



# OFFICIAL MEETING OF THE NATIONAL AND GOVERNMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEES (NAC/GAC)

## SUMMARY

### FINAL

**December 7, 2023**

Zoom Virtual Platform

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**Thursday, December 7, 2023**

### **Call to Order and Introductions**

*Oscar Carrillo, National Advisory Committee (NAC) and Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) Designated Federal Officer, Federal Advisory Committee Management and Oversight Division (FACMOD), Office of Inclusive Excellence (OIE), Office of Mission Support (OMS), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)*

Mr. Oscar Carrillo welcomed the attendees to the joint meeting of the NAC and GAC. He called the meeting to order and thanked the NAC/GAC Chairs and Vice-Chairs for assisting in planning the meeting. He thanked Ms. Jane T. Nishida, Assistant Administrator, Office of International and Tribal Affairs (OITA), EPA; Mr. Rafael DeLeon, Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator, OITA, EPA; Mr. Mark Kasman, Director, Office of International Affairs (OIA), OITA, EPA; Ms. Monisha Harris, Deputy Director, OIA, OITA, EPA; Dr. Lesley D'Anglada, Senior Advisor, North America Program, OIA, OITA, EPA; Ms. Nadtya Hong, General Standing Committee Representative and International Environmental Program Specialist, OITA, EPA; Mr. Carrillo noted that the previous Federal Advisory Committee Management Division has been restructured as FACMOD within the newly created OIE. He expressed appreciation to the entire FACMOD team, including Ms. Robbie Young-Mackall, Director, FACMOD, OIE, OMS, EPA. Mr. Carrillo thanked the members of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC), including Mr. Jorge Daniel Taillant, Executive Director, CEC, and Dr. Octaviana Trujillo, Chair, Joint Public Advisory Committee (JPAC), for their support. He invited the NAC and GAC members to introduce themselves.

### **Opening Remarks**

*Gina Moore, Acting Director, FACMOD, OIE, OMS, EPA*

Ms. Gina Moore welcomed the new and returning NAC and GAC members on behalf of Ms. Young-Mackall. Ms. G. Moore noted that the new FACMOD supports the NAC and GAC and provides oversight to the other 23 EPA Federal Advisory Committees. Ms. G. Moore thanked the members for their intellectual investment in advising the EPA Administrator on issues related to the CEC. Ms. G. Moore also expressed appreciation to Mr. Carrillo and the new NAC/GAC Chairs and Vice-Chairs for their efforts in planning the meeting. She thanked Mr. Kasman, present on behalf of Ms. Nishida, as well as Dr. D'Anglada and Ms. Hong for their efforts in support of the NAC and GAC.

### **Welcome and Overview of the Agenda**

*Dr. Vincent R. Nathan, Center for Houston's Future, Chair of the NAC*

*Austin Nunez, San Javier District Council and Tohono O'odham Nation, Chair of the GAC*

Dr. Vincent R. Nathan welcomed the meeting attendees. He reviewed the charge of the meeting, which explores topics that were raised at the [30th Regular Session of the CEC Council and JPAC Public Forum](#), which was held in June 2023. Dr. Nathan reviewed the agenda for the meeting.

### **Update on U.S. Priorities for Council Session and Guidance**

*Mark Kasman, Director, OIA, OITA, EPA*

Mr. Kasman thanked the FACMOD team for organizing the meeting, the NAC and GAC members for advising the Agency on CEC matters, and the guest speakers for their participation. Mr. Kasman presented an update on U.S. and EPA priorities related to climate change and introduced the advice letter charge.

The effects of the climate change crisis are being seen across the world. Extreme weather events have increased in frequency and intensity, leading to billions of dollars of destruction each year. Climate change is exacerbating challenges related to poverty, hunger, global health and political stability. To address climate change, President Joseph R. Biden enacted the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 (IRA) and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act to fund new infrastructure and reduce pollution from fossil fuels. EPA is committed to protecting the health and safety of all people, especially communities that have been marginalized, underserved and forced to bear the burdens of environmental pollution and the historical legacy of structural racism. Environmental justice (EJ) has become the cornerstone of EPA's efforts to mitigate climate change. EPA has established a new national office charged with advancing EJ and civil rights, as well as the [Environmental and Climate Justice \(ECJ\) Program](#), which funds activities to benefit overburdened and marginalized communities. Through IRA, Congress has appropriated \$2.8 billion for financial assistance and \$200 million for technical assistance to implement the ECJ Program. Additionally, EPA has committed to devoting 40 percent of the benefits of federal investments to underserved communities.

EJ and climate justice work are not solely the responsibility of the federal government. State governments and other local organizations have an important role to play. EPA is working to ensure that collaborations with smaller, local entities are developed to implement inclusive and equitable climate adaptation and resilience strategies. At the [Cities Summit of the Americas](#), held in April 2023, EPA organized a panel focused on EJ and urban conservation that was moderated by Mr. Taillant. The roundtable discussion resulted in the development of a network of participants who are interested in collaborating on EJ issues. The participants included national- and city-level government representatives, members of Indigenous groups, delegates from disadvantaged communities, and other society leaders. Last fall, EPA solicited advice on how best to engage key subnational actors in North America, shaping the development of the CEC's climate adaptation initiative. EPA will continue to request input from the NAC/GAC committees as new projects and initiatives are developed.

Mr. Kasman noted that the day's charge would guide the development of a new CEC initiative focused on sharing approaches to adaptation, planning and implementation of local projects that respond to the needs of urban citizens, as well as how cities are incorporating Indigenous traditional ecological knowledge (ITEK) and EJ into adaptive management plans. He reviewed the charge of meeting and explained that this input will inform the U.S. position as a project description for the initiative is developed with colleagues from Canada and Mexico.

## **CEC Updates**

*Jorge Daniel Taillant, Executive Director, CEC*

Mr. Taillant thanked the meeting organizers. He emphasized that the world is not on the path to preventing the key climate threshold of 1.5 degrees Celsius warming above pre-industrial levels. Risks of extreme heat are increasing. Human health and safety are being threatened by drought, floods and changes in sea level. Climate change is exacerbating inequalities and hurting marginalized communities the most. Mr. Taillant listed current and emerging global strategies and priorities for mitigating and adapting to climate change, which include reducing potent emissions, improving energy efficiency, reducing waste and promoting a circular economy, infusing efforts with ITEK to reestablish people's relationship with nature, improving water management, and reverting systemic injustices.

Mr. Taillant provided updates from the June 2023 CEC Council Session, from which several priorities emerged. To prevent a triple crisis of climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss, the CEC and other agencies must coordinate with local governments on actions to confront the crisis; promote EJ and ITEK; and ensure clean air, land and water for present and future generations. Several projects were publicized. The [2023 Council Statement](#) announced C\$500,000 to launch the Reaching Horizon 2030: An

Environmental Outlook for North American Cooperation initiative (which will detail how to prepare for emerging environmental and climate challenges in North America); C\$500,000 to launch the Adaptation Champions Cities Initiative (focused on sharing best practices related to adaptation planning and implementation); C\$400,000 for a Fast Mitigation initiative to reduce short-lived climate pollutants (including methane); C\$250,000 for an initiative to support efforts related to food loss and waste; US\$2 million for the third cycle of the [EJ4Climate Grant Program](#) (which provides funding to community-based organizations to address environmental and human health vulnerabilities); and C\$1.75 million to fund a new cycle of the [North American Partnership for Environmental Community Action](#) (NAPECA) grant program (which seeks to improve environmental conditions at the community, Indigenous, local and regional levels). Mr. Taillant reviewed CEC projects and initiatives related to ecosystems (e.g., conserving pollinators, reducing marine litter, implementing nature-based solutions to address flooding in coastal cities), environmental quality (e.g., supply chain transparency for chemicals in consumer products, air quality improvement for EJ, transitioning remote communities to renewable energy) and green growth (e.g., recycling and solid waste management, trilateral data exchange on the import and export of hazardous waste, supporting a circular economy).

Mr. Taillant shared updates related to several CEC projects. The new Adaptation Champions Cities Initiative is a solutions-focused initiative assessing potential partnerships in North America. The initiative has four priorities: (1) strengthening climate governance in cities, (2) introducing nature-based solutions, (3) promoting EJ and community engagement, and (4) facilitating Indigenous engagement and leadership. The initiative will highlight “Champion Hub Cities” to share lessons learned in promoting climate adaptation in urban areas. The [Communities for Environmental Justice Network](#)—a network to strengthen the capacity of Indigenous and vulnerable communities in Canada, Mexico and the United States—held its first Trinational Workshop in Oaxaca, Mexico, in November 2023. EJ community representatives and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) from the three countries shared stories of resilience and explored ways to exchange expertise, tools and resources. JPAC and TEK Expert Group (TEKEG)—led initiatives include Indigenous Approaches to Freshwater Management in North America; Advancing Responsible Purchasing of Wood Products; and Resilience of Indigenous People’s Food Systems. The CEC Secretariat is responding to such emerging issues as intersectionality, youth engagement, artificial intelligence, climate finance and private-sector engagement. Mr. Taillant described CEC [Submission on Enforcement Matters](#) (SEM) efforts to enforce environmental laws in Canada, Mexico and the United States. Among the three countries, the CEC prepared a total of 112 SEMs, 26 of which resulted in Factual Records.

## **Question and Answer Period**

In response to a question from Ms. Julia S. Moore (Vermont Agency of Natural Resources), GAC member, on why nature-based solutions are being limited to coastal cities, Ms. Hong explained that limited resources must be targeted where they will be most effective. Mr. Taillant emphasized that the Adaptation Champions Cities Initiative will not be limited to coastal cities.

Mr. Terry Gray (Rhode Island Department of Environmental Development), GAC member, asked whether the city initiative includes a role for states or provinces. Mr. Taillant answered that the project will focus on cities but will not exclude participation from states and provinces. The CEC engages with all levels of government throughout its work.

A participant noted that water management often receives insufficient attention. More comprehensive and effective environmental strategies take into consideration water’s contribution to the circular economy, the potential for resource recovery and the role of water management in counteracting droughts and floods.

Mr. Edward Moderow (Texas Commission on Environmental Quality [TCEQ]) commented that the [Ysleta del sur Pueblo Tribe](#) near El Paso, Texas, participates in a local federal–state–city–tribal collaboration that is boosted by the [Joint Advisory Committee on Air Quality](#).

## **JPAC Report Out**

*Octaviana Trujillo, Ph.D., Chair, JPAC, CEC*

Dr. Trujillo acknowledged the ancestors of the Indigenous nations living on the lands of Canada, Mexico and the United States. She shared an overview of recent JPAC activities. On November 27–29, the CEC and JPAC convened public forums in Oaxaca de Juárez, Oaxaca, Mexico. On November 29, JPAC submitted advice on Indigenous approaches to climate adaptation policy and planning that was solicited during the CEC Council Session in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada, in June 2023. The advice highlighted examples, issues, challenges and opportunities to increase the resilience of North American communities when addressing climate change through the appropriate recognition of ITEK and Indigenous perspectives. Key points included the importance of considering both ITEK and Western science to address environmental challenges, learning from nature and simulating it as social relationships are designed, following a holistic approach to land management through a relationship based on love and respect, understanding how to steward resources at the ecosystem level, and building trust to support relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous representatives and communities.

The advice contained several specific recommendations. First, JPAC recommended that the CEC continue to support efforts to increase the weaving of ITEK and Indigenous perspectives into its work. JPAC also recommended that the Council support a project identifying, documenting and disseminating case studies that showcase the successful weaving of ITEK and Indigenous perspectives into projects and organizations. The second recommendation was to support Indigenous-led conservation projects. The third recommendation was to support Indigenous economics and alliances across countries by actively involving Indigenous people in trade-related discussions. The fourth recommendation was to support relationship building between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples and organizations. The fifth recommendation was to review CEC financing processes and mechanisms to ensure that they provide sufficient funding to address the planning and implementation phases of climate and environmental initiatives and to ensure that funding processes do not impede the participation of communities with limited resources.

The JPAC-led initiative Advancing Responsible Purchasing of Wood Products seeks to increase public awareness of the importance of sustainable forest management by developing awareness campaigns tailored to the three countries. Feedback on this program from the [U.S. Forest Service](#) and [Procuraduría Federal de Protección al Ambiente](#) (or PROFEPA, Mexico’s Federal Environmental Protection Agency) currently is being reviewed and will be shared with the parties the week of December 11. Dr. Trujillo noted that she had provided an update on JPAC and TEKEG-led activities at the face-to-face meeting of the CEC Alternate Representatives held in Washington, D.C., on October 31.

## ***Joint JPAC/TEKEG Meeting Report***

[CEC, JPAC, and TEKEG-led public forums](#) were convened in Oaxaca de Juárez in November 2023 and focused on [Indigenous approaches to freshwater management in North America](#). They included results from CEC case studies of TEK and freshwater management from Mexico and the United States. The forums enabled the TEKEG members to engage with virtual and in-person participants during a networking event on November 27 and another event on November 28. The November 28 session included discussions of potential opportunities to utilize the CEC’s mandate to advance the interests of Indigenous peoples, as well as apply ITEK directly to the CEC’s operations and policy recommendations. A report outlining these recommendations for the CEC will be published in January 2024. The JPAC



Public Forum, held on November 29, consisted of three sessions on community-based conservation of freshwater resources: (1) Restoring Access to Water—The Long Road, (2) Responsible Watershed Management Practices, and (3) Water Restoration: Collaborations Between Communities and Governments. Following the sessions, an open dialogue took place, providing the opportunity for invited experts, NGOs, government representatives and the public at large to share additional examples of successful alliances and raise other concerns with JPAC. The day also included the report from the NAC and GAC Chairs, as well as the SEM overview. Approximately 120 to 150 participants joined online each day of the meeting, and in-person participants enjoyed a field trip to visit [Centro de Apoyo al Movimiento Popular Oaxaqueño A.C.](#) (or CAMPO), a nonprofit organization that works in such areas as agroecological production, land tenure, human rights, gender, environmental conservation, and strengthening social and traditional aspects of Oaxacan communities.

### ***Other Updates***

A new JPAC Chair will be elected for 2024; the next chair of the Committee will be a member from Mexico. While in Oaxaca, the roles and responsibilities of the Chair were discussed with the eligible candidates, Mr. Luis Alfonso Argüelles Suárez and Mr. Esteban Escamilla Prado. The results of the election will be shared with the parties during the week of December 11. Dr. Trujillo thanked the meeting participants for their support throughout her tenure as JPAC Chair.

### **Question and Answer Period**

In response to a question from Mr. Gerald Wagner (Blackfeet Nation), GAC member, about future plans, Dr. Trujillo answered that she would remain a JPAC member until further notice.

Ms. Hong shared information about a [NAPECA grant program](#) consisting of C\$1.75 million to empower Indigenous people and enhance climate adaptation by incorporating TEK.

### **Innovative Solutions in Climate Champion Cities in the United States and North America**

*Kate Johnson, Head of U.S. Federal Cities, C40 Cities*

*David Miller, Former Mayor of Toronto, Managing Director, C40 Center for City Climate Policy and Economy*

Ms. Kate Johnson, Head of U.S. Federal Cities, C40 Cities, introduced Mr. David Miller, former mayor of Toronto, Ontario, Canada, and Managing Director, C40 Center for City Climate Policy and Economy. Mr. Miller explained that [C40 Cities](#) is a network of mayors of approximately 100 [world-leading cities](#) that are collaborating on urgent action to mitigate and confront the climate crisis. Cities occupy 2 percent of the world's landmass, generate more than 80 percent of the world's gross domestic product, consume approximately 75 percent of the world's energy, and are responsible for more than 70 percent of energy-related greenhouse gas emissions. Large cities have the political influence, administrative power and public policy experience to take leading action in this area. C40 breakthroughs (e.g., electrified public transport) can be scaled up in North America and across the world. Cities are bearing the brunt of climate change, and the ability of cities to respond to this challenge will be key in fight against climate disaster.

In general, C40 Cities are required to have populations of more than 3 million, although high-achieving cities (e.g., Copenhagen, Denmark; Portland, Oregon) with smaller populations have been invited to join the network. The C40 Cities network directly represents a total of just under 600 million city residents. In North America, three Canadian cities, two Mexican cities and 14 U.S. cities are members of the organization. The new [C40 Centre for City Climate Policy and Economy](#) brings together mayors, researchers, economists and academics to produce timely, evidence-based research that will drive the urban climate agenda to create equitable and resilient cities.

Ms. Johnson noted that C40 works with cities across several sectors (e.g., adaptation and water, air quality, energy and buildings, food systems, transportation, urban planning, waste management). For example, the adaptation and water program helps cities take action to protect residents and infrastructure from such immediate and future climate risks as flooding, water scarcity and extreme heat.

As part of the goal to raise climate ambitions, C40 supports a series of [high-impact accelerators](#), through which city mayors commit to implementing new policies and regulations to demonstrate the highest level of leadership on climate action. The pledges report to C40 regarding concrete benchmarks for mitigation and adaptation in such areas as clean air, clean construction, renewable energy and urban nature. To date, 41 signatory cities have delivered more than 270 actions, with more than 900 additional actions in progress or planned to be completed by 2030. Accelerators are not limited to C40 member cities. Barcelona, Spain, will subsidize 75 percent of the cost of new green rooftops to create urban allotments; Durban (eThekweni Municipality), South Africa, is completing a transformative riverine management program; Mumbai, India, is amending the city's Tree Act to conserve mangrove trees; Toronto is planting more than 13,000 trees and shrubs under the Urban Forestry Grants and Incentives Program. In a new [Water Safe Cities Accelerator](#), cities pledge to protect the city's communities most vulnerable to high risk of flooding and drought.

The C40 [Cool Cities Network](#) involves facilitating peer-to-peer learning for participating cities that face similar challenges and have prioritized mitigating urban heat island effects in their local jurisdictions. Focus areas of this program include heat mapping and areas of vulnerability to heat, emergency management, long-term planning and cooling solutions. For example, cities are beginning to use building safety codes to ensure a minimum level of cooling to protect residents from extreme heat.

Ms. Johnson shared several case studies showing innovative C40 solutions. Montreal, Québec, Canada, has undertaken an ambitious environmental rehabilitation project to transform a former limestone quarry that served as a landfill until 2000 into a public park that ultimately will occupy 150 hectares. Mexico City, Mexico, has launched the Programa Especial de Infraestructura Verde (Special Green Infrastructure Program) to systematically plan and implement green and blue spaces across the city. Phoenix, Arizona, is tackling urban heat with cool pavements that are coated in paint that reflects sunlight. Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico, is combatting heat through the Ciudad Fresca (Fresh City) program, which focuses on interventions like cool roofs in areas that are most vulnerable to urban heat. Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, has developed a heat response plan that is activated when a heat warning is announced and has partnered with local organizations to distribute cooling kits to vulnerable residents. Portland (Oregon) is working to reduce flood risk via floodplain acquisition and restoration efforts.

Mr. Miller emphasized that city residents are experiencing the effects of climate change directly and expect their local governments to respond with tangible results. This intersection of people and government is a key opportunity to develop climate change solutions. He also noted that these solutions often address social justice and equity. He shared the example of Boston, Massachusetts, which expanded a network of parks in lower income neighborhoods that also served to absorb water during a flooding event in the area. Cities must understand the connection between climate change and inequality and implement crosscutting solutions that address multiple challenges.

## **Question and Answer Period**

Dr. Nathan asked whether the C40 Cities network has any connections to the Paris Agreement. Mr. Miller answered that cities have been included in the language of international climate agreements since the 2009 United Nations Climate Change Conference (or COP15) in Copenhagen. However, the role of cities in these negotiations remains ambiguous. Since the Paris Agreement was adopted in 2016, C40 Cities



have been required to develop and implement a climate plan that halves emissions by 2030 and achieves net zero emissions by 2050.

In response to a question from Dr. Nathan about addressing non-urban and non-coastal areas, Ms. Johnson commented that C40 partners with several city networks in the United States to ensure that resources and best practices are shared with smaller cities. C40 engages with cities of all sizes, even if the network is limited to large cities.

Zeek Ojeh (Zalmar, Inc.), NAC member, asked about mitigating climate change triggers that exist beyond the limits of municipal governance. Mr. Miller noted that mayors of large cities often have powers that extend beyond these limits. He shared examples of Mr. Eric Garcetti, the mayor of Los Angeles, California, who transformed that city's electricity into a clean utility, and of several mayors of New York, New York, who spearheaded such efforts as the divestment of city pensions from fossil fuel companies and building code changes to improve energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Debra L. Kring (City of Mission, Kansas), GAC member, asked about efforts related to the mitigation of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). Ms. Johnson noted that most C40 efforts focus on climate change, but the organization is interested in expanding its work on sustainable consumption.

Dr. Antonio Rene (Texas A&M University School of Public Health), NAC member, asked for information about C40 collaborations with academia. Dr. Miller noted that this is the focus of the C40 Centre for City Climate Policy and Economy, which engages with academics and policymakers so that the best possible advice is available to C40 mayors. Avenues for disseminating information include a [podcast](#), an [academic journal](#) focused on city climate policy and economics, a newsletter, and an advisory board of academics. Mr. Miller noted the challenge of performing academic research in a time frame that is useful to city mayors. Dr. Rene suggested that academics engage with students who are interested in climate change related to cities.

