

Ottawa, 26 June 2008

COUNCIL RESOLUTION: 08-05

Continued trilateral cooperation to protect marine biodiversity in North America by fostering an effective North American marine protected areas network

THE COUNCIL:

RECOGNIZING that, globally, the establishment of protected areas in the oceans lags considerably behind the protection of terrestrial environments and ecosystems—including their cultural features—and that it is the collective responsibility and interest of our nations to protect marine biodiversity within them;

ACKNOWLEDGING that cooperation for shared North American ocean environments transcends conservation efforts and includes trilateral socioeconomic and trade considerations;

MINDFUL that the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (the “Commission”) affords the Parties the unique opportunity to develop and sustain projects that are of mutual benefit as they expand their domestic marine protected area networks, informed by awareness of regional ecological interactions and collaborating to respond to shared challenges;

MINDFUL AS WELL that, beginning in 1999, the Commission has continued to foster the North American Marine Protected Areas Network (NAMPAN), an affiliation of representatives of the three governments, nongovernmental organizations, academics, stakeholders and civil society, to undertake projects that support the ultimate objective of completing an ecologically meaningful network of marine protected areas in North America;

NOTING that foremost among the projects now underway is the development of a shared approach to monitoring the ecological health of marine protected areas, using pilot sites in the Baja to Bering region along the Pacific coast of North America; and

RECOGNIZING that during their meeting in Montebello, Canada, in August 2007, the Prime Minister of Canada and the Presidents of Mexico and the United States noted in their joint statement that to improve the ecological health of the three countries’ shared marine resources, their governments were continuing to expand the North American Marine Protected Areas Network, and to use their marine protected areas in the development of a trilateral MPA-based monitoring program stretching from Baja to the Bering Strait;

HEREBY DECIDES TO:

ENCOURAGE continued North American collaborative efforts, through the NAMPAN, to foster trilateral progress toward an effective network of marine protected areas in North America, with the aim of maintaining healthy marine biodiversity;

SUPPORT the exchange of information for decision-making on matters such as: the establishment of marine protected areas within the priority conservation areas; shared or complementary approaches to monitoring the health of marine protected areas and the effectiveness of their management; and other items of shared interest such as the socioeconomic benefits of marine protected areas and fostering an ocean ethic among stakeholders and civil society;

PROMOTE the implementation of capacity building activities at ecoregional, local and national levels in all three countries, such as training of marine protected area staff in best practices for monitoring the areas and in adaptive management based on monitoring results;

SUPPORT NAMPAN in exploring opportunities for synergies with other Commission activities, including continued and strengthened collaboration with the North American Conservation Action Plans (NACAPs) for Marine Species of Common Conservation Concern;

FURTHER SUPPORT NAMPAN in exploring opportunities to expand linkages with other institutions, including national science foundations, fisheries management agencies, nongovernmental organizations, universities, and others, including the potential addition of other marine protected areas within the Baja to Bering region to the pilot sites monitoring project now underway; and

CONSIDER expanding the strategic approach of the NAMPAN to embrace the Atlantic, the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean, and the Arctic coasts of North America.

APPROVED BY THE COUNCIL:

John Baird
Government of Canada

Juan Elvira Quesada
Government of the United Mexican States

Stephen L. Johnson
Government of the United States of America