

## A New Era of State, Local, Tribal, and International Partnerships FY 2016 Action Plan

In support of the Cross-Agency Strategy, “Launching a New Era of State, Tribal, Local, and International Partnerships,” this FY 2016 Action Plan continues work to strengthen partnerships with states, tribes, local governments, and the global community that are central to the success of the national environmental protection enterprise through consultation, collaboration, and shared accountability. The Cross-Agency Strategy also places an emphasis on actions to modernize and revitalize the EPA-state relationship, using the National Environmental Performance Partnership System (NEPPS) and by jointly pursuing E-Enterprise for the Environment, a transformative strategy to streamline and modernize the implementation of our environmental programs, and improve data integrity and communications, through a new model for collaborative leadership among environmental co-regulators.

### 1. With State and Local Partners

#### A. Continue consultations with state and local elected officials on EPA rulemakings, guidance, and policies. By September 30, 2016, EPA will:

- 1) In addition to the “Big 10” intergovernmental associations,<sup>1</sup> include additional intergovernmental organizations--such as the Local Government Advisory Committee (LGAC), National Association of State Departments of Agriculture, National Association of Attorneys General, National Association of State Conservation Agencies, Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, National Conference of Black Mayors, and the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials, among others--in federalism consultations when an EPA policy or rule impacts their members.
- 2) Conduct additional outreach with intergovernmental partners on regulations, major guidance, and other Agency policies as early in the development process as possible.
- 3) Work with the Environmental Council of States (ECOS), the LGAC, and other intergovernmental and private sector partners to further the environmental justice goals in the [EJ2020 Action Agenda](#).
- 4) Identify opportunities to disseminate the LGAC’s recommendations more broadly among state, local, and tribal partners and also share with other federal agencies the value of engaging with a body of elected and appointed officials who represent cities, towns, and other local governments.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Big 10 intergovernmental associations are the largest national organizations for state and local governments and include the National Governors Association, National Conference of State Legislatures, National Association of Counties, U.S. Conference of Mayors, National League of Cities, International City/County Management Association, County Executives of America; National Association of Towns and Townships, Council of State Governments, and the Environmental Council of States.

<sup>2</sup> Among advisory committees created under the Federal Advisory Committee Act, EPA’s LGAC is unique in that it is the only committee government-wide that is made up of state, local and tribal elected and appointed officials. The LGAC’s candid advice has been immensely helpful in informing EPA’s work.

**B. Modernize and revitalize EPA’s working relationship with states by building on actions memorialized in the recent EPA-ECOS renewal and recommitment to NEPPS.<sup>3</sup>**

By September 30, 2016, EPA will:

- 1) Continue work begun in FY 2015 to test and evaluate regional-state approaches to ensure NEPPS is used to identify mutual priorities and deploy resources flexibly and effectively.
- 2) Conduct outreach and develop additional guidance and training, as necessary, to support the Agency’s implementation of Grants Policy Issuance 15-01, “Performance Partnership Grants for States,”<sup>4</sup> and encourage greater use of multi-year PPGs and state grant workplans.<sup>5</sup>
- 3) Continue collaborating with states to evaluate the two-year National Program Manager (NPM) Guidance and Annual Commitment process and make adjustments, if needed, to ensure that both work as intended for EPA and the states.

**C. Collaborate with state research organizations to share information about EPA’s scientific capabilities and solicit input to make the Agency’s tools, models, and research useful and practical for the states.**

- 1) Work towards integrating the environment and public health by building a stronger relationship with state environmental health agencies (via the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials) and expanding the Office of Research & Development’s (ORD) partnership with the Environmental Research Institute of the States (ERIS) to include other federal agencies (e.g., the NOAA, USGS, and CDC), with a goal of addressing state research needs. Hold a joint ERIS Board-ORD meeting in summer 2016 at EPA’s Mid-Continent Ecology Division. By September 30, 2016, hold a joint meeting with State Environmental Health Directors.
- 2) Continue outreach to state environment and health agencies near ORD lab locations to raise awareness of EPA research, methods, models, tools and databases. By September 30, 2016, host state visits to three ORD facilities. We will continue to coordinate with the EPA regions on these visits.
- 3) By September 30, 2016, initiate an Interstate Technology & Regulatory Council pilot project of an ORD product.
- 4) As a follow up to the 2014 ERIS states’ research needs survey and ORD’s response, develop a process, in collaboration with the regions, for EPA to incorporate state input into ORD’s research planning by September 30, 2016.
- 5) Continue state and tribal engagement and coordination on potential research products and/or analytical needs associated with EPA’s Hydraulic Fracturing Drinking Water Study and Draft Assessment.

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<sup>3</sup> Renewal of Commitment to the National Environmental Performance Partnerships System Marking the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

<sup>4</sup> [Grants Policy Issuance 15-01](#) was issued to increase awareness of the administrative and programmatic flexibility available through Performance Partnership Grants (PPGs), encourage greater PPG use, ensure consistent implementation and management, and establish a PPG training program for EPA staff and managers.

<sup>5</sup> Multi-year grant workplans broaden the planning horizon and allow for better alignment with the new two-year NPM guidances, thus providing a greater ability to plan strategically and address and respond to changing conditions during the term of the grant. In addition, longer project periods increase administrative efficiency by reducing the number of grant applications required and help ensure financial stability during periods of federal and state budget uncertainty, particularly when using a multi-year PPG to combine funds from multiple grant programs.