Dr. Joseph E. Aldy (Harvard Kennedy School and Resources for the Future), NAC member, asked how the C40 network evaluates the outcomes, successes and shortcomings of city projects. Mr. Miller noted that C40 holds cities accountable to their climate plans. Cities must document external measures (e.g., reductions in greenhouse gases) and determine whether these measures are changing according to the trajectory established in the plan. C40 also partners with academic researchers to evaluate certain interventions (e.g., the public health effects of an ultra-low emissions zone).

Ms. Erica Ocampo (The Metals Company), Vice-Chair of the NAC, asked for more information about funding mechanisms that support C40 initiatives. Ms. Johnson answered that efforts are funded via a number of mechanisms, including financing from multilateral development banks, dedicated municipal revenue and public-private partnerships. City residents are more supportive than expected of taxes to fund climate action. Federal funding (e.g., the Federal Emergency Management Agency's [Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities](#) program, the U.S. Department of Agriculture [USDA] [Urban and Community Forestry Program](#)) also has become more readily available. Mr. Miller noted that, in Canada, the federal and provincial governments provide funding for larger projects.

Dr. Erika Allen Wolters (Oregon State University), NAC member, asked whether cities are considering the connection between green infrastructure and gentrification. Ms. Johnson answered that cities are involving communities in the development of climate initiatives. For example, communities have expressed concerns about maintenance needs and safety issues associated with tree planting programs.

## **Public Comment Period**

No comments were offered.

## **Hot Topics and Joint Open Discussion on Presentations**

*Dr. Vincent R. Nathan, Center for Houston's Future, Chair of the NAC*

*Austin Nunez, San Javier District Council and Tohono O'odham Nation, Chair of the GAC*

Dr. Rene mentioned that Jeff Landry, the governor-elect of the state of Louisiana, has appointed Ms. Aurelia Skipwith Giacometto to lead the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Ms. Giacometto is associated with the coal industry and was appointed as director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service during the previous administration. She will be the first Black woman to direct Louisiana's DEQ.

Dr. Rene added that people are facing a higher risk of injury, illness or death due to climate change. These effects are not just due to extreme weather events but also increased air pollution, heightened disease threats and other downstream effects. Higher temperatures increase the risk of cardiovascular disease and stroke and can lead to multiorgan failure and death. The Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health's Center for Climate, Health, and the Global Environment (or C-CHANGE) is addressing several areas related to climate change and health outcomes, including climate and nutrition, adaptation strategies for agriculture as it relates to food security, resilient supply chains, and effective responses to climate events, as well as knowledge management and integration of climate and health databases.

Dr. Stephen Martin (Creating Pathways and Access for Student Success Foundation), NAC member, echoed Dr. Rene's comments on the health effects of climate change. He added that the city of Chicago is replacing lead service lines with copper water lines, representing an additional layer of challenges that cities must address.

Dr. Angela Maria Fasnacht (Princeton University), NAC member, commented that PFAS might be a hot topic for the NAC and GAC to address in the future.

Dr. Nathan noted that many regions of the United States face challenges related to water. Older cities are affected by lead infrastructure, coastal regions face flooding challenges, and other regions must deal with drought or contamination issues. Water should be at the forefront of urban and rural developmental projects.

## **Committees Meet Separately to Discuss Charge Questions**

The NAC and GAC met separately to deliberate on the EPA charge questions.

### ***GAC Separate Meeting***

Mr. Austin Nunez (San Javier District Council and Tohono O'odham Nation), Chair of the GAC, welcomed everyone and introduced the Vice-Chair, Dr. June Weintraub (San Francisco Department of Public Health). Mr. Nunez and the GAC members reviewed and discussed the charge questions.

The GAC discussion opened with Charge Question #1: *Identifying exemplary cities in North America that serve as examples of successful (1) climate governance that advances urban climate adaptation; (2) employment of nature-based solutions that increase community resilience; and (3) environmental justice solutions and community engagement processes.* The GAC members simultaneously discussed Charge Question #2: *Identifying cities ready (or able) to develop climate adaptation plans that would benefit from guidance by cities that have implemented advanced climate adaptation initiatives.*

Ms. J. Moore asked whether a shared understanding of the size or definition of cities referred to in the charge questions was necessary. She pointed out that the largest city in her home state of Vermont has a

population of 50,000 people. Mr. Nunez referenced the C40 network inclusion criteria, in which even smaller cities could join if they were high achieving in the area of climate action.

Mr. Gray highlighted the example of Providence, Rhode Island, which is a city of approximately 300,000 people that has implemented a comprehensive [climate justice plan](#).

Dr. Weintraub has held discussions with colleagues from multiple agencies that are developing climate initiatives in San Francisco, California. Sea level changes and storm events are areas of focus. During these discussions, Dr. Weintraub was informed about the [Resilient Cities Network](#), which emerged from The Rockefeller Foundation's 100 Resilient Cities initiative to enable cities to hire a chief resilience officer, develop a resilience strategy, and share knowledge and resources through a supportive network. The [Urban Sustainability Directors Network](#) is another group that aims to connect local government sustainability practitioners to collaborate and accelerate the work of local sustainability. Miami-Dade County is known as a leader on [climate action](#). Ms. Gail E. Good (Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources), GAC member, highlighted the [U.S. Climate Alliance](#) as a similar coalition advancing climate action. Mr. Carrillo recommended that Mr. Nunez include this list of networks in the opening of the advice letter.

Dr. Kendra Abkowitz (City of Nashville and Davidson County), GAC member, stated that she was familiar with the Resilient Cities Network. A variety of consortia exist to enable peer-to-peer engagement and the sharing of information and other resources. She emphasized that success has been seen in cities that are adopting local resolution targets and thresholds, especially those enforceable by the law. A widespread regulatory structure or planning requirement that is stronger than commitments would be beneficial. Nashville is a member of the [Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy](#) (GCoM), but the city's funding opportunities related to greenhouse gas emissions inventories and local building code requirements likely are more significant drivers of climate-related action in the region than its membership in the GCoM alliance.

Mr. Robert Janecka (TCEQ), GAC member, recommended Houston and Austin, Texas, as exemplary cities. He added that El Paso is a city in Texas that is high achieving in addressing water scarcity. With the approval of the city's residents, the municipal government in El Paso is investing in conserving water resources. The city of El Paso received a Phase 1 Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) from TCEQ and is actively developing its climate adaptation plan.

Mr. Wagner noted that initiatives focused on urban areas can limit the inclusion of tribes. Blackfeet Nation has had a climate change adaptation plan since 2018. Mr. Carrillo suggested that advice and examples from GAC members could be categorized as being related to larger or smaller cities. Ms. J. Moore concurred that creating categories of different types of communities would prevent the exclusion of smaller communities. Dr. Abkowitz pointed out that smaller cities might be more likely to implement innovative solutions because they benefit from more flexible and streamlined decision-making. Dr. Weintraub agreed that the use of the word "city" was not inclusive.

Mr. Nunez opened the NAC discussion to Charge Question #3: *Providing examples of good practices for coordinating city pairs programs to obtain the best results.*

Mr. Gray noted that this was a difficult charge without a better understanding of the cities under consideration.

Dr. Weintraub suggested that the GAC members consider methods to operationalize these partnerships. Cities could be paired based on their population size, political structures or location. The charge question might be answered by posing questions to guide the direction of the initiative.

