Category: **Obligation to Make Environmental Information Public**

Sub-Category: Online Tools and Applications Related to Access to Environmental Information

Name of Good Practice: The Taking Stock Programme of the North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation

Key Words: Access to Information, Database, Regional, Internet, Participation, Technology

Implementing Actors: Regional Organisation: North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation

Location: Canada, Mexico, United States

Description: Since 1994, Canada, Mexico and the United States have collaborated in protecting North America's environment through the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation (NAAEC), which came into force at the same time as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The NAAEC established an intergovernmental organization, the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC), to facilitate “collaboration and public participation to foster conservation, protection and enhancement of the North American environment for the benefit of present and future generations, in the context of increasing economic, trade, and social links among Canada, Mexico, and the United States.”

Taking Stock is an integral aspect of the CEC’s North American Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (PRTR) Project, which compiles, integrates, analyses and disseminates PRTR data from each of the three NAFTA countries through the Taking Stock report and Taking Stock website. According to the CEC’s website, the Taking Stock online “searchable database allows users to explore pollutant releases and transfers from PRTR reporting facilities in North America; generate reports in a variety of formats; create maps and view them using Google Earth; and analyze PRTR data in the context of information such as border areas, locations of watersheds, and population centres, using geospatial data from the CEC's North American Environmental Atlas.” The Taking Stock reports provide details about specific pollutants, including how they have been managed and the sectors and facilities reporting them over time and across North America. According to the CEC, the report “seeks to enhance the understanding of the sources, locations and types of pollutant releases and transfers across North America” and also to “ provide information for decision-making at all levels of society, promote reductions in industrial pollution, and support the integration of PRTR data into an overarching framework for managing pollutants in North America.”  The CEC has published 14 Taking Stock reports since the inception of the programme.

Further Information: The Taking Stock website: <http://www.cec.org/Page.asp?PageID=924&SiteNodeID=1097>; the 14th Taking Stock Report: <http://www3.cec.org/islandora/en/item/11581-taking-stock-vol-14>.