

# **Update on Environmental Justice Activities at EPA**

**Presented to NACEPT by  
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# Today's Briefing

## Vulnerability

- A concept that provides a holistic approach to addressing environmental justice issues

## Plan EJ 2014

- Plan EJ 2014 is road map for advancing environmental justice

## Actions to Advance EJ

- Work in rulemaking and science focus on multiple factors that can lead to disproportionate impacts

# Key Administration Priority - EJ

*“Expanding the conversation on environmentalism and working for environmental justice”*

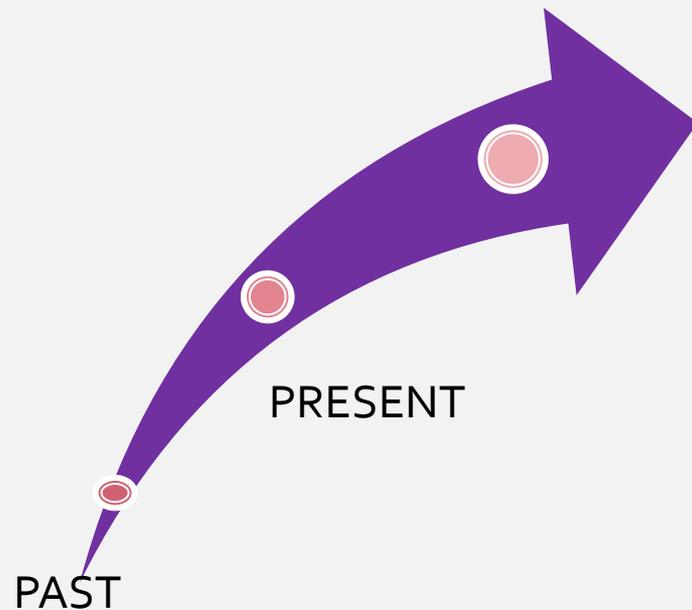
- Build strong working relationships with tribes, communities of color, economically distressed cities and towns, young people.
- We must include EJ principles in all of our decisions.
- The protection of vulnerable subpopulations is a top priority

# Vulnerability

- *"A matrix of physical, chemical, biological, social, and cultural factors that result in certain communities and subpopulations being more susceptible to environmental factors because of greater exposure to such factors or a compromised ability to cope with and/or recover from such exposure."*

World Health Organization: Principles for Evaluating Health Risks (2006).

# *Architecture for Environmental Justice*



## “True North”

- Prevent and/or reduce adverse environmental and health impacts from pollution
- Ensure equal access to decision-making process
- Increase economic, social, health and environmental benefits

# Plan EJ 2014: Road Map for Advancing Environmental Justice

# Plan EJ 2014

## Plan EJ 2014

- The Guiding Document and framework for organizing EPA's on-going and future work to advance environmental justice
- 4-year horizon to correspond with 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of E.O. 12898
- Implements principles in EPA's Strategic Plan, Cross-cutting Strategy for EJ and Children's Health
- Implementation of elements lead by Agency Programs Regions