Dr. Weintraub opened the NAC discussion to Charge Question # 4: *Providing examples of funding mechanisms that cities can access to support climate adaptation actions.*

Dr. Weintraub asked whether the champion cities initiative includes funding for cities. Mr. Carrillo said the CEC's initiative likely would include funding in the form of grants or other mechanisms.

Dr. Weintraub noted that funding packages could include a requirement for partnerships with other cities. Competition is strong because of limited resources, and cities should be encouraged to collaborate. Collaboration would benefit cities that have fewer resources and cities with populations that lack the political will to address climate change.

To clarify the charge, Mr. Carrillo shared a document outlining the proposed approach for developing the Council Initiative on Indigenous and Urban Approaches to Climate Change Adaptation. The CEC has a framework of proposed criteria for the trilateral partnership of a select number of champion cities and is soliciting expert guidance on the cities that should be included. The advice letter should highlight the innovative cities discussed during the GAC separate meeting and link to relevant websites.

Mr. Leonard Drago (Arizona Department of Environmental Quality), GAC member, noted that as a state employee, he does not feel comfortable recommending particular cities. He highlighted a CPRG being developed by the Arizona Office of Resiliency that covers state, territory, tribal and local actions to reduce greenhouse gases and toxic air pollution. Mr. Drago will talk to the Office of Resiliency about incorporating this initiative into the advice letter.

Mr. Gray commented that he, too, is a state employee. He will reach out to the Providence Department of Sustainability and connect it with the CEC initiative. He noted that CPRGs incorporate both state and municipal elements. The next round of CPRG applications is due in April 2024 and should provide an overview of municipal climate action plans from across the country.

Mr. Nunez requested that GAC members who suggested cities prepare a summary of those cities' efforts and reasons for their inclusion in the CEC initiative. The summaries should be emailed to Mr. Nunez and Dr. Weintraub.

Dr. Weintraub announced that she has accepted a new position. She will remain on the GAC and retain her appointment as Vice-Chair, but her affiliation will change in January 2024.

The group reviewed a summary of their discussion and proposed next steps. Mr. Nunez thanked the members for their support. The GAC meeting was adjourned.

### ***NAC Separate Meeting***

Dr. Nathan welcomed everyone and introduced Ms. Ocampo. He reminded the NAC members that the advice letter will be due to EPA on January 12, 2024. The letter will be drafted by the end of December. Members were requested to send their written comments to Dr. Nathan by December 15, 2023. The draft advice letter will be sent to the members for review before January 1, 2024.

Dr. Nathan noted the charge and opened the NAC discussion to Charge Question #1: *Identifying exemplary cities in North America that serve as examples of successful (1) climate governance that advances urban climate adaptation; (2) employment of nature-based solutions that increases community resilience; and (3) environmental justice solutions and community engagement processes.*

Dr. Rene provided written comments related to this charge question prior to the meeting, and further details can be found in his statement. Dr. Rene explained that he and Dr. Martin discussed the charge and produced the written comments together; he encouraged that approach for future meetings, especially for

members working in academia. The following is a summary of those comments. Drs. Rene and Martin identified New Orleans, Louisiana, as an exemplary city that has been affected by climate change more than any other U.S. city, primarily because of its geographical location where the Mississippi Delta meets the Gulf of Mexico. Intense weather events, including hurricanes, result in a rise in sea level. An increase in storm surge exposure stresses the levees and flood protection systems around the city. In addition, New Orleans experiences extreme heat episodes that directly threaten the health of the residents and the reliability of the infrastructure systems that supply the city's energy and water. A research study revealed that some areas of New Orleans act as heat islands due to the amount of asphalt and concrete within the city; the temperature in the heat islands averages several degrees higher than green space and shaded areas.

New Orleans' leadership recognized that climate change is a current scenario and have been preparing for adverse climate situations. The city is better prepared for the threat of storm surge than ever before with the installation of (1) a large-scale hurricane risk-reduction levee, (2) a surge barrier system, and (3) 24 pumping stations to move the water away from the city. New Orleans established an assisted evacuation system to manage mandatory evacuation orders and partnered with a nonprofit, [Evacuteer.org](https://www.evacuteer.org), to implement this plan. Additionally, New Orleans has worked to implement many of the nonstructural elements of Louisiana's [Coastal Master Plan](#), including home elevations, and building code improvements (e.g., retrofitting buildings) to better prepare for the threats of an uncertain future related to climate change. To protect the coast, New Orleans also is working with Louisiana's Coastal Master Plan to address the coastal land loss that decreases the hurricane and storm buffers. New Orleans has focused on its ability to be prepared in the future by improving its electric grid and developing microgrids for backup power in the city. Furthermore, New Orleans is striving to increase green infrastructure and improve its transportation system to reduce travel in the city by cars. Dr. Martin added that New Orleans, which is his hometown, has had many improvements over the years. He emphasized incentivizing the various efforts and staying vigilant to ensure that the residents are prepared.

Mr. Ojeh highlighted Phoenix as an exemplary city in addressing climate change. It is the first city to issue a Sustainability Bond through which investors who are interested can fund these types of projects. In terms of sustainability projects, Phoenix retrofitted its streetlights to LED lighting and built a state-of-the-art compost facility. Aligning with the CEC's pillar of biodiversity that will be the focus for the next few years, Phoenix has invested more than \$30 million in a biogas facility. The city has installed 100 miles of cool pavements that extend citywide. Phoenix also spent more than \$500 million on transit facilities throughout the Salt River Valley and is a member of the C40 Cities and several other mayoral associations.

Dr. Nathan requested that Mr. Ojeh provide more information on Phoenix's financing of the sustainability projects (e.g., LED lighting) as examples of funding mechanisms that cities can access to support climate adaptation action. Mr. Ojeh will work with Phoenix's Office of Environmental Planning and Management to provide updates on the green projects that can assist with preparing the NAC advice letter.

Dr. Marla del Pilar Perez-Lugo (The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley), NAC member, asked whether the exemplary cities identified would need to fit into all three categories of the charge. Dr. Nathan noted that a city can fit into one of the three categories. Dr. Perez-Lugo commented that the two cities presented, New Orleans and Phoenix, have extensive histories of environmental injustice. She emphasized that identifying exemplary cities without such history might need to be delegated to a research institution or a university to select. Dr. Perez-Lugo noted that the NAC and GAC have not been provided with a formal set of criteria to distinguish between the different cities or identify the cities and compare them. She pondered that this identification requires a more systematic approach than discussing several cases separately.

Dr. Nathan explained that the NAC and GAC are charged to present EPA exemplary North American cities aligning with the categories and other charge questions, which the Agency will further review. He speculated that additional work and research will be necessary and that various universities will be involved. The committees are providing advice, not the final results. Mr. Ojeh commented that, as he understands it, the NAC members are to approach the charge from their spheres of knowledge and professions and respective to their geographical regions.

Dr. Nathan highlighted the Gulf Coast region, noting that all cities (small or large) within this region can be affected by the same environmental events. The NAC can ask EPA whether or not the Gulf Coast, the Atlantic Coast or some other geographic region—or even Houston, which is regarded as one of the exemplary cities—can learn and benefit from some of the work that New Orleans is performing. He also noted that the NAC can suggest to the Agency the topic of addressing data sharing across these cities. The NAC is providing advice to the Agency, not directly to the CEC. EPA will determine the extent of the implementation efforts, in terms of budget, projects and site selections. Dr. Perez-Lugo suggested that the NAC advice letter clearly convey that a systematic approach is needed to identify cities that fit into these categories.

