience and develop more sustainably. International partners engaged in this activity with OIA include, but are not limited to, EPA's Office of Policy (OP), the UN Global Adaptation Network (GAN), the EPIC Network (EPIC-N) Secretariat, ICLEI (Local Governments for Sustainability), the US National Science Foundation (NSF) and the International START (System for Analysis, Research and Training) program.
- 2) **Climate Environmental Governance: Deployment and Implementation of the ARC-X Capacity Building Toolkit.** OIA's commitment to the provision of trainings on various aspects of environmental governance presents opportunities to offer training and capacity building related to climate literacy, climate risk, resilience, and climate adaptation, especially to sub-national partners in developing countries. More specifically, OIA partners with OP to educate and train international partners on the use of EPA's Adaptation Resource Center (ARC-X) or toolkit. ARC-X is a web-based interactive resource to help local governments effectively deliver services to their communities even as the climate changes. Decision makers can create an integrated package of information tailored specifically to their needs. Once users select areas of interest, they will find information about the risks posed by climate change to the issues of concern; relevant adaptation strategies; case studies illustrating how other communities have successfully adapted to those risks and

tools to replicate those successes; and EPA funding opportunities. Though originally designed for local government officials and practitioners in the US, the toolkit has also proven to have international interest and relevance as well.

- 3) **Strengthening Capacity to Address Climate in Arctic Communities.** Working through the Arctic Council Arctic Contaminants Action Programme (ACAP) and its Expert Groups on Short-Lived Climate Pollutants (SCLPs) and the Indigenous Peoples Contaminants Action Programme (IPCAP) along with some funding from the Arctic Council's Project Support Instrument (PSI), OIA supports ongoing projects to strengthen the capacity of remote and indigenous Arctic communities in responding and adapting to climate change. In addition, OIA promotes the needs of these communities in the Arctic Executive Steering Committee (AESC). At present, there are two ACAP projects underway or about to get underway, that are led by indigenous Arctic communities. They are the Community-based Black Carbon Health Assessment and a forthcoming project on wildfire management co-led by Environment and Climate Change Canada and the Aleut International Association, with US government expert cooperation. These projects have scope for mitigation, adaptation, and resilience activities. In addition, the Circumpolar Local Environmental Observer (CLEO) project received funding from EPA to help its launch, with supplemental support from ACAP to reach out to additional Arctic communities. OIA is also examining ways to promote the expansion and sharing of this tool and its capabilities for the purposes of promoting exchanges of experiences and knowledge among indigenous peoples with traditional, place-based ecological knowledge (TEK), scientific experts, academics, and others, within indigenous Arctic communities in the US and internationally. Lastly, EPA/OIA has also signed an interagency agreement with the State Department to work with Arctic communities on climate change.
- 4) **Commission on Environmental Cooperation (CEC) EJ4Climate Grants for Climate Action in Underserved and Vulnerable Communities.** As a long-standing member of CEC, OIA continues to work through the CEC to direct funds to support climate adaptation and resilience activities in the US, Canada, and Mexico, especially within underserved and vulnerable communities as part of the new EJ4Climate Grants Program established by President Biden. The CEC established this grant program in 2021 to fund projects that target underserved and vulnerable communities, and Indigenous communities, in Canada, Mexico, and the United States, to prepare them for climate-related impacts. The EJ4Climate Grant Program provides funding directly to community-based organizations and seeks to support environmental justice by facilitating the involvement and empowerment of communities searching for solutions and the development of partnerships to address their environmental and human health vulnerabilities, including those due to climate change impacts.

The Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) is an international organization established by the United States, Canada, and Mexico under the 1994 North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation (NAAEC) as a complement to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The NAAEC promotes sustainable development based on cooperation and mutually supportive environmental and economic policies and fosters the protection and improvement of the environment in the territories of the Parties for the well-being of present and future generations. EPA and its counterparts in Mexico and Canada sit as CEC Council members. Being that the CEC is a trilateral Organization EPA/OIA has limited in resources, and agreement from the other two parties is always required to proceed with projects and/or direct funds to activities. However, as a member of the CEC Council, OIA continues to advocate for additional support for climate adaptation and resilience work.

5) Enhancing Literacy of Staff on Various Aspects of Climate Adaptation and Resilience

OIA is committed to enhancing climate literacy among its staff by hosting at least 1 webinar or tutorial per year for OIA staff, as well interested staff from other offices within EPA, on various aspects of adaptation and resilience, primarily, but not exclusively, from an international perspective. This commitment also involves enhancing staff literacy on the evolving climate forces making it necessary to adapt and build resilience to the impacts of climate change over time. In the first webinar, OIA was able to secure the co-chair of IPCC's (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) Working Group II report on the impacts of climate change, to share with staff and others key climate findings from the 6th IPCC Assessment's Synthesis Report.

Integrating Indigenous Place-Based Knowledge (IK) into OITA-OIA Priority Adaptation Actions and Projects

OIA is committed to helping to facilitate the integration of traditional indigenous, place-based knowledge (IK) with other sources of knowledge into its priority actions whenever and wherever applicable and appropriate. This is particularly applicable in the instance of priority action 4, where CEC grant funds explicitly target projects in underserved and vulnerable communities, and Indigenous communities. The same can also be said for priority action 3, that focuses on climate adaptation projects involving indigenous communities in the Arctic, and to a lesser extent, priority action 1 which in many instances in Africa, often involve the integration of place-based knowledge from local informal communities with knowledge from local governments and universities sharing the same settings.

Integration of Climate Adaptation into BIL and IRA Funds

Since the Office of International Affairs is internationally focused and BIL and IRA funds are directed at domestic interests, the integration of climate adaptation into BIL and IRA does not apply to OIA.