

LETTER FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) published its first Environmental Justice Strategy in February 2012. This strategy identified key areas that GSA would focus on in subsequent years.

The GSA mission makes our agency uniquely situated to leverage efforts Government-wide to reduce the Federal carbon footprint, reduce fossil fuel emissions for the Federal fleet of vehicles, impact Government-wide transportation policy to promote tracking of and efficient goods movement, and advance Government-wide policy that impacts current and future generations' reuse and safe disposal of electronics. Since GSA is an active member of the Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice (IWG), this report presents GSA's accomplishments during Fiscal Year 2014 and includes accomplishments of the IWG.

As shown in this year's report, the principles of environmental justice run deep in the work that we do at GSA, and we look forward to continuing these efforts.



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Administrator

U. S. General Services Administration
FY 2014 Annual Environmental Justice Implementation Progress Report

The Memorandum of Understanding on Environmental Justice and Executive Order (EO) 12898 directs each Federal agency to provide a concise report on progress during the previous fiscal year in carrying out the agency's environmental justice strategy and EO 12898 by the EO's February 11 anniversary.

I. INTRODUCTION/OVERVIEW:

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) is pleased to publish its annual Environmental Justice Progress Report for Fiscal Year (FY) 2014. As the Federal Government's real property, personal property, and acquisition steward, GSA leveraged its influence to bring about a reduction of the Federal Government's carbon footprint, reduce petroleum fuel emissions for the Federal fleet of vehicles, impact Government-wide transportation policy to ensure goods are tracked and moved efficiently, and advance Government-wide policy that impacts current and future generations' re-use and safe disposal of electronics. Additionally, GSA sought out opportunities to engage with communities near GSA's projects to ensure it considered their concerns when planning and executing a wide variety of construction activities and Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) projects.

These efforts by GSA reduce the Federal Government's impact on the environment and support the principles of environmental justice—that Federal action does not have “disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority populations and low-income populations.” (EO 12898)

II. IMPLEMENTING ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION PLANS.

A. Electronics Stewardship. As the Federal Government's premier manager of personal property, GSA's regulations have long encouraged efficient re-use of assets as opposed to moving straight to end-of-life disposal. Electronic waste (e-waste) is now the largest-growing waste stream in the country, with the Federal Government being the world's largest consumer of electronics. According to the most recent U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates, more than two million tons of electronics were in storage and ready for end-of-life management, yet typically, only twenty-five percent of such electronics are collected for recycling.

GSA is committed to reducing e-waste and realizing efficiency by standardizing disposal procedures across the Government. This is an opportunity for the Federal Government to lead by example, and to spur national awareness to go beyond minimal requirements in the management and disposal of e-waste. GSA co-leads the Interagency Task Force on Electronics Stewardship (The Task Force) with the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) and EPA. The Task Force released the [National Strategy for Electronics Stewardship](#) in 2011. As recommended by the Strategy, GSA first issued [Federal Management Regulation \(FMR\) Bulletin B-34, Disposal of Federal Electronic Assets](#) regarding electronic stewardship. As a Bulletin, this document is non-regulatory.

U. S. General Services Administration
FY 2014 Annual Environmental Justice Implementation Progress Report

To develop mandatory policy for the use, safe handling, and disposal of electronics across the Federal Government, GSA published a [Proposed Rule, Disposal and Reporting of Federal Electronic Assets](#), in the **Federal Register** on March 6, 2014. The proposed rule encourages reuse and recycling instead of disposal in landfills or by incineration. As many electronics are made of valuable resources and highly engineered materials, such as metals (gold, silver, copper), plastics, and glass, recycling these materials conserves the Nation's resources, avoids air and water pollution, and reduces greenhouse gas emissions that are generated during extraction and manufacturing of virgin materials. GSA sought input from the public so the agency can fully consider all perspectives in the development of a final rule governing this policy. The comment period ended on May 5, 2014, and GSA is coordinating comments received, with the goal that the final rule will be published by September 30, 2015.

B. Goods Movement.

GSA's progress on incorporating the principles of environmental justice in its goods movement activities includes:

1. Government-wide Transportation Policy: GSA's Office of Government-wide Policy (OGP) is in the final rule phase of amending FMR 102-117, Transportation Management Subpart K Transportation Reporting. Transportation management policy seeks to improve management and enhance sustainable transportation operations with a focus on effective and efficient Federal transportation operations for freight and cargo. The rule recommends that agencies annually report their transportation activities (freight, cargo, and household goods) for a Government-wide transportation data collection effort that would result in the ability to analyze data and identify shared services and operational efficiencies. Agency reporting is currently *not* mandatory, although publicly available data will be used to supplement agency submissions. The initial phase of system release and data collection is expected in FY 2016.

Accompanying the proposed transportation reporting regulation is a system for data collection—the Federal Interagency Transportation Summary. Once the regulation is finalized (anticipated in September 2015), GSA's Office of Government-wide Policy will issue a bulletin describing the data elements to report and the procedures for annual reporting. One question planned to be included in the collection system is "Do you incorporate your own agency's environmental justice policy when selecting transportation services?" Agency data submissions may take a two-fold approach: 1) uploading transaction data from existing systems, and 2) responding to particular questions with a new data set. Questions on training, POCs, and environmental justice are expected to fall into the second phase.

U. S. General Services Administration
FY 2014 Annual Environmental Justice Implementation Progress Report

2. Freight Transportation, Federal Travel, and Fleet Management: The Federal Acquisition Service (FAS) at GSA has implemented three distinct efforts to improve sustainability and environmental objectives. These efforts are designed to further enhance visibility and measurement of Federal agencies' purchase of transportation goods and how that decision affects greenhouse gas emissions.
- a. Freight Transportation: GSA became certified as a SmartWay Transport Logistics Partner, an EPA initiative. GSA prioritizes the vendor qualifications who are SmartWay-certified through GSA buying and ordering channels. In FYs 2013 and 2014, GSA's customer agencies chose SmartWay Transport Partners to move 98 percent of the total shipments processed through GSA FAS's freight program. Through GSA's participation in this initiative, deeper and broader transparency has resulted in illustrating continuous annual improvements in fleet-wide fuel efficiency, alternative fuels use, and greenhouse gas emissions intensity.
 - b. Federal Strategic Sourcing Initiative (FSSI) Domestic Package Delivery Solution (DDS): In its most recent Third-Generation DDS3/FSSI contract for package delivery services, GSA was the first to *require* its suppliers (United Parcel Service and Federal Express) to report out, by Federal agency, their agency-by-agency emission output and footprint, thereby promoting and bringing visibility to cost and greenhouse gas impact based on shipping profile and choices. GSA worked closely with CEQ to build these requirements.
 - c. Greenhouse Gas Emissions Travel Reporting: GSA currently provides 107 agencies, departments, and other independent Government entities the tool and the ability to produce their annual CO2 emissions report to CEQ, through the carbon calculator provided by GSA. GSA further augmented for an integrated assessment tool that incorporates the CO2 data into other reporting capabilities—including a conference planning tool and a teleconference/video conference dashboard, both of which estimate CO2 impacts that inform travel and conference decision-making by customer agencies.

C. Sustainability. GSA exceeded six of the seven Office of Management and Budget (OMB) goals for FY 2014. These OMB goals include reducing Scope 1 & 2 greenhouse emissions by 20 percent and Scope 3 greenhouse gas emissions 8.8 percent. GSA is pleased to report that the agency reduced these greenhouse gas emissions by approximately 43 percent (Scope 1 & 2) and 53 percent (Scope 3) in FY 2014, far exceeding our goals. Additionally, OMB's goals included a targeted reduction of petroleum fuel used in fleet vehicles of 18 percent for FY 2014. GSA reduced petroleum fuel used in fleet vehicles by 55 percent in FY 2014.

D. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

U. S. General Services Administration
FY 2014 Annual Environmental Justice Implementation Progress Report

1. Background: NEPA is designed to ensure that all communities and people across this Nation are afforded an opportunity to live in a safe and healthy environment. NEPA requires Federal agencies, before they act, to determine the environmental consequences of their proposed actions for the dual goals of informed agency decision-making and informed public participation. The Federal actions subject to NEPA include, but are not limited to, those undertaken by GSA, such as: adoption of official policy, programs, or plans; Federal construction projects; plans to manage and develop Federal lands; and Federal approvals of non-Federal activities such as grants, licenses, and permits. Additionally, NEPA gives communities the opportunity to access public information on and participate in the agency decision-making process for these varied Federal actions. The Presidential Memorandum accompanying EO 12898, *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations*, underscores the importance of procedures under NEPA to “focus Federal attention on the environmental and human health conditions in minority communities and low-income communities with the goal of achieving environmental justice.” Further, the Presidential Memorandum underscores public participation opportunities under NEPA, stating: “Each Federal agency shall provide opportunities for community input in the NEPA process, including identifying potential effects and mitigation measures in consultation with affected communities and improving the accessibility of meetings, crucial documents, and notices.”

2. NEPA Committee of the EJIWG: GSA is participating on the NEPA Committee of the EJIWG. The purpose of the NEPA Committee is to improve the effective, efficient, and consistent consideration of environmental justice in the NEPA process through sharing of promising practices and lessons learned developed by Federal departments and agencies since EO 12898 was signed in 1994. Thus, the NEPA Committee supports Federal agency NEPA implementation precisely to “focus Federal attention on the environmental and human health conditions in minority communities and low-income communities with the goal of achieving environmental justice.”

Since it was established in May 2012 by the EJIWG, the NEPA Committee employed a robust and innovative process to fulfill its purpose. Co-chairs of the Committee and Subcommittees are from EPA, DOT, U. S. Department of Justice (DOJ), and U. S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), while working groups are chaired by U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), U. S. Department of Energy (DOE), and EPA. Furthermore, there has been active participation by CEQ, U. S. Department of Homeland Security, DOE, U. S. Department of Interior, DOJ, DOT, HHS, U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), USDA, EPA, GSA, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Deliverables of the NEPA Committee include:

U. S. General Services Administration
FY 2014 Annual Environmental Justice Implementation Progress Report

- *Community of Practice*: Monthly interagency meetings have established a vehicle for cross agency training and dialogue for addressing complex issues through sharing of experiences and effective practices in addressing environmental justice in the NEPA process.
 - *Environmental Justice and NEPA Agency Resource Compendium*: The compendium, available on the EJIWG Web page, <http://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/interagency/index.html>, gathers publically available information (e.g. regulations, orders, guidance, environmental justice strategic plans) from 20 Federal agencies on the intersection of environmental justice and NEPA into one place and hyperlinks them so that documents can be easily accessed. A select set of key references are also available on the EPA NEPA Web page.
 - *Promising Practices on Environmental Justice Methodologies in NEPA Reviews*: The NEPA committee is drafting a compilation of promising practices which represents the results of research, analysis, and discussions by participants of the NEPA Committee concerning the interface of environmental justice considerations through NEPA processes. It represents the professional expertise of the NEPA Committee participants, and their collective thinking and thoughtful deliberation of information sources and is not formal agency guidance. The draft final document will be presented to the Chair of the EJIWG.
 - *National Training Product on Environmental Justice and NEPA*: The NEPA Committee is drafting a *National Training Product on Environmental Justice and NEPA*. This training product is a companion to Environmental Justice Methodologies that provides history of NEPA and environmental justice, promising practices, and examples from Federal agency NEPA reviews.
 - *Lexicon*: the NEPA Committee is drafting a lexicon and compendium of key terms as used by Federal agencies to consider environmental justice in NEPA reviews.
3. Agency Consideration of Environmental Justice in NEPA Activities. In addition to the efforts by the NEPA Committee, GSA has undertaken the following efforts to advance consideration of environmental justice in NEPA activities:
- a. **Developed and Instituted an Environmental Tracking System**. In 2013, GSA developed and instituted a tracking system for Environmental Assessments (EA), Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) and Categorical Exclusions (CATEXs) to annually track implementation of environmental justice for all projects. During GSA's NEPA analyses, an early determination is made as to the potential for having environmental justice concerns, in accordance with GSA's NEPA Desk Guide. GSA tracked all NEPA projects during FY 2014 and specifically identified those that performed an environmental justice analysis. Since FY 2013, six projects have performed either an EA or EIS. Of these six projects, three determined a need for further environmental justice analysis, and all three reviews determined no adverse impact.

