

## **2014-2017 United States - Colombia Work Program for Environmental Cooperation**

### **Introduction**

The Environmental Cooperation Commission (ECC), established pursuant to Article III of the Environmental Cooperation Agreement (ECA) between the Governments of the United States and Colombia (hereinafter the Governments), hereby defines a Work Program through 2017 that establishes specific goals and objectives and areas for cooperation that reflect national priorities for each Government.

### **Background**

On April 19, 2013, the Governments of the United States and Colombia signed the ECA. In so doing, they recognized that cooperation is the principal means for ensuring that trade and environmental policies are mutually supportive and promote the optimal use of resources in accordance with the objective of sustainable development.

The objective of the ECA is to establish a framework for strengthening bilateral and/or regional environmental cooperation between the Governments aimed at enhancing environmental protection and the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources, including through the development and improvement of environmental practices and technologies.

The ECA establishes an Environmental Cooperation Commission (ECC) and obligates the ECC to define a Work Program, establishing specific goals, objectives and areas for cooperation in a way that reflects national priorities of each Government.

### **Work Plan Goals**

The ECC recognizes that through implementation of this Work Program it is striving to achieve the following long-term goals:

- Compliance with obligations in the Environment Chapter of the United States Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement (TPA);

- Protection and conservation of the environment and natural resources;
- Environmental education, transparency and public participation in environmental decision-making;
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation;
- A culture of environmental protection and compliance with environmental laws through, among other things, the promotion of economic opportunities, voluntary measures to enhance environmental performance, and job creation.

### **Priority Areas for Cooperation**

This Work Program focuses on the following priority areas, with the following corresponding general objectives.

#### **A. Strengthening effective implementation and enforcement of environmental laws and regulations.**

*Objectives:* To work with national, regional and local governments to: (1) strengthen the ability to effectively enforce environmental laws; (2) exchange best practices on enforcement of environmental laws; (3) strive to improve the implementation of environmental laws, regulations and other measures, including obligations under multilateral environmental agreements; (4) exchange information and experiences on legal, policy, regulatory, enforcement and compliance regimes for, and approaches to, environmental protection and natural resource management, including through market-based mechanisms. (See ECA Art.IV.2. a, d, f).

Potential Activities:

1. Support regulatory entities in the development of, enforcement and compliance with environmental laws (inspection, investigations, prosecutions, and permitting); and facilitate information exchanges and sharing of best practices regarding adjudication of environmental laws and regulations.
2. Exchange information and best practices on implementation of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Flora and Fauna and other multilateral environmental agreements.
3. Enhance collaboration on cooperative activities to promote best practices for conservation of living marine resources and particularly to address illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing.

4. Exchange information and best practices on environmental management and environmental permitting, including between the ANLA and EPA and DOI.

**B. Promoting sustainable and inclusive management and conservation of environmental resources, including biodiversity and other ecosystem services, protected wild areas, and other ecologically important ecosystems.**

*Objectives:* To work with national, regional, and local governments, and seek opportunities for multilateral cooperation to (1) promote and encourage the conservation and sustainable use<sup>1</sup> of biological diversity and all of its components; (2) promote the sustainable use and management of natural resources; and (3) promote effective management of terrestrial and marine protected areas and other ecologically important ecosystems, including by reaping the benefits of traditional knowledge and realizing economic benefits of conservation. (See ECA Art. IV.2. b, c, j).

*Potential Activities:*

1. Share experiences in working with Indigenous and local communities to improve park and protected area management, and biodiversity and habitat conservation while managing economic benefits from related natural resources; in particular, support efforts to conserve tropical dry forests, marine and coastal ecosystems, páramos, and the Colombian Amazon.
2. Promote forest conservation programs to reduce emissions from degradation and deforestation, protect migratory bird and wildlife habitat, and deter illegal logging, including through the use of economic incentives.
3. Exchange best practices and law enforcement strategies, and implement activities, to reduce environmental degradation and chemical contamination including mercury pollution from artisanal small scale mining activities.
4. Promote the consolidation of the National System of Protected Areas and the Strategic Ecosystems of Colombia.
5. Exchange information and share experiences relevant to domestic approaches to biodiversity offsets .

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<sup>1</sup> For purposes of this Work Program, sustainable use means non-consumptive or consumptive use in a sustainable manner.

**C. Encouraging low emissions development, building resilience to climate change, and encouraging the adoption of sound environmental practices and technologies.**

*Objectives:* To support the Government of Colombia in the implementation of the National Low Carbon Development Strategy, encourage investment in clean and efficient energy as well as energy access for remote areas, partner to reduce deforestation and strengthen climate resilience, and work with private enterprises to develop and adopt low emissions technologies, in a manner consistent with protecting the environment and maintaining international competitiveness (See ECA Art. IV.2. e, g, k).

Potential Activities:

1. Support the implementation of the Colombian Low Carbon Development Strategy.
2. Exchange best practices on mitigation of short-lived climate pollutants, including black carbon and methane from agriculture, landfills and wastewater treatment.
3. Facilitate relationships, exchange information, and explore public-private partnerships opportunities between Colombia and U.S. private sector and industry associations to strengthen industries' development and adoption of environmentally-friendly and economically efficient practices.
4. Exchange information on technical and administrative guidelines for green public procurement.

**D. Promoting environmental education, transparency and public participation in environmental decision-making and enforcement.**

*Objectives:* To share experiences on (1) involving the public in decision-making regarding environmental matters; (2) enhancing openness and transparency in regulatory and program implementation; and (3) implementing environmental education strategies and programs (See ECA Art. IV.2. h, i; and Art. VI)

Potential Activities:

1. Exchange best practices in promoting inclusive public participation in environmental decision-making and enforcement.
2. Facilitate information exchanges on strategies to promote access to information and transparency in regulation and program implementation.
3. Support environmental education activities to promote community involvement in environmental services and biodiversity conservation.

### **Resources**

The objectives and activities set forth in this plan may be updated and modified by future consultations between the Governments, and the implementation of activities is contingent upon the availability of funding and other resources.

### **Benchmarks, Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Governments recognize that a variety of government agencies and civil society groups could be involved in implementing the programs and projects under this Work Program, and that the agency or group that leads implementation for a particular program or project will strive to be responsible for public participation, information disclosure, and performance tracking related to that program or project.

As the Governments more narrowly define cooperative programs, projects, and activities under this Work Program, the Governments intend to identify performance indicators and benchmarks to measure appropriately the progress made in accomplishing or otherwise furthering the goals and objectives of such programs, projects and activities and intend further to facilitate public reporting of that progress. To the degree that the Governments use independent sources of monitoring data and evaluation to assess progress, they intend to collaborate with those other sources in identifying suitable performance indicators and benchmarks.

The Governments intend to consider input from relevant local, regional and international organizations regarding cooperation under this Work Program. The Governments also plan to encourage public participation in setting goals and implementing environmental collaboration, and plan to make information on activities carried out under this Work Program available to the public.

**FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:**



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**FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE  
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