Message

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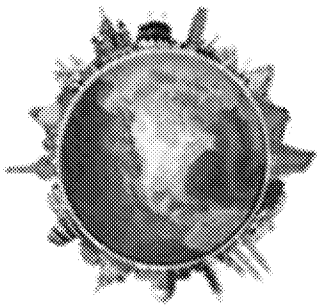
**Sent:** 7/13/2017 7:20:48 PM
**To:** OITA-EVERYONE [OITAEVERYONE@epa.gov]
**Subject:** ORBA WEEKLY REPORT: July 12 - July 19, 2017



# ORBA WEEKLY REPORT: July 12 – July 19, 2017

## ISSUES OF NOTE

### COMMISSION FOR ENVIROMENTAL COOPERATION (CEC) – IMPLEMENTATION OF OPERATIONAL PLAN 2017-18:

- The CEC Council held its annual meeting on 27-28 June in Prince Edward Island, Canada. The Council approved the 2017-18 Operational Plan and other initiatives. Acting Assistant Administrator Jane Nishida represented the U.S. at the Council Session.
- The U.S. assumed the chairmanship of the Council for 2017-2018 and announced that next year's CEC Council meeting will be held in Oklahoma City.
- The U.S. held meetings this week with representatives of Canada and Mexico and the CEC Secretariat program managers to identify action items for the Secretariat and Parties' experts to initiate implementation of the ten trilateral cooperative projects in the operational plan.
- In addition, EPA hosted an interagency meeting with project team members to advise them of their role and action items to work with the Secretariat, Mexican and Canadian counterparts to implement the projects as designed. U.S. agencies collaborating with EPA on the CEC include: National Atmospheric and Oceanic Administration, Fish and Wildlife, Department of State, Centers for Decease Control, U.S. Trade Representative, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. [Troche]

### OITA ACTING ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR'S MISSION TO TAIWAN AND JAPAN:

- Acting Assistant Administrator Jane Nishida traveled to Taiwan and Japan to advance cooperation on air quality protection, circular economy, mercury monitoring, environmental education and other areas.
- In Taiwan, AAA Nishida met with Taiwan Vice President Chen Chien-jen, EPA Taiwan (EPAT) Minister Lee Ying-yuan, American Institute in Taiwan Director Kin Moy, key legislators, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs among other counterparts.
- AAA Nishida reaffirmed EPA's commitment to Taiwan's International Environmental Partnership program and core areas of cooperation under the bilateral agreement such as sustainable materials management, environmental education, air quality protection, and enforcement. She also noted that US EPA welcomes the planned visit of Minister Lee to the United States.

- Vice President Chen and Minister Lee expressed support for a new proposed Global Environmental Institute which will help EPAT institutionalize the IEP program, increase visibility, develop regional strategy, and help expand global participation in the coming years.
- The American Chamber of Commerce conveyed support for cooperation under IEP during a roundtable meeting with companies including Dell and Dupont.
- In Tokyo, AAA Nishida met with counterparts at Ministry of Environment Japan to follow-up on the bilateral meeting between Administrator Pruitt and MOEJ Minister Koichi Yamamoto at the G7 ministerial last month. These meetings helped advance areas of cooperation under the US-Japan Joint Statement such as air quality protection, mercury monitoring, and environmental education. [Guen-Murray, Novikoff, Harris]

**U.S.-JAPAN ECO-CAMPUS PILOT PARTNERSHIP LAUNCHED IN TAIWAN:**

- EPA partners—the Environmental Protection Administration of Taiwan and the National Wildlife Federation—delivered a teacher training workshop in Taiwan on July 6-7, 2017. OITA Acting Assistant Administrator Jane Nishida delivered opening remarks and participated in portions of the workshop programming.
- EPA facilitated the participation and connection at the workshop of high school teachers from Missoula, Montana, and Minamata, Japan at the workshop. Their schools will engage in a pilot eco-campus partnership in the 2017-18 school year, engaging in collaborative educational experiences and opportunities with their partner school.
- The connection of the American and Japanese school is a step towards expanding eco-campus partnerships to EPA's bilateral cooperation programs with Japan and globally. [Novikoff, Harris, Guen-Murray]

**MEETING WITH TRIBES NEAR U.S.-CANADA BORDER ON TRANSBOUNDARY WATER ISSUES:**

- OITA hosted an interagency meeting with two tribes located near the border with Canada concerning water quality impacts from mining development in British Columbia.
- The Kootenai Tribe of Idaho (KTOI) and the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) of Montana requested the meeting in follow-up to two letters sent by the transboundary Ktunaxa Nation to the U.S. and Canadian federal governments and to the State of Montana and Province of British Columbia.
- In addition to the two tribes, participation included representatives from EPA Regions 8 and 10, OW, OGC, both OITA's international and tribal sides, and the Department of State.
- The tribes described the decades-long transboundary mining waste issue and the recently-discovered impacts beyond the transboundary Lake Koocanusa which are also affecting drinking water sources for tribes on both sides of the US-Canada border.
- The discussion which followed included a number of suggestions by the various offices represented, including next steps that could be taken domestically as well as with Canadian counterparts.

The issue is expected to be raised at the next U.S.-Canada bilateral meeting in October. [Teel]

**CHINA'S NDRC VISITS EPA TO LEARN ABOUT ENERGY EFFICIENCY:**

- On July 10, China's National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) visited the EPA to learn about energy efficiency policies and programs.
- During the meeting, OAR experts presented on two of EPA's voluntary programs – Energy Star and Combined Heat and Power Partnership.

- The delegation was interested in the roles and involvement of various stakeholders in the programs, especially in the certification, verification and compliance components of the Energy Star program.
- The meeting was part of a larger study-tour hosted by the Department of Energy to visit various U.S. agencies, NGOs, and companies to discuss best practices in the energy sector. [Doroski, Chen]

**EPA DELIVERS WATER LAW WORKSHOP IN VIETNAM:**

- On July 11-13, EPA partnered with Vietnam Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MONRE) to deliver a 2.5 day workshop on water law.
- The purpose of the workshop, which included about 35 government official participants, was to help MONRE staff develop recommended changes to Vietnam's Laws on the Environment to propose to the Minister later this year, and ultimately to the Vietnam general assembly next year. These changes are intended to help address concerns over major fish kills in Vietnam last year that were likely caused by toxic pollutant discharges by a steel plant.
- EPA joined other international experts from Japan, South Korea, Australia, and the U.S. in providing technical inputs to the process and sharing international experience with water resource management.

This workshop helps implement EPA's interagency agreement with State Department to support strong environmental governance policies and procedures in Vietnam in support of the increasing trade relationship. [Kasat]

**REC BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING:**

- EPA represented the United States at the July 6-7 Board of Directors Meeting for the Regional Environmental Center (REC) for Central and Eastern Europe.
- The Board reviewed status to date and approved future plans outlined by new Executive Director Mihail Dimovski to strengthen organizational structures, enhance financial stability and sustainability, and implement a targeted business development strategy.
- The Board also was briefed on proposals from the Hungarian Government to provide new office space for the REC in downtown Budapest that would increase the organizations' visibility and accessibility while reducing costs.
- The next Board of Directors meeting will be held on November 30th and will be followed by the annual REC General Assembly Meeting on December 1, 2017. [Phillips]

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