U. S. General Services Administration
FY 2014 Annual Environmental Justice Implementation Progress Report

Out of 42 GSA projects that performed checklist categorical exclusions (CATEXs), 9 were determined to not have any adverse impacts by the nature of the projects and did not need to perform a specific EJ analysis. The remaining 33 projects performed an EJ analysis, and none of the reviews indicated any adverse impacts. .

b. Provided Environmental Justice Training. In 2014, at the following venues, GSA's Office of General Counsel (OGC) provided training on GSA's environmental justice program by using a PowerPoint presentation that was jointly developed by the Office of Civil Rights (OCR), the Public Buildings Service (PBS) and OGC:

- In June, in Fort Worth, Texas, the GSA Region 7 Real Property Utilization & Disposal Division sponsored environmental law update training for 14 of its Region 7 real estate specialists, These specialists work both in the areas of real property acquisition and disposal, and the training provided by OGC addressed environmental justice in both settings. The 14 attendees amounted to nearly 100% of Region 7's real property specialists.
- In August, in Washington D.C., the Office of Real Property Utilization and Disposal's Environmental Team held an environmental law update conference, one topic of which was the GSA environmental justice program. This team consists of GSA's leading experts (in the Regions and at Central Office) in the areas of environmental law compliance, and real property disposal. The conference was attended by 16 of these experts, who amounted to 100% of the membership of the Environmental Team. The experts on the Environmental Team create national guidance for use throughout GSA on how to satisfy federal, state and local environmental standards, new and emerging, that affect GSA's real property disposal mission.

In conclusion, the NEPA Committee is providing Federal departments and agencies with promising practices organized in a coordinated, functional framework as identified by NEPA practitioners across the Federal Government. This community of practice is working in a collaborative manner to address complex environmental justice issues in a timely manner. Ultimately, the NEPA Committee intends its efforts provide the groundwork for a renewed and dynamic process to advance environmental justice principles through NEPA implementation.

E. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI). Title VI prohibits race, color, and national origin discrimination by recipients of financial assistance from GSA. Environmental justice issues may be raised in programs and activities supported through Federal financial assistance. In those circumstances, Title VI is an important

U. S. General Services Administration
FY 2014 Annual Environmental Justice Implementation Progress Report

tool for addressing those concerns. GSA's OCR is responsible for enforcing Title VI for the agency.

GSA is committed to using its authority under Title VI to achieve the goals of EO 12898. GSA's OCR participated in the Title VI Committee of the EJIWG, which drafted language regarding environmental justice responsibilities of recipients of Federal financial assistance, as enforced through Title VI. OCR trains the State Agencies for Surplus Property to ensure they understand their Title VI responsibilities, which includes the discussion of how environmental justice principles apply to their Title VI responsibilities.

III. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE STRATEGY UPDATES/REVISIONS

During FY 2015, GSA will review its Environmental Justice Strategy, which was published in February 2012. The review will consider whether GSA should make any changes to its Strategy, including consideration of current EJIWG focus areas and any comments received from the public.

IV. NOTABLE AND INNOVATIVE PLACED-BASED INTERAGENCY COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

GSA routinely collaborates with other Federal agencies in the work that it does for the American people. Examples of such collaboration include, but are not limited to, entering into an Interagency Agreement with EPA to assist GSA with the Good Neighbor Program projects, or obtaining EPA's expertise to identify environmental justice communities near CERCLA projects, or partnering with the U. S. Small Business Administration to enhance Federal contracting opportunities for small businesses near construction projects.

V. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS/IMPACTS

GSA takes steps to engage with community leaders and members in the work that it does. Examples of community engagement include, but are not limited to:

A. CERCLA Projects. EPA guidance for environmental remediation projects under CERCLA calls for the lead agency to create a community involvement plan and to engage in meaningful community outreach activities. Although the former Hardesty Federal Complex, in GSA's Region 6, near Kansas City, has been privately owned since 2011, GSA retained responsibility for making sure the site is safe for redevelopment and for addressing environmental contamination in surface soils and underground. The environmental issues date back to World War II when soldiers' uniforms were dry cleaned and chemically treated on the site. Chemicals from those operations released into the soil and groundwater. The community near the complex contains high percentages of minority, low-income, and linguistically isolated populations, and the Region received an environmental justice screening report from EPA that indicated the area has the potential for environmental justice concerns. As

U. S. General Services Administration
FY 2014 Annual Environmental Justice Implementation Progress Report

a result, the Region shaped its community involvement plan and outreach efforts to include communication with individuals who have limited English proficiency and the broader environmental justice population.

Print materials are made available to the community in English, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese. The Region has hosted three public information sessions at the local library. Spanish and Vietnamese interpreters attended, as coordinated by GSA's Office of Civil Rights.

The Region is nearing the end of the Remedial Investigation stage of the CERCLA process, and GSA is working to determine the precise location and amounts of contamination, on- and off-site, and to identify the existing or potential risks to human health and the environment. In the next few months, the Region will complete the Feasibility Study phase by evaluating several remedial options and determining the best option for cleaning up the site. The projected completion date for this project is 2025. This timeline includes 5 years of long-term monitoring.

B. Land Ports of Entry and Small Business Federal Contracting Opportunities.

GSA is committed to expanding opportunities for small businesses, awarding \$1.5 billion to small business in FY 2014. GSA conducts outreach events to support active construction projects, which included co-hosting small business outreach events with the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce to highlight potential opportunities for small businesses on the San Ysidro Land Port of Entry. The Administration's commitment to small business growth and the dedicated actions of GSA, GSA's prime contractors on the project, as well as GSA's partnership with the Small Business Administration, have resulted in strong partnerships around the San Ysidro LPOE area and job creation in the border communities, which includes minority and low-income populations. The project's small business contracts and subcontract award record, along with GSA's outreach efforts, reaffirms GSA's commitment to helping small businesses remain competitive in the Federal market and supports the creation of jobs in the local community.

VI. CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

A. Introduction/Overview. Climate change is a force multiplier for environmental justice, as it binds together economic development, human rights. The current nexus of more extreme weather incidents and decaying infrastructure not designed for recurring extreme weather, combined with vulnerable communities deeply connects climate change risk management and environmental justice efforts. In 2013, The President's Climate Action Plan called for Federal agencies to "continue to identify innovative ways to help our most vulnerable communities prepare for and recover from impacts of climate change." GSA must continue focused efforts to make an enabling environment for change and support its Federal customers whose missions are more directly engaged with the State, local, and tribal stakeholders.

B. Progress toward implementing Agency Climate Adaptation implementation plans related to vulnerable communities. GSA is responding to environmental justice issues that impact its Federal customers and the communities affected by GSA's initiatives. As GSA's customers identify vulnerable mission-critical sites and supply chain components, GSA will partner with them to identify and avoid maladaptation—actions that increase vulnerability to climate risks rather than reducing them.. Real property adaptation actions may vary across a spectrum of protection, accommodation, or retreat. Supply chain adaptation actions may vary across a spectrum of planning for disruption, minimizing damage, or damage control. GSA must work with its customers to understand how a changing climate, in conjunction with other socioeconomic and demographic trends, will affect customer agency missions and work to enable their capacity to support vulnerable communities more directly than GSA itself. Preparing agency staff to have the capability, confidence, and capacity to successfully implement this emergent aspect of risk management requires ongoing attention.

GSA is updating its agency and service-level vulnerability assessments based on the Third National Climate Assessment. Environmental justice is included in this update.

C. Interagency collaborative efforts to help vulnerable communities prepare for and recover from impacts of climate change. Effective integration of climate risk management measures in operational planning and service delivery is dependent on a solid awareness of constraints and incentives. Even when climate change risk management is helped by new information and technological solutions, the positive effects can sometimes be limited by lack of speed or institutional capacity to effectively mainstream adaptation. The development of an enabling environment for change, both at the level of individual decisions and at the organizational level, can act as a big incentive for adaptation. For example, GSA has collaborated with other agencies on long-term climate change scenario planning exercises at multiple locations through the U. S. Department of Homeland Security-- Federal Emergency Management Agency's National Exercise Program, which has improved understanding of climate change impacts on operations and will be used in adaptation planning for local communities. GSA focused efforts to make an enabling environment for change with its partners who are more directly engaged with State, local, and tribal entities.