Dr. Rene commented that Jackson, Mississippi, is the only in city that state to implement a climate action plan. Furthermore, only 33 of the 50 U.S. states have a climate action plan, and only one of those states is in the Gulf Coast region. Storms are a concern for other cities along both the East Coast and West Coast. In contrast, the inland regions north of the Gulf Coast experience issues related to drought and scarcity of water.

Mr. Ojeh added that Arizona does not have a climate action plan, even though many cities in the state do. In 2010, Arizona passed a law to limit monitoring greenhouse gas emissions, thus rolling back what the prior state administrations had implemented.

Dr. Aldy echoed Dr. Perez-Lugo's comments about encouraging EPA to systematically consider how the Agency evaluates the performance of cities and the kinds of actions being taken to address climate change. For example, a city's meeting its goals on reducing emissions could reflect a variety of activities unrelated to what that particular city is doing. For example, San Francisco, which is a C40 city, has much lower emissions today than in 1990, but that reduction may partially be due to ongoing efforts to reduce emission in Sacramento, California. Dr. Aldy noted that a city may be demonstrating progress in addressing climate change, but that progress may be a function of state and/or federal policy. The NAC needs go beyond examining the straightforward and easy-to-evaluate metrics to rigorously drawing connections between the actions the city has taken and the outcomes that matter. In the context of climate adaptation, a number of activities could occur at the state level that have implication at the city or federal levels. Dr. Aldy also noted that in their funding opportunities, federal agencies are asking cities and local governments how they will evaluate the performance of the grants they receive. He cited the USDA Urban Forestry Program and EPA Greenhouse Gas Reduction Program as examples. Dr. Aldy volunteered to provide additional information about a systematic program evaluation and effective ways to reduce the risk of climate change to assist in formulating the advice letter. Ms. Ocampo highlighted the importance of recognizing that some cities that have recently started to address climate change but may also have well-established programs.

Ms. Ocampo opened the NAC discussion to *Question #2: Identifying cities ready (or able) to develop climate adaptation plans and that would benefit from guidance by cities that have implemented advanced climate adaptation initiatives.*

In response to a question from Dr. Perez-Lugo about the definition of "ready" and criteria for identifying the cities poised for climate adaptation, Ms. Ocampo replied that this is an open question through which EPA is gathering information from many groups. Examples of cities for this charge question include



those that have a climate change group within the government and are adopting policies, those that recently started a climate adaptation initiative, or those that have created funding opportunities. She encouraged Dr. Perez-Lugo to provide her perspective on criteria that EPA can consider when identifying these cities.

Mr. Ojeh commented that he would base his examples on cities in Arizona that already have climate action plans and now need to work on action-related adaptation plans to guide the activities. Many cities in Arizona are without resources to address climate adaptation. Dr. Nathan added that the NAC also can reference cities that should be able to develop a climate adaptation plan based on catastrophic events they have experienced, such as the recent storms in the Northeast.

Dr. Nathan opened the NAC discussion to Charge Question #3: *Providing examples of good practices for coordinating city pairs programs to obtain the best results.*

In terms of matching cities, Dr. Nathan commented that the NAC experts in engineering and/or policy could provide EPA a roadmap on pairing cities with similar programs.

Dr. Wolters noted that if coordination efforts are EPA's aim, then cities would need to be matched in population and in similar environmental or climate change issues. This would allow for a collaboration that would be beneficial to both groups.

Dr. Nathan called attention to an overriding issue, which is that CEC is an organization that covers Canada, Mexico and the United States. Because this is, therefore, a North American issue, the NAC could provide examples of undeveloped areas within the North American continent, not just the United States.

Ms. Ocampo explained that Chicago, Illinois, and Houston could be paired. Both have climate adaptation plans but are lagging behind in their implementation because of a lack of funding. Funding in Chicago is improving, with the approval by the residents to financially support funding the conservation parks across the city. This involves implementation of low carbon transportation, which is problematic in both cities.

Dr. Nathan opened the NAC discussion to Charge Question # 4: *Providing examples of funding mechanisms that cities can access to support climate adaptation actions.*

Dr. Nathan highlighted the billion-dollar water fund in Houston. Ms. Ocampo noted the [Clean Energy Community Benefits Fund](#) in Portland (Oregon), and also highlighted funding examples from public-private partnerships, including Nature Conservancy-Dow Inc. ecosystem services projects and TCEQ projects.

Dr. Fasnacht highlighted the Cincinnati water and wastewater fund that is advancing new technologies and optimization for energy and chemical efficiencies. She also noted a similar fund in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Ms. Ocampo commented that many such projects, such as establishing cool corridors and planting more trees within the cities, can create jobs for EJ projects. If the government is willing to provide credits to environmentally focused companies for these efforts, however, then the funding can move from solely the private sector.

Mr. Ojeh reiterated that Phoenix has a Sustainability Bond and is receiving dedicated money to address climate-related issues.

Dr. Nathan redirected the discussion to examples of best practices and other ideas implemented by exemplary cities. Ms. Ocampo asked about examples of best practices for coordinating city payers and

programs to obtain the best results. Members suggested providing EPA the parameters of such practices if no examples can be cited today.

Mr. Carrillo asked Mr. Ojeh to comment on the sister cities initiatives in Phoenix that would be relevant to the charge. Mr. Ojeh explained that at the county level, the [Maricopa Association of Governments](#) meets to discuss climate adaptation issues and practices.

Dr. Wolters provided a link to examples from New Zealand's [Climate Adaptation Platform](#) on pairing cities that the NAC can review.

Dr. Fasnacht identified Vancouver—an exemplary city that has made significant progress in climate change—as a city that the NAC could showcase. Vancouver also could potentially benefit from city pairing.

Regarding funding mechanisms, Ms. Ocampo noted that some waste processing programs based on the Producer Responsibility concept charge a fee for dumping and that this approach has been successful in generating revenue in the cities where implemented. Ms. Ocampo added that recycling facilities that reduce the cost structure in cities for handling waste have received incentives, such as Sims Recycling, which provide services in New York City.

Dr. Nathan moved the discussion to other topics and final comments. He noted that a major problem along the Gulf Coast is that the oil and gas industry practices flaring, and the product of that process is not collected but is waste; flaring adds to air pollution in that region as well. Reusing the flaring waste of those gases should not be an impossible project. Mr. Gray, who is a chemical engineer by training, agreed that this type of project is possible. Ms. Ocampo noted that some cities, including Corpus Christi, Texas, are planning “brown” hydrogen projects to capture the exhaust of refinery plants.

Members recommended that the advice letter highlight infrastructure, energy, water, waste and EJ as topics and list examples for each. EPA can consider approaches to prioritize the exemplary cities to understand whether they are covering all areas addressed in the charge.

Dr. Nathan and Ms. Ocampo requested that members develop and forward their recommendations to be incorporated in the advice letter. They clarified that the NAC is providing advice to EPA but is not mandating any approaches. The NAC meeting was adjourned.