## 2. With Tribes

### A. Continue developing EPA-Tribal Environmental Plans (ETEPs) with each tribe that applies for and receives an Indian Environmental General Assistance Program Grant (GAP), consistent with the May 2013 GAP Guidance.

- 1) By September 30, 2016, regions will finalize the cumulative planned number of ETEPs nationwide (i.e., 66% of tribes receiving GAP grants).

### B. Support regular collaboration between ECOS, the National Tribal Caucus, the Regional Tribal Operations Committees, and NPM-supported tribal partnership groups (e.g., Tribal Water Council) to enhance federal-tribal-state partnerships.

- 1) By March 31, 2016, The Office of International and Tribal Affairs (OITA) will establish a working group with representatives from these organizations to develop proposals for creating a clearinghouse for technical assistance resources, sharing of ideas, and expertise.

### C. Continue to improve use of the tribal identifier standard in Agency data systems and improve reliability of EPA's environmental and compliance data for Indian country.

- 1) By September 30, 2016, OITA and the Office of Environmental Information (OEI) will engage with the owners of at least four EPA data systems to develop specific recommendations for improving the accessibility and accuracy of data about Indian country in those systems.

## 3. Advancing E-Enterprise for the Environment with state, local, and tribal partners

### A. Through E-Enterprise joint governance, work with states and tribes to improve environmental outcomes by modernizing the business of environmental and public health protection and enhancing services to the regulated community and the public.

- 1) Broadening EPA and State Participation in E-Enterprise:<sup>6</sup>
  - a) By March 31, 2016, each EPA regional office will identify, in collaboration with the states, regional-state business process modernization projects or activities currently proposed or underway, and will subsequently propose one or more to the regular program discussions of the applicable Regional Division Directors and National Program Managers (NPM), to be considered as potential new national E-Enterprise projects or enhancements to current E-Enterprise projects. These should be projects or activities which could advance the E-Enterprise goals and be nationally scalable through joint governance.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> This action has two purposes. One is to encourage EPA regions and states to take jointly identified issues that business process modernization could address, and to propose them jointly, through the regular program discussions of the applicable Regional Division Directors and the National Program Managers (NPM), as potential new E-Enterprise projects. A second is to enable states, in collaboration with their regions, to participate in E-Enterprise work through a temporary tradeoff in workload, which can be funded by State and Tribal Assistance Grants under state grant workplans, to provide the flexibility for states and tribes encouraged in Section V of the Overview to the FY2016-2017 NPM Guidances. These purposes are in furtherance of the July 14, 2015 memorandum of Acting Deputy Administrator Stan Meiburg, "Advancing Participation in the E-Enterprise for the Environment Strategy," which particularly asked for the regions' involvement in E-Enterprise process modernization efforts that are incorporated into the NPM Guidances.

<sup>7</sup> These regular program discussions will consider such proposed projects or activities, in consultation with the states, for recommendation to the E-Enterprise Leadership Council (EELC) for potential selection as a new national E-Enterprise project or enhancement. Regions and states may choose to work jointly on any project or activity proposed to these program discussions but not recommended to the EELC, or ultimately selected.

- b) By September 30, 2016, each EPA regional office and interested states in that region will work collaboratively through established or adapted regional processes to consider and facilitate temporary tradeoffs in workload in exchange for participation by such states in E-Enterprise or similar projects or program activities designed to modernize business processes.<sup>8</sup> Such participation can be funded using State and Tribal Assistance Grants (which may be Performance Partnership Grants where appropriate) and provided for in state grant workplans to describe such temporary tradeoffs.
- 2) **Tribal Participation:** By January 31, 2016, the E-Enterprise Leadership Council (EELC) will develop a proposal to provide for appropriate and regular tribal participation in EELC meetings, and by September 30, 2016, will provide for regular tribal participation on at least five E-Enterprise project teams or workgroups.
- 3) **Shared Services:** By September 30, 2016, develop and obtain EELC approval of an E-Enterprise-wide plan to develop and integrate shared services into appropriate E-Enterprise projects. Implementation of the plan will begin in FY2017. Development of the plan will reflect learning from the initial implementation during FY2016 of E-Enterprise projects that integrate shared services.

#### 4. With International Partners

##### **A. As chair of the Lead Paint Alliance, EPA will engage in series of efforts in support of the Lead Paint Alliance.**

- 1) By September 30, 2016, EPA will sponsor a workshop encouraging the development of laws and regulations limiting lead in paint in East Africa.

##### **B. Continue to strengthen EPA leadership in the Arctic Council and with other governments to improve policies and implement cooperative projects that address climate change and reduce contamination in the Arctic.**

- 1) By September 30, 2016, EPA will co-sponsor a regional stakeholder workshop to establish a North-American Local Environmental Observer (LEO) Network, as the first step in expanding the LEO network to the entire Arctic region.

##### **C. EPA and China's Minister of Environmental Protection (MEP) will capitalize on the multi-stakeholder platform to advance the development and implementation of policies, regulations, technologies, and best practices to reduce criteria air pollutant and greenhouse gas emissions from ports and vessels.**

- 1) By September 30, 2016, EPA will reach agreement with MEP on a national port emission inventory methodology to assess the volume and impact of marine emissions in Chinese ports.

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<sup>8</sup> Projects or program activities in which states can participate under these temporary tradeoffs are specific E-Enterprise projects included and as encouraged in each of the NPM Guidances, those subsequently selected as new or enhanced E-Enterprise projects, and/or other business process modernization projects or program activities that will be jointly governed at the state or multistate level in collaboration with EPA.