1. Recent Efforts to Support and Encourage Local Adaptation: Building a Climate Resilient National Capital Region Workshop Series. Starting in fall 2013 through 2014, GSA, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, the National Aeronautic and Space Administration (NASA), the National Capital Planning Commission, , , the Smithsonian Institution, and the U.S. Global Change Research Program, sponsored free, invitation-only webinars and workshops to assist Federal and local agency climate adaptation planning and improve regional coordination. The workshops provide Federal, regional, and local organizations with an opportunity to work together, share technical information, and collaborate on climate adaptation strategies tailored to the National Capital

U. S. General Services Administration
FY 2014 Annual Environmental Justice Implementation Progress Report

Region Many Federal, regional, and local agencies are individually exploring climate adaptation strategies for their facilities and workforce.. However, no single entity can address all of its climate change risks without working with other area organizations.

The workshop structure was based on a process for assessing and planning for vulnerabilities to climate impacts. This process has been tested and followed for several years by NASA managers.

In the interim, between workshop events, participants were encouraged to complete “homework assignments” to identify the built systems most vulnerable to climate change. In discussion groups, participants shared and synthesized the results of this homework, characterizing the primary threats common among participating organizations. At some of the workshops, participants broke into sector-based groups to identify strategies for a climate-resilient DC area.

The groups at the December workshop were:

- Energy (electrical supply),
- Geographically and historically significant areas,
- Governance,
- Information technology and telecommunications,
- Transportation, and
- Water/wastewater/stormwater

Workshop participants developed shared messages to communicate climate preparedness messages within their organizations.

2. Upcoming Efforts to Support and Encourage Local Adaptation: Building a Climate-Resilient National Capital Region Workshop Series. Similar to the GreenGov Community Spotlight in R11GSA’s National Capital Region (NCR) and the White House GreenGov Climate Champion award-winning pilots in GSA’s Heartland Region and NCR, GSA’s New England Region will be a pilot in Spring, 2015. The pilot will provide an opportunity for Federal customers who work with regional and local climate change adaptation plans and applicable local organizations to work together, share technical information, and collaborate on climate adaptation strategies tailored to the two sites in the New England Portfolio.

D. Conclusion. Per the findings of the 2011 Interagency Climate Change Adaptation Task Force Progress Report, GSA recognizes that minority communities and low-income communities are disproportionately affected by climate change. Extreme heat, severe storms, reduced air quality, severe droughts, and sea-level rise exacerbate environmental and public health challenges facing minority and low-income communities. GSA’s responsibilities continue to vulnerable communities through GSA’s direct support of its Federal customers, who directly engage with vulnerable communities.

VII. IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS IN EJIWG FOCUS AREAS

A. NEPA. See Para II (D) regarding NEPA implementation.

B. Title VI. See Para II (E) regarding Title VI implementation.

C. Impacts from Commercial Transportation and Supporting Infrastructure (Goods Movement). See Para II (B) regarding Goods Movement.

D. Impacts of Climate Change (focuses on EJIWG climate work group efforts).

The EJIWG provided input to the President’s State, Local, and Tribal Leaders Task Force on Climate Preparedness and Resilience. The Task Force provided recommendations to the President on how the Federal Government can respond to the needs of communities nationwide that are dealing with the impacts of climate change. The section on addressing the needs of vulnerable populations recognized that low-income, minority, and indigenous communities are more severely impacted by climate change. The Task Force recommended that agencies “develop guidance and tools that consider geographic, economic, and social contexts to help identify disproportionately vulnerable populations and those most at risk to the effects of climate change.”

In June, 2014, the EJIWG also provided guidance to Federal agencies’ Senior Sustainability Officers to assist agencies in considering the impacts of climate change on minority and low-income communities. The guidance was offered in the spirit of EO 13653 and EO 12898 to ensure that agencies are appropriately considering environmental justice vulnerabilities in their Agency Adaptation Plans.