## **Summary and Next Steps**

*Dr. Vincent R. Nathan, Center for Houston's Future, Chair of the NAC*

*Austin Nunez, San Javier District Council and Tohono O'odham Nation, Chair of the GAC*

Mr. Nunez summarized the GAC discussion, noting that the following cities were recommended as exemplary: Austin, El Paso, Houston and Providence. The group discussed categorizing cities by size (to better address their needs and prevent the exclusion of smaller cities and tribal areas) and pairing cities by geographic location. Other examples of knowledge- and resource-sharing networks related to climate adaptation were shared; these networks might be able to provide more information about cities that are implementing innovative climate adaptations.

Dr. Nathan shared a summary of the NAC discussion. NAC members highlighted Houston, New Orleans and Phoenix. The NAC agreed to submit information on criteria for pairing cities rather than focusing on identifying city pairs. The group discussed ideas for potential funding mechanisms and determined several potential city pairs (e.g., Chicago and Houston).

The Chairs, with assistance from the Vice-Chairs, will draft the advice letters and then incorporate feedback from the Committee members via email. Final drafts of the advice letters for EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan are due by January 12, 2024. Mr. Carrillo noted that NAC and GAC members may submit individual letters with additional advice.

## **Adjournment**

Mr. Carrillo thanked the members for attending and for supporting EPA. The meeting was adjourned at 4:42 p.m. EST.

## **Action Items**

- ❖ GAC members will forward their written comments on the charge questions to Mr. Nunez.
- ❖ GAC members who highlighted exemplary cities will prepare a summary of those cities' efforts and reasons for their inclusion in the CEC initiative, which will be emailed to Mr. Nunez and Dr. Weintraub.
- ❖ Mr. Drago will contact the Arizona Office of Resiliency about incorporating its CPRG initiative into the advice letter.
- ❖ Mr. Gray will reach out to the Providence Department of Sustainability and connect it with the CEC initiative.
- ❖ Mr. Nunez will incorporate comments from the GAC members into the draft advice letter on exemplary cities in North America poised for climate adaptation, which will be shared with the GAC members for their comments.
- ❖ NAC members will forward their written comments on the charge questions to Dr. Nathan by December 15, 2023.
- ❖ Mr. Ojeh will provide more details on Phoenix's financing of sustainability projects.
- ❖ Dr. Aldy will provide additional information about a systematic program evaluation and effective ways to reduce the risk of climate change.
- ❖ NAC members will forward their recommendations to Dr. Nathan to be incorporated in the advice letter.
- ❖ Dr. Nathan will share his draft advice letter on exemplary cities in North America poised for climate adaptation with the NAC members for their comments.

**Summary Certification**

*I, Austin Nunez, Chair of the Governmental Advisory Committee, and I, Vincent R. Nathan, Chair of the National Advisory Committee, certify that the meeting minutes for the date of December 7, 2023, as hereby detailed, contain a record of the persons present and give an accurate description of matters discussed and conclusions reached and copies of all reports received, issued or approved by the advisory committees. My signature date complies with the 90-day due date after each meeting required by the GSA Final Rule.*



\_\_\_\_\_  
Austin Nunez  
Chair, GAC

\_\_\_\_\_  
Vincent R. Nathan  
Chair, NAC

1/26/2024  
Date

1/26/2024  
Date

## Appendix A: Meeting Participants

### NAC Members

**Vincent R. Nathan, Ph.D., M.P.H., Chair**

Environmental Health Consultant  
Center for Houston's Future

**Erica Ocampo, Vice-Chair**

Chief Sustainability Officer  
The Metals Company

**Joseph E. Aldy, Ph.D.**

Professor of Practice of Public Policy  
Harvard Kennedy School/Resources for the  
Future

**Cherrelle J. Duncan, M.P.S.A.**

Director of Community Engagement  
LINK Houston

**Angela Maria Fasnacht, Ph.D.**

Visiting Fellow  
Department of Engineering  
Andlinger Center for Energy and the  
Environment  
Princeton University

**James Marston**

Principal  
Marston Sustainability Consulting

**Stephen A. Martin, Jr., Ph.D.**

Executive Director and CEO  
Creating Pathways and Access for Student  
Success Foundation

### GAC Members

**Austin Nunez, Chair**

Chairman  
San Javier District Council  
Tohono O'odham Nation

**June Weintraub, Ph.D., Vice-Chair**

Senior Epidemiologist  
San Francisco Department of Public Health

**Zeek Ojeh**

President  
Zalmar, Inc.

**Javier Ortiz**

Policy Fellow  
Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education

**Marla del Pilar Perez-Lugo, Ph.D.**

Professor of Sociology  
The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

**Antonio A. Rene, Ph.D.**

Professor Emeritus  
Texas A&M University School of Public Health

**Susan Robinson**

Consultant  
Susan K. Robinson Consulting

**Erika Allen Wolters, Ph.D.**

Associate Director  
Oregon State University

**Geri Yang-Johnson**

Senior Fellow  
Climate Equity and Inclusive Green Economy  
Central Valley Community Foundation

**Kendra Abkowitz, Ph.D., M.B.A.**

Chief Sustainability and Resilience Officer  
Office of Mayor Freddie O'Connell  
City of Nashville & Davidson County

**Brad Cole**

Executive Director  
Illinois Municipal League

**Leonard Drago**

Ombudsman/Tribal Liaison  
Arizona Department of Environmental Quality

**Stephen Etsitty**  
Executive Director  
Navajo Nation Environmental Protection  
Agency

**Sonja B. Favors, P.E.**  
Branch Chief  
Industrial Hazardous Waste  
Alabama Department of Environmental  
Management

**Gail E. Good**  
Director of Air Management  
Environmental Management Division  
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

**Terry Gray, P.E.**  
Director  
Rhode Island Department of Environmental  
Development

**Robert “Bobby” Janecka**  
Commissioner  
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

**Debra L. Kring**  
Council Member  
City of Mission (Kansas)

**Julia S. Moore, M.S., P.E.**  
Secretary  
Vermont Agency of Natural Resources

**Erich A. Morales**  
Assistant County Attorney/Division Chief  
El Paso County Attorney’s Office

**Gerald Wagner**  
Director  
Blackfeet Environmental Program  
Blackfeet Nation

## **Designated Federal Officer**

**Oscar Carrillo**  
Federal Advisory Committee Management and Oversight Division  
Office of Inclusive Excellence  
Office of Mission Support  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

## **EPA Participants**

**Nadtya Hong**  
General Standing Committee Representative  
International Environmental Program Specialist  
Office of International and Tribal Affairs  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

**Mark Kasman**  
Director  
Office of International Affairs  
Office of International and Tribal Affairs  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

**James McCleary**  
Federal Advisory Committee Management and  
Oversight Division  
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Office of Mission Support  
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**Gina Moore**  
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**Nolan Pinkney**  
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**Christine Taylor**

Federal Advisory Committee Management and  
Oversight Division  
Office of Inclusive Excellence  
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U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

**Other Participants****Liesette Brunson, Ph.D.**

Professor of Community Psychology  
Université du Québec à Montréal

**Kate Johnson**

Head of U.S. Federal Affairs  
C40 Cities

**David Miller**

Former Mayor of Toronto  
Managing Director  
C40 Centre for City Climate Policy and  
Economy

**Edward Moderow**

Director of Border Affairs  
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

**Marcela Orozco**

Head of Advisory Groups and Private Sector  
Engagement  
Commission for Environmental Cooperation

**Contractor Staff****Carolyn J. Fisher, Ph.D.**

The Scientific Consulting Group, Inc.

**Jorge Daniel Taillant**

Executive Director  
Commission for Environmental Cooperation  
Secretariat

**Octaviana Trujillo, Ph.D.**

Chair  
Joint Public Advisory Committee  
Commission for Environmental Cooperation

**Armando Yanez Sandoval**

Head of Green Growth Unit  
Commission for Environmental Cooperation  
Secretariat

**Tamara Korolnek, Ph.D.**

The Scientific Consulting Group, Inc.

## Appendix B: Meeting Agenda



### Official Meeting of the National and Governmental Advisory Committees to the U.S. Representative to the Commission for Environmental Cooperation **AGENDA**

**Thursday, December 7, 2023**

**12:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. EST (11:30 a.m. CST, 10:30 a.m. MST, 9:30 a.m. PST)**

**William Jefferson Clinton East  
Great Lakes Conference Room  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20004<sup>1</sup>  
and Via Zoom Virtual Platform**

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- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| 12:30 p.m. | <b>Call to Order and Introductions</b><br>Oscar Carrillo, Designated Federal Officer, EPA  |
| 12:35 p.m. | <b>Opening Remarks</b><br>Robbie Young-Mackall, Director, Federal Advisory Committee Management and Oversight Division, EPA  |
| 12:40 p.m. | <b>Welcome and Overview of Agenda</b><br>Dr. Vincent R. Nathan, Chair, National Advisory Committee<br>Austin Nunez, Chair, Governmental Advisory Committee                   |
| 12:50 p.m. | <b>Update on U.S. Priorities for Council Session and Guidance</b><br>Mark Kasman, Director, Office of International Affairs, Office of International and Tribal Affairs, EPA |
| 1:05 p.m.  | Question & Answer Period   |
| 1:20 p.m.  | <b>CEC Updates</b><br>Jorge Daniel Taillant, Executive Director, CEC   |
| 1:35 p.m.  | Question & Answer Period   |
| 1:50 a.m.  | <b>JPAC Report Out</b><br>Octaviana Trujillo, Ph.D., Chair, JPAC   |
| 2:05 p.m.  | Question & Answer Period   |

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<sup>1</sup> Note: The planned in-person event was not held; the meeting was held only virtually.

- 2:15 p.m.      **Innovative Solutions in Climate Champion Cities in U.S. and North America**  
Kate Johnson, Head of U.S. Federal Affairs, C40 Cities  
David Miller, Former Mayor of Toronto, Managing Director, C40 Centre for City  
Climate Policy and Economy
- 2:35 p.m.      Question & Answer Period
- 2:45 p.m.      **Break**
- 3:00 p.m.      **Public Comment Period**
- 3:30 p.m.      **Hot Topics and Joint Open Discussion on Presentations**  
Dr. Vincent R. Nathan, Chair, National Advisory Committee  
Austin Nunez, Chair, Governmental Advisory Committee
- 3:45 p.m.      **Committees Meet Separately to Discuss Charge Questions**  
Dr. Vincent R. Nathan, Chair, National Advisory Committee  
Austin Nunez, Chair, Governmental Advisory Committee
- Question 1:** Identify exemplary cities in North America that serve as examples of successful climate governance that advances urban climate adaptation, employment of nature-based solutions that increases community resilience, or environmental justice solutions and community engagement processes.
- Question 2:** Identify cities ready (or able) to develop climate adaptation plans and that would benefit from guidance by cities that have implemented advanced climate adaptation initiatives.
- Question 3:** Provide examples of good practices for coordinating city pairs programs to obtain the best results.
- Question 4:** Provide examples of funding mechanisms that cities can access to support climate adaptation actions.
- 4:30 p.m.      **Summary and Next Steps**  
Dr. Vincent R. Nathan, Chair, National Advisory Committee  
Austin Nunez, Chair, Governmental Advisory Committee
- 4:35 p.m.      **Adjourn**

## Appendix C: Charge Questions for the NAC/GAC December 7, 2023, Meeting

11/17/2023

Dear NAC/GAC Members,

Below are the charge questions for your meeting on December 7, 2023. We also have included a short update on new CEC developments since our last meeting on May 18, 2023, with the purpose of providing context for the charge questions.

### I. NAC/GAC BACKGROUND AND CHARGE QUESTIONS

The U.S. seeks advice from the NAC/GAC on:

1. Identifying exemplary cities in North America that serve as examples of successful:
  - climate governance that advances urban climate adaptation
  - employment of nature-based solutions that increases community resilience
  - environmental justice solutions and community engagement processes
2. Identifying Cities ready (or able) to develop climate adaptation plans and that would benefit from guidance by cities that have implemented advanced climate adaptation initiatives.
3. Providing examples of good practices for coordinating city pairs programs to obtain the best results.
4. Providing examples of funding mechanisms that cities can access to support climate adaptation actions.

#### **Links to Climate Action Networks:**

<https://www.c40.org/about-c40/>

[https://iclei.org/about\\_iclei\\_2/](https://iclei.org/about_iclei_2/)

### II. UPDATE ON CEC DEVELOPMENTS:

At the June 2023 Council Session in British Columbia, the Council addressed many of the most pressing environmental challenges facing North American communities, particularly vulnerable communities and Indigenous Peoples that are oftentimes disproportionately burdened with environmental impacts.

The 2022 Council Session, with a theme of “Community-led Environmental Education for Sustainable Development,” focused on activities from across North America that support an understanding and awareness of key environmental concerns, from the perspective of communities directly impacted and working to develop and share best practices for adapting to a changing climate.

This year’s CEC Council Session builds on the January 2023 North American Leaders’ Summit, in which Prime Minister Trudeau, President López Obrador and President Biden recognized the critical nature of taking rapid and coordinated measures to tackle the climate crisis and respond to its consequences.

At the 2023 Council Session, the CEC announced several initiatives and one relevant to our charge is the announcement of:

- *C\$500,000 to launch a **cities initiative** focused on sharing approaches and best practices to adaptation planning and implementation, as well as visiting concrete, on-the-ground projects that respond to the needs of urban citizens.*

Other announcements included:

- Announced C\$500,000 to launch a new Council-led initiative, “Reaching Horizon 2030: An Environmental Outlook for North American Cooperation,” that will detail how to prepare for the emerging environmental and climate challenges North America is expected to face from the present until 2030 and beyond.
- Announced US\$2 million for the third cycle of the EJ4Climate grant program that will focus on projects to build resilience to climate change. The EJ4Climate grant program assists underserved and vulnerable communities and Indigenous communities in Canada, Mexico and the United States in preparing for climate-related impacts.
- Contributed C\$1,750,000 to fund a new cycle of the North American Partnership for Environmental Community Action (NAPECA) grant program to engage and empower Indigenous communities in climate adaptation. Since 2011, NAPECA has been supporting the delivery of projects led by non-profit and non-governmental organizations that build partnerships and drive action at the local level.
- Endorsed two new projects focusing on shared environmental priority areas, with Fast Mitigation Strategies for Short-Lived Climate Pollutants, with a particular focus on addressing methane, and Food Loss and Waste.