



OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

February 20, 2024

Vincent Nathan
Chair, U.S. National Advisory Committee
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Dear Mr. Nathan:

On behalf of the U.S. Council member to the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC), Administrator Michael S. Regan, thank you for the National Advisory Committee's (NAC) January 10, 2024, advice letter resulting from the December 7th NAC meeting. We appreciate the NAC's commitment to undertaking your charge and providing us with your comprehensive advice on exemplary cities in North America with strong climate governance, nature-based solutions, environmental justice engagement and promotion of Indigenous engagement and leadership.

I am pleased to offer the following responses to the NAC's recommendations on the four (4) charge questions:

- (1) a. *Identifying exemplary cities in North America that serve as examples of successful climate governance that advances urban climate adaptation.*

Thank you for your detailed and comprehensive advice regarding cities with successful climate governance advancing urban climate adaptation, including highlights of the UN report on climate adaptation and its importance to the world's environment to provide context. We are pleased to see the range of issues addressed by these states and cities in the southwest of the United States and the importance given to community engagement as they develop their strategies.

We have taken note of the states and cities you have highlighted and, as next steps, we will share the list with the steering committee developing an initiative on cities for them to consider these recommendations as they design the city pairs based on the specific needs and challenges faced by the three countries. Thanks to your advice, the steering committee will consider pairing cities implementing effective practices, strategies, and tools to address climate-related challenges and extreme events.

- b. *Identifying exemplary cities in North America that serve as examples of successful employment of nature-based solutions that increases community resilience.*

Thank you for sharing in detail New York City's example as one undertaking nature-based solutions successfully and through a broad lens, specifically with various actions to adapt the Region's infrastructure system, as well as adopting policies in support of such adaptation. Thank you for also identifying additional cities, including one in Canada, with successful programs that can be considered in further developing this initiative. We will also share this information with the steering committee for further consideration.

- c. Identifying exemplary cities in North America that serve as examples of successful environmental justice solutions and community engagement processes.*

Thank you for identifying Detroit and Chicago as cities that have initiatives successfully addressing environmental justice by working with communities. We will forward this information to the steering committee for their consideration as they develop the cities' initiative.

- (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.*

Thank you for sharing a thorough list of U.S. cities that may benefit from those that are more advanced in implementing climate adaptation initiatives, particularly some with clear potential partners, as well as the specific topics that could be addressed through a partnership. We also appreciate the examples of successful city pairs and the focus of their collaboration, as well as those who may be ready to develop climate adaptation plans. We will similarly share these examples with the steering committee for their consideration.

- (3) Identifying examples of good practices for coordinating city pairs programs.*


We appreciate your advice regarding good practices that should be undertaken in coordinating city pairs programs, such as establishing clear objectives and engagement of stakeholders and communities. We agree that these practices will be essential to the strength and sustainability of a city pairs program and will share your recommendations with the steering committee for their consideration in the project's design.

- (4) Provide examples of funding mechanisms that cities can access to support.*

We also appreciate the detailed list of potential funding mechanisms that cities can access to support climate adaptation work, such as public-private partnerships, climate funds and special financing mechanisms, and crowdfunding and community initiatives. Furthermore, thank you for sharing specific U.S. programs with associated funding that the steering committee can explore to further develop this initiative.

Thank you again for your thoughtful and thorough advice on the CEC's city pairing initiative. We appreciate the NAC's knowledge and understanding on these topics and look forward to continued cooperation for the benefit of the North American environment.

Sincerely,



Jane Nishida
Assistant Administrator