

MISSION STATEMENT

CFEE STUDY TRAVEL PROJECT

Fall 2019



MEXICO

In Fall 2019, the California Foundation on the Environment and the Economy (CFEE) will lead a Delegation of elected officials and business, environmental and labor leaders to Mexico. The Delegation will conduct site visits and meet with government officials and leading academics, energy executives and environmental stewards, and community and labor leaders to learn about shared California and Mexico areas of interest in energy, water, and natural resource management. The group will also learn more about California-Mexican ties on trade and immigration, issues that are central to the enduring, special relationship between the two neighbors.

Carbon Offsets in the Mexican Rainforest | The California Air Resources Board (CARB) is exploring how to ensure that carbon offset projects located outside the U.S. can be compliant with the state's cap and trade program. Environmental organizations and carbon-intensive companies have identified the Mexican jungles in the Yucatán Peninsula and elsewhere as suitable for offsetting greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions while also protecting ecosystems vulnerable to deforestation.

Yet some California stakeholders are skeptical that CARB will be able to verify that international carbon offsets are yielding genuine GHG reductions. Questions also remain about local acceptance of such projects, as there's concern that foreign investments may insufficiently benefit local communities. The Delegation will see these projects firsthand and explore how to resolve shared concerns and build trust for other potential collaborations between California and Mexico as they combat climate change.

Cross-Border Infrastructure and Pollution | In 2017, the California and Mexico border saw 16.5 million pedestrian crossings and 27.6 million vehicle crossings, making it the world's busiest border. The extraordinary traffic levels necessitate top notch infrastructure to facilitate the flows of people and goods that underpin the two neighbor's relationship while also ensuring adequate safety and security.

The 140-mile border of land, air, and water is also a focal point due to rising pollution. Border rivers are regularly contaminated by municipal, industrial, and agricultural runoff that can be deposited in other streams, lakes, and beaches. Further, border communities are increasingly afflicted by criteria air pollutants and dust generated by both California and Mexico. The Delegation will tour affected sites and meet with leaders on both sides of the border to examine the causes of cross-border pollution and the steps being taken to mitigate the environmental hazards.

The Mexican Energy Economy | Blessed with rich energy deposits, Mexico has long used oil and gas resources as a pillar of its economy. A new Mexican administration is revisiting the concept of a more domestically-protected energy market in pursuit of economic gains and other social benefits for Mexicans across the income spectrum.

It's an ambitious agenda that has outsiders wondering what room it leaves for foreign investment, particularly for those California energy companies who have a significant and growing retail presence in Mexico. It's also unclear how the new administration may look to diversify its energy supply as it works to uphold its global commitments to reduce GHG emissions. Delegates will meet with industry and government representatives to learn about the business and political landscape and what it portends for future energy partnerships with Mexico.

Managing a Megatropolis | Mexico City is one of the most populous cities in the world, with more than 21 million residents calling the City and the surrounding metropolitan region their home. The challenges of delivering basic city services of water treatment, waste management, transportation and other vital municipal functions offer City and regional officials the opportunity to envision how Mexico City can optimize its systems and services in the 21st century.

California, too, is challenged to deliver high quality city services as population growth, rising public expectations, and the impacts of climate change constrain public agencies. The Delegation will engage with Mexico's leaders to share best practices on providing backbone city services and infrastructure that ensure our cities, businesses, and households prosper in the years to come.

CFEE's MISSION is to facilitate an exchange of knowledge, insights, and experiences between California policy leaders and their Mexican counterparts. CFEE strives to identify ideas that can support California policymakers as they work to deliver economic growth while demonstrating environmental stewardship.



About the California Foundation on the Environment and the Economy (CFEE)

The California Foundation on the Environment and the Economy (CFEE) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that conducts intensive public policy conferences, legislative briefings, multiparty workshops, and international study travel projects for California State legislators, regulatory commissioners, members of the Governor's Cabinet, business, labor, environmental and local government leaders. The subject areas covered by CFEE are energy, water, transportation, technology and telecommunications, housing and other infrastructure and climate issues.

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