



**Memorandum of Understanding
between the United Mexican States
and the United States of America on
Addressing the Sanitation and
Environmental Crisis
in the Tijuana–San Diego Region**



The United Mexican States (“Mexico”) and the United States of America (“United States”), hereinafter referred to as “the Participants”;

RECOGNIZING the longstanding environmental, public health, and national security consequences caused by untreated wastewater and stormwater contaminated with raw sewage flows from Tijuana into the United States;

RECALLING the productive meeting held April 21, 2025, in San Diego, California, between Secretary of the Environment and National Resources of Mexico (“SEMARNAT”), Alicia Bárcena Ibarra and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (“EPA”), Administrator Lee Zeldin, and the successive communications and meetings that have followed;

WELCOMING the important advances made through the completion of the International Collector Phase I and the San Antonio de los Buenos Wastewater Treatment Plant (“SAB WWTP”);

DESIRING to coordinate cross-border solutions that permanently stop untreated wastewater from polluting coastal communities, harming public health, and damaging the environment on both sides of the border;

REAFFIRMING commitments made under International Boundary and Water Commission (“IBWC”) Minute No. 328 (“Minute 328”) and the public acknowledgments by President Donald J. Trump and President Claudia Sheinbaum of the importance of resolving this binational challenge;

ACKNOWLEDGING the joint program for 2025–2027 developed by Comisión Nacional del Agua (“CONAGUA”), IBWC, and SEMARNAT, as presented during the April 30 binational meeting at the South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant (“SBIWTP”), San Ysidro, California, which aims to reinforce the wastewater conveyance infrastructure for the newly expanded SAB WWTP facility;

ENDORISING that the projects and efforts in this memorandum of understanding are strategic and complementary, and that collectively, they provide an immediate response to this crisis while delivering a long-term solution that integrates innovative approaches to wastewater reuse and management for the region;

REALIZING that Mexico and the United States accept the commitments in this memorandum of understanding in good faith, both countries are supporting these efforts by facilitating access to resources authorized by their respective authorities and laws, as well as leveraging other complementary funding sources;



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NOTING the North American Development Bank (“NADBank”) Board of Directors meeting that took place on June 12-13, 2025, in Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua; and calling on the NADBank to take all appropriate actions to accelerate projects mitigating transboundary wastewater flows between Tijuana and San Diego; and

NOTING the Council Session of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (“CEC”) to take place in Mexico City on July 24–25, 2025,

The Participants have reached the following understandings:

1. The Participants expect:
 - a. The U.S. and Mexican Commissioners of the IBWC to:
 - i. Review the status of all Tijuana wastewater infrastructure projects, including Minute 328 projects;
 - ii. Jointly review progress on the SBIWTP; and
 - iii. Develop a joint communication strategy to notify stakeholders of issues and project progress regularly.
 - b. The EPA, SEMARNAT, the U.S. and Mexican Sections of the IBWC, and the U.S. and Mexican Consulates in Tijuana and San Diego to meet regularly at an operational level and issue clear, coordinated, and at least quarterly public updates.
2. The United States intends to:
 - a. Release EPA Border Water Infrastructure Program (“BWIP”) funding to complete the rehabilitation of Pump Station 1 (“PB-1”) and Tijuana River collection pipes (Tijuana River Gates) upon initiation of construction in accordance with Section 3(a).
 - b. Provide, during the period of validity of Minute 328 and subject to the availability of appropriations, BWIP funds for the projects corresponding to Sections 3(b.i.F) and 3(b.ii.A).
 - c. Expand treatment capacity at the SBIWTP from 25 to 50 million gallons per day (“MGD”) by December 2027, with an interim expansion to 35 MGD by August 2025. Provide for Operation and Maintenance (“O&M”) to be included in project cost.



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- d. Inform Mexico of expenses incurred for the trash removal and sediment dredging activities carried out on its side of the Tijuana River, when such activities are undertaken in accordance with relevant IBWC Minutes, including Minute 258.
3. Mexico intends to:
- a. Immediately seek internal funding—such as through CONAGUA or the Government of Baja California—to initiate the construction process of the following projects in 2025:
 - i. Diversion of 10 MGD of treated effluent entering the Tijuana River from the Arturo Herrera and La Morita WWTPs to a site upstream of the Rodríguez Dam (USD\$13.3M); and
 - ii. Rehabilitation of the Parallel Gravity Line (USD\$8.42M).
 - b. Allocate the remaining Minute 328 funds as part of Mexico's 2026-2027 budgets, including half (USD\$46M) in 2026 and half (USD\$47M) in 2027, to facilitate completion of the remaining Minute 328 projects by December 31, 2027, or sooner in accordance with the following project priority schedule:
 - i. Construction in Calendar Year 2026:
 - A. Rehabilitation of the Insurgentes Collector;
 - B. Rehabilitation of PB Matadero and Laureles Pump Station 2;
 - C. Rehabilitation of Poniente Interceptor;
 - D. Rehabilitation of the Oriente Interceptor;
 - E. Rehabilitation of the Collector Carranza; and
 - F. Backup power supply for PB1.
 - ii. Construction in Calendar Year 2027:
 - A. Upgrades to the Arturo Herrera and La Morita WWTPs;
 - B. International Collector Phase II;
 - C. Rehabilitation of the Antiguo Force Main;
 - D. Lift station and force main from Sainz Canyon to Arturo Herrera; and
 - E. Enclose the open channel from PB1 to SAB WWTP.
 - c. Secure full funding of operation and maintenance for Minute 328 infrastructure projects.
4. The Participants intend to enter into a new Minute by December 31, 2025, or sooner, which will, at minimum, contain the following actions and be executed immediately



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through existing or new binational workgroups led by the two Sections of IBWC upon agreement. These actions are deemed necessary to ensure a comprehensive and durable solution to address transboundary wastewater management issues, human health concerns, and environmental conditions in the Tijuana River watershed:

- a. Initiate engineering and financial feasibility of installing an ocean outfall at the SAB WWTP in Tijuana, building upon prior studies conducted by the NADBank and the Tijuana Utility - CESPT;
- b. Assess the technical and financial feasibility of expanding treatment capacity of the SAB WWTP in Tijuana from 18.26 to 43.37 million gallons per day (MGD);
- c. Construct and maintain the sediment basin at Matadero Canyon (currently undertaken by Secretariat of National Defense of Mexico SEDENA);
- d. Expand the Tecolote–La Gloria WWTP to 3 MGD;
- e. Develop and encourage consistent implementation of best practices and guidelines for stormwater management and construction runoff control to reduce inflow rates and downstream deposition of trash and sediment.
- f. Through Minute 320, identify sediment and trash projects that can be cost-shared amongst appropriate entities (for example, enhancements to stormwater infrastructure serving roadways along urbanized sections of the Tijuana River; trash capture devices, and sediment dredging operations);
- g. Develop a routine schedule and cost-sharing formula for cleaning and sediment dredging operations in the Tijuana River;
- h. For Mexico, share information with the United States on the anticipated additional flows to the Tijuana wastewater system from the proposed Rosarito Desalination Plant.
- i. Evaluate supplementary treatment for SAB WWTP effluent (e.g., ozonation for disinfection, odor control, and reduction of chemical usage).
- j. Create an O&M account at NADBank which would set aside a portion of all dollars provided to Mexico to be held for future O&M costs.
 - i. The O&M account should be developed in partnership with NADBank and a new binational workgroup, which would explore and design alternative O&M strategies to ensure proper maintenance of infrastructure investments,



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ultimately extending their operational lifespan.

- k. Develop a Tijuana water infrastructure master plan to ensure that sufficient water infrastructure is planned and constructed commensurate with anticipated population growth.
- l. Conduct a comprehensive mass balance flow analysis of the Tijuana water system.
- m. Develop a transparent and real-time binational monitoring system to account for flow inputs and outputs in the Tijuana River and water quality data from the treated effluent discharged by the wastewater treatment plants in this memorandum of understanding.

5. The Participants intend for the following timeline to apply to the specified coordination and activities:

On at least a quarterly basis	Convene IBWC Commissioners.
August 28, 2025	Complete expansion of the SBIWTP from 25 to 35 MGD. (United States)
December 31, 2025, or sooner	Initiate the construction process for the diversion of 10 MGD to a site upstream of the Rodriguez Dam, as well as the rehabilitation of the Parallel Gravity Line. (Mexico)
December 31, 2025, or sooner	Enter into a new Minute as described in Section 4.
December 31, 2027, or sooner	Complete all Minute 328 projects. For Mexico, doing so following the project priority schedule in Sections 3(a) and 3(b).
within 100 days	Evaluate all infrastructure project construction schedules to ensure completion at the earliest possible date.

6. The Participants affirm their deep and urgent commitment to the permanent well-being of the San Diego and Tijuana communities, environmental protection, and regional resiliency.

7. This Memorandum of Understanding becomes operative upon the signature of both Participants.



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Signed in Mexico City, on the 24th day of July, 2025, in duplicate, in both the English and Spanish languages.

FOR THE UNITED MEXICAN STATES

FOR THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**Alicia Bárcena Ibarra
Secretary of the Environment and Natural
Resources**

**Lee M. Zeldin
Administrator of the Environmental
Protection Agency**