



ECOSYSTEM CONSERVATION WORKING TABLE – ACTION ITEM REPORT
XXIV Trilateral Committee Meeting
Victoria, Canada
April 8-11, 2019

The Working Table will conduct its working session on April 8-11, 2019. The following Action Items were agreed upon at the meeting in 2018 and address the current priorities of the Trilateral Committee.

<i>Trilateral Priorities:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Climate Change with a Focus on Adaptation ○ Landscape and Seascape Conservation Including Connectivity and Area Based Conservation Partnerships 			
Action	Responsible Party	Due	Date Completed
Action Item 1 – Trilateral Grasslands Conservation Initiative	EWCT and Migratory Birds Working Table	Initial Proposal: Due October 2018 Program of work: April 2019	Ongoing; circumstances regarding action items changed (see Results).
Goals: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish an initiative that serves as a forum for coordination and public engagement around grasslands conservation in North America, building upon existing work and analyses such as the grassland conservation products of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC). 2. Explore the option of reconvening the North American Grasslands Alliance (NAGA). 3. Have an initial focus on communications, branding, and outreach. 4. In doing so, work with states, provinces, industry, NGOs, academia, and other interested organizations and stakeholders. 5. Organize an exploratory conference call in May 2018 (ECWT Facilitator). 			
Requested Action or Support from ET (if any): Recognizing the urgency for action on grassland conservation in North America, the Executive Table should issue a charge to the Working Tables of the Trilateral Committee to establish an initiative to enhance coordination and garner support for grassland conservation across the continent.			
Results: The Executive Table acknowledged the importance of grasslands conservation to the three countries while no specific actions were recommended at the executive level. Domestic grasslands conservation efforts continued in earnest within protected areas and migratory bird conservation programs. No formal initiative or campaign was launched due to a lack of capacity. Organizers of the America’s Grasslands Conference 2019 did			

rework their program to better accommodate trilateral themes and Canadian participation. This will continue to be a priority topic for the ECWT.			
Action Item 2 – Climate Change Vulnerability and Grasslands in North America	INECC	April 2018	April 2018
Goals: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Begin the compilation of information and inputs for the assembly of climate change vulnerability assessments on grasslands of North America to identify and make further prioritization of areas for conservation/management in order to inform policy and management actions. 2. Begin the project with the sharing of information between INECC and the authors at NatureServe of a recently published landscape conservation design for temperate grasslands in North America. 3. Share ongoing and final results with practitioners and stakeholders for grassland conservation. 			
Requested Action or Support from ET (if any): N/A			
Results: Information between these efforts was exchanged through the proceedings of the Trilateral Committee. Project work continues unabated.			
Action Item 3 – Standing Joint Session for Grasslands Conservation	EWCT and Migratory Birds Working Table	April 2019	April 2019
Goals: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Commit to a standing joint session around grassland conservation between the Ecosystem Conservation and Migratory Bird Working Tables of the Trilateral Committee at the annual meetings. 			
Requested Action or Support from ET (if any): N/A			
Results: A joint session is being organized for the Trilateral meeting in 2019 in Victoria, Canada. This is emerging as a standard approach for agenda formulation for the working tables, although no changes have been made to the formal terms of references for the working tables.			
Action Item 4 – Sharing Information and Tools	EWCT	Ongoing	April 2018, Ongoing
Goals: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to leverage the ECWT as a forum for sharing new data and tools for science, planning, and prioritization of conservation actions as they relate to ecosystem conservation. 2. In 2018, share presentations on planning and prioritization tools with Working Table participants. 3. For 2019 and the future, emphasize the ECWT’s role in sharing tools for landscape design and assessing climate vulnerability for multi-species benefits. 4. In particular for the short-term (April/May of 2018): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Follow-up with the domestic leads for digital wetlands inventories to share progress and approaches. b) Promote webinar (May 2018) about CEC climate change toolkit for Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) 			

- c) Compare Mainstreaming Biodiversity document from SEMARNAT with recent guidance from the Department of the Interior in the U.S.
- d) Share materials from the CEC-sponsored workshop in Monterey, Mexico around engaging landowners in monarch conservation.
- e) Share CEC webinars on rights-of-way in Canada with U.S. Rights-of-Way as Habitat Working Group.

