

**LETTER OF INTENT IN THE SUBJECT MATTER OF
CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION OF THE INSULAR
ECOSYSTEMS OF THE MEXICAN UNITED STATES,
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, AND CANADA**



BACKGROUND

Islands are known for their exceptionally high levels of biodiversity with an estimated 20 percent of all bird, reptile, and plant species occurring on less than 5 percent of the earth's land area. Islands continue to face an alarming loss of biodiversity with 80 percent of known species extinctions having occurred on islands and more than 40 percent of vertebrates currently threatened with extinction being island species. Significant threats to island biodiversity include invasive species, habitat loss, human disturbance, marine pollution, and unsustainable uses.

Recognizing the value and importance of the island ecosystems, successful collaborative efforts between the Mexican United States, the United States of America, and Canada are underway to conserve and restore island ecosystems from North America. Forums for trilateral collaboration in the subject matter include the North American Intergovernmental Committee on Cooperation for Wilderness and Protected Area Conservation, the North American Bird Conservation Initiative, the Baja California to Bering Sea Region - Marine Priority Conservation Areas Initiative and the Trilateral Committee for Wildlife and Ecosystem Conservation and Management. These forums promote and enhance coordinated efforts to conserve shared resources and protect biodiversity at international, national, regional, and local levels. Building upon long-term partnerships and the current successful trajectory in the conservation and restoration of island ecosystems, this Letter of Intent seeks to strengthen collaboration between the three countries in the subject matter.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Letter of Intent is to document that the Secretaría de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales from the Mexican United States (SEMARNAT), with the expected participation of the Dirección General de Vida Silvestre (DGVS) from SEMARNAT, the Instituto Nacional de Ecología y Cambio Climático (INECC), the Comisión Nacional para el Conocimiento y Uso de la Biodiversidad (CONABIO) and the Comisión Nacional de Áreas Naturales Protegidas (CONANP); the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the National Park Service (NPS), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) from the United States of America; and the Parks Canada Agency (PCA) from Canada, hereinafter “the Agencies”, have the intention to collaborate on the conservation and restoration of the island ecosystems, and their adjacent coastal and marine environments of Canada, the United States of America, and the Mexican United States, relative to islands located in the Pacific, Atlantic, and Arctic Oceans, Gulf of California, Gulf of Mexico, and Caribbean Sea.

FORMS OF COOPERATION

Desiring to promote collaboration in the conservation and restoration of insular ecosystems, the Agencies have reached the following understanding:

1. To cooperate in bilateral and trilateral activities, and when appropriate, in regional activities to promote environmentally sustainable policies and practices and effective methods in support of the conservation and restoration of insular ecosystems.

The areas of cooperation may include:

- a. Strengthening institutional capacities in the subject matter of this instrument;
- b. Exchanging information on environmental best practices;
- c. Technological cooperation, including research and development, and the transfer of new technologies on mutually agreed terms;
- d. Mechanisms of promotion to improve the protection of the environment and natural resources, such as: incentives for conserving, restoring, or enhancing the environment; public/private partnerships; and endangered species conservation;
- e. Improving natural resource management;
- f. Environmental education and outreach; and
- g. Fundraising for conservation and restoration projects of insular ecosystems.

2. In the development of specific cooperative activities, the Agencies may invite other government agencies, educational and research institutions, as well as any other stakeholders considered relevant and pertinent for the development of the referenced activities, and non-government organizations with experience in restoration of island ecosystems, including but not limited to, Island Conservation (IC), Coastal Conservation, and Grupo de Ecología y Conservación de Islas (GECI).

3. The Agencies intend to jointly develop a Plan of Action that will contemplate specific cooperative projects, under the following assumptions:

- a. That the Plan of Action elaborated under this Letter of Intent should be evaluated, updated and revised every five years, as appropriate;
- b. That each Agency names a Principal Coordinator to serve as a point of contact for activities of cooperation;
- c. That in preparing the Plan of Action, the following forms of cooperation are considered:
 - i. Exchange of professionals, technicians, and specialists, including study visits, to promote the development of environmental policies and standards;
 - ii. Organization of joint conferences, seminars, workshops, meetings, training sessions and outreach and education programs;
 - iii. Joint research and monitoring projects, studies and reports;
 - iv. Facilitation of linkages among representatives from academia, industry, local communities, and government to promote the exchange of best practices and environmental information and data likely to be of interest to the Agencies and stakeholders;
 - v. Sharing of information on national environmental programs; subject to applicable laws and regulations;
 - vi. Identifying projects and priorities of common concern in regard to islands, island regions and island species-particularly marine birds; and
 - vii. Other activities of environmental cooperation as the Agencies may deem appropriate.

4. All activities of cooperation are subject to the availability of funds and to the applicable laws and regulations of the respective governments, in the understanding that:

- a. Each Agency is expected to provide for its own expenses.
- b. This Letter of Intent is not legally binding and does not obligate funding nor allocation of assets from any of the governments or the Agencies.

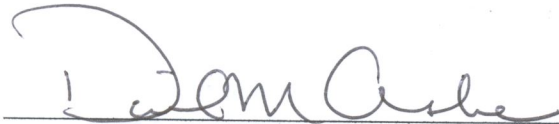
5. The Agencies have the intention that all non-proprietary technical information obtained through their collaboration be available to the public to the extent permissible under their respective laws and regulations.

6. Cooperation under this Letter of Intent may commence upon signatures by representatives of the Agencies and may continue indefinitely. Any Agency may discontinue its cooperation at any time by notification in writing to the other agencies.

7. The Letter of Intent may be modified by joint determination of the Agencies in writing.

Signed in Santiago de Querétaro, Querétaro, México, the 28 day of the month of May of the year two thousand fourteen, in triplicate, in the Spanish and English languages.

FOR THE FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



/s/ DAN ASHE
DIRECTOR U.S. FISH AND
WILDLIFE SERVICE

FOR PARKS CANADA AGENCY
OF CANADA



/s/ GILLES SEUTIN
CHIEF ECOSYSTEM SCIENTIST

FOR THE SECRETARIAT OF ENVIRONMENT
AND NATURAL RESOURCES OF THE
MEXICAN UNITED STATES



/s/ JORGE MAKSABEDIAN DE LA ROQUETTE
DIRECTOR GENERAL OF WILDLIFE