



Strategic Plan

North American Working Group on Environmental Enforcement and Compliance Cooperation of the CEC

26 May 2004

Background

The North American Working Group on Environmental Enforcement and Compliance Cooperation, (Enforcement Working Group, or EWG), was created in 1996, under Council Resolution 96-06, to “strengthen cooperation on the development and improvement of environmental laws, regulations, procedures, policies, and practices, and to enhance compliance with, and enforcement of, environmental laws and regulations.” The Council acknowledged the obligation of the Parties to “effectively enforce their respective environmental laws and regulations with the common aim of achieving high levels of environmental protection and compliance.”

The Enforcement Working Group functions within the structure of the Law and Policy Program of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation.

Mission

The EWG is comprised of the Governments of the United States, Canada and Mexico, working together to achieve environmental protection in North America through good governance, rule of law, and capacity building, recognizing the individual sovereignty of each Party.

Vision

Over the next five years, the EWG will strive to guide decision making, focus human and financial resources, and coordinate activities with governmental and non-governmental stakeholders in meeting enforcement and compliance challenges.

As mandated under Council Resolution No. 96-06, the EWG shall operate under the following agreed terms of reference to:

1. Take action to strengthen cooperation among the Parties in environmental enforcement and compliance
2. Enhance cooperation among the environmental enforcement agencies in recognition of shared enforcement and compliance challenges;
3. Facilitate and support cooperative enforcement and compliance initiatives;

4. Exchange information and experiences with alternative approaches to enforcement and compliance;
5. Facilitate training opportunities among the three Parties;
6. Prepare on behalf of the Parties the report on environmental enforcement obligations and activities for the CEC annual report;
7. Recommend to the CEC program priorities relating to environmental enforcement and compliance;
8. Establish or recognize any subgroups, task forces or expert groups necessary to implement this mandate, consistent with the annual program and budget, as approved by the Council.

EWG Strategic Objectives

The following strategies are proposed to fulfill the mandate, mission and vision of the EWG:

1. Support and provide input on enforcement and compliance issues related to the environmentally sound management of hazardous waste, ozone depleting substances and other regulations impacting the environment, wildlife, plants and habitat.
2. Establish strong linkages and synergies with relevant programs and working groups within the CEC to promote effective enforcement and compliance with each Parties' environmental laws and regulations.
3. Recognize and support the use of incentives and other flexible and voluntary mechanisms where they complement EWG activities.
4. Work with other international environmental programs and entities including Canada's Smart Border Accord and US-Mexico Border 2012 Program, INECE, INTERPOL and others to share information and more efficiently leverage scarce resources.
5. Identify gaps in legal and judicial systems that allow the border to be used as a shield or act as barriers to effective transboundary environmental enforcement.
6. Build national capacities that support and employ the range of existing enforcement and compliance tools.
7. Promote transparency in EWG activities.
8. Support NAWEG's work on the protection and conservation of plants, wildlife and habitat.
9. Support the development of appropriate tools to meet the EWG's mandate and Regional priorities, including those related to environmental management systems and indicators.
10. Enhance collaboration across the Parties on legal authorities and inspection procedures in order to promote enforcement and compliance.

11. Strengthen enforcement and compliance across the Region for purposes of national security.
12. Build capacity on intelligence analysis and detection and identification of transboundary illegal activities.
13. Identify and encourage the utilization of existing information systems for the enhancement of enforcement and compliance by the Parties.
14. Identify measures of success and appropriate indicators for work plan activities.