



ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES
Inter-American Committee on Ports (CIP)



DRAFT DECLARATION OF PANAMA
ON GUIDELINES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PORT PROTECTION

The Member States of the Organization of American States,

CONSIDERING:

1. That communities of the hemisphere depend in great measure on the natural resources of the oceans, coasts, and inland waters for their survival and well being. That port activities and the maritime industry play significant roles in coastal area economies. That in many areas of the hemisphere health, security, and economic sustainability depends on coastal areas resources.

2. That the use of coastal zones is growing more intense and that a higher percentage of the hemispheric population resides in these zones and that port activities contribute to the increase of environmental pressures on ecosystems, in addition to the health of these coastal populations.

3. That environmental impacts on coastal areas of the hemisphere that accrue from growing populations and port activities can, in part, be reduced incorporating measures that protect the environment for port development planning processes. That Member States of the OAS should consider these measures as an immediate starting point for establishing innovative strategies that care for and preserve the marine environment and coastal zones. That in this manner it will contribute significantly to the achievement of the development objectives agreed to in Agenda 21 of the United Nations Conference on Environment & Development (Rio de Janeiro, June, 1992), and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit for Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, August-September, 2002), in addition to other multilateral agreements on environmental protection applicable to ports and coastal protection in the hemisphere.

4. That various countries of the hemisphere have achieved significant progress in promoting institutional capacity and elaborating legislative frameworks, and sustainable

environmental policies for coastal and port areas. Nevertheless, the differences existing in small island states and landlocked countries should require different treatment in environmental cooperation materials.

5. That a key point for the protection of the environment in the hemisphere is the lack of capacity for the disposal generated by vessels. That existing facilities for the reception of waste should be better identified in the online database of the Global Integrated Shipping Information Systems (GISIS) maintained by the International Maritime Organization (IMO), and that it supply information relative to facilities for the reception of waste generated by vessels.

6. That many important environmental concerns are shared by many nations and are related with the increase of commerce in the hemisphere. Among these, it is important to emphasize: a) increased air pollution from marine vessels and port activities, b) port dredging operations, c) ballast water discharge, d) proliferation of invasive non-native species through vessel hulls, e) contamination from ship maintenance operations, f) contamination from spills of hydrocarbons and other hazardous and toxic chemicals, g) management of marine debris and shipwrecks, and h) visual and sound pollution in port areas. That the ability of nations, their ports, the shipping industry, and transport to address these issues can be increased with environmental cooperation and the development of training, which will permit to identify and implement best management practices.

7. That the Inter-American Committee on Ports (CIP) of the Organization of American States (OAS), particularly through the Technical Advisory Groups on Navigation Safety and Environmental Port Protection, and subsequently Environmental Protection, has made a significant contribution in the collection and circulation of information for optimal decision-making for sustainable port development.

DECLARE

1. To express our appreciation to the Inter-American Committee of Ports (CIP) of the Organization of American States (OAS) for its efforts in promoting the sustainable port activities and in urging the organization to increase its support in the application of methods that contribute to environmental protection of port areas.

2. To intensify the efforts destined to elaborate and apply action programs in regional, national, and local levels for environmental protection in port activities.

3. To re-affirm the relevance and importance of environmental protection measures in port activities and the necessity to incorporate these measures in public and private sectors interests associated with these activities. Recognizing that the protection of the environment is strengthened through inter-governmental organizations like the Organization of American States, the United Nations, as well as multilateral environmental agreements that are properly signed and ratified by the Member States.

4. Necessary to drive the elaboration and application of integrated, long-term strategies for sustainable management of port and related activities that contribute to improving the protection of the environment and address social and economic concerns.

5. That it is necessary to improve monitoring systems in addition to environmental information gathered at all levels of public and private sectors, to identify contamination that affects the environment and public health, contributing to planning and implementing efficient measures to prevent, reduce, or limit the pollution in coastal zones with the cooperation of ports and maritime industries.

6. That it is necessary to strengthen, as appropriate, international law frameworks that promote the protection and sustainable use of port areas through the creation and implementation of protocols on pollution caused by port and related maritime activities.

7. To agree to coordinate with other organizations, regional, and international processes to apply international conventions, protocols and guidelines related to port activities, strengthening strategic associations that improve the cooperation and coordination in the exchange of international knowledge, experiences and technology, particularly for dredging activities.

8. It is necessary that national, regional, and international organizations related to the maritime port sector, incorporate at the adequate level the objectives of environmental protection in their respective work plans, activities, policies and programs. To urge the strengthening of relations with all sectors of civil society as decisive mechanisms for the environmental protection in port areas.

9. To emphasize environmental protection of port activities by:

a. Strengthening consultations, dialogue, and extended collaboration with port administrations and maritime industries and local communities interested in facilitating the integration of environmental protection plans, activities, policies and programs applicable to the operation and development of ports.

b. Generating and promoting clean technologies that combine efficient and sustainable environmental management with reasonable cost-effectiveness while preserving natural resources and the environment.

- c. Improving cooperation among port administrators in environmental matters and facilitating the exchange of experiences and application of environmental management systems that involve port and related activities.
- d. Promoting and establishing the regionalization of “Contingency Plans for Hydrocarbon Spills and other Substance Contamination” through applicable international legal frameworks, and seeking to establish a cooperative focus to share knowledge, information, monitoring practices, environmental management systems relative to land-based sources of marine pollution, and applicable IMO agreements addressing air quality issues.
- e. Promoting the use of environmental indicators as well as methodologies to assess port environmental issues to objectively measure progress made in hemispheric port activities regarding water, land and air quality.

10. To designate the following declaration as a “Declaration of Panama on Guidelines for Environmental Port Protection” in honor of the City of Panama, Republic of Panama, host of the First Hemispheric Conference on Environmental Port Protection of the Inter-American Committee on Ports.