

# *U.S. Government Officials Point to Cooperation with Cuba*

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Viña del Mar, October 6 (RHC)-- U.S. government officials have pointed to the favorable environment to boost cooperation with Cuba and expressed their hope to reach an ocean-protection accord as they spoke at the 2nd International Conference Our Ocean, underway in Chile.

In statement to Prensa Latina news agency, U.S. Undersecretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy and the Environment, Cathy Novelli, expressed her satisfaction in sharing experiences with Cuba and added that the idea is to reach an accord as soon as possible, which would entail an important step for the two nations who have experience about ocean-related issues.

Previously, Secretary of State John Kerry spoke at the high-level segment of the “Our Ocean” forum and noted that he recently spoke about the issue with President Raul Castro and Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez, and that he considered that conditions are favorable to advance towards bilateral agreements in this area.

Meanwhile, the Deputy Director of the Cuban Protected Areas Center with the Ministry of the Environment, Enrique Hernandez, said that there is a will to sign a memo of understanding soon.

The current talks between Havana and Washington has allowed exploring issues related to marine ecosystems as the signing of a document is expected to take place between the Cuban Environment Ministry (CITMA) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

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