



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 on January 19, 2000

LEAD & PARTNER DEPARTMENTS:

Lead: Environment and Climate Change Canada

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

Web Links:

- [Canada – U.S. Cooperation in the Salish Sea: 2021-2024 Action Plan](#) ECCC website
- [Health of the Salish Sea Ecosystem Report](#) ECCC Website
- [US-Canada Cooperation in the Salish Sea](#) US EPA website
- [Health of the Salish Sea Ecosystem Report/Salish Sea Transboundary Ecosystem Indicators](#) US EPA Website
- [Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference](#)
- [Coast Salish Gathering Initiative](#)

Contacts:

[ECCC Inquiry Centre](#)

COMPENDIUM EDITION:

July 2022

PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY

Canada and the United States (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 science and information and track changes in order to understand the current state of health of the transboundary 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 migratory bird flyways 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.

The SoC also commits Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) and the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to develop action plans and to monitor 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 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
- Support bi-annual Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference with US EPA

RESULTS / PROGRESS

Activities

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

Reports and Results

- [Canada – U.S. Cooperation in the Salish Sea: 2021-2024 Action Plan](#)
- [Health of the Salish Sea Ecosystem Report](#)
- [US-Canada Cooperation in the Salish Sea](#) US EPA website
- [Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference](#)