# Plan EJ 2014 – A Road map for Action

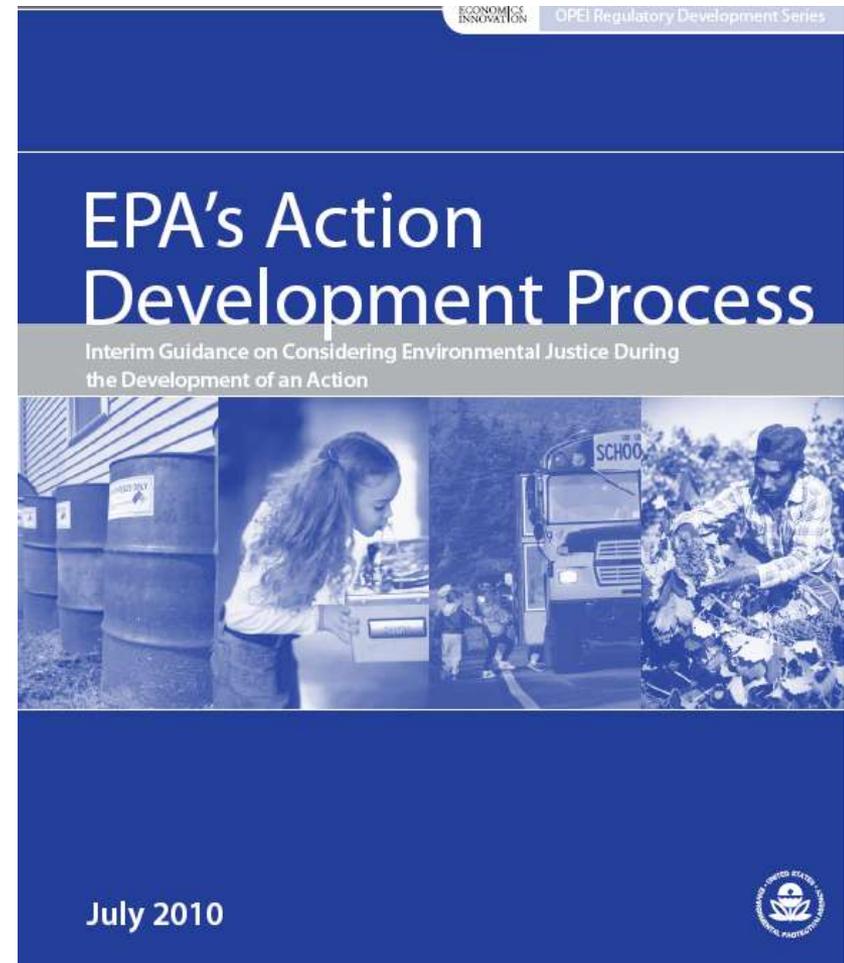
- 5 cross-agency focus areas:
  - **Rule making**
    - *Incorporate EJ into rule making*
  - Permitting
    - *Consider EJ concerns in EPA's permitting process*
  - Compliance enforcement initiatives
    - *Accelerate compliance and enforcement initiatives*
  - Community-Based Action
    - *Support community-based action programs*
  - Administration-wide action on EJ
    - *Foster Administration-wide action on EJ*

# Plan EJ 2014 – A Road map for Action

- 4 tool development areas:
  - Science
  - Law
  - Information
  - Resources
- Program Initiatives

# Rulemaking

- EPA developed interim guidance related to its rule making process. Purpose is to:
  - *Explicitly integrate EJ considerations into the fabric of EPA's ADP—from rule inception through all the stages leading to promulgation and implementation*



# Rulemaking

For all rules with potential EJ concerns three questions frame the development of the rule:

- How will your public participation process provide transparency and meaningful participation for minority, low-income, and indigenous populations, and tribes?
- How do you plan to identify and address existing and new disproportionate environmental and public health impacts on minority, low-income, and indigenous populations during the rulemaking process?
- How did the actions taken under #1 and #2 impact the outcome or final decision?

# Understanding Environmental Justice: Disproportionate Impact Factors



*Proximity*



*Cumulative Impacts*



*Physical Infrastructure*



*Susceptible Populations*



*Unique Exposure Pathways*



*Ability to Participate in Decision-Making (social capital)*

# Tools Development: Science

- Articulate how and why minority and/or low income groups experience disproportionately higher environmental health risks.
- EPA commissioned the development of papers on the following topics:
  - Proximity to pollution sources
  - Unique exposure pathways
  - Multiple and cumulative exposures and impacts
  - Physical infrastructure
  - Lack of community capacity/Diminished ability to participate in decision making

# Tools Development: Science

- Papers include:
  - state of the science reviews,
  - conceptual frameworks for integrating specific concepts, and
  - papers on conceptual and methodological issues of differential vulnerability across population groups.
- EPA is collaborating to publish these papers in the **American Journal of Public Health** with:
  - **National Institute for Minority Health and Health Disparities**
  - **Office of Minority Health/HHS**
- Anticipated publication date - Summer 2011.

# Rulemaking

## EJ in Rulemaking Technical Guide

- Apply science to the ongoing development of technical guidance to support rulemaking *process* guidance.
- Provide regulatory analysts with:
  - A framework for integrating EJ into their analyses
  - Methods for assessing disproportionate environmental health risks – existing and anticipated:
    - Among minority and low income populations relative to a defined comparison group(s).
    - Within the various rule making contexts/statutory authorities
- Overarching goal is to design analysis so as to facilitate its application in decision making.
- Anticipated EPA Science Advisory Board Peer Review - Spring 2012

# Moving Forward....

- Administrator Lisa P Jackson

*“.....An area that calls for innovation and bold thinking, and I am challenging all of our employees to bring vision and creativity to our programs”*