

ANNEX 7

CANADA-MEXICO ENVIRONMENTAL CO-OPERATION

As noted in Chapter VI of the review, the NAFTA negotiations resulted in a significant intensification of bilateral co-operation on the environment between Canada and Mexico. This annex provides additional background information on this co-operation and lists the projects that were implemented under the C\$1-million program announced by Canada on March 18, 1992. Added to the C\$0.9 million already allocated by CIDA to environmental projects in Mexico, this new funding increased the government's commitment in Mexico since 1990 to C\$1.9 million.

Environmental co-operation between Canada and Mexico began in 1988 when both countries joined with the U.S. in signing a Memorandum of Understanding on Migratory Birds and their North American Habitats. This agreement has as its objective the preservation and maintenance of migratory bird populations and the conservation of their habitats. The Canadian Wildlife Service of Environment Canada is the executing agency for this trilateral project.

Bilateral Canada-Mexico co-operation was institutionalized in March 1990 during a visit to Mexico by the Prime Minister. Since that time, the Canada-Mexico Agreement on Environmental Co-operation, signed on that occasion, has provided a formal mechanism for the planning and co-ordination of joint projects on behalf of the environment. For example, under the aegis of this Agreement, CIDA has invested in excess of \$900,000 to permit a Canadian company to undertake feasibility studies for dealing with municipal and industrial wastes in the Coatzacoalcos-Minatitlan area of the state of Veracruz.

A second example of bilateral co-operation was the transfer, by Environment Canada, of a Canadian water management software package to Mexico for use in the protection and rehabilitation of the Lerma-Chapala watershed in the state of Jalisco. A third initiative was a December 1991 Canadian seminar in Mexico City on Geographical Information System (GIS) software products that drew 160 participants, including 11 Canadian suppliers. GIS environmental protection control software has applications in mining, forestry and water resources management.

The NAFTA negotiations have contributed to a significant heightening of the level of interest in bilateral co-operation on the environment. A major boost to this co-operation occurred on March 18, 1992 when the Secretary of State for External Affairs and the Minister of the Environment announced projects valued at \$1 million to assist Mexico in environmental monitoring and enforcement. This Canada-Mexico environmental initiative was assigned two main objectives:

- to address priorities and to strengthen the capabilities of Mexico's Secretariat of Social Development in the enforcement of that country's environmental legislation; and
- to demonstrate Canadian public and private sector expertise in environmental technology, thereby opening the door to future commercial collaboration between the two countries.