



FY 2011-2015 EPA Strategic Plan
Cross-Cutting Fundamental Strategy: Expanding the Conversation on Environmentalism

Engage and empower communities and partners, including those who have been historically under-represented, in order to support and advance environmental protection and human health nationwide.

We have begun a new era of outreach at EPA and seek to include a broader range of people and communities in our work and expand our engagement with communities historically under-represented in our decision-making processes. We will build stronger working relationships throughout the country, particularly with tribes, communities of color, economically-distressed cities and towns, young people, and others.

To accomplish these goals, we will:

1. Call for innovation and bold thinking and ask all employees to bring their creativity and talents to their everyday work to enhance outreach and transparency in all our programs.
2. Ensure that our science is explained clearly and accessible to all communities, communicating and educating in plain language the complexities of environmental, health, policy, and regulatory issues.
3. Educate and empower individuals, communities, and Agency partners in decision making through public access to environmental information and data.
4. Ensure that the Agency's regulations, policies, budget, and decision-making processes are transparent and accessible through increased access to environmental data sources, community right-to-know tools, and direct stakeholder engagement.
5. Address barriers to improve engagement with historically under-represented sectors of the nation.
6. Use traditional and new media to inform and educate the public about Agency activities and provide opportunities for community feedback.
7. Encourage citizens to understand the complexities and impacts of environmental issues and environmental stewardship, and provide avenues and tools that enhance their ability to participate in processes that could affect them.

FY 2013 Action Plan: Expanding the Conversation on Environmentalism

This Action Plan lists the specific actions that the EPA will carry out in FY 2013 to achieve the goals of the Strategy for Expanding the Conversation on Environmentalism as described in the FY 2011-2015 EPA Strategic Plan. Annual Action Plans will be developed for each year of the Strategic Plan.

In FY 2013, EPA will continue to institutionalize efforts to broaden access to information across the Agency and expand outreach beyond the Agency. This year's actions are expected to result in more standardized documentation and data availability through both traditional and non-traditional approaches to information sharing, targeted to population groups that have been historically under-represented in environmental decision making. These actions will support our goals to engage the public and increase transparency to expand the conversation on environmentalism.

1. Expand interactions with historically under-represented groups (Supports Principles 4, 5, 6, and 7).
 - National Program Managers and Regions will implement their Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Review Plans and certify implementation to the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) by the end of FY 2013.
 - By the end of FY 2013, the Office of Civil Rights will establish an Agency-wide Language Access Group to ensure the implementation of EPA's Limited English Proficiency Order 1000.32.
 - OCR will coordinate with the Office of External Affairs and Environmental Education (OEAAEE) to revise EPA's Translation Protocol and finalize by the end of FY 2013.
2. Improve environmental awareness and stewardship through implementation of the One EPA Environmental Education and Public Engagement initiatives (*Supports Principles 3 and 6*).
 - Launch the ecoAmbassadors program in 30 historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs), minority serving academic institutions (MSAIs), colleges for women, and faith-based colleges and universities during the academic year of September 2012–May 2013.¹
 - Launch the ecoAmbassadors environmental Science and Technology Engineering and Math (eSTEM) program with five national youth-serving organizations during the academic year of September 2012-May 2013.²
 - Increase the integration of environmental education (EE) activities into Agency programs and expand the creation and distribution of educational resources for a range of target audiences.
 - National Program Managers (NPMs) and the Office of Environmental Education (and Regions as appropriate) will collaborate to complete development of educational resources or infographics for at least five of the most significant environmental and public health programmatic areas or regulatory actions by September 30, 2013. Issues will be selected by the Administrator's office with input from the NPMs and the intra-agency EE workgroup.
 - The Office of Environmental Education and Office of Public Engagement (OPE), in collaboration with the NPMs, will cultivate and establish two national and two regional/local partnerships to leverage both new and established distribution and outreach channels during FY 2013 to expand the reach of environmental education resources.
 - Integrate eSTEM environmental education activities into the work of the intra-agency EE workgroup to enhance activities that encourage people to pursue environmental careers.
 - The Office of Environmental Education, Office of Research and Development (ORD), Office of the Science Advisor, and the Office of Diversity, Outreach, and Collaboration (ODOC) will develop an e-mentoring strategy during FY 2013 to expand the number of EPA staff participating in mentoring activities. The strategy includes developing a monthly on-line webinar or other series highlighting EPA employees who serve as professional eSTEM role models.

¹ The OnCampus ecoAmbassadors program allows students to green their campuses and promote environmental awareness. Students can choose from a variety of events and projects, all of which are based on projects from EPA program offices and use EPA resources.

² The goal of the ecoAmbassadors eSTEM program is to provide external mentoring opportunities for EPA employees via existing youth organizations. Prior to launching a mentoring program, EPA must first establish an internal employee e-STEM Corps Network to unite and engage existing EPA employees to support e-STEM mentorin and promotion within and outside of EPA.

- The Office of Environmental Education, Office of Public Engagement, Office of Diversity, Outreach, and Collaboration, and Office of Regional Operations will collaborate to develop and conduct ten regional eSTEM roundtables with college and university students and faculty to discuss trends in environmental protection and environmental careers in FY 2013.
3. Improve access to and transparency of the EPA's environmental data to support community and citizen involvement in decision making (*Supports Principles 1, 2, 3, 5, and 7*).
 - By the end of FY 2013, publish an additional 70 datasets and ten applications from the EPA's national programs in Data.gov to improve access to the EPA's data in support of community and citizen involvement in environmental decision making. At the end of FY 2012 EPA had published 162 new datasets and 28 data tools.
 4. Expand public awareness and opportunities for involvement in advance of and throughout the development of rules and regulations through social media tools including regulations.gov, the rulemaking gateway, Greenversations, webinars, and other tools (*Supports Principles 3, 4, 6 and 7*).
 - By the end of FY 2013, the Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) University Initiative will establish partnerships with at least two academic institutions to increase the awareness of TRI data in academic communities, expose students to TRI data, tools, and analyses, and generate innovative programs, activity recommendations, or research that improve the accessibility, awareness, understanding, and application of TRI data.