



# “Environmental Indicators Initiative” and “Draft Report on the Environment”

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*“My goals for the Agency are to make our air cleaner, our water purer and our land better protected. These are the results that we are working hard to achieve. Our progress towards these goals will be the measure of our success. To know whether we are making progress toward these goals, we need high quality information about the state of the environment. It is also important that we are accountable to the American public and report to them on our progress in reaching the goals we have set for ourselves.”*

*The ‘Indicators Initiative’ and ‘Draft Report on the Environment’ are critical steps in our more comprehensive approach to identifying priorities, focusing resources on areas of greatest concern, and managing our work to achieve measurable results.”*

*-- Christine Todd Whitman, November, 2001*

## ***“Indicators” Initiative Launched***

On November 13, 2001, EPA Administrator Christine Todd Whitman announced an “Environmental Indicators Initiative” to improve EPA’s ability to report on the status of and trends in environmental conditions and their impacts on human health and the nation’s natural resources. The Administrator directed the Office of Environmental Information (OEI) and the Office of Research and Development (ORD) to lead this multi-year, Agency-wide Initiative.

## ***“Draft Report on the Environment”***

Developing and publishing a “Draft Report on the Environment,” using available national level data and indicators to describe environmental conditions and human health concerns will be one of the key products of this effort. A “Draft Report” will be released during Spring 2003 for broad public discussion. It will:

- describe current environmental conditions and trends using existing data and indicators
- identify data gaps and research needs
- discuss the challenges government and our partners face in filling those gaps and
- be accompanied by supporting technical information.

Five “theme areas” will be covered in the “Draft Report”: *cleaner air; purer water; better protected land; human health; and, ecological condition.* To establish a national baseline for “*cleaner air,*” the “Draft Report” will address the status and effects of outdoor air quality and indoor air quality. The “*purer water*” theme will examine the condition of the nation's water resources, drinking water, recreational water, and the condition of waters supporting fish and shellfish. To ensure “*better protected land*” the “Draft Report” will explore land use and effects on the environment, chemicals used or released on land, wastes, and land contamination. Under “*human health,*” the “Draft Report” will explore human health and disease trends in the United States, the role of the environment in disease, and how exposure to environmental pollutants is measured. The theme about the nation’s “*ecological condition*” will present information on ecosystems and work towards the development of ecological indicators. The “Draft Report” will also include specific information on cropping practices, waste management, emergency response and preparedness, and recycling.

### ***Working with Our Partners and Stakeholders Is Key to Our Success***

Through our outreach efforts, EPA is inviting governmental entities, non-governmental organizations, and the public to be our partners in the longer- term “Environmental Indicators Initiative.” Data from other federal agencies and departments, EPA regional offices, state and local governments, tribes, and other partners will be vital to sustaining a long-term effort to improve the way we develop indicators that can help us measure and report on environmental conditions and the results we achieve.

For further information, please visit our web site at: [www.epa.gov/indicators](http://www.epa.gov/indicators). If you would like to be notified when the “Draft Report” becomes publicly available, go to the comments section of our web site and add your name to our “Indicators” mailing list.

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