Category: **Obligation to Facilitate Public Participation in Environmental Decision-Making**

Sub-Category: **Public Participation Platforms or Bodies**

Name of Good Practice: Mexican **Consejos Consultivos para el Desarrollo Sustentable/**Consultative Councils for Sustainable Development

Key Words: Climate Change, Consultation, Corporations, Participation

Implementing Actors: National Ministry: Secretaría de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (SEMARNAT)/Mexican Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources; Civil Society Organisations: Various; Corporations: Various

Location: Mexico

Description: Articles 157 and 159 of the Ley General del Equilibrio Ecológico y la Protección al Ambiente (Environmental Framework Law) establish that the national government must promote public participation in the planning, implementation, evaluation and monitoring of environmental and natural resource policy. The Mexican Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (Secretaría de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales, or SEMARNAT) established the Consejos Consultivos para el Desarrolo Sustentable (CCDSs) in 1995 in order to promote public participation forums for consulting, designing and evaluating public policies on environmental issues. These councils also aim to coordinate, persuade and help reach consensus between interested parties in environmental decision-making.

Currently, there is one national CCDS and six regional CCDSs. Each council is comprised of representatives from civil society organizations, academia, the corporate sector, and federal and state government agencies. For example, the national CCDS is presided over by the head of SEMARNAT, and also includes as members the presidents of the six regional councils, seven environmental and natural resource specialists from civil society or academic institutions, three experts on the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation, and representatives from the Mexican Institute of Youth, the National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples, and the National Institute for Women. Members of the Councils themselves approve internal regulations that govern the operation and organization of the CCDS, and the CCDSs meet twice a year.

The 26 October 2014 public information and review meeting of the environmental impact study (EIS) for the proposed new international airport in Mexico City provides a recent example of the work of CCDSs. At the meeting, a representative of the national council provided detailed comments and recommendations to SEMARNAT and to the public relating to the EIS, including areas where further investigation was necessary.

Further Information: The CCDS programme has its own website where the public can find out more information about their organisation, functions, and activities: <http://wp.ccds.org.mx/>.