



COMPENDIUM OF CANADA'S ENGAGEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS AND INSTRUMENTS

Environment and Climate Change Canada – US Environmental Protection Agency Joint Statement of Cooperation on the Georgia Basin and Puget Sound Ecosystem

SUBJECT CATEGORY:
Biodiversity & Ecosystems

TYPE OF AGREEMENT / INSTRUMENT:
Canada - US

FORM:
Cooperative Arrangement

STATUS:
Signed January 19, 2000

LEAD & PARTNER DEPARTMENTS:
Lead: Environment and Climate Change Canada

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

Web Links:

- [Environment and Climate Change Canada's Transboundary Partnerships](#) website
- [US EPA Puget Sound Partnership](#) website
- [Health of the Salish Sea Ecosystem Report/Salish Sea Transboundary Ecosystem Indicators](#).
- [2020 Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference](#)
- [Coast Salish Gathering Initiative](#)

Contacts:
[ECCC Inquiry Centre](#)

COMPENDIUM EDITION:
January 2020

PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY

Canada and the U.S. are working together to address environmental challenges in the Salish Sea ecosystem. The two agencies identified in the Agreement, Environment and Climate Change Canada and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, share scientific information and track changes in order to understand the current state of health of the Salish Sea ecosystem.

OBJECTIVE

In 2000, the Joint Statement of Cooperation (SoC) on the Salish Sea (Georgia Basin and Puget Sound Ecosystem) was signed by the Minister of Environment in Canada and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency in the United States. The SoC is a uniquely written non-legally binding bilateral agreement that outlines common goals and objectives and provides context for federal agency collaboration on transboundary ecosystem management of the Salish Sea.

KEY ELEMENTS

The Salish Sea ecosystem, which includes the Georgia Strait, the Strait of Juan de Fuca, and Puget Sound in Washington State, is of significant importance in North America as one of the richest in biodiversity. However, this ecosystem is also one where common airsheds, watersheds, marine estuaries, and common flyways for migratory birds face serious and mounting pressures from rapid population and urban growth, intense agriculture and resource development. In acknowledging the uniqueness of the Salish Sea ecosystem, the SoC serves to:

- publicly confirm the commitment and leadership of the Canadian and American governments;
- recognize the special interests of First Nations and Tribes;
- establish a formal Canada-US mechanism at the regional level to act on sustainability challenges and promote multi-jurisdictional collaboration on transboundary issues.

It also commits Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) and the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to develop action plans and to routinely report to the public on progress.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Canada-US collaboration in addressing the transboundary environmental challenges confronting the ecosystem health in the Salish Sea, with a focus on knowledge and information sharing as well as transboundary demonstration projects that contribute to improved air quality, water quality, habitat and species health. Action plans are generated, updated, and monitored to identify policy activities in focus areas.

CANADA'S INVOLVEMENT

- Co-signatory (ECCC) with US EPA (Region 10)
- Co-chair with US EPA meetings of the SoC Working Group
- Co-develop and implement Action Plans
- Co-lead demonstration projects with US EPA
- Support bi-annual Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference with US EPA

RESULTS / PROGRESS

Activities

- Convene special sessions on transboundary topics of interest.
- Provide advisory support to the Salish Sea Ecosystem Conferences.
- Pursue key joint initiatives such as the Transboundary Ecosystem Indicators Report and other transboundary demonstration projects.
- Jointly agree to draft action plans and reports on progress, and communicate these efforts to the public and key stakeholder groups.

Reports

ECCC and the US EPA jointly agree to draft actions plans and reports on progress and communicate these efforts to the public and key stakeholder groups.

- [US EPA Puget Sound Partnership website](#)

Results

- [Health of the Salish Sea Ecosystem Report/Salish Sea Transboundary Ecosystem Indicators](#).
- 2020 Salish Sea [Ecosystem](#) Conference