Requested Action or Support from ET (if any): N/A

Results: Information and presentations from ECWT proceedings were shared. The ECWT continues to rely on the resources and forums of the Ecosystems Unit of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) and other trilateral forums for sharing information, best practices, and project updates regarding priority ecosystem conservation topics and initiatives within the three countries.

Action Item 5 – Coordination with the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC)	EWCT	Ongoing	Ongoing, April 2019
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- Goals:
1. Recognize the importance for ongoing trilateral coordination for ecosystem conservation between the Trilateral Committee and the CEC.
 2. Establish a continuing invitation to the Ecosystems Unit of the CEC to the Trilateral Committee, including enhancing the communication and synergy between the Trilateral and the CEC request for proposal process for projects in the operational plans (via appropriate domestic channels).

Requested Action from ET (if any): Convey importance of coordination with the CEC to the Executive Table.

Results: Coordination between the EWCT and CEC continues strongly, particularly with regards to ongoing projects identified in the CEC Operational Plan 2017-2019. Updates from the CEC continues to be a standard agenda item for the ECWT, including for the meeting in 2019 in Victoria, Canada. CEC will present project updates at the meeting as well as prime discussions regarding project proposals for the CEC Operational Plan 2019-2021 cycle.

Trilateral Priorities:

- o **Landscape and Seascape Conservation Including Connectivity and Area Based Conservation Partnerships**

Action	Responsible Party	Due	Date Completed
Action Item 6a - Trilateral Islands Initiative (TII)	EWCT, Annie Little (USFWS), Island Conservation, Conservación de Islas, Parks Canada, other partners	Ongoing	April 2018, Ongoing

Goals:

1. Continue to support the Letter of Intent signed at the 2014 Trilateral Meeting and the Trilateral Islands Initiative (TII), which has strengthened commitments to island conservation and completed shared projects.
2. Highlight collaborative projects such as those on Midway Atoll and Guadalupe Island.
3. Continue to develop the “Atlas of Islands at Risk in North America.”
4. Organize workshop(s) to identify goals, priorities, and methods in support of TII projects, the Atlas, and/or domestic islands conservation initiatives.
5. Propose “Oceans and Islands” as a future plenary theme (2019 or 2020) in coordination with the domestic government departments and ministries with jurisdiction over marine conservation.

Requested Action from ET (if any): 1) Convey the importance of trilateral island conservation efforts to the Executive Table (including continued support of the Letter of Intent on record), and 2) consider the proposal for the “Oceans and Islands” plenary theme in 2019 or 2020.

Results: The Executive Table acknowledged the importance of trilateral cooperation with regards to island conservation. The Trilateral Islands Initiative (TII) continued their program of work and will present updates to the ECWT at the 2019 meeting. The proposal for theming the plenary around “Oceans and Islands” was denied in favor of “Human Dimensions” based on the initial location of the meeting. Additionally, the traditional marine aspects of the ECWT has been intentionally been diminished given the Trilateral Committee’s signatories’ lack of jurisdiction around ocean and marine policy. The ECWT will continue to promote islands conservation as a priority of the Trilateral Committee and as a potential future plenary topic.

Action Item 6b - U.S. Islands Partnership	EWCT, Annie Little (USFWS), Island Conservation, The Nature Conservancy, others	Ongoing with deliverables in 2019	Ongoing
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Goals:

1. Purpose of the U.S. Islands Partnership is new initiative with the goal to eradicate invasive vertebrates on U.S. islands by 2050.
2. Develop a business case to help leverage public-private resources and increase scale, pace, and scope of participation, including from NGOs. Look to successful efforts in Mexico and New Zealand as models.
3. Have biosecurity and restoration plans in place and develop a response framework for biosecurity.
4. Address regulatory compliance barriers to biosecurity interventions on islands.
5. Further support intent of LOI by pursuing opportunities for trilateral engagement in U.S. initiative.

Requested Action from ET (if any): N/A

Results: The work of the U.S. Islands Partnership continue in 2018 and 2019 with leadership from the NGO sector, in collaboration with government agencies and partners.

<i>Trilateral Priorities:</i>			
○ Monarch Butterfly Conservation			
Action	Responsible Party	Due	Date Completed
Action Item 7 – Trinational Monarch Butterfly Conservation Partnership	USFWS, CONANP, Canadian Wildlife Service	Ongoing	Ongoing; February 2019 (Trinational MCSP)
Goals:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support and expand the extensive monarch conservation efforts that are underway in all three countries and continue to support Monarch butterflies as a flagship species of trinational importance. 2. Increase the participation of states and provinces from all three countries in trilateral meetings, efforts, and projects. 3. Continue to provide a forum for the work of the Trilateral Monarch Conservation Science Partnership, including the project funded by the CEC in the 2017-2018 Operational Plan – <i>Project 8: Science for Pollinator and Monarch Conservation</i>. 4. Continue to work towards and monitor progress on the shared near-term population target for the monarch’s eastern population - 225 million monarchs occupying an area of approximately 15 acres (6 hectares) in the Mexican overwintering grounds by 2020. 			
Requested Action from ET (if any): Convey the importance of trilateral cooperation for monarch conservation to the Executive Table.			
Results: Trilateral coordination with regards to monarch conservation was strong in 2018 and 2019, particularly with the support of the CEC’s project “Monarch Butterfly and Pollinator Conservation” that uplifted the efforts of the Trinational Monarch Conservation Science Partnership (Trinational MCSP). In February, 2019, the CEC hosted in Mexico City the “Trinational Monarch Science Meeting” to convene government experts, researchers, and key stakeholders from Canada, Mexico, and the U.S. to share novel research and scientific findings and to establish further collaborations for data-sharing, research, and monitoring. The meeting was the initial launch of the Monarch Knowledge Network—an effort to better share data and scientific resources related to monarch conservation. The meeting also coincided with an historic announcement of a 144% increase in the eastern population of monarchs overwintering in Mexico, representing just over 6 ha of overwintering habitat, which for the first time met the short-term population goal for the eastern population initially established through the Trilateral Committee and the domestic High-Level Working Groups for Monarch Conservation in all three countries.			
Action Item 8 – Domestic Monarch Conservation Planning Efforts	USFWS, CONANP, Canadian Wildlife Service	2018-2019	April 2018, Ongoing
Goals:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognize and share information about domestic efforts in all three countries for conservation and/or recovery planning for monarchs, specifically: 			

- a) *Canada* – Listing determination and recovery planning for Monarch butterflies under the *Species At Risk Act* in Canada
 - b) *U.S.* – Mid-American Monarch Conservation Strategy (led by the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies) and the Species Status Assessment (SSA) (led by USFWS)
 - c) *Mexico* – Action Plan for the Conservation of the Migratory Phenomenon for the Monarch Butterfly
2. Share information about the U.S.-based Monarch Conservation Database (MCD) to consider whether and how to include conservation efforts undertaken or planned in Canada and Mexico (May 2019).
 3. Explore trilateral participation at the partners regional conference for U.S.-based monarch conservation efforts in November 2018 (joint meeting of the state fish and wildlife agencies and the Monarch Joint Venture).

Requested Action from ET (if any): N/A

Results: Information about domestic planning efforts for monarch conservation was shared through the EWCT proceedings. In both Canada and the U.S., the governments are moving forward with determining the designation of the Monarch butterfly under their respective imperiled species regulatory programs while Mexico continues to exert strong national support, planning, and programs for monarch conservation. The EWCT is working to put together a follow-up presentation on domestic planning efforts for the ECWT’s upcoming meeting in Victoria, Canada.

Action Item 9 – Sister Natural Heritage Areas for Monarchs	National Park Service	Ongoing	Ongoing
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- Goals:
1. Consider establishing a network of sister natural heritage areas in all three countries for monarch conservation, building on a model project “Operation Butterfly Wings” from the Midwest Region of the National Park Service.
 2. Engage Rotary International as a potential partner.
 3. Establish a partnership pledge with being affiliated with the network.
 4. Share existing information for engaging communities on monarch conservation, including outreach products from the CEC and previous efforts for supporting a sister protected area network for monarchs.

Requested Action from ET (if any): N/A

Results: The ECWT did not identify a sustained trinational component to the project while also appreciating its value and importance for connecting parks with monarch conservation. The National Park Service continues to independently support this project and monarch conservation more broadly.