

RECOGNIZING that restoration and enhancement of the Waters of the Great Lakes cannot be achieved by addressing individual threats in isolation, but rather depend upon the application of an ecosystem approach to the management of water quality that addresses individually and cumulatively all sources of stress to the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem;

RECOGNIZING that nearshore areas must be restored and protected because they are the major source of drinking water for communities within the basin, are where most human commerce and recreation occurs, and are the critical ecological link between watersheds and the open waters of the Great Lakes;

ACKNOWLEDGING that the quality of the Waters of the Great Lakes may affect the quality of the waters of the St. Lawrence River downstream of the international boundary;

CONCLUDING that the best means to preserve the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem and to improve the quality of the Waters of the Great Lakes is to adopt common objectives, develop and implement cooperative programs and other compatible measures, and assign special responsibilities and functions to the International Joint Commission;

RECOGNIZING that, while the Parties are responsible for decision-making under this Agreement, the involvement and participation of State and Provincial Governments, Tribal Governments, First Nations, Métis, Municipal Governments, watershed management agencies, local public agencies, and the Public are essential to achieve the objectives of this Agreement;

DETERMINED to improve management processes for the implementation of measures necessary to achieve the objectives of this Agreement,

HAVE AGREED as follows: