



ADVICE TO COUNCIL: NO. 00-01

Re: Strategic Directions for the Conservation of Biodiversity

The Joint Public Advisory Committee (JPAC) of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC);

IN ACCORDANCE with its mandate to provide advice to Council;

HAVING had an opportunity to receive public input on CEC's Conservation of Biodiversity Program at various plenary sessions in 1999 and 2000, and to participate in a Stakeholder Consultation Meeting organized to receive the input of Indigenous peoples from Mexico, the United States and Canada on the CEC Biodiversity Conservation Strategic Plan;

RECALLING JPAC Advice to Council 99-10 which, among other matters, noted that "working with Indigenous peoples of the North American region and their communities is an important step in building local capacity for the conservation and protection of biodiversity;"

NOTING very strong public support for the CEC's role in gathering and coordinating information about biodiversity and developing a strategic plan for influencing policy development and implementation mechanisms in our three countries to protect the environment and promote the sustainable development of the North American region;

HAVING reviewed and discussed *A Strategic Plan for the Conservation of Biodiversity for the Commission for Environmental Cooperation: Questionnaire for Stakeholder Feedback* prepared for the Secretariat;

BEARING IN MIND, with regard to the conservation, protection and restoration of biodiversity, that the legislative and regulatory regimes of our three countries differ;

JPAC RECOMMENDS THAT:

- Council confirm the role of the CEC as catalyst, public entry point and information hub in fostering biodiversity conservation within the North American region as recommended in the *Strategic Directions for the Conservation of Biodiversity: Integrated Baseline Summary Report*;

- Council encourage the Secretariat to ensure that its efforts within the Conservation of Biodiversity Program are properly aligned with those in the Law and Policy Program, which are designed to improve public access to information and enforcement capabilities within and between our three countries;
- Council members review their national legislative and regulatory regimes with a view toward enhancing capacity and implementation mechanisms for protecting biodiversity;
- Council direct the Secretariat to revise the *Questionnaire for Stakeholder Feedback* and other consultation documents to accommodate the views, perspectives and knowledge of Indigenous peoples and other land-based populations—thus actively engaging them in the Program;
- Council direct the Secretariat to continue its efforts to involve the public in planning and implementing this important Program; and
- Council further direct the Secretariat that the most recent and successful consultation with Indigenous peoples be seen as a first step in a long-term process of engaging them in the ongoing work of the CEC.

APPROVED BY THE JPAC MEMBERS

21